



## **Cosdon Hill and Little Hound Tor**

**A demanding walk around Cosdon Hill, taking in Little Hound Tor  
- and Hound Tor itself too, if you take the full route option**

### **Essential Facts**

- Route distance: 11.5 km (7.2 miles)
- Approximate time: 3 hours 30 mins
- Optional extension: + 1.5 km
- Optional shorter route: 10.5 km (6.6 miles)
- Approx. total ascent: 360 metres
- Start point Grid Ref: SX 652 934
- GPS Ref: SX 65207 93434
- Recommended O.S. Map: Explorer OL28
- Toughness Rating: Devon 4

Please see the notes on Toughness Ratings at the end of this report

**Up For A  
CHALLENGE ?**

**Take a Great Walk and HELP  
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**A Donation**

**An Individual Walk  
A Team Effort**

**Full Info from the Great Walks web site**

## THE ROUTE

Today's walk is on open moorland, out to Little Hound Tor, with an optional extension up to Hound Tor. However, this is not the more famous Hound Tor which you can visit on our walk from Manaton.

This walk starts at South Zeal, a village east of Okehampton, on Dartmoor's northern fringe. Park in the small car park, signed from the main street.

Turn right out of the car park, **S**, and bear right when the lane divides. Continue up the hill to where the lane meets the main road at **A**. Cross the road and take the track immediately opposite, up the hill beside the cottage.

Stick with the track, ignoring the footpath which loops away and back again (unless of course you choose to explore it!), and also ignoring the footpath and the track to the left a little later, at **B**. Shortly afterwards, the track pulls to the left, with a path away to the right, which again you should ignore.

Follow the track up onto the open hillside at **C**, and contour around the hill past Belstone to your right. Various footpaths lead up to the summit for breathtaking views of the surrounding countryside; but our path for this walk curves around the hillside. Stay just uphill of the leat where this is visible, and beware of the boggy patches, usefully flagged in the summer by little white tufts of cotton grass.

Cross the leat and then Lady Brook at **D** and, picking up the peaty path, stay with it as it follows the stream around the hillside, aiming roughly towards Hound Tor, which is visible on the horizon. When the stream vanishes, the path goes away down the hillside, meeting Small Brook at **E**.

Don't cross the brook, but turn uphill and head due south east, climbing steeply but not straight towards the top. The path comes and goes along here: you are better not looking for it, but making your own way up and along the hillside, following a similar course to that of the brook some distance below you.

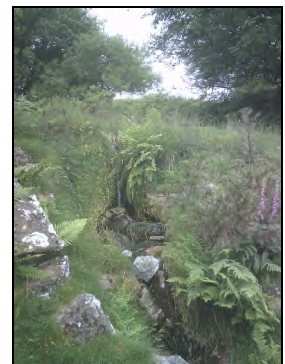
As you start to round Little Hound Tor, the hillside dips in a very small col at **F**. Cut across here to the far side for the shorter route, crossing the track at the top and carrying on to the fairly well defined path 100 metres or so below. The main route continues around Little Hound Tor, however, turning back on itself at the far side at **G** (unless you choose to go a little further, to Hound Tor and back). Near **G**, look out for the stone circle and White Moor Stone, a little way to the south.

The returning path around this side of the hill is easy to follow, except here and there where boggy patches require you to find your own way through (some of these are rather wet, but they are all negotiable with care). As the path starts to descend, it crosses the tail end of the triple stone row at **H**. Make a note of where you are heading before you wander away to investigate the stones and the cist above them; and on your return, follow the path down to the stone wall that bounds the access land.

Follow the wall downhill, and stay with the path all the way back down to where you rejoin your original route; from where you may return to the car, **S**.



The Track Begins



A Rocky Waterfall



Looking North

## Refreshment

The Tors  
Village inn  
Belstone  
Tel: 01837 840689  
Lunches and evening  
meals

The Oxenham Arms  
Public House  
South Zeal  
Tel: 01837 840244  
Snacks and meals

The Taw River Inn  
Village inn and Restaurant  
Sticklepath  
Tel: 01837 840377  
Refreshment, snacks &  
meals



**The Taw River Inn**

## LOCAL INFO

The Oxenham Arms in South Zeal was formerly a monastery. Ghosts of a monk and a lady have been seen, as well as footsteps heard in the corridor. In the lounge bar of the pub is an impressive granite monolith, believed to be 5000 years old and set so deeply in the earth that no amount of digging has ever reached its foundations. Archaeologists believe that the 13<sup>th</sup> century inn was built around the stone.

The Oxenham family lived in the local manor house and have many plaques dedicated to them in St Andrews Church at the edge of the village of South Tawton, which also has a monument to 'Warrior Wykes', a sixteenth century local legend.

Cosdon Hill was an important site in the Bronze Age. As well as the triple stone row (sometimes called The Cemetery) on the east side of the hill there are several cairns and numerous hut circles around here. There are many tales about the stone circles and structures on Dartmoor, with the most common telling of maidens being turned into stone for dancing on the Sabbath.

South Zeal is host to the Dartmoor Folk Festival in August, an event which attracts many top names and is regarded as one of the top folk events.

