



West Bay and Thorncombe Beacon

Sea views accompany much of this strenuous walk along the cliff tops, and then inland across the bracken and gorse covered Eype Down

Essential Facts

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| ▪ Route distance: | 11.0 km (6.9 miles) |
| ▪ Approximate time: | 3 hours 30 mins |
| ▪ Approx. total ascent: | 300 metres |
| ▪ Start point Grid Ref: | SY 461 904 |
| ▪ GPS Ref: | SY 46109 90415 |
| ▪ Recommended O.S. Map: | Explorer 116 |
| ▪ Toughness Rating | Dorset 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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An Individual Walk
A Team Effort

Full Info from the Great Walks web site

THE ROUTE

The walk starts at the Harbour Car Park in West Bay, south of Bridport, beside the plaque commemorating the opening of the West Bay Coastal Defence and Harbour Improvement Scheme by HRH The Duke of York, **S**.

Walk westwards along the sea front. Soon turn right up hill at some steps with a "Coast Path" signpost, and follow the cliff top path to Eype Mouth. Climb up onto the road and continue to follow the cliff path towards Seatown. When you reach a stile beside a gate the Coast Path continues straight ahead, but if this appears too steep go right, following the sign to Eype Down. Head towards a patch of scrub and follow the path below it, then turn left to climb to Thorncombe Beacon, **A**.

Now start to descend towards Seatown, taking a right fork to keep Doghouse Hill on your left. When you reach a fence turn right, signed "East Chideock" at **B**.

Keep the fence on your left for about 800m. Cross a stile on your left and go across a field to another stile, descend some steps, cross a stream and turn left. After 400m go through a gate and continue to a stile, bear left and shortly cross a stile on the left to join a track to a farm. Go through the farm buildings and cross a stile on your right. Now keep parallel with the A35 to cross a field to a track, **C**.

Turn left and then almost immediately turn right, to climb onto Eype Down. Take a left fork, and at the T-junction turn left and continue climbing to a cross-paths. Go straight ahead, signed "Eype", and at a T-junction turn right to descend to Down House Farm, **D**.

After passing the tea gardens turn right through a gate, and at the far end of the field go left through a hunting gate. Descend, and go through two more hunting gates before reaching a metal gate. Turn left, go through another gate onto a track and follow this to a road. Turn right and when the road bends right go left, to follow a footpath between fences, **E**.

At a road turn right and right again, to walk through a churchyard. Follow a grassy track to a road, cross and walk past a communication mast. Turn left at the next gate to follow a hedge down to a crossing track. Turn right, and on reaching a caravan park fork left. Follow the path through the complex to emerge in West Bay. Your start point, **S**, is straight ahead.



West Bay Harbour



Thorncombe Beacon



Eype Down

Refreshment

The West Bay
Public House
Station Road, West Bay
Tel: 01308 422157
Real ales. Meals and bar
snacks.

New Inn
Public House
Lower Eype
Tel: 01308 423254
Local beer. Meals and
bar snacks.

Bridport Arms
Public House
West Bay
Tel: 01308 422994
Traditional local ales.
Meals and bar snacks.

Down House Farm
Tea Gardens
Down House Lane,
Higher Eype
Tel: 01308 421232
Home cooked food and
cream teas.

West Bay Tea Rooms
Tea Rooms
West Bay
Tel: 01308 455697
Snacks, light lunches and
cream teas.

LOCAL INFO

West Bay is a working fishing harbour, which also describes itself as a major gateway to the Jurassic Coast. From the end of the pier, on a fine day, you can see the coastline from Start Point in South Devon to Portland Bill in Dorset.

The famous sandstone east cliff exposes 180 million years of history. **Eype Mouth Beach** is a particular favourite for fossil hunters.

Thorncombe Beacon was originally built in 1588, as one of a chain of early warning signal stations along the South Coast where fires were lit to warn London of impending danger. These were used to great effect when the Spanish Armada was sighted off Plymouth Sound. Thorncombe Beacon was restored in 1989 to mark the 400th anniversary of that event.

WEST BAY & THORNCOMBE BEACON G.P.S. WAYPOINTS

WAYPOINT NAME	MAP REF	CO-ORDINATES	ELEVATION: Metres
WBT S	S	SY 46109 90415	6
WBT A	A	SY 43547 91466	158
WBT B	B	SY 42855 91467	121
WBT C	C	SY 43685 92722	88
WBT D	D	SY 44086 91838	92
WBT E	E	SY 45175 91758	70



Great Walks
IN BRITAIN



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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

All our **Dorset** routes can be undertaken by reasonably fit walkers able to utilise our map segments, together with the route guidance notes. 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 with some steep sections, higher paths or places which may be wet and boggy.
4. The most demanding walks in this edition. There may be prolonged steep ascents. Conditions may be challenging underfoot.

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