

Monday 26th April, “The Kilmington Walk” with Dee Woods and Iain Ure

There was a full take up so expectations of this walk were high. The weather was non-stop sunshine but the cool wind made it ideal for a saunter a little way from our normal walking area. The village of



Kilmington revealed itself to be a hidden jewel in Devon’s crown - once clear of the A35.

Starting at the Kilmington Boulder, a relic of 100,000,00 years ago, we proceeded through the village to see the scarecrow remnants of the last weekend’s open gardens . A steady climb took us to the top of Shute Hill and the Shute Beacon where glimpses of the surrounding countryside showed themselves. The hill is wooded and has many paths.

As we descended on the far side of the hill the views opened up. Coffee was conveniently taken outside Shute Barton with its Elizabethan gatehouse. This medieval manor house is only open to the



public once a year during heritage week. Its fireplace is remarkable for its ability to barbeque two oxen side by side. Enough for an OVA luncheon!

A circular tour of the property through the nearby farm brought us to New Shute House - built in the Late Palladian style. We passed the magnificent Turkey Oak tree which has the largest unsupported crown of 54 metres - mind-blowingly beautiful.



A meander down the lanes gave 180+ degree open views of the countryside for miles around. Lunch was taken on the Green, a sloping grass area with a bubbling brook and benches in an idyllic setting.

The afternoon walk was in total contrast - almost flat on the Yarty and Axe flood plains. The walk was a reminder of school where we were taught about meandering rivers with ox bow lakes. The twists and turns were everywhere and the tight switchbacks made the route confusing at times. This area has many remnants of the Axe valley and Taunton stop line - concrete blocks and structures designed to prevent a potential German invasion in WWII.

The walk concluded through the fields of the farm shop, with its freshly cut rhubarb purchased by at least one of the team. The walk was a little longer than advertised in order to take full advantage of the weather and open views.

Iain and Dee