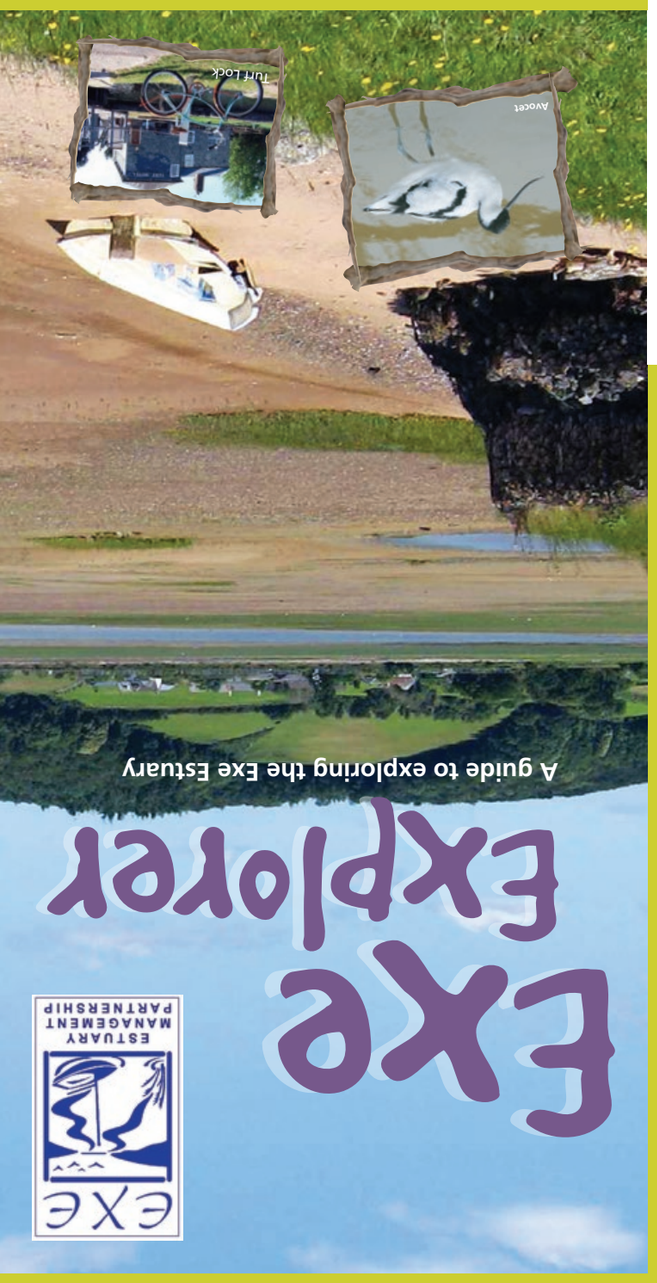
Exe Explorer

A guide to exploring the Exe Estuary

ESTUARY MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP

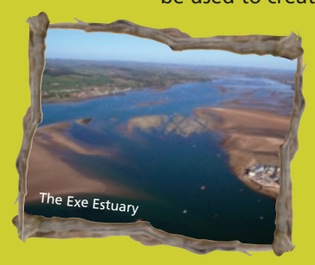


World class wildlife, sandy beaches, historic buildings and water based recreation are some of the attractions to be found on the Exe Estuary.

With miles of cycle and foot paths and exceptional views, the Exe Estuary is a destination you can explore again and again. Whether you fancy a short stroll or something more adventurous there is bound to be a route that suits you.

This leaflet is a guide to the footpaths, cycle ways and public transport options available around the Exe Estuary. The centre of the leaflet provides a detailed map of the estuary including the various ferry routes and docks, train routes and stations, bus routes and stops, key viewing points, parking, and toilet and refreshment facilities.

The map, along with the accompanying route information (such as the ferry timetable opposite), can be used to create your own trails depending on where you would like to visit, your means of transport, and how long you would like to take. We have provided some circular route suggestions alongside the map overleaf to get you started.



