

**Wednesday, 27th May 2015, Exe Valley Way, with Chris Buckland and Mike Paddison**

**Stage Two , Exeter Quay to Thorveton (9.5 miles)  
*"Squealing Pigs and Nettles"***

The sun was shining brightly as the 15 of us set off from Exeter Quay on the second part of the Exe Valley Way. We had been warned by our two leaders that the route involved sections of road walking, footpaths hidden by crops, and nettles. We were not disappointed.

It started with a pleasant riverside walk along paved paths trying to avoid the cyclists. We ambled past the Flowerpots playing fields and then took a well planned detour along a tree bordered side road rich with the song of blackbirds, so avoiding the main A377. This route took us past an old Mill building, Exwick Mill, which has a long and interesting history with milling on the site dating from 1086 as mentioned in the Domesday book.

Crossing the A377 we walked through the Lodge Gates and avoiding the bullocks emerged into the river basin to enjoy wide views of the hills on either side with glimpses of the river



Our coffee break close to a pig farm with its inevitable squeals and odours was understandably brief. Refreshed by the drinks we were ready to walk our way down 'nettle alley'. The braver trouser clad walkers led the way with arms raised high to avoid

We motored on along the river flats to arrive at the picturesque village of Brampford Speke. Passing the church we headed for the river where we happily stopped for lunch on its banks with idyllic views of grazing cattle and the church spire peeping above the poplars. Following our well deserved break we set off again beside the river, a swan and her 7 cygnets providing photo opportunities.



**all pix by stella**

Confronted by a field of wheat with no signposts, Mike effortlessly led us through the middle to emerge unerringly opposite the half concealed stile in the far hedge. Skirting around a field of young seedlings an impromptu stile repair enabled us all to climb safely over. Arriving on the outskirts of Thorverton early we hailed a bus down and happily clambered aboard to return to Exeter after a satisfying walk of approx. 9 1/2 miles. Out thanks to leaders Chris Buckland and Mike Paddison.

**Stella French**  
**8 June 2015**