

## **The Greenway Walk**

This walk links the beaches and buses of Torbay with the National Trust's historic Greenway House and Garden on the River Dart. It passes through some superb landscapes and offers spectacular views over both Tor Bay and the Dart.

The route is waymarked - look out for the colourful little waymark plaques featuring a boathouse.

The walk is circular, so can be joined anywhere. If using public transport a good starting point is Churston Station, which is served by a frequent bus service and also by the Paignton and Dartmouth Steam Railway during the summer. If arriving by car a good starting point is Broadsands beach, which has a large car park, and that is the start used in this description.

### **Fact File**

Buses on the main seafront route between Torquay/Paignton and Brixham pass Churston Station. This is a frequent and regular service; for details contact Traveline on 0870 608 2 608 or visit [travelline.org.uk](http://travelline.org.uk).

The very scenic Paignton and Dartmouth Steam Railway serves Churston Station - for details telephone 01803 844010 or visit [www.paignton-steamrailway.co.uk](http://www.paignton-steamrailway.co.uk)

The route passes the National Trust's Greenway House and Garden, once home of Agatha Christie. For opening times and prices telephone 01803 842382. Let them know you have arrived using the Greenway Walk, as this will entitle you to a **reduced entry price**.

**Walk Length:** 10.5km/6.5 miles: there are two stiles; a number of minor ups and downs, but these are generally steady gradients rather than steep slopes; one major road crossing where care is needed.

**Facilities:** Broadsands: - car park, toilets, refreshments; Churston: - pub and restaurant; Churston Station: - buses, trains, pub; Galmpton: - shop, pub; Greenway: - car park, gardens, toilets, refreshments.

### **The Walk**

The walk starts at Broadsands Car Park. This is on the coast of Torbay between Paignton and Brixham, and is signed from the main coast road.

**From Broadsands Car Park, go to the seafront promenade. Facing the sea, bear right, along the Coast Path, heading towards Brixham. Skirt the edge of the green, then follow the Coast Path down to the pebbly Elberry Cove.**

Note the stone building at the far end of the cove. This was an early bath house, built for the local Lord of the Manor when sea bathing became popular in the 1700s.

**Cross the cove to the far end and go through the gap in the wall. Climb the steps and at the top, by a large tree virtually in the middle of the path, bear right.**

Note the colourful Greenway Walk waymark here. These should guide round the whole walk. The unusual design is by Devon artist Brian Pollard.

**The path passes through some woodland. On arriving at a junction turn left and cross a short stretch of golf course - follow the yellow posts here. Continue along the track at the far end, then bear right and immediately left along a tarmac lane. This leads to a T-junction.**

Over the wall ahead can be seen the tower of Churston Church. Just beyond in the same direction is Churston Court. Now a pub and restaurant, this is an Elizabethan house in origin, and the church is even older. These mark the centre of the original Churston village, and may be visited by walking along the road ahead.

**To continue on the Greenway Walk, turn right at this junction. Continue to another junction and bear right here.**

The bridge towards the left once carried the Brixham branch line railway, unused since the 1970s.

**Continue along the road, parallel to the old railway.**

Be a little careful on this road as it is used by a certain amount of local traffic.

**Take the next turning left, Bridge Road, and cross the old railway bridge.**

Note the number on the bridge indicating that it is 225 miles and 22 chains from the old GWR terminus at Paddington.

**On reaching the main road turn right then descend to use the underpass. Climb at the far side and continue ahead past Churston Station and the school.**

If joining the route from Churston Station, turn left along the main road then left again into Greenway Road. If alighting from a bus, head for Greenway Road next to the station.

**Follow the road to the bottom and bear left, keeping left at the Manor Inn on Greenway Road.**

This is the village of Galmpton. Recorded in the Domesday Book (1086), it was once a very isolated agricultural community. After becoming important for its limestone quarries, it has now become an attractive outer suburb of Torbay. (If you feel you would like to return now, there is a short cut back to Broadsands from here. To follow this, bear right at the Manor Inn then turn right again, where directed by a Greenway Walk arrow, up Slade Lane. This is the return leg, and the walk description can be followed as indicated below).

**To continue on the full walk, bear left at the Manor Inn and walk past the Galmpton Institute and the Primary School, then on uphill as far as a lane which goes off to the left at the top, Kennel Lane. Turn left along here, cross the steam railway line and immediately afterwards turn right along the track known as Combe Lane.**

After a while this attractive green lane crosses a stream then climbs up the side of the valley, or combe, which gives it its name. Nearing the top look across the valley to spot the unusual tree on the skyline, a cunningly disguised telecommunications mast.

