

## Walk 35 The Two Moors Way, the Teign Gorge and Some Special Moor Stones

The Two Moors Way is Devon's oldest Long Distance Path, apart from the South West Coast Path. It was formally opened in 1976, and now forms the major north-south walking route across the County. As the name suggests, it links Devon's two great moorlands, stretching as it does from Ivybridge on the southern edge of Dartmoor to Lynmouth on the north coast of Exmoor. With the recent establishment of a link between Ivybridge and the south coast at Wembury, it also forms the major part of a Devon Coast to Coast walk.

The walk described here offers a variety of options based on the Two Moors Way at the Teign Gorge on the northern edge of Dartmoor. The village of Drewsteignton is the main settlement in the area, and there are bus routes serving the village. However, parking is very limited so if arriving by car it is best to base the walk at Fingle Bridge, where there is ample parking. The walk description starts at Fingle Bridge, with an explanation for "bus walkers" starting at Drewsteignton.

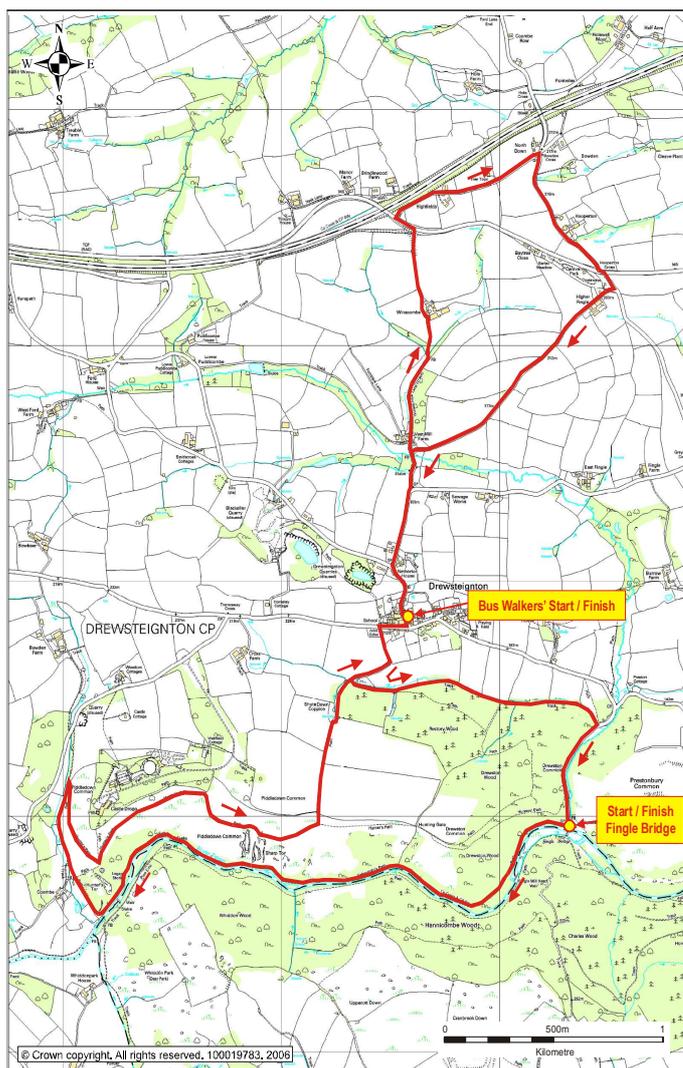
### Fact File

Drewsteignton is served by buses to and from Exeter and Newton Abbot daily except Sundays. There are also summer Sunday services to and from Okehampton, Widecombe and Newton Abbot. For timetable details contact Traveline on 0870 608 2 608 or visit [www.traveline.org.uk](http://www.traveline.org.uk). Drewsteignton and Fingle Bridge are both signposted from the A30 between Exeter and Okehampton.

