

Rural Footpaths in Milton Damerel



7 Public Footpaths within the Parish
(Updated – 2025)

Introduction

In the early 1900's there were around 25 rural footpaths throughout the Parish. Their purpose was not recreational but as a means of getting around the Parish in the days before the advent of the motor car, when the primary form of transport over short distances, at least, was by walking. Some of the tracks were also about moving produce, such as millers' tracks from farms to mills etc. Hence many of these paths ran from pockets of habitation to farms which were the major sources of employment at the time. They also went to the churches, the school and shops, taking the most direct routes possible, in order to cut down on journey times. FP 1 probably arose to allow the vicar/rector to walk from the rectory to the Church. In the 1950's and 60's when the car became ubiquitous, farming more mechanised and needing far fewer workers, many of these footpaths fell into disuse and over the years have now been 'lost'. Today, with people having more leisure time available, interest is being generated in rural footpaths for recreational walking, to enable them to get away from traffic and out into the peace and tranquillity of the countryside.

There are 7 of these short footpaths remaining within our Parish, none of which is more than ½ mile in length:

No. 1	Glovers Cottage to Worden Cross
No. 7	Whitebear Cross to Lower Walland Gate
No. 12	Gidcott Mill to Halsepark
No. 15*	Whitebear Farm to Chapel View
No. 16*	Whitebear Cottage to Holy Trinity Church or the Methodist Chapel
No. 21	Waldon Farm via Heddon Farm to Sutcombe ❶
No. 24	Milton Mill via North Town to Butterfly Lane ❷

❶ *The parish boundary is the River Waldon which is crossed by a footbridge and from there to Sutcombe it continues under a different footpath number.*

❷ *The first part of this path has recently been re-aligned and therefore does not follow the route marked on the various O/S maps.*

- Both FP 15 & 16 have 'Permissive Path' options as alternatives

From a gentle stroll to a long distance walk the countryside provides every opportunity for enjoyment and relaxation. If you follow the Countryside Code wherever you go, you will get the best enjoyment possible and help to protect the countryside now and for future generations

Countryside Code – Advice for the Public

- Be safe – plan ahead and follow any signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants and animals
- Take your litter home
- Keep dogs under close control
- Consider other people

Many of the Milton Damerel footpaths are across working farms with the possibility of the presence of sheep and cattle. It is recommended that dogs be kept under close control on a short lead. Please also remember that cattle, especially when with their young, perceive dogs, even small ones, as a threat and you should treat them with the utmost caution. Also, please be alert for tractors and machinery which may be operating on or near the paths and tracks, which could be a particular hazard to young children

The diagrammatic maps in this booklet are not to scale but none of the paths are more than 3/4 mile (1.2 kilometres) in length. Please also wear suitable footwear remembering that there can be boggy areas on most of these paths depending on the time of year.

The key & legend to all maps is shown on page 5 (Footpath 16).

FP 16

Whitebear Cottage to Holy Trinity Church

The starting point for this path is the stile opposite the side of Whitebear Cottage which is ¼ mile up the lane from the Parish Hall.

