

Donkey Sanctuary Coast Walk

around 3 miles, VERY muddy after rain



Park at the Donkey Sanctuary just off the A3052 towards Sidmouth. Both parking and entrance to the donkey sanctuary are free, though they would always appreciate a donation. Start the walk by entering the donkey sanctuary. The Kitchen café is new for 2018 serving hot and cold food and has an outdoor balcony seating area.

Work your way through the sanctuary to exit at the gate on the far side near Slade House Farm on Slade Lane. Turn right, through the gate and head down the public footpath signed 'Weston Mouth and Coast Path' and 'Field of Dreams'. Stay on this path, ignoring the path on the right into the woods. A little further you may like to pop into the Nature Centre just off the path to the right. A path behind here would loop you back up into the donkey sanctuary, but this for walk you should return to the main path and continue down to the 'Field of Dreams'. Not sure why it is called this, unless you dream of deep, squelchy mud in the winter months!

Eventually you will reach the style above Weston Beach. You could decide to walk down to the beach and back, but it is quite a climb. This walk however takes a sharp right up the side of the field, i.e. keeping the sea on your left, but it is probably still worth nipping over the style for 20 yds to get a view down over the beach.

A short distance up the field, you will find an entrance gate on your left to 'Weston Plats'. Plats are found along the coast in this area and were turn of the century commercial allotments. You can take a detour in for a look round, which will take around 20 minutes, but be aware that there is no other way out than the way you go in. The path loops around inside, just follow it to return to the gate.

Continue up the hill to enter a gate that enters a more woody area. A little further up you reach a crossroad of paths. Turn left here and, ignoring the path that leads out to a viewing bench (though this would be a lovely spot for a picnic) head up onto the cliff top. There are great views from up here, though be careful! Follow the path along through an area that resembles The Shire-by-Sea! Maddy would love to turn these mounds into Hobbit houses.

Continue on past a bench, after which the path curves inland over the valley Lincombe. Ignore the path down to the left. These steps are the continuation of England's coast path, instead stay on the main path and pass through a gate to join a lane.

At the end of this lane, turn right and head along a tarmac farm road to reach a strangely positioned pair of gates that you must pass through. Then go left round the bend to reach the road. Turn right here, and follow the road almost immediately round to the left. A short way along the road you will find the corner entrance gate to the donkey sanctuary. Enter this and work your way back through the sanctuary fields to your car or the café.