Long distance routes

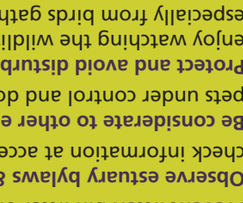
As well as circular routes around the Exe, there are also several long distance routes which can be met on the estuary.

The South West Coast Path

A National Trail of 630 miles of superb coastal walking from Minehead on the edge of the Exmoor National Park to the shores of Poole Harbour in Dorset.

Exe Valley Way

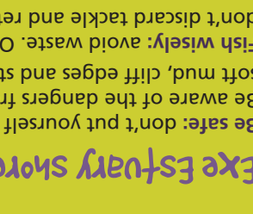
Follows the route of the Exe from its source on Exmoor through the Devon countryside, as it meanders for over 50 miles to reach the open estuary. The route can be divided up in to a series of 10 stages, most of which can be walked in half a day.



East Devon Way

A 40 mile walking route through East Devon's Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty providing spectacular views, a wealth of wildlife and diverse geology.

Detailed Guides for these routes are available from Tourist Information Centres and from www.exe-estuary.org



Travel Around The Exe

The Exe Estuary is well served by bus and train routes. The Avocet Line runs between Exeter and Exmouth and offers stunning views of the estuary. Brunel's line runs from Exeter to Dawlish passing the atmospheric pump house.

Exe Estuary Circular tickets are available on some trains and ferry services. For information about bus and rail services please contact:

Traveline: 0871 200 22 33 www.traveline.org.uk

National Rail Enquiries: 08457 48 49 50
Text phone: 0845 60 50 600
www.nationalrail.co.uk

Foot Ferries

See main map for ferry routes. Bookings may be necessary for some ferry services.

① Scenic estuary cruises

Stuart Line Cruises: 01395 222144
www.stuartlinecruises.co.uk

River Exe cruises throughout the year from Exmouth. Boat and train trips to and from Topsham (Spring to Autumn). Summer coastal cruises and day trips to Torquay and Brixham. Timetable available on website.

② Starcross to Exmouth

Exe to Sea Cruises: 01626 774770
Ferry and Fishing Trips: 07974 022536 www.exe2sea.co.uk

Starcross to Exmouth ferry, trips to Brixham, coastal cruises, fishing trips and bird watching cruises including winter RSPB Avocet Cruises. Ferry services are timed to coincide with the train schedule as much as possible.

③ Topsham to Turf Locks

The Sea Dream II ferry: 07778 370582
www.topshamtoturfferry.co.uk
Turf Hotel: 01392 833128 www.turfpub.net

Topsham to Turf Locks and RSPB bird watching cruises. The Turf Locks Hotel is a family run pub serving great food, local ales and wines.

④ Topsham to Exminster

Topsham Ferry: 07801 203338

Runs all year round between Passage House Inn Topsham and Lock Keeper's Cottage Exminster.

⑤ Double Locks to Turf Lock

The White Heather: 07984 368442
Double Locks: 01392 256947 www.doublelocks.co.uk

⑥ Exeter Quay to the Double Locks

Exeter Crusises: 07984 368442 www.exetercruises.com

Double Locks is a family pub situated right on the Exeter canal serving great food, real ales and has a child's play area. It is a 45 minute round trip.

- Disabled access is available on the majority of circular cruises from Exmouth. Access is limited on the rest of the ferry services due to the unsuitable nature of the docks, however, ferry crew are keen to help where ever possible. Please contact individual services for more information.
- Bicycles are accepted but can be subject to a charge or limited at peak times. Bicycles are permitted on trains as long as they are stored safely. Bicycles can be carried on some foot ferries, please check with individual operator.
- Well behaved dogs on leads accepted on all services but may be subject to a small charge.

Ferry Service	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
①												
②												
③												
④												
⑤												
⑥												
⑦												

Daily | Weekends, Bank Holidays and Easter Holidays | Weekends and Bank Holidays | Avocet Cruises

Fun Ways To Access The Estuary/ River/Canal

⑦ Water Taxi: Exmouth to Dawlish Warren

07970 918418

Canoe & kayak hire: Saddles and Paddles

www.sadpad.com

Exeplore Ltd

www.cyclehireexeter.co.uk

Cycle hire

See list of cycle hire and bike retail outlets around the Exe Estuary at:
www.cycledevon.info

Pedallo hire

07984 368442
www.exetercruises.com
Available during the summer.