**Walk Length:** There are two loops to this walk, both based on Drewsteignton; the two combined are 13.25km/8.25 miles. Alternatively, if based at Fingle Bridge, it is possible to walk the southern of the two loops only, a well-known walk circling the Teign Gorge; this is 6.75km/4.25 miles. The northern loop, while less spectacular scenically, has the attraction of a number of carved stones along the route. Quite a bit of this loop uses quiet lanes. The southern loop has no stiles and one climb of 70m/230ft; the northern loop has 2 stiles and three climbs, one of 70m/230ft, one of 40m/130ft and one of 60m/200ft.

**Facilities:** Drewsteignton - shop, pub, toilets, buses;  
Fingle Bridge - pub, car parking.

## The Walk



The description starts at Fingle Bridge. "Bus walkers" starting at Drewsteignton start at \* below for the northern loop and \*\* for the southern loop.

Go through the kissing gate opposite the Fingle Bridge Inn, signed "Fisherman's Path" and follow this as it rises slightly alongside the River Teign.

Fingle Bridge dates from the 16th or 17th Century. As a river crossing point it is even older, joining the two great prehistoric hill forts of Prestonbury Castle and Cranbrook Castle, one on either side of the river.

Keep to the obvious path as it descends gently back to the floor of the valley, the steep wooded sides of the Teign Gorge rising on both sides.

The Teign rises from two sources high on Dartmoor and flows around the eastern side of Dartmoor to the sea at Teignmouth. The middle section of its course, including the Teign Gorge, is among Devon's landscape gems. Watch out for dippers in the river, and notice the thick covering of moss and lichen on the rocks and trees, a good sign of clear air.

The path rises and falls, including one particularly sharp climb and descent on stone steps over the base of Sharp Tor, a rocky prominence overlooking the Gorge. Follow the path as far as a prominent footbridge over the Teign, where the Gorge begins to open out. Turn right here, uphill, on the path signposted to the Hunter's Path.

The walk has now joined the route of the Two Moors Way, on its journey towards Exmoor.

**Keep climbing on the path, joining a surfaced lane. Where the land on the right opens out, look for a signpost on the right indicating "Hunter's Path", and also notice the MW symbol, sign of the Two Moors Way. Turn right and back here, along this path and through the gate.**

Above and on the left can be seen part of the outline of Castle Drogo. Described as the "last castle to be built in England" it was designed by the famous architect Edwin Lutyens for Julius Drewe, millionaire owner of the Home and Colonial Stores. Drewe thought of himself as the descendant of the medieval landowner Dru, who gave his name to Drewsteignton. Described by English Heritage as to be "regarded as one of the finest 20th Century houses in Great Britain" it is now in the ownership of the National Trust and is well worth visiting.

**As the path continues, it offers wide views ahead towards Dartmoor. It then turns sharp left to give a superb vista back along the Teign Gorge. This part of the route, the Hunter's Path, is parallel to but above the outward riverside stretch, the Fisherman's Path, now far below.**

This is a superb length, dominated by birdsong and the sound of the river far below.

For those who wish to visit Castle Drogo, look out for signposts to the left for access paths. The second of these is at the top of Sharp Tor, a superb lookout spot. Looking back, the outline of Castle Drogo is clear above the Gorge. Behind, the farmland leads up to the high moorland beyond with the village of Chagford seen to the left.

**Continue along the Hunter's Path to a third path off to the left. This one, signed to Drewsteignton and with the MW symbol, is the route of the Two Moors Way and the way of our walk to Drewsteignton and the northern loop.**

Those wishing to return direct to Fingle Bridge should continue along the Hunter's Path, bearing right at the fork half-way back. Turn right at the road at the bottom to return to the bridge.

**To continue on the northern loop take this side path, go through the gate ahead and keep on next to the hedge.**

Very soon the village of Drewsteignton appears ahead. On the far horizon and to the right, if it is very clear, may be seen the outline of Exmoor, destination of the Two Moors Way. However, the high land here above the

Teign Gorge is called Piddledown Common, and this is often an appropriate name. In that case, long views may be limited.