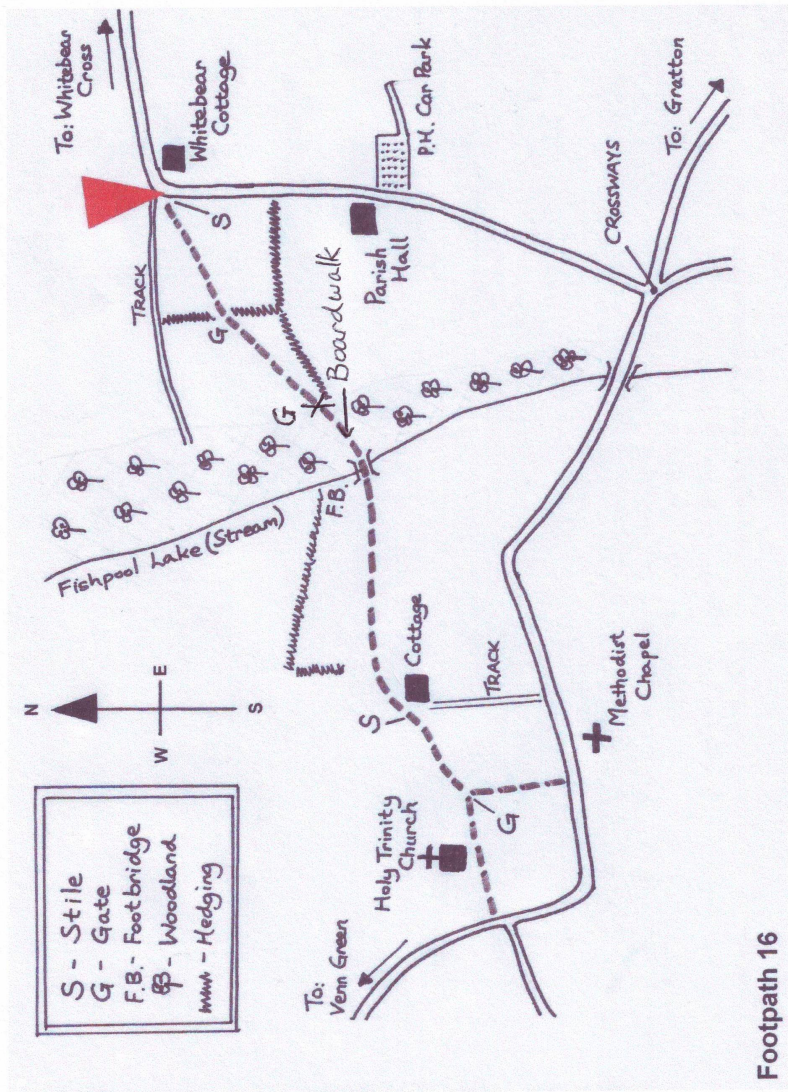
Standing on top of the stile look across the field in a SW direction to where you will see a field gate. Head diagonally across the field to the gate, pass through the gate and continue in the same direction across the field to the field corner where you will find a small gate. Through the gate and follow the boardwalk until you come to a gated footbridge over the stream. After crossing the footbridge continue up the field in a westerly direction until you can see the old barn and white cottage and you then make your way towards them. As you near the buildings an old track takes you past the rear of the buildings until you come to a pedestrian gate.

Pass through the gate and turn immediately right to follow the shale path until you reach the rear of the church yard.

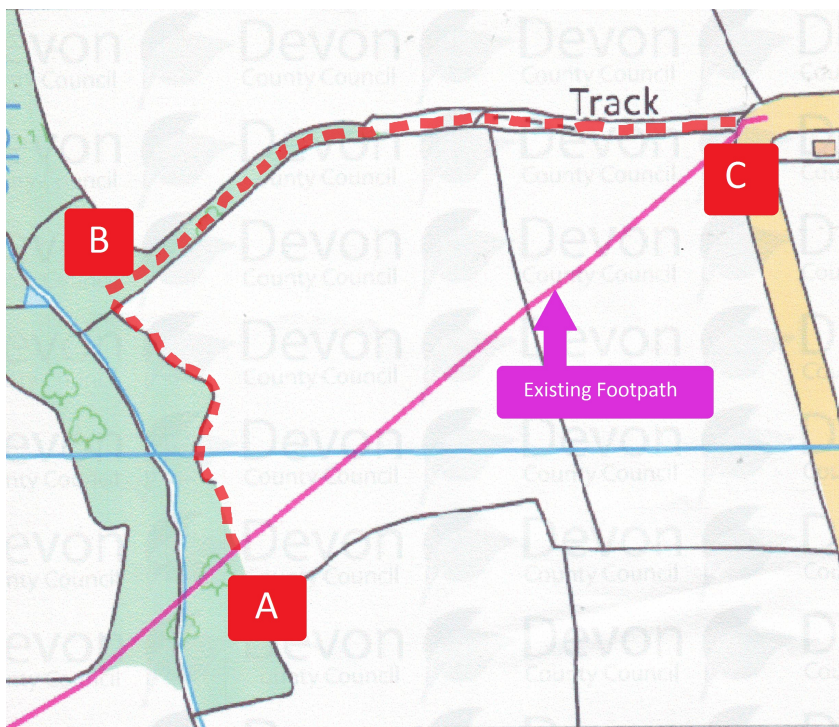
You now have the choice of going through the churchyard gate and exiting at the front entrance of the church through the lych gate or continuing in a westerly direction along the side of the Town Farm development site until you reach the road opposite the Methodist Chapel.

