



## Stage 10: Shaugh Bridge to Ivybridge

<b>Start</b>	SX 5333 6364 Car park at Shaugh Bridge, near Shaugh Prior
<b>Finish</b>	SX 6366 5627 Ivy Bridge on Harford Road, Ivybridge
<b>Distance</b>	12 miles / 19.25 km
<b>Total ascent</b>	1,686 ft / 514 m
<b>Refreshments</b>	Shaugh Prior (off route), Cornwood (off route), Ivybridge
<b>Public toilets</b>	Ivybridge
<b>Tourist information</b>	Ivybridge

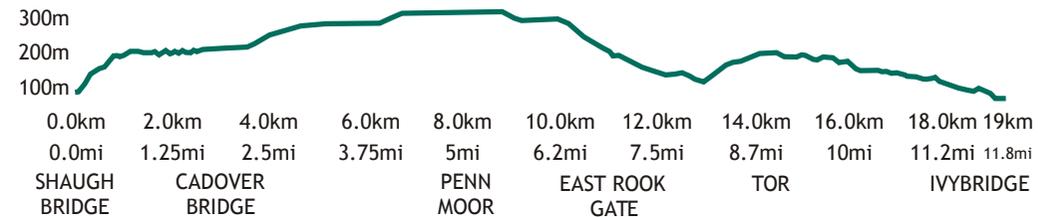
Please refer also to the [Stage 10 map](#).

**S** From the car park entrance ascend steep steps past old drying kilns (a remnant of the local china clay industry), signed to Cadover Bridge. The path soon clips the road again then ascends steadily, passing abandoned settling tanks. Pass through a kissing gate and continue uphill through woodland. Emerge briefly into the open, then bear left and duck back under the trees again, soon picking up traces of the pipe that once carried china clay in suspension from quarries above Cadover Bridge to be processed at Shaugh Bridge for onward transport.

Pass a gate and fence corner and continue uphill - there's a choice of paths but the 'Pipe Path' is the one on the left - threading through the trees and soon passing to the right of another industrial structure. The path levels and heads into the open across West Down, with good views of the impressive Dewerstone Crags on the other side of the Plym valley: a hotspot for climbers.

Shaugh Bridge car park is the setting-off point for climbers intent on tackling the Dewerstone. This popular granite crag towers above the wooded Plym valley and is (of course) home to many legends: the Devil's hounds are said to round up unrepentant sinners every so often and force them over the edge of the crags. It is also said that a huge red-eyed dog lurks in the woodlands hereabouts. Locally the Devil is known as 'Dewer'.

### Elevation Profile



Bluebell Woods  
above the  
River Plym

Cross a stile into North Wood and continue through beautiful light oak woodland, picking up the pipe every now and then. Cross a stream on a boardwalk, then continue through the wood, with the beautiful River Plym below. The path is rough and rooty in places, but eventually a made section leads to a kissing gate, beyond which is the parking area below Cadover Bridge (a popular picnic spot: there's often an ice cream van here). Bear right to reach the road, then turn left.

You can also follow the riverbank to reach the bridge, then cross straight over the road to find the onward route.

**1** Immediately before the bridge, turn right on a tarmac lane (dead-end sign), which rounds a right-hand bend where a track forks off left towards Trowlesworthy Warren House. There's an impressive array of tors on the ridge away to the left: (from left to right) Legis, Little Trowlesworthy and Great Trowlesworthy tors. Pass an entrance to Shaugh Lake China Clay Works and then a quarry pond, to reach a path junction.

## POOR VISIBILITY OPTION

In times of poor visibility or if anxious about your route-finding abilities over moorland turn right on the bridleway, a broad fenced track heading through the old clay workings (far more extensive than they appear at first sight). At the end of the quarry pond you'll see a flat-topped hill ahead (Saddlesborough) with an ascending track towards its left end - that's the onward route, and it's well signed. Keep ahead, paralleling a fence; where that bears away stay on the main track which soon bears left, re-meets the fence and ascends steadily along the northeast side of Saddlesborough.

At a large bridleway sign (no admittance ahead) turn right across the grassy slopes, then right again to reach the trig point. There are fantastic views from here across Plymouth and Plymouth Sound to Rame Head in Cornwall, and across a huge sweep of West Devon and the moor, from Brent Tor in the distance to Sheepstor, Sharpitor, Leather, Legis, Little and Great Trowlesworthy tors, Shell Top and Penn Beacon.

From the trig point turn left on a grassy way that descends gently (southwest) along the edge of Shaugh Moor, soon paralleling a track edging huge spoil heaps. At the end of the spoil heaps reach a junction of grassy ways; to the right the tower of Shaugh Prior church peeps above the trees. Here bear left and follow the boundary ditch as it curves around the bottom of the spoil heaps. (You may be able to pick out flat-topped Hawks Tor ahead, from where there are great views across Plymouth and beyond.) Where the ditch bears away further to the left, stay on the main path; the tungsten quarry at Hemerdon comes into view in the distance.

