



THE



GRANITE WAY



Best Whole Journey Experience
Highly Commended 2002

Okehampton to Lydford
11 mile / 18km Cycle/Walkway
via Meldon and Lake Viaducts



DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL

Mostly traffic-free on a former railway line



Part of the National Cycle Network
Route 27 "Devon Coast to Coast"





HOW TO REACH THE GRANITE WAY

OKEHAMPTON:

By train - from Exeter (on Summer Sundays) - cycles carried

By bus - service numbers X9 and X10 operated by First from Exeter or Bude - at drivers discretion cycles are carried under floor on most services

Service number 86 from Plymouth/Barnstaple - cycles carried from summer 2002

By cycle - please contact Devon County Council or Sustrans (details over) for the most suitable route

By car - from the A30 follow signs for Okehampton station along the B3260

LYDFORD:

By bus - service number 86 operated by First between Plymouth and Barnstaple - cycles carried from winter/spring 2003

By cycle - please contact Devon County Council or Sustrans (details over) for the most suitable route

By car - via A386 at Dartmoor Inn, follow signs for Lydford/Lydford Gorge



ABOUT THE GRANITE WAY

This excellent mainly traffic-free cycle/walkway between Okehampton and Lydford is part of the National Cycle Network (NCN) route number 27 'Devon Coast to Coast' between Ilfracombe and Plymouth. Much of the Way is within Dartmoor National Park.

The trail is ideal for families and those new to regular cycling. The Granite Way is mostly built along the course of the former Southern Region railway line. The Way is entirely off-road for 6 miles/9kms between Okehampton and Lake Viaduct with additional off-road sections towards Lydford (see map over page).



The traffic-free sections are **wheelchair accessible** (except access from the A386 at Bearslake to Lake Viaduct)

**distances are approximate*

ALONG THE GRANITE WAY

(for convenience and clarity this description assumes a cycle ride or walk heading south west from Okehampton station towards Lydford)

THE GRANITE WAY HAS THREE MAIN SECTIONS

1. Okehampton Station to Meldon Viaduct (2½miles/3¾kms traffic-free)

From Okehampton Station the trail runs entirely traffic-free parallel to the railway line which takes passenger trains to Meldon and carries aggregate from Meldon Quarry. To the north there are superb views with Okehampton's motte and bailey castle (English Heritage) in the valley below. To the south rises Dartmoor with High Wilhays, the highest point on the Moor at 621 metres (2038 feet), not far away. At Meldon Viaduct there is a railway station, Visitor Centre and café in the former buffet carriage all run by Dartmoor Railway. Trains run from here to Okehampton station.

2. Meldon Viaduct to Lake Viaduct (3½ miles / 5¼kms traffic-free)

Continuing along the railway line the trail passes the highest point on the railway in a deep cutting before emerging at the gates where the lane leads to the water treatment works at Prewley.

Crossing this lane by the cattle grid the trail continues west towards Lake Viaduct.

The dramatically craggy features of Sourton Tors are clearly visible to the south and further west in the far distance is Brentor church on a distinctive knoll.

Although along a former railway path the trail has been built to meander to and fro offering a more attractive ride or walk. Sourton church and the views along this section warrant a stop for a picnic by the granite 'seats'. Please ensure you close the gates behind you when passing through the short permissive section between Sourton village and Lake Viaduct.

At Lake Viaduct, built of local stone and offering spectacular views of the Moor and the surrounding countryside the trail splits. You can continue on road to the former Bridestowe station (2 miles / 3½kms) where you rejoin another 1¼ miles / 2kms traffic-free section to Lydford.

Alternatively, continue south to the current end of the traffic-free section for a further mile to Southerley Halt picnic site (see map over page). You will then need to return to Lake Viaduct.

3. Lake Viaduct to Lydford via Bridestowe (4½ miles / 7½kms, 1 mile traffic-free)*

From Lake Viaduct take great care when crossing the main A386 road at Beardown before travelling along undulating quiet lanes through the village of Bridestowe and on to the site of the former Bridestowe railway station. Here the Trail is again off-road on level ground with superb views across Fernworthy Down before emerging at Lydford. In Lydford the trail is again on a minor road through the village past the Norman castle (English Heritage) and Lydford Gorge (National Trust). From Lydford the 'Devon Coast to Coast' NCN route leads south towards Tavistock and Plymouth. There are further traffic-free sections through Tavistock and south of Yelverton for 7 miles on the Plym Valley Trail.

Meldon Viaduct and industrial archeology

Meldon Viaduct was built in 1874 three years after the London and South West railway reached Okehampton. Spanning 341 feet (165 metres) the steel viaduct looks down upon a complex area of industrial archeology. Meldon Dam can be seen to the south west and Exmoor 20 miles away to the north east. In the valley to the south is Meldon Pool, the remains of mineral mining, such as copper and arsenic, and quarrying including limestone in the 18th and 19th centuries, with two lime kilns. An embryonic glass industry based on the naturally occurring aplite essential in glass manufacturing was started in the early 1920's but it did not flourish.

Today, quarrying continues with Aggregate Industries extracting railway ballast, roadstone and other industrial aggregates which are taken out by rail through Okehampton Station and on to the mainline at Exeter.

