

# Circular Walks in Exmoor and North Devon

## Brendon Common

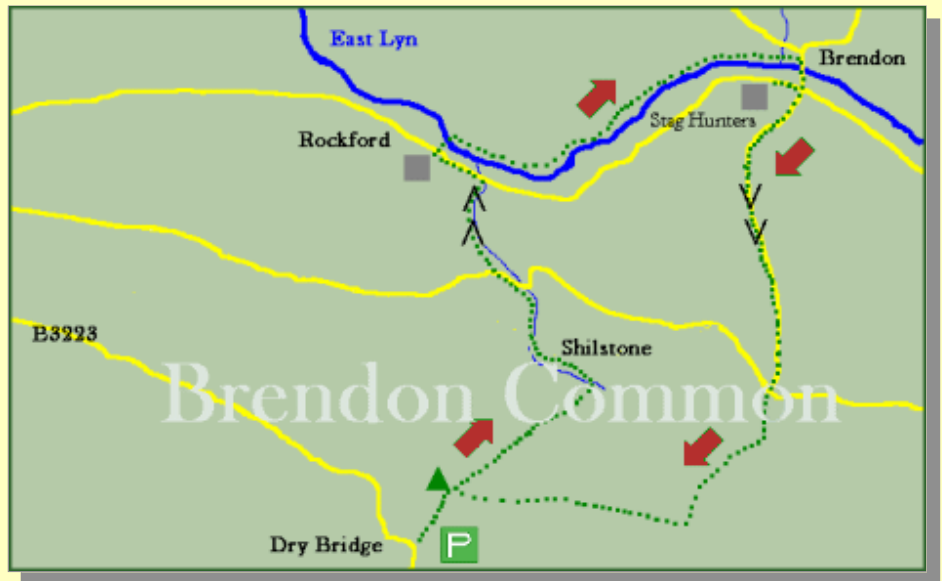
A 3-hour circular walk that includes the best of Exmoor's open moorland, descending into wooded valleys with fast flowing streams, and a traditional hunting Inn for lunch.

### The Route:

Park by the signpost to Rockford at Dry Bridge on Brendon Common. Follow the path across the moor, ignoring a path that leads to the right. Carry straight on to the trig point. Keep on straight. Spectacular views across the Bristol Channel lie ahead of you. Start descending, cross a small gully; the path leads you to the corner of a stone wall. Keeping the wall to your left descend towards Shilstone Farm. The path winds down the hill to the bottom

where you ford a small brook. Ascend a little to a signpost where you bear left to the farm. Walk between the farm houses and head for the gate straight in front of you adjacent to Shilstone Cottage. Go through the gate and across the field heading for the signpost on the horizon on the other side of the field. At the post turn left following the hedge down the hill to the road. Over the stile and descend a few stone steps on to the road. Turn left and head for the bottom of the hill, continue a little way up the other side of the valley just past a yellow grit box on your right. Take the signposted path through the woods to your right to Rockford. Follow the path down through the woods with the stream to your right. As the path drops more steeply, the stream starts to cascade down the hill forming many waterfalls. Before joining the road at the bottom it's worth noticing the old water mill on your right. At the road turn left and head into Rockford. Why not stop for a drink or snack at the Rockford Inn?

Opposite and slightly to the right of the Inn you will notice a little wooden bridge. Cross the bridge over the East Lyn, turn left by a National Trust sign and then immediately right to Brendon. Follow the river upstream past a cottage, along between two high stone walls. Keep to the main path to the left and continue through the lower slopes of an ancient oak woodland and then descend to the side of the river along an old cobbled road, past another cottage and on to the road. Turn right and cross the bridge into the village. Here you might want to turn right and head for 'The Staghunters' for a nice lunch and a pint of Exmoor Ale.



Then retrace your steps to the bridge this time walking up a small lane besides Brendon House (to your right if coming from the pub). Continue up the long windy hill out of the village, cross a cattle grid and walk back to the Common. Go straight ahead following the signpost "Brendon common 1 1/4", the track leads you to a hedged field to your left. TAKE CARE, NO OBVIOUS PATH! In the hedge there is a metal gate. Stop there and turn 45 degrees or so to your right where you notice another hedged field. Strike off across the moor to meet the corner of the field enclosure ahead of you. Keeping the

hedge to your right follow the boundry, the hedge becoming a wall. After a while the hedge turns to form the corner of a field. Stop following the hedge and instead head straight on across the open moorland leaving the wall to your right. In a short distance you hit a grass track. Follow the track along a gully. As you reach the brow of the hill you will see the trig point. Head towards it along the track. From the trig point retrace your steps to the car park.