Start to descend, eventually crossing the remnants of a wall - to the right lie the low rocky outcrops of Collard Tor - and passing an old granite boundary stone. Keep descending, still parallel to the ditch, towards a clutch of grass-covered spoil heaps. Just below a small fenced-in area enclosing a green structure meet a

track junction with warning signs ahead (quarry rim). Bear right on a track which descends to a gate and the road in Wotter.

Turn left and follow the road downhill. Where it bears sharp right to the Lee Moor-Shaugh Prior road turn left on a bridlepath, passing between boulders (an old road heading towards Lee Moor). Where the old road crosses a stream and bears slightly left bear right at a path junction. Follow the bridlepath ahead, uphill; on meeting another path bear right, paralleling the road (but screened from it by trees). The bridlepath eventually heads left and narrows, ascending steeply (walkers can utilise a short flight of steps).

At the next bridlepath post bear right on a level, elevated track which passes through beautiful oak woodland below Blackalder Tor, thick with moss-covered boulders. Emerge from the trees, passing the top of an incline (right). At the next track junction keep ahead between two old tall red-and-white striped poles. Just beyond the bridlepath bears right, dropping through a beautiful glade of oak trees then passing below houses on the edge of Lee Moor, rounding a wall corner on the left. Meet the road just below the village hall.

Turn right, downhill. About 75yd before the main road bear left across grass to cut the corner. Cross the main road and turn left, crossing the road to Plympton. The bridlepath follows the broad grassy verge, keeping within crash barriers opposite the entrance to Lee Moor china clay works. Pass a narrow fenced-off area and meet the road again at Tolchmoor Gate. Cross over, pass through a parking area and head right on the bridleway again. The path runs gently downhill through pretty woodland, passing Tinpark Farm (opposite), then descending to cross the Piall River on a railed footbridge. Ascend below a parking area at Quick Bridge, and reach a path junction just before the road.

Poor Visibility Option continues on next page>

### Poor Visibility Option (continued)

Turn left through a kissing gate and follow the track downhill to cross the Piall River again. Turn right through a kissing gate into Newpark Wood (Delamore estate). Follow this beautiful permitted path 'to the Heathfield' through lovely mature woodland, crossing occasional streams on small stone bridges. Reach a broad T-junction of tracks; keep ahead through a kissing gate into Sheraleers Wood. Within a few paces meet another path on a bend and bear right. The path emerges via a kissing gate onto Heathfield Down. Turn right to pass through a parking area and meet the road again.

Turn right for 75yd (take care), then first left. The walled lane descends gently to meet a T-junction, passing Oak Park (Cornwood Cricket Club). Turn left - look across the fields left to catch sight of Delamore House - and follow the lane up to the crossroads (Cornwood Inn) in the middle of the village.

Cross over; head along Fore Street, passing the village shop. Walk out of the village and re-join the main route, which comes down the first lane on the left.

The lane continues along the edge of the workings to reach a parking area (big boulders block the way ahead, beyond which Blackaton Cross - a historic waymarker on the route to Plympton Priory - can be seen).

**2** Bear left through a line of boulders and head across rough ground; cross a leat then follow it to meet a track, just before a solitary conifer. The two high points on the skyline are Shell Top and Penn Beacon - the onward route runs around the southern slopes of the latter.

Please note that the route is not waymarked from this point until it reaches Point 3 at East Rook Gate.

The china clay workings at Lee Moor date back to the early 1800s. China clay is used widely, from the manufacture of porcelain and china through to paint, rubber, paper and many other products, even toothpaste. It is formed by the decomposition of granite which breaks down over time and forms kaolin. This is then 'washed' out of the ground using high pressure water jets before being subjected to various processing stages. The overall quality of the refined clay is defined by measuring the content of potassium and iron, its brightness and viscosity.

Kaolin has been mined on Dartmoor since the early 1800s and at its peak in the 1980s Lee Moor was producing approximately half a million tonnes per acre per year. Combined with the larger operation north of St Austell, kaolin mined in Devon and Cornwall is the most profitable mineral mined in the UK, as 80 percent (40 percent of the world's total production) is exported. Over the last fifteen years the companies that run Lee Moor (and the sister operation in Cornwall) have reduced production, but the industry still plays a large part in the local economy of south Dartmoor.



Extraction of china clay using high-pressure water jets in the 1990s

Turn left on a track that runs alongside 'Big Pond' (an old working). Cross a leat, then follow the track sharp left above expansive quarry workings. The track curves right around the end of the quarry, and the leat bears away left: follow the track on, right. Eventually the track bears left and ascends to a T-junction and another leat (flanked by boulders), with Great Trowlesworthy above. Turn right, heading south-southeast, alongside the leat. There are expansive views over Big Pond and the enormous workings - it's an impressive sight!

Head along the track, soon gaining views of Plymouth Sound in the distance. Ignore a path left and keep going. At long last the end of the leat is reached at a path junction - a track heads off right, downhill, towards the quarry rim. Keep straight on along an obvious path which bears slightly left, uphill, soon becoming grassy and eventually passing a large cairn (right). As you crest the hill a huge view opens up, from Stall Moor on the left via Ugborough Moor to Western Beacon. Round the slopes of Penn Beacon to meet the path heading down from the summit. Bear right across a dry leat and head downhill, bearing slightly right - the village of Cornwood can be seen ahead - later bearing left and descending towards trees.

