

Saturday, 23rd May 2015, A Scenic Walk with Jan Stuart

"Up and down and around Sidbury"

On Saturday 23rd May, 10 walkers, a walk leader and 1 dog met in Sidbury Car Park for an OVA walk. The weather was overcast and it looked as if it might rain. We were a little late to leave which was quite fortunate as one of our members had encountered County Show traffic and arrived a few minutes after our start time of 10am.

We made our way past the side of Sidbury Church to encounter chocolate box cottages with wisteria and roses adorning the white cob walls. We made our way out of the village climbing the steady incline of Hatway Hill, the banks of the road oozing with spring flowers. We joined the East Devon Way just after the Old Dairy House. A wonderful rambling house that would not look out of place in a fairy tale. One member commented that there must have been more money in dairy in the past.

We walked through ancient woodland carpeted in a haze of bluebells just beginning to fade and had a coffee stop in a clearing where we were able to feast our eyes on the wonderful panorama of the Sid valley with farmhouses nestling among the green fields. The threat of rain passed and we enjoyed the warmth of the spring day although the sun was still a bit shy of making an appearance.

We crossed the main road and descended into an undulating woodland valley to the promised lunch stop in a covered woodsman's barn where we found plenty of logs tastefully arranged by previous walkers to sit on. It was a bit early for lunch time but we ate anyway. Afterwards we made our way via Fire & Smoke Farm to pass through Paccombe Farm which is home to numerous donkeys that belong to the Donkey Sanctuary. We were greeted by very loud braying. The walk then split into 2 distinct groups while some walkers took photos of the donkeys.

Our next point of interest was Harcombe. A tiny hamlet away from the main road and very quiet. We crossed the ford via a footbridge and ploughed our way across a field of very green grass 2 feet high. Nobody appeared to have been that way for a long while. We then climbed up a steep wooded hill to re-join the East Devon Way to make the very steep descent. Resting for a while before arriving back into Sidbury. A very pretty undulating walk was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Jan Stuart
24th May 2015