

Wednesday, 1st July 2015, Exe Valley Way with Chris & Mike

Exe Valley Way - Stage IV, Tiverton to Bampton

Ten happy walkers travelled on the pleasant bus ride from Exeter on a warm dry day. Firstly we crossed to the West of the Exe and then headed North, briefly on the A3126 past a large textile factory before joining the more minor roads and lanes beyond. Initially we were kept from the river's edge by gardens and then we were a bit unnerved by building work near the river but this soon passed. Whilst our route for the most part generally followed the line of the Exe there were periods when we were nearer than others which made the terrain all the more interesting.

For quite some way we travelled along one side of a beautiful valley with unobstructed views. Although the route was mostly on paved roads and lanes they were quiet and we were not unduly troubled by traffic. At one point we passed a new house under construction where the owner happily described plans to add turf to the roof so that it would blend in with the attractive valley setting.

We stopped for a well-earned lunch break on a bridge at a place I think called Cove where some induced a horse to come nearer with the offer of greener grass! The route then winded North to Bampton after the Exe loops sharply West. We were then mostly on smaller tracks roughly following the line of Exe tributary the River Bathern.

Generally the route was quite undulating with only the occasional lengthy incline but none of it particularly challenging which appeared to suite everyone. There may, or may not, have been a small navigational error but we were all unperturbed and remained in very good humour.

To my delight we had time for further refreshments in Bampton before catching a local bus to back Tiverton for the return journey to Exeter. Guiltily encouraged by yours truly some also enjoyed their first small sampling of Pims at the 250 year old Quarryman's Rest, although most enjoyed fresh tea.

A good day out in fine weather leading to high hopes for the next stage on 1st August. The bus connections worked particularly well for me. Well done Chris and Mike.

Andrew Beresford
16th July 2015