



Exe Valley Way

Exeter to Dawlish Warren

Distance: 10 Miles

Grading: ●○○○○

OS Maps: Landranger 192 / Explorer OL44

This walk is part of the **Exe Valley Way** and joins the coast path at Starcross. It is a natural extension to the coast path and is a scenic and fairly easy walk. Starting from the historic city of Exeter, this walk follows the Exe Valley Way alongside the **Exeter Canal** and the **River Exe**. As you head out of Exeter, the canal re-joins the river at **Turf Looks** where the river becomes wider, opening into a large estuary as it approaches the sea. The path passes **Powderham Castle** before joining the official coast path at Starcross. From Starcross it is an easy walk to the popular resort of **Dawlish Warren**, passing **Cockwood Harbour** on the way.

There is some road walking involved within Exeter city centre, around Powderham Castle and between Starcross and Dawlish Warren, though there are footpaths on a lot of the walk.

The Walk

This walk starts the historic quay-side in **Exeter**. This is easy to find from the **High Street**. Head down the high street and turn left at the bottom into **South Street**, then turn right into **Coombe Street**. From the bottom of this road there is a subway under **Western Way**, which leads into a footpath round the back of the **Cathedral and Quay car park**, down onto the **Quay**. If you're arriving by train at **Exeter St Davids**, you may choose to walk along the river from the station to the Quay. If so, on leaving the station turn left, and then go down the lane next to the car park, coming out opposite the **Red Cow Inn**. Turn left and there is a level crossing. Once you've crossed the level crossing (there is usually someone there to tell you when it's safe to cross), the footpath by the river starts on the left.

The Quay area of Exeter is very historic. The **Custom House** is open to the public. There is a visitor centre, as well as several pubs, cafes and restaurants and an antique centre. There are two choices for the start of the walk. You can walk along the river as far as the **Countess Wear swing bridge**, or you can stick to the footpath next to the **Exeter Canal**. The path next to the canal is the official route. The footpath along the river can become difficult to follow and muddy. To get to this, cross the river on the bridge and then walk past the former **Maritime Museum**. Here there is a **lock gate**, and the **canal footpath** is well signed.

The path is well used by walkers and cyclists, and passes the edge of the Marsh Barton industrial estate. Once you arrive at the **Countess Wear swing bridge**, the canal goes under the main road. The Exeter Ship Canal was built to provide a navigable route into Exeter. After Countess Wear bridge the path goes through the **Exminster Marshes** towards the **M5**. Shortly after the motorway bridge you reach **Double Locks**. A ferry also runs from here to the historic port of **Topsham** on the other side of the river.

From Double Locks it is an easy walk down to **Turf Lock**, where there is a good pub, which is popular with walkers and cyclists. Turf Locks is where the canal re-joins the river. The river estuary is now very wide, and the village of **Exton** can be seen across the estuary, as well as the Royal Marines base of **Lympstone Commando**. The path runs right next to the river from here down towards **Powderham**, using the bridge to cross the railway line. It is necessary to walk on the road round the edge of **Powderham Castle**. Although there is no footpath, the road is quite quiet. The main railway line is between this road and the river. Follow this road into **Starcross**.

A ferry runs from Starcross station to **Exmouth**, (this is a seasonal service). There are frequent bus services back to Exeter from here, and there is also a station where you can catch a train back to Exeter. Starcross is where the **Exe Valley Way** joins the **South West Coast Path**. If you continue onto **Dawlish Warren**, the path/cycleway continues adjacent to the road side all the way into Dawlish Warren. You pass through the village of **Cockwood**, with its pretty Harbour on the way. Dawlish Warren is a popular resort, with an excellent beach and nature reserve. Buses run from Dawlish Warren on into **Dawlish** or back to Exeter. There is also a railway station at Dawlish Warren, where trains run roughly hourly to Dawlish and Exeter.

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Whilst every care has been taken in compiling this list, no responsibility can be taken for errors or omissions.