

CADOVER BRIDGE, SHAUGH BRIDGE TO RINGMOOR DOWN AND RETURN VIA THE BANKS OF THE PLYM START POINT GRID REF: 555646

Sunday 28th January was a fine, sunny winters day, with a light breeze. Conditions like that and a walk with a 5 or 9.5 mile option and a start location close to Plymouth certainly brought out the walkers and there were between 40 and 50 ramblers at the start for the walk led by Fran Allen.



The walk outline map is given above. It should be related to a 1:25000 ordnance survey map of the Dartmoor such as the outdoor leisure map no 28.



The walk started at Cadover Bridge and the first section went down the 'pipeline route' to Shaugh Bridge. A steepish uphill section followed up to the Dewerstone Rock, following a zig zag route. Thence across Wigmore Down and then Ringmoor Down across to near Didsworthy Warren House and finally back along the western banks of the River Plym back

once more to Cadover Bridge.

At 10.00 AM Fran Allen gathered her flock together and outlined the route she would be taking and pointed out there was a route back to Cadover Bridge at lunch time for those who only wanted a 4 to 5 mile walk and that she anticipated a finish time of mid to late afternoon for those taking the full 9 to 10 mile route.

With that we were off heading south west down the muddiest section of the walk heading down along the footpath, known as the pipeline route which took us right down to Shaugh Bridge getting on for 2 miles below us in the valley below.

Over a stile and down the muddy path we went. Before long we were walking along the side of the pipe which once carried china clay liquid waste down to the valley way below us.



It is easy to see how the first leg of the route, the pipeline, got its name.



As we made our way down we had superb views looking across at the rocks below and constituting the Dewerstone Rocks.

In the season climbers can often be seen practicing their skills on the sheer faces of the rocks across the valley. Today there was no sign of anyone on the rocks.

After a fairly slippery descent through mud and slippery leaves, we emerged in the car park by Shaugh Bridge where the rivers Meavy and Plym merge together.

We crossed the wooden bridge over the Plym just above Shaugh Bridge and had our first stop of the day for morning coffee.



After the break came the major climb of the day. What goes down must also come up again and we were faced with regaining the height we had lost during the first section of the walk.



Our goal was the top of the Dewerstone rocks high above us. We started by walking up a steep path over what looked like huge cobbles.

We followed the zig zag route up, well most of us did, one or two who don't follow the leader took the straight up route to the top.

The more law abiding citizens dutifully took the recommended route and after 15 to 20 minutes or so emerged at the top, by the little rocky outcrop signifying the top of the Dewerstone, very much a local landmark.

Renegade Jack can be seen resting contently at the top of the Tor waiting for the lesser beings to arrive.

The views were excellent and well worth the climb.

We waited for 10 minutes or so for the whole group to get together and then we were on our way again for a relatively easy section across Wigmore Down.

For some, it was a chance to stretch our legs and walk quickly across the short cropped grass of the Down as we headed up on about 045 degrees towards the cairn at the high point of the down just under a mile to our north east.





With the leader setting a cracking pace we made great progress and inevitably the group got a little spread out. Burning rubber took on a whole new meaning as we made our way to the cairn.

Just before reaching the cairn we came upon a fair sized pool.

Strangely enough the pool was not shown on the map as such although it was rather bigger than many that are shown on the 1:25000 map.

We stopped to investigate and concluded that the pool was in fact a hut circle that had been filled with water and was now a pond.

Just beyond the pond was the cairn, very well renovated and beyond it in the distance we could see the classic Dartmoor Tors standing imposingly and starkly in relief against the horizon.



On this clear day we could also see Burrator Dam 2 to 3 miles north of us.

Fran waited for the group to gather together and explained that we would shortly be taking a lunch break and this was the optional cut off point she had mentioned.



Getting on for 10 of the group opted to return to the cars at Cadover Bridge although many stayed with us for lunch before leaving for the return to Cadover.

From the cairn we walked down by the side of a wall for a couple of hundred yards before stopping to enjoy lunch in the sunshine overlooking three flooded tips now used for fishing and by Plymouth

Model boat club.

One rambler, Helen Rowett, joined the group at this point for the second section of the walk.

After the break we continued on, down to the road and across and up by the western side of Brisworthy Plantation.

Just beyond the edge of Brisworthy plantation we turned right, over a stile and up onto Ringmoor Down on a bearing of about 045 degrees.

As we gained height up onto Ringmoor down off to our right we could see Legis Tor.





Making good pace over this easy to walk area, we came to a bridleway, marked by a series of posts which led us on a bearing of 110 degrees across the down towards Didsworthy Warren House.

Leaving the down was through a strange corral like structure out and to our left we could see Gutter Tor and ahead of us Eastern Tor.

We turned onto a bearing of 060 degrees and headed down and onto the track which led to Didsworthy Warren House.

We left the track and headed south down across what was left of tin mine workings and emerged onto a track we would have followed had we gone to the house.



Fran led us along the path for a short distance before swinging south again and down to the western side of the river Plym, after keeping to the higher ground for a short time to avoid the boggy area near the river.



Once back alongside the Plym we were able to follow it all the way back to Cadover Bridge. About a mile down the river immediately east of Legis Tor, we stopped for an afternoon break.

The sun was still shining, low in the sky as it was and we had been bathed in this weak winter sunshine for the whole walk, does the sun really shine on the

righteous I ask myself !!! It was very nice to sit beside the banks of this narrow stream, only three or four miles downstream from its source and to think just how many other tributaries must enter the river to make it the fast flowing river that passes down through Marsh Mills on the very edge of Plymouth.

After the break we were on for the last lap of the walk as the river made its way west, then south and then west again down towards Cadover Bridge.

On the other side of the river the Lee Mill china clay works stands out in stark relief in contrast with the unspoilt Dartmoor all around us.

It was surprisingly dry here considering the amount of rain which had been tipped on Dartmoor over the past few months.



Yes there areas that were quite wet and care was needed but it could have been so much worse.

We had to climb over a stile or so on the way down and care was needed.



We managed it unscathed and continued on down alongside the river. Other people were around, a sure sign that we were approaching the Cadover Bridge area.

Before long we crossed Cadover Bridge and were once again back at the car park. It was 3.20 PM and we had been out walking for approaching 5.5 hours.

Those with pedometers confirmed Frans initial estimate of the walk distance, between 9 and 10 miles, and the initial prediction of the time back to the car park had also been proven correct.

Fran was pleased that everyone got back and that the weather had been so kind to her. It had been an excellent walk with plenty of variety, woodland, moorland down, steep climbs, the odd Tor or two to look at plus the bonus of a return alongside the river bank.

Thanks were given to Fran for her sterling efforts and she could leave for her holiday to Bali satisfied that she had given the group a good days walking.