

Aveton Gifford

A perfect taste of South Hams countryside



This inland walk bowls along on paths and green lanes, taking in hills and combes, gentle pasture, woodland and stream, with views across to the moor for good measure.

Start: | Village Hall car park, Aveton Gifford (if starting from Timbers car park, go through the underpass, up through the recreation grounds, along Jubilee Street and then turn left to the Hall.)

Distance: | 5.75 miles

Difficulty: | Moderate. 9 stiles; 1 flight of steps; 1 steep ascent.

Terrain: | Footpaths, with some short muddy sections in wet weather; green lanes; surfaced roads.

Parking: | Village Hall car park, TQ7 4LL or Timbers car park, TQ7 4LT

OS map: | Explorer 0L20

Grid Ref: | SX 694 477

Public transport: | Buses to Aveton Gifford – www.travelinesw.com

Refreshments: | In Aveton Gifford

Toilets: | Next to village hall

This walk is available in the following formats from www.southdevonaonb.org.uk/walks



online walk



downloadable PDF

downloadable route map onto your device

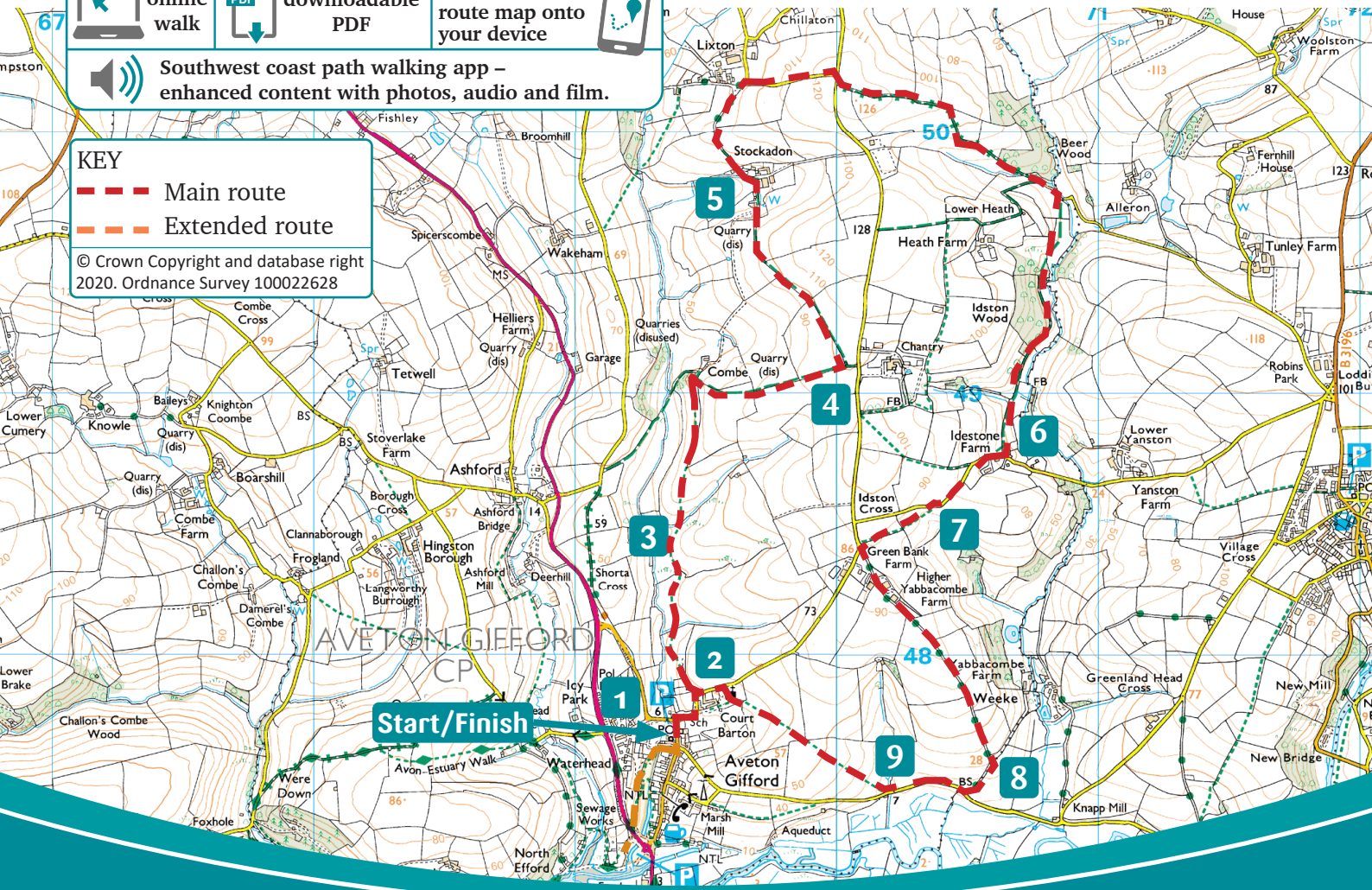


Southwest coast path walking app – enhanced content with photos, audio and film.