Near the bottom of the hill cross a leat on stone slabs and stay on the path which curves left, then right, downhill to find a rocky walled track leading off the moor.

**3** Head down the track, passing through East Rook Gate; cross a stream, beyond which the track becomes surfaced. Continue downhill, following the lane sharp right, then left at East Rook, to reach a T-junction.

[Cornwood village - and refreshments - is a short walk along the lane to the right.](#)



Near East Rook Gate

**4** Turn left, ascending then descending to cross pretty little Vicarage (OS Wisdome) Bridge. Keep straight on, climbing steeply through the little hamlet of Torr. Soon the gradient eases, and a wonderful mossy wall is followed over the brow of the hill. At Hall Cross, where a byway crosses the lane, keep straight on, descending gently.

**5** Opposite the entrance to Hall Farm turn right through a gate onto a walled track, which ends at another gate. Cross the stream on the other side - it's always wet here - and head up the field, ascending gently. Pass through a hedge gap and keep up the left side of the next field to find a gate into a plantation.

Follow the path downhill; at the bottom of the plantation bear right through a small gate. Within a few steps, at a fork, keep right; the path threads its way through bracken and past scattered oak trees, crossing two streams. A stile in a beech hedgebank gains a path junction on the edge of a field.

Turn left (Ivybridge via Erme Valley) and pick your way downhill, soon crossing two stiles. The rough path continues into the valley, eventually necessitating a wade across a stream, to meet a footpath sign a few paces from the River Erme. Turn right and head downstream through beautiful light oak woodland. The path is wet and difficult in places; expect stiles, steeping stones and the odd boardwalk.



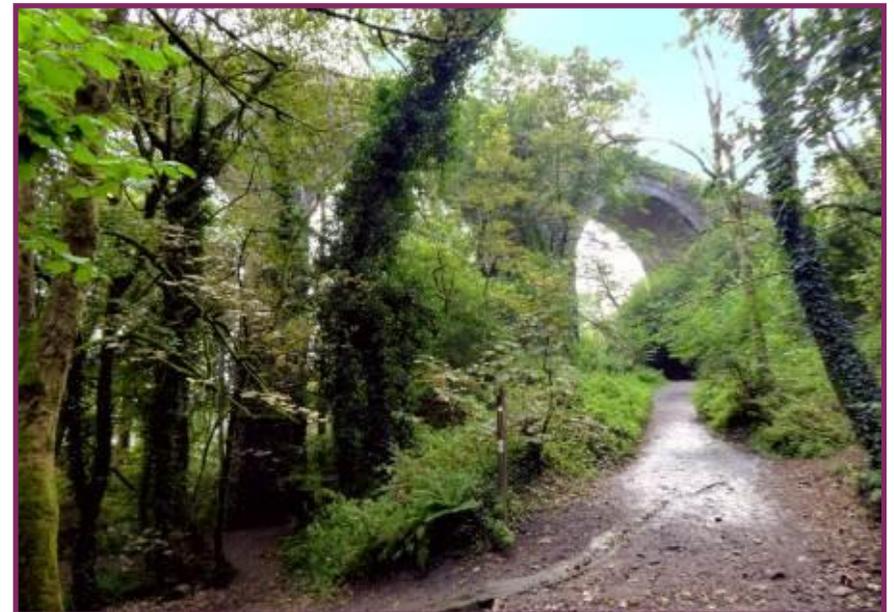
Pithill Wood  
near  
Ivybridge

Eventually the path bears away from the river; cross a ladder stile then keep straight on through Pithill Wood, soon re-joining the river. Continue downstream; at one point the path climbs high above a narrow section of riverbed, the water hurtling between rocky walls below. Pass a riverside picnic area, and then the old swimming pool to the right.

At last the railway viaduct comes into view through the trees - an astonishing structure (the original viaduct here, on Isambard Kingdom Brunel's Great Western Railway, was wooden). About 50yd before reaching the viaduct bear left at a path junction to pass beneath it, soon descending steps. The narrow and uneven path runs above the river, utilising a boardwalk, to emerge at a parking area by the Stowford Mill development. Head down Station Road; turn left over the old Ivy Bridge to reach Harford Road. **F**

Turn right down Harford Road, cross Fore Street and walk down Costly Street to find The Watermark (refreshments and local information).

Ivybridge is easily accessed via the A38, and the only town on the Dartmoor Way to have direct access to the main rail network. The original hamlet developed at a handy crossing point of the River Erme, and later became a staging post on the London to Plymouth road; the railway arrived in 1848. Ivybridge - which developed as a mill town during the 19th century, utilising the fast-flowing waters of the Erme - only officially became a town in 1977, four years after the opening of the A38 bypass. The Watermark (local information) is down in the town near New Bridge, built in 1823 just downstream from the older Ivy Bridge, originally a 13th-century packhorse bridge, on Harford Road. Ivybridge marks the start of the Two Moors Way long-distance walking route, which is followed for 102 miles (164km) across Devon to Lynmouth on the north coast.



Ivybridge Viaduct