Meldon Dam and Reservoir

A few hundred metres west along the trail from Meldon Viaduct is a turning, by a Sustrans milepost, that gives access along a lane - a few minutes by bicycle - to Meldon Dam and Reservoir. The dam was built in 1972 in the West Ockment valley and has a span of 660 feet (201 metres) and is 145 feet high (45 metres). It is possible to walk around the reservoir using a permissive path and access land to admire the magnificent views of the Dartmoor scenery.

The Granite Way

This 11 mile (18kms) cycle/walkway runs along the north west edge of the granite massif of Dartmoor. The way has been constructed by Devon County Council in partnership and with the welcome support of a wide variety of organisations and individual landowners. These include: South West Regional Development Agency, the European Union, the Millennium Commission, Sustrans, Aggregate Industries and Dartmoor National Park Authority.

CONTACTS



DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL

Devon County Council

☎ 01392 383223
www.devon.gov.uk

Dartmoor National Park

☎ 01822 890414
www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk

Sustrans

☎ 0117 926 8893
www.sustrans.org.uk

CTC (Cyclists Touring Club)

☎ 0870 873 0060
www.ctc.org.uk



Okehampton Tourist Information Centre

Museum Courtyard, 3 West Street,
Okehampton, Devon EX20 1HQ
☎ 01837 53020

Cycle Shop & Cycle Hire in Okehampton

Okehampton Cycles,
North Road, Okehampton
☎ 01837 53248

Dartmoor Railway

Okehampton Station,
Okehampton
☎ 01837 55330
☎ 01837 55667 (talking timetable)

 **traveline**
public transport info
0870 608 2 608



PLEASE TAKE YOUR LITTER HOME WITH YOU - THANK YOU!

GOOD CYCLING CODE

Keep safe, be courteous and enjoy your cycling

When cycling on shared paths please:

- give way to pedestrians, leaving them plenty of room
- keep to the left but away from the edge
- don't expect to cycle at high speeds
- **remember that many people are hard of hearing or visually impaired - don't assume they can see or hear you**

- **carry a bell and use it - don't surprise people**
- give way where there are wheelchair users

When cycling on roads:

- always follow the Highway Code
- be seen - take care at junctions
- use your bell - not all pedestrians can see you

Thank you for cycling

Cycling does not cause pollution or contribute to climate change



HORSES and MOTORCYCLES are NOT PERMITTED on the traffic-free sections of the Way between Okehampton and Lydford. Some local residents may be issued with a permit to ride a horse along certain sections of the route

THE GRANITE WAY

Okehampton to Lydford Cycle/Walkway

Part of National Cycle Network Route 27
'The Devon Coast to Coast'



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Bluebell Wood, near Meldon



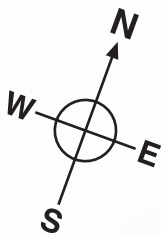
Okehampton Castle

Cycle route to Jacobstowe, Hatherleigh, Bideford, Barnstaple and Ilfracombe



KEY

- Main Access to the Way
- National Cycle Network Route 27 "Devon Coast to Coast"
- Off Road Cycle Route
- On Road Cycle Route
- Cycle/walkway link to Meldon Dam
- Railway
- Sustrans Milepost
- Viewpoint
- Cycle Parking
- Cycle Hire/Shop
- Telephone
- Toilets
- Post Office/Shop
- Picnic Site
- Pub/Accommodation
- Camping & Caravan Site
- Parking
- Shelter
- Car Parking space for wheelchair users



BRIDESTOWE

SOURTON

Okehampton Station

- Buffet/WC*
- Bus Services*
- Trains to Meldon (Cycles carried free)*
- Trains to Exeter/Crediton (Summer Sundays)*
- YHA
- Information Centre
- Cycle & Car Parking
- Model and gift Shop*

* It is advisable to check service and opening times in advance

Meldon Viaduct
(no access by motor vehicle)

- Spectacular 19th Century metal rail viaduct
- Buffet/WC*
- Visitor Centre*
- Trains to Okehampton* (Cycles carried free)

* It is advisable to check opening times before arrival at Meldon

Caution:
Take care when crossing busy A386

Short gated section.
Please ensure both gates are closed behind you.



Near Meldon Quarry



View from Lake Viaduct



Some sections suitable for wheelchair users



Lydford Castle and Church

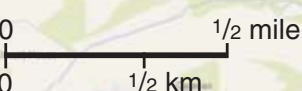
These signs indicate that this route, the Granite Way, is part of the 6,000 mile National Cycle Network (NCN). The Granite Way, between Okehampton and Lydford, forms part of NCN route 27, which is also known as the 'Devon Coast to Coast'. The 'Devon Coast to Coast' is a 102 mile cycle/walkway between Ilfracombe and Plymouth, much of which is traffic free like the Granite Way. The NCN in Devon is being developed by Devon County Council in partnership with Sustrans, the sustainable transport charity.



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Okehampton Town Map



OKEHAMPTON STATION

START OF GRANITE WAY

Cycle route to Brentor Church, Mary Tavy, Tavistock and Plymouth