

Tuesday, 29th November "A Jaunt from East Budleigh to Budleigh beach and back" with Penny and Paul Kurowski

Fourteen people and two dogs assembled in East Budleigh car park on a sunny morning. After the round of introductions, Paul did the safety announcement and highlighted that seven of the walkers had completed the 'Outdoor First Aid' training on the previous Saturday so any incidents would be well-covered, however, he hoped that this would not be necessary!

After a few historical facts about the housing in East Budleigh, we set off down the High Street to take Tidwell Lane up to muddy tracks towards Kersbrook where we joined the old railway line. Then we walked past the Croquet Club, down a footpath and to the seafront. We found a number of unoccupied benches and sat in the warming sun to enjoy coffee and discussions.

On the way along the seafront, a lady collapsed from a bench in front of the Longboat Café and, whilst not there immediately, Alison leapt into action and went through the basics from the first aid course, helped the lady onto a chair and made sure that an ambulance had been called. As the lady was in the care of others, Alison was able to return to the walk.

We met David White who gave us a list of interesting birds to see ...

We stopped to look at the large machines at work by the old cricket pitch in preparation for the 70m bridge for the South West Coast footpath to span a large breach (see photo). It was interesting to see the progress of the Lower Otter Restoration Project from different vantage points on the walk.



As we walked along the main footpath beside the River Otter, we came across two serious birdwatchers who kindly offered us a view of a Green Sandpiper through their telescope. We also saw Teal and Widgeon but no Firecrest, Black-Tailed Godwit or Yellow Browed Warbler as seen by David White - if we had remembered our binoculars it might have helped!

We went along South Farm Road to join the Little Otter path that had re-opened on the 19th of November. It looks a bit municipal with concrete posts and wires but it will weather. We talked briefly about the red sandstone cliffs and the local geology. Along Big Bank back to the river to highlight where the Budleigh Brook aqueduct had been and what had happened to the Brook. We returned to East Budleigh and the Sir Walter Raleigh pub having covered 5.7 miles in under three hours including all the stops.

The warm, sunny morning together with excellent company and interesting conversations made for a great walk.

Paul Kurowski