**At the junction at the end turn right.**

Soon, superb views open up on the right over Galmpton Creek, which is an inlet of the River Dart which will be experienced more closely later in the walk. There are

also views over the Dart itself and, further round, Galmpton village and Torbay beyond.

**Continue downhill alongside the meadow and then past what used to be the farm buildings of Higher Greenway to a lane. Turn left here and continue ahead past Maypool Youth Hostel.**

The Youth Hostel, just off the lane to the left, is a Victorian building. It was built by the Simpsons, a family which owned an important boatyard just down the river; it is said the house was built here so they could keep an eye on things at the yard.

**Continue ahead through the gate onto the green track.**

This may be the line of an ancient trackway which led to the crossing point of the Dart between Greenway and Dittisham. Today it gives magnificent views down the Dart. Noss Boatyard, originally the Simpsons' business, is immediately ahead on the left, with Dartmouth and Kingswear beyond. Look out for the information board referring to the Dart Valley Trail, which also uses this path.

**Just before the end of the field turn right through a gate. Continue ahead to the bottom of this next field.**

If you wish to visit Greenway Gardens, and look at the house, turn left here and descend. It is a fascinating location, originally the home of Sir Humphrey Gilbert the founder of Newfoundland, and in the 20th century home to Agatha Christie.

**To continue on our circular walk, turn right at the bottom of the field.**

There is another splendid view over the Dart from here, this time featuring the village of Dittisham on the opposite bank.

**Continue along the bottom of this next field and downhill onto a track. Go ahead on a narrower path which in turn bears left then, at a fork, keep left to arrive at a road. Cross the road and cross the stone stile on the opposite side. Go down the field edge then bear right and down through the farmyard of Lower Greenway.**

You may just notice the chimney to the right of the farmyard. This was for a 19th century steam engine which powered the most up-to-date farm machinery of the time.

**At the bottom of the farmyard go through the gate and head downhill by the fence. Go through the gate halfway down the hill and continue to the bottom, crossing the stile to the foreshore at Galmpton Creek.**

Just to the left is a limekiln. This burnt limestone taken from the quarry on the far side of the creek, the burnt lime being spread on the fields as a fertiliser. The limestone was also used as ballast in early ships sailing to Newfoundland, and the Galmpton Creek limestone has been found in early Newfoundland buildings.

**Turn right along the foreshore, crossing a stream as it flows over the beach.**

This is the same stream as was crossed in Combe Lane earlier. It was once used to power Galmpton Mill, seen ahead at the end of the beach.

**Continue along the foreshore to Galmpton Mill, climb the lane ahead and then on the path and down to the boatyard by the creek.**

Boatbuilding has long been an important industry on Galmpton Creek, including trawlers for Brixham and small craft for the Navy during the Second World War.

**Continue on the lane ahead to the junction at the top, passing another lime kiln on the way. Turn right at the top to arrive back at Galmpton. Carry on past the village stores and on past Langdon Lane and the Roundings, then turn left up Slade Lane.**

Those who took the short cut at Galmpton on the outward leg will rejoin here.

**Keep on to the top, to the open common of Galmpton Warborough. Go ahead on the left hand edge of the common.**

The name Warborough comes from the Saxon words for "watch hill", and this open area is still a good vantage point to see over the bay. On the left are the remains of a windmill. It dates from the time of the Napoleonic Wars, when an increased demand for flour led to its building.

**Just after the war memorial turn right then, WITH GREAT CARE, cross the main road (it might be easier to use the bollards a little way to the left). Follow the road opposite downhill, then go off left downwards at the bottom of the slope along a footpath into woodland.**

(If returning to Churston Station, do not cross the main road but turn right and the station is on the right).

This is another location for superb views over the Bay to Torquay. In the foreground is Hookhills Viaduct, on the Paignton-Kingswear line.

**Follow the footpath downhill to a road. Turn right, pass under the viaduct and on down to return to Broadsands car park.**

### **Further Information**

A free leaflet on the walk is available in local Tourist Information Centres. This contains a sketch map and further background information, and is designed in the same style as the waymarks.

An information pack on the Dart Valley Trail, which links with this walk around Greenway, is available from local Tourist Information Centres price £2. Alternatively, it may be obtained from Discover Devon. Information line 0870 608 5531, at Westacott Road, Barnstaple, EX32 8AW, price £3.50 including post and packing - quote reference DTY/DP42.

For information on the wider network of walking trails in Devon pick up the free brochure "Discover Devon - Walking" from local Tourist Information Centres on the above address.

OS maps for this walk:

Explorer (1: 25,000 scale) no. OL20 South Devon  
Landranger (1: 50,000 scale) no. 202 Torbay and South Dartmoor.