**Continue ahead to descend steeply into a wooded area beside a stream, continuing to follow the Two Moors Way at a junction of paths.**

Near the path in the bottom of the valley is a sculpture by the internationally renowned local artist, Peter Randall-Page. This carved local stone is one of a number commissioned by the charity Common Ground to be placed by public paths in the area.

**From the junction of paths follow the Two Moors Way to the lane at the top.**

At the top on the left is another, very different, carved stone. This one commemorates the opening of the Two Moors Way in 1976, one of four along the Way erected at that time.

**Turn right along the lane, into the attractive village of Drewsteignton.**

Drewsteignton is very picturesque, and the unusually early 16th and 17th Century cottages around the village square, together with the 17th Century Drewe Arms and the church all go to make up an exceptionally scenic location.

(\* "Bus walkers" walking the northern loop start here).

**Follow the main Exeter road through the village, past the square, and on steeply downhill. At the fork at the bottom where the Exeter road bears right, keep ahead and left. At the bend in this lane follow the track ahead, over the stream then keep to the right of the house and cross another stream.**

The house here is Veet (or Vete) Mill, a 17th Century farmhouse, although it may have a much earlier origin. You may well see more sculptures by Peter Randall-Page around here, in the gardens and adjacent to the path.

**Follow the path up a secret little valley.**

As the path rises, notice yet another carved stone on the left. Another work by Peter Randall-Page, this one was erected in 2004 to commemorate the life and work of Joe Turner, founder of the Two Moors Way. The design is based on "natural geometry" and is on one face of half of a boulder - the other half with a mirror image design is at the southern edge of Exmoor.

**Pass through the farmyard, then bear left at the concrete track and climb to a road.**

There is a panoramic view from here back over Drewsteignton to the Teign Gorge beyond.

**Turn left at the road.**

The walk now leaves the Two Moors Way, which continues ahead over the A30.

**Turn right immediately before the A30, along the lane signed to Bowden. At the end turn right (signed Crockernwell and Drewsteignton) and at the next junction go straight across the more major road. Almost immediately afterwards turn right, signposted to Higher Fingle. This descends quite steeply back to Veet Mill, giving more good views of Drewsteignton and the outline of the Teign Gorge.**

**From Veet retrace outward steps along the Two Moors Way up the lane to Drewsteignton, through the village, past the 1976 stone and down to the valley bottom.**

(\*\* "Bus walkers" walking the southern loop start from Drewsteignton here - follow the road towards Castle Drogo and turn left down the public bridleway at the Two Moors Way stone).

**At the valley bottom do not follow the Two Moors Way but take the public bridleway on the left, next to the stream (look out for the carved stone here near this path). Where the track forks keep left, signed to Fingle Bridge. This track follows an attractive stream valley, eventually emerging at a lane. Turn right to return to Fingle Bridge.**

("Bus walkers" follow the description from the start to return to Drewsteignton).

### Further Information

An introductory leaflet on the Two Moors Way is available free and there is a Guide Book for the route costing £4.95, both from local Tourist Information Centres. Alternatively, both may be obtained from the Discover Devon Holiday Line, Westacott Road, Barnstaple, EX32 8AW, telephone 0870 608 5531 - the leaflet is free (quote reference DP34). The Guide Book costs £6.45 including post and packing (quote reference DP15) - make cheques payable to Devon County Council. A further Recreational Path Guide on the Two Moors Way published by Aurum Press on behalf of the Ordnance Survey is available in bookshops, price £12.99.

For information on the wider network of walking routes in Devon obtain the free leaflet "Discover Devon - Walking" from local Tourist Information Centres or the address above. Alternatively, visit the website [www.discoverdevon.com](http://www.discoverdevon.com) which has all the information and an order form.

OS maps for this walk:

Landranger (1 : 50,000 scale) No. 191 Okehampton and North Dartmoor  
Explorer (1 : 25,000 scale) No. OL28 Dartmoor

Note that OS maps may be ordered via the Discover Devon website shown above.