

Saturday, 19th March 2016 - C2C with Chris and Mike

THE DEVON COAST TO COAST

Stage 2 Yealmpton to Ivybridge

Four late arrivals swelled the total group number at Ivybridge to fourteen. A very efficient taxi operation (thank you walk leaders) then deposited the group some twenty minutes later at Yealmpton village cross roads - the start of Stage Two of the Devon Coast to Coast Walk.

Threading our way through the village margins we quickly picked up Coast to Coast way marks to follow a path east alongside the diminutive river Yealm.



Emerging from the flatlands the group then climbed steadily to enter a landscape of rolling hills and isolated hamlets with attractive views on all sides. Although cold and grey, the day remained dry and visibility was surprisingly good. Dartmoor beckoned from the north. A nursery of lambs viewed us philosophically as we 'crocodiled' across their pasture.



A late morning coffee stop to combat the low temperature was made even more congenial when a group member with an imminent birthday circulated chocolate brownies. The group responded in the by now traditional fashion with a rendering of 'Happy Birthday' that made up in enthusiasm what it lacked in musical

virtuosity! Revived, the group continued through ever changing landscapes,

passing serried ranks of conifers, the first bluebell, and green lanes jewelled with primroses.

Descending into the Erme valley we stopped for a picnic lunch in the village of Ermington which is dominated by the crooked spire of its fourteenth century church. Endearingly, the villagers rejected the opportunity to straighten the spire when struck by



lightning in 1856, preferring to retain it curved! Less endearing, the local hostelry, 'The Crooked Spire,' had chosen Saturday to clean out all its pipes depriving one desperate wayfarer of liquid support.



A sharp drop in temperature prompted a swift move out to follow the Erme upstream where we negotiated a couple of idiosyncratic stiles including a timber 'knee-breaker.' An attractive stone pack bridge with a grassed over causeway near Caton Cross drew our attention, while two

hundred yards beyond, notices of prohibition around Cole Lane weir advised the observer - **'No parking, no swimming, no picnicking (dogs and humans)'**



We entered the last phase of the walk following the Erme towards Ivybridge. Both the terrain and the river now reflected the proximity and promise of Dartmoor with huge quantities of water on the move, alternating between deep translucent pools and knots of foam cascading over rock ledges.

In Ivybridge the group thanked Walk Leaders Mike Paddison and Chris Buckland for their extensive planning work and for a very enjoyable walk.

Mike French
22nd March 2016