KEY

- Main route
- Extended route

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Directions

- 1** Turn left out of car park entrance. Turn right at T-junction up Church Lane. Follow Church Lane as it bends left. When it bends right take the first track on the left onto public footpath past Little Court.
- 2** Drop down across field with large spreading tree to a gate. At the far corner of cultivated area of next field, bear up to right.
- 3** Cross footbridge and stone stile. Go straight up over the hill, and pass to left of large waymarked fence post ahead. Just before the ruins of Coombe Farm, follow the waymarker on the path sharp right up the hill, beside the hedge.
- 4** At fingerpost at the top of the rise turn left to follow bridleway along field edges and down rocky green lane.
- 5** Bear left in front of Stockadon Farmhouse, right past Chestnut and up narrow green lane and farm track to Lixton. Turn right up the road and bear right again. At Greyhill Cross, take the green lane opposite and to the right. Turn left along the road at the bottom. Turn right by the bridge to follow bridleway through fields and woods, above stream.
- 6** Bear right just before the house at Idestone, and then turn right along road.
- 7** After 350m fork left through double gates and follow fingerpost arrow across field to a stile. Follow field edge path to road, then turn first left up Hoppy Green Lane.
- 8** At t-junction turn right down lane then bear right along the road.
- 9** At bottom of dip, turn right by a small stream onto public footpath. Cut up through field over the hill and down through cemetery to left and continue down to join road. At Tree Corner, turn left into village then turn right back into car park.

Further Interest

Heritage and Landscape

Aveton Gifford got its name from the River Avon and the family of Giffard, Lords of the manor in Norman times. Walter Giffard came across with William the Conqueror. At least three manors within the parish were recorded in the Domesday book in 1086, Avetone, Heathfield and Stadbury

St Andrew's Church was completed in 1250. In 1943 the church received a direct hit in a bombing raid by German planes. The Luftwaffe pilots had intended a 'harassment attack' on nearby Loddiswell, but lost their bearings and targeted Aveton Gifford by mistake. Four bombs were dropped on the village, one of which also destroyed the rectory. The church was restored in 1957. Behind each of the 144 bosses in the church ceiling is a coin put there by the craftsmen who helped rebuild it.

The first stream above which you walk, through the fields beyond Little Combe, used to power the Town Mill, and becomes Parson's Brook a little further downstream. The second stream on the walk, flowing beneath Alleron Bridge, divides the parishes of Loddiswell and Aveton Gifford. The bridge itself is Grade II listed.

The agriculture which shapes the landscape in the area has changed considerably in recent years. 135 acres of orchard were recorded in Aveton Gifford parish in 1842, almost all of which have now been grubbed up. The traditional brown South Devon cattle have largely been replaced by modern breeds, and dairy herds by beef cattle. Of 30 milking herds in the parish in the 1950s, only 4 remain.

This walk follows several 'green lanes'. Green lanes are ancient ways that were once trading, droving and smuggling routes. They would also have been used at one time by the people trying to avoid the tolls imposed on the main turnpike roads.

Many of the area's green lanes have fallen into disrepair over the years, becoming eroded and overgrown. However initiatives in recent times have helped halt the slide and restore them for future use.



This walk along with many more can be downloaded from www.southdevonaonb.org.uk

South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Walks

Wildlife

Rushes are found in the damp grassy bottom of the first valley walked on the route. These open areas provide butterfly 'rides' - warm, sheltered and sunny corridors between trees and hedgebanks that are perfect for these insects. The meadows south of Alleron Bridge are also rich in butterflies.

Species include the Clouded Yellow, with dark fringes to its yellow wings, and the large colourful wing 'eyes' of the Peacock Butterfly. The subtle brown and cream speckled wood, orange and white-winged orange tip, and the Red Admiral, with its white and red markings against a black dark background, are also all likely sightings.

Seasonal flowers along the route include the bright yellow stars of Celandine, delicate purple violets, and leggy Red Campion with deep pink blooms, all of these classic hedgerow plants. In the spring, Primroses are especially plentiful on the green lane at Beer Hill.

Among the birdlife, the Buzzard may be seen wheeling on the thermal air currents above or even perched in trees or on posts. A large and handsome bird of prey, it has rich brown plumage with pale barred markings, and flies on broad wings with 'fingered' tips. By the early 20th Century, the buzzard had been persecuted almost to extinction, but it is now a familiar sight in the South Devon countryside.

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Working in partnership



The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development Europe investing in rural areas has supported Explore South Devon to promote circular walks within the South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.