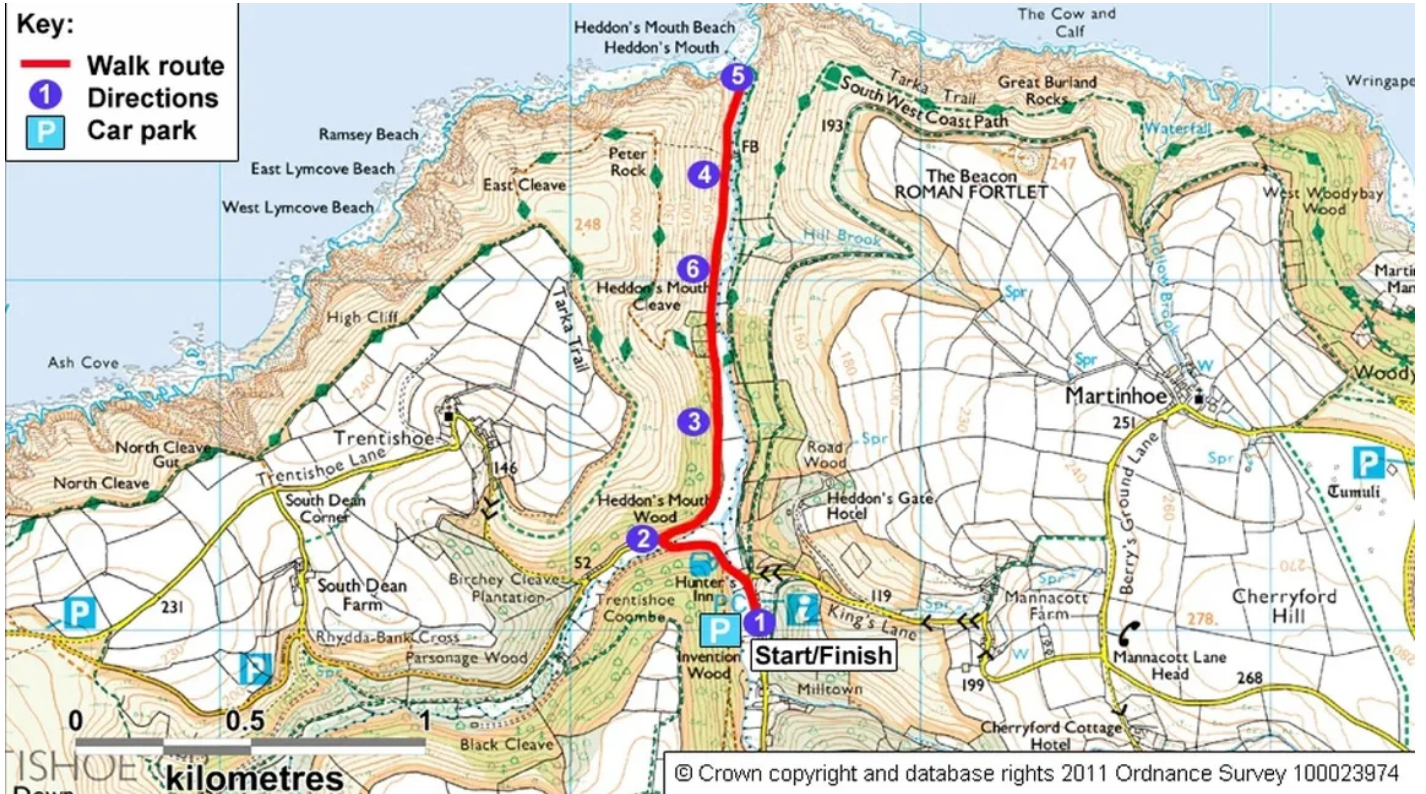


DEVON

Gentle walk to Heddon's Mouth

Take a gentle stroll through ancient woodland alongside the River Heddon, to where it meets the sea between some of England's highest cliffs. The Heddon Valley is home to a variety of wildlife including otters and the rare high brown fritillary butterfly. You'll also find a restored 19th-century lime kiln on the beach, and a traditional country inn at the end of the walk in the local 'Swiss style'.



Information

Address: Heddon Valley, North Devon

OS map: Landranger 180

Activity: Walking

Easy: Easy terrain with gentle incline as you near the sea. For further details, see section marked Terrain.

Dog friendly: Dogs welcome on leads, as there is livestock in surrounding fields.

Full trail: Miles: 2 (km: 3.2)

Access: Easy

Duration: 1 hour

Terrain

This linear walk follows a graded pathway across easy terrain, with one gentle incline as you near the sea. Suitable for all terrain pushchairs and rough-terrain mobility scooters, but please be aware that the path is stony and can be uneven in places.

Total steps: 6

Start point: National Trust gift shop, grid ref SS655480

1. With the National Trust shop on your right, walk down the road towards the Hunter's Inn. Keeping the inn to your right, follow the road over the River Heddon and carry on as it curves up to the left and then to the right over the stone bridge – please be aware of the traffic on this section. Just after the bridge look to your right – Harry's Orchard was planted in memory of Harry Westcott, a former National Trust employee.
2. Continue 33yd (30m) past the stone bridge, turn right and go through the gate along the footpath signed Heddon's Mouth. You'll follow these signs all the way to the beach. Please close all gates behind you.
3. Follow the footpath until you reach the next gate. As you are walking look across the river into the meadow and up into the woodland to your left, home to sessile oaks, ash and some rare whitebeams. If you're lucky you might even see an otter in the river and at certain times of year you may see dippers, grey wagtails and herons.
4. Go through the gate and carry on straight. The path is gently undulating and passes a stretch of traditional dry-stone wall, a thriving habitat for insects. You'll also see large patches of scree left over from the last Ice Age. Carry on past the wooden bridge. The valley now opens out – you'll see vast stretches of heather light up the slopes in August, and in early autumn the air is tinged with the coconut smell of bright yellow gorse flowers.
5. Just beyond the top of a slight incline the path reaches its end at the 19th-century lime kiln at the beach; for your own safety, please do not enter the kiln. This is a wonderful viewpoint down onto the pebble beach, up to the top of the cliffs and back along the valley behind you. Rest a while on the bench and absorb the myriad of sounds – waves crashing on the beach, pebbles rolling back and forth, and the birdsong. Please do not take rough-terrain mobility scooters beyond the lime kiln (again, for your own safety) and, if you walk down onto the beach, please keep away from the base of the cliffs.

6. Retrace your steps back up the valley, this time with the river on your left, back to the National Trust car park, enjoying the different vistas seen from this direction.
End point: National Trust gift shop, grid ref SS655480
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