### COSDON HILL AND LITTLE HOUND TOR G.P.S. WAYPOINTS

WAYPOINT NAME	MAP REF	CO-ORDINATES	ELEVATION: Metres
COS S	S	SX 65207 93434	192
COS A	A	SX 64831 93229	210
COS B	B	SX 64462 93178	292
COS C	C	SX 63830 93031	367
COS D	D	SX 62835 92540	400
COS E	E	SX 62655 90608	423
COS F	F	SX 63002 90327	464
COS G	G	SX 63225 89600	473
COS H	H	SX 64389 91587	434



MAP LEGEND					
	Great Walks route		Church with tower		Spot height - metres
	M6 Motorway		Church with spire		Information centre
	A23 Main road		Other place of worship		Parking
	B2116 Secondary road		Cathedral / Abbey		Public convenience
	Minor road		Building		Public house
	Other road		Built up area		Picnic site
	Track		Woodland		Camp site
	Footpath		Sand, shingle or mud		Major tourist feature
	Bridleway		Water feature		Other tourist feature
	National trail				
	Railway				

## Safety First

**Safety should always** be your first priority in planning and undertaking a walk, whether on your own or leading a group. Please read these Safety First and Walking Our Routes notes.

**Lead a group** of other walkers only if you have leadership and navigational experience adequate for the 'worst case' conditions which may be encountered on the particular walk, bearing in mind the terrain, possible weather and navigational demands.

**Weigh up the capabilities** of your party, in terms of fitness and walking speed. Adjust your time expectations accordingly.

**Ensure** all your party are adequately clothed for the weather and conditions. Footwear is particularly important. Clothing must protect against cold, wet or strong sun according to the time of year.

**Emergencies** are quite rare, but it is essential to think ahead about what to do if someone in your party sustains an injury. Will you have a First Aid kit? Is there a qualified First Aider in the party? How could help be summoned in a serious eventuality?

**Refreshment**, particularly water, can be vital. Dehydration in hot summer conditions can be rapid, and frequent intake of fluids is essential.

**On tougher walks** it is a good idea to tell someone where you are planning to go – and when you expect to be back. Remember - mobile phones often lose reception in mountainous or isolated areas.

**All our walks use legitimate routes:** Public Rights of Way, Public Footpaths, Bridleways, Permissive Paths, Access Land, Byways and Roads.

**Road** walking calls for particular care. When there is no defined footpath or verge wide enough for safe walking it is usually best to walk on the right – facing oncoming traffic. An exception may be a tight bend, where walkers would be more visible on the left.

**Occasionally** you may find a public footpath blocked or unuseable. It is perfectly in order to take the shortest available diversion without damaging crops, perhaps around a field margin.

**It is courteous** to close gates after passing through, sometimes even if the gate was open when you arrived – particularly if it is obvious livestock may escape.

**Mutual respect** for farm animals is to be encouraged! Don't frighten or annoy them, but equally don't put your party members in danger or discomfort. You certainly wouldn't be the first walkers to go round the outside of a field of frisky bullocks.

**Dogs** should always be kept on a lead anywhere near farm animals, and under close supervision elsewhere in the countryside.

## Walking Our Routes

**Our walks** are designed to be negotiated using the route directions in conjunction with the map section provided. We suggest walkers also take the Ordnance Survey Explorer or Outdoor Leisure map recommended for each walk.

**On mountain, moorland and open heathland** walks it is **ESSENTIAL** to have navigational expertise and tools, including the recommended Ordnance Survey map(s).

**Take care** to observe any cautions in the route description; exposed paths, areas liable to flooding etc.

**Consider conditions before setting off.** Will heavy rain have made a water meadow impassable? Will frost or snow make a path slippery?

**When navigating the route** look for clues to confirm you are in the right place. Are map features where you would expect on the ground? Are features mentioned in the text where expected? If you suspect you may have taken a wrong turn, take action sooner rather than later. It is better to re-trace to a known point rather than carry on regardless with the possibility of becoming increasingly confused.

**All our routes are carefully checked** before publication, but features can change on the ground – sometimes surprisingly quickly. Footpaths may be re-routed, buildings can appear or change significantly and these days pub names seem to change frequently.

**The approximate time** given for each walk is based on an average walking speed of 2.5 miles per hour (4 km/hour), plus an allowance for ascent, descent and any difficult terrain.

**Total ascent** is the approximate total ascent over the whole walk.

**GPS users** can enter in the waypoints provided in each of our walk reports. It is important to read our guide **Introducing GPS for Walkers**, available as a PDF file from the Great Walks in Britain web site.

**Remember that GPS** is a great navigational tool, but only one of those available to the navigator. Never dispense with conventional map and compass – and the training and skills to use them, especially on mountain, moorland or open heathland walks.

### TOUGHNESS RATINGS

Most of our **Devon & Dartmoor** routes can be undertaken by reasonably fit walkers able to utilise the map segments and our recommended Ordnance Survey maps, together with the route guidance notes.

The toughest walks should be undertaken or led only by experienced mountain walkers with navigational expertise. Always consider recent and forecast weather.

Each walk has been allocated a **Toughness Rating**:

1. Easier walks with modest ascent and generally on well defined paths. There may be stiles or narrow gateways to negotiate.
2. Routes which are more demanding. They may include more ascent and possibly paths which are looser or more difficult underfoot.
3. More strenuous walks. There may be prolonged steep ascents, and perhaps several ascents over the whole walk. Conditions may be challenging underfoot.
4. The toughest walks, requiring considerable fitness and navigational experience. There may be prolonged steep ascents. The ability to navigate by compass may be essential.

Toughness Ratings are allocated in the context of the terrain in the edition area. For example a walk rated as demanding in Cambridgeshire may be equivalent to an easier or moderate route in Devon & Dartmoor