Exe Estuary Shore Code

Be safe: don't put yourself or others at risk. Be aware of the dangers from rising tides, soft mud, cliff edges and strong currents.

Fish wisely: avoid waste. Only take bait for planned trips, don't discard tackle and return unwanted fish to the sea.

Prevent litter: bin litter or take it home with you.

Observe estuary bylaws & warnings: check information at access points.

Be considerate to other estuary users: always keep pets under control and don't block access points.

Protect and avoid disturbing wildlife: enjoy watching the wildlife but keep your distance, especially from birds gathering at high water.

To report pollution to watercourses, flooding, fly tipping of industrial wastes and illegal fishing please call the Environment Agency Emergency Hotline on: 0800 807060

Exe Estuary Management Partnership

For people, for wildlife, for the future.

For more information on the work we do please contact the Exe Estuary officer, Midge Kelly:

T: 01392 383000 E: midge.kelly@devon.gov.uk
W: www.exe-estuary.org
C/o Devon County Council, AB3 Lucombe House, County Hall, Topsham Road, Exeter EX2 4QD

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Many thanks to John Drake-Law (Spoonbill image), John Morton (Exe Estuary Trail) and DCC for the use of their images in this leaflet.

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www.exe-estuary.org

Share This Space

- Be polite and considerate. If someone lets you pass, thank them.
- Travel at a speed that is appropriate to the conditions, e.g. when the path is busy.
- Bikes are quiet so let people know you are coming – ring your bell, or a friendly *"Hello!"* often works wonders.
- Be prepared to slow or stop – there may be people who don't know you are there, or dogs off their lead.
- Take care when passing others, especially children and older or disabled people and allow them plenty of room.
- There are on-road sections, e.g. in Exton, Lympstone, Topsham and Dawlish. These may be on narrow roads and hilly, so please take extra care and consider others.
- If you're cycling with children, take up a position behind them. If there are two adults in your group, it's a good idea to have one at the back and one in front of the children.

For more up-to-date information about the progress of the trail please visit www.cycledevon.info

other Leaflets

Exe Activities is a guide to the recreational activities available to enjoy in and around the Exe. A map shows the location of activities, clubs and organisations who can provide more detailed local information about the various water sports and leisure pursuits available, as well as their contact information.

Exe Wildlife is a guide to when and where to see some of the wildlife highlights on the globally important and protected Exe Estuary, and can help you to learn more about the animals that live in this ever changing environment.

Exploring Exmouth is a series of eight linked circular walks in Exmouth and Lympstone areas. The routes are accessible and mostly stile-free. All of the walks connect with at least two others, so can be easily extended.

Walking Trails in Devon contains ten walks plus information on the Exe Valley Way, East Devon Way and the South West Coast Path National Trail. Pick up a free copy from a TIC or visit www.visitdevon.co.uk

Leaflets are available from Tourist Information Centres, our website: www.exe-estuary.org, or by contacting us via email: midge.kelly@devon.gov.uk

cycle Guide Maps

Cycling is a great way to get around Exeter and Exmouth. These maps are designed to be useful for anyone on a bike. The roads and cycle tracks are colour coded to show what type of route to expect when you cycle through and around Exeter and Exmouth. We hope that these maps will be useful when you plan your commute, travel to school, shopping, social, leisure or simply for exercise.

Download free maps from www.cycledevon.info or for a free hard copy, email environment@devon.gov.uk or telephone 0845 155 1004.

Enjoy the Exe Estuary Trail

Photo: Nigel Chieffers-Heard 2990

Devon County Council is creating a fantastic new cycle/walkway known as the Exe Estuary Trail. It is part of Route 2 of the National Cycle Network as well as a scenic route for pedestrians.

When completed, the 26 mile trail will provide an exciting opportunity for people to cycle or walk around the entire Exe Estuary, appreciating the wildlife and passing through some beautiful riverside towns and villages steeped in maritime history. The trail connects 80,000 residents to the city of Exeter and is used by nearly 200,000 people each year.

