

**Wednesday, 25<sup>th</sup> May 2016, Devon Coast to Coast Stage 4, Holne to Dunstone Down with Chris Buckland and Mike Paddison**

As this was such a nice walk when I did it a couple of weeks earlier, I decided to repeat it although I hadn't had much sleep after getting home in the early hours after an International flight.

Before the car drivers returned after leaving two cars at Dunstone Down, the rest of us had time to look around the village and explore the church of St Mary the Virgin which dates from the 13th Century with records showing an incumbent priest in Holne in 1240. The church's medieval roodscreen dates from 1480 and the ancient yew tree in the grounds may predate the church.



Eleven walkers made their way out of the village and were soon heading along the Dart valley below Bench Tor and admiring delightful views. We crossed the very narrow 15th Century New Bridge passing under the bridge onto the rocky river bank. We followed the riverside path where a kingfisher was

spotted in flight, then climbed up the valley passing the scattered outcrops leading to Leigh Tor.

I realised when we had almost got to the abandoned quarry that as I had been chatting, I had forgotten to turn right uphill to skirt Aish Tor but we soon retraced our steps and were back on track. Then on to Dr Blacknall's Drive and more spectacular views to Bench Tor. We walked along a walled lane and reached Bel Tor corner where the ice cream van was rewarded with our custom.



Then we crossed the B3357 and walked downhill towards Primm cottage where, in a field nearby, a young foal was standing with its mother close by.

Note: the implementation of the Devon agricultural building standards Ed.

We soon reached the little ford at Ponsworthy where there were two stone slabs making a suitable lunch spot.



Suitably refreshed and with the bonus of chocolate brownies in celebration of a recent birthday, we then turned left onto a delightful path leading to woodlands carpeted with bluebells and a few early purple orchids.



We crossed the river at a footbridge at Jordan Mill and up past Drywell farm and across

the crossroads marked by Drywell Cross.



We soon reached the crossroads on the edge of Dunstone Down at the southern end of Hamel Down and soon made our way to the Two Crosses where the cars were parked; Haytor being clearly visible on the horizon.



We then drove back to Holne for welcome refreshments. This was a most delightful section of our Coast to Coast journey and I am looking forward to the next section.

**Heather Fereday**  
**4<sup>th</sup> June 2016**