For more up-to-date information about the progress of the trail please visit www.cycledevon.info

Exploring the Exe

With help from public transport and ferries you can get around much of the estuary in a day. Please take care crossing roads and railways and enjoy exploring the Exe.

Excellent

Exeter Canal and Locks are the oldest of their type in the UK. They were built in 1567 to divert trade to Exeter from Topsham, which at that time was the second busiest port in the UK.

Exquisite

The Exe is one of the most important estuaries in Europe for wildlife, particularly birds. It is recognised as a Special Protection Area and Site of Special Scientific Interest. These designations ensure that any development plans or projects on the estuary must be submitted to Natural England for its consent.

A scenic cruise and train ride with a leisurely stroll

1. Take ferry ① from Topsham 9 to Exmouth 6
2. Walk or cycle from Exmouth to Lympstone 7 (2.5 miles) or Exton 8 (4 miles) or Topsham 9 (6 miles)
3. If stopping at Lympstone or Exton catch the train back to Topsham

Suitability: Walkers, cyclists, wheelchairs and pushchairs
Time for walkers: Lympstone - 3hrs, Exton - 3hrs 30mins, Topsham - 4 hours
Time for cyclists: Lympstone - 2hrs 30mins, Exton - 2hrs 40mins, Topsham - 3 hours
Estimated Cost: £8 adults, £5 children with Round Robin ticket

Getting Started: A car park is available in Topsham on Holman Way that is a short walk from the quay. Buses and trains from Exeter to Topsham are frequent and reliable. Alternatively, ample parking and public transport links are available in Exmouth if you reverse the route.

In Topsham, follow signs to Lager Quay where Stuart Line Cruises depart for Exmouth when tides permit (check times by calling 01395 222144). The ferry takes from 1 to 1.5 hours depending on tides.

From Exmouth Marina travel along Victoria Road and turn left on to Imperial Road. Follow this road onto Marine way. Where the road forks take the left hand path which follows the Estuary. The 1.5 mile walk will wind its way along the Estuary to Lympstone where you can catch a train back to Topsham or continue on foot to Exton or Topsham (please see approximate journey times above).

Exotic

Bowling Green Marsh and Dawlish Warren are essential high tide roosting sites for the many thousands of birds that migrate to the estuary each winter. They feed and rest on these areas during high tide and then move back on to the rich mud flats, to feed on worms, snails and shellfish, as they are revealed by the falling tide.

Explore Exminster Marshes and Topsham

1. Walk or cycle from Exminster to the Turf Hotel 3
2. Take the ferry ③ to Topsham
3. Take the Topsham ferry ④ back to Exminster

Suitability: Primarily walkers. Cyclists, wheelchair and pushchair users; please check with ferry operators that they will be able to accommodate you
Time: Two hours approx for walkers and 1.5 hours for cyclists
Distance on foot: One mile approx
Estimated Cost: £5 Adults, £3 children (under 12), £1 bikes

Getting Started: Two small car parks are available at the Exminster Marshes RSPB Nature Reserve. Alternatively take the bus (service 2) to Exminster.

Follow the Exe Estuary Trail along the canal until you reach the Turf Hotel (01392 833128). Refreshments are available here while you wait for the next ferry which leaves from the jetty at the end of the garden (The Sea Dream II 07778 370582).

When you arrive in Topsham you can choose to browse the historical town or head straight for the Topsham ferry (07801 203338) by following Ferry Road. Once back on the Exminster side you can choose to take a stroll through the Exminster Marshes reserve (walkers only) or head back along the canal path.

Exciting

The estuary is a hub of activity for recreational activities; such as sailing, canoeing, windsurfing, fishing and scuba diving. There are several clubs and training centres available to help you make the most of the Exe.

Examine

The Brunel Tower at Starcross is the best surviving remnant of Isambard Brunel's famous Atmospheric railway, which was quickly abandoned after its completion in 1845. Today the pump house is home to the Starcross Fishing and Cruising Club.

Exceptional

The cycle trail offers a remarkable experience for cyclists to enjoy stunning views of the estuary. Bike hire is available in Exeter, Topsham and Exmouth so there is no excuse for not getting out on a bike to enjoy the miles of off road, flat trails that the area has to offer and making the most of the beautiful landscape and wildlife spotting opportunities available.

Explore

Exmouth is the start of the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site. The coast line tells the history of the earth. The rocks at Orcombe Point date back to 250 million years. The red cliffs are due to the presence of iron.

Exploring Exmouth

There are many short circular walks that can be created within the towns on the banks of the Estuary. Why not walk from the Imperial Recreation Ground in Exmouth, with its open views of the estuary, to the sea front and Jurassic Coast.

Key

- Footpath (off road) only recommended for walkers
- Footpath (on road) only recommended for walkers
- Cycle route (off road) suitable for walking, cycling, wheelchairs and pushchairs
- Cycle route (on road) suitable for walking, cycling, wheelchairs and pushchairs
- Foot ferry (ferry guide overleaf)
- Railway/Station
- Parking available
- Key viewing point
- Tourist Information
- Toilet
- Refreshments
- Cycle Hire
- Bus stop
- Bathing area
- Nature reserve

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ Foot ferry routes (see reverse for more information)

1 2 3 4 5 6 Locations

Average distances and times

1 to 2 Exeter Quay to Topsham Ferry:
4 miles / 6.4km – 1.2 hours / 29 minutes

2 to 3 Topsham Ferry to Turf Hotel
1.5 miles / 2.4km – 30 minutes / 9 minutes

3 to 4 Turf Hotel to Starcross
3 miles / 4.8km – 1 hour / 20 minutes

4 to 5 Starcross to Dawlish Warren
2.5 miles / 4km – 40 minutes / 19 minutes

6 to 7 Exmouth to Lympstone
2.5 miles / 4km – 50 minutes / 20 minutes

7 to 8 Lympstone to Exton
1.5 miles / 2.4km – 30 minutes / 10 minutes

8 to 9 Exton to Topsham
2 miles / 3.2km – 40 minutes / 15 minutes

Distances and times are approximate and based on an average walking speed of 3 miles per hour and cycling speed of 12 miles per hour.

For an online cycle journey planner and more information on cycling in Devon please visit: www.cycledevon.info

Bus routes

57 **Exeter - Topsham - Exton - Lympstone - Exmouth**
Runs Mon-Sat daytime every 15 mins, and Sunday and evenings every 30 mins

2 **Exeter - Exminster - Kenton - Starcross - Cockwood Harbour - Dawlish Warren - Dawlish**
Runs Mon-Sat daytime every 20 mins, and Sunday every 30 mins from spring (service runs hourly during evenings and winter)

To check seasonal timetable changes please call: 01392 427711

Image credits (from top left clockwise): Topsham (Mike Tuckett), Redshank (Andy Hay, rspb-images.com), Kite surfing (Dave Pick)

Paris Street
Exeter
Exeter Quay
Riverside Valley Park
Double Locks Pub
Countess Wear
Swing Bridge
Exeter Park & Ride
Beware: This section is tidal
Train to Exeter
Devon Wildlife Trust Nature Reserve
Exeter Canal
M5
Topsham
River Clyst
Darts Farm
Lock Keeper's Cottage
Topsham Ferry
Cyclists please dismount
Exminster
Exminster Marshes RSPB Nature Reserve
West Mud
Bowling Green Marsh RSPB Nature Reserve
Exton
For ferry services see 'Travel around the Exe' on outer panel
Turf Hotel
Greenland Bank
Powderham Sand
Lympstone
Powderham
Powderham Castle
The Ridge
East Devon Way
A-la-Ronde
Kenton
Permissive Path
Haldon Hills
Cockle Sand
Starcross
Exmouth Local Nature Reserve
NCN to Budleigh Salterton
Exe Valley Way
Cockwood
Cockwood Harbour
Exmouth
South West Coast Path National Trail (Poole - 116 miles)
The Maer Local Nature Reserve
Pole Sand
Dawlish Warren National Nature Reserve
Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site
Visitor Centre
Dawlish Warren
Dawlish
South West Coast Path National Trail (Minehead - 512 miles)