Turning left onto the lane and continuing, you will reach Crossways where left again will bring you back past the Parish Hall to complete a round trip.

Turning right will take you to Venn Green.



Alternative Route for part of Footpath 16



This alternative route has been provided by kind permission of the landowners as an alternative to crossing two fields which are frequently used for grazing cattle.

Using the same start point opposite Whitebear Cottage (**C**) - instead of going over the ladder stile take the farm track running to the right for 200 metres to where it reaches a field-gate on the right. Take the path on the left going through the copse for approx. 100 metres, where left (**B**), up the steps on the bank and immediately right, following the field fence. CARE – when cattle are in the field the electric fence will be live. When you reach the top of the boardwalk (**A**) you re-join the original route.



Above: Steps on FP16 – Permissive path section
Below: Boardwalk on FP 16 – Installed 2014



FP No. 1

Glovers Cottage to Worden Cross

The starting point for this path is the field gate situated to the side of Glovers Cottage.

Pass through the gate and head straight across the field in the direction of the double row of hedging which is on the skyline. When you reach the top of the small rise in this field you will see a gap in the Devon Bank field boundary. Continue through this gap and keeping the hedge to your left follow it until you come to a pedestrian gate. Through the gate and over the footbridge to continue with the hedge to the left until you reach a field gate. Through the gate and turn right onto the track (turning left is a private track to Venn Farm) which then continues for approx ¼ mile to another gate which brings you out onto the main road (A388) at Worden Cross.

FP No 24

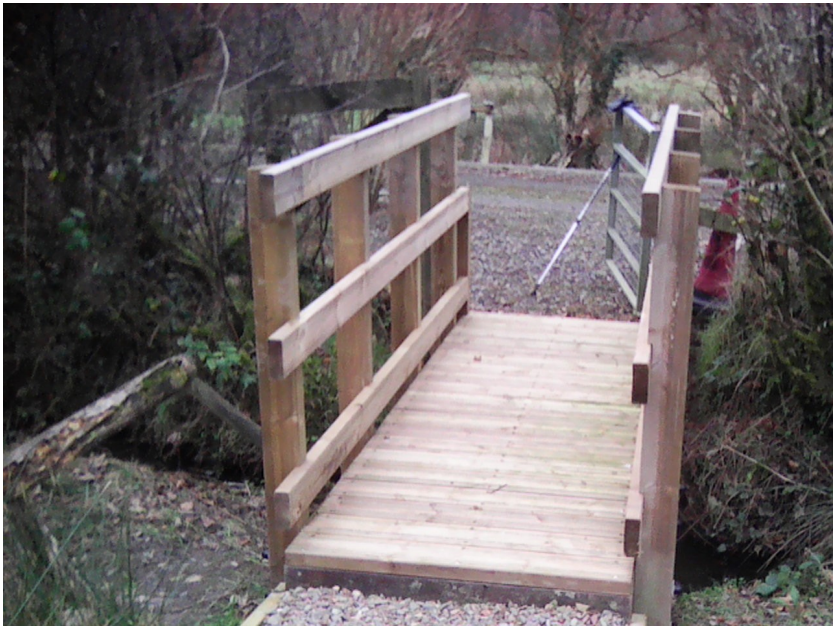
Milton Mill via North Town to Butterfly Lane

The starting point for this path is the road end of the drive up to North Town. The path has recently been re-aligned and is not as on the O/S maps.

Proceed along the drive until you reach a pedestrian gate on the right. Through the gate, over the short footbridge and continue along the shale path. When this runs out continue to follow the way-marked path which take you around the right hand side of the pond. At the head of the pond the path turns sharp right and follows the line of the fence which is now on the right, passing the house, gardens and poly-tunnel until you reach another pedestrian gate. Through the gate and you are now on Butterfly Lane.

Turning right takes you along the lane until you reach the Town Farm to Milton Mill road just a short distance along from Milton Mill Cottage.

Turning left and you can follow Butterfly Lane all the way along to the Blackberry Farm shop at Venn Green



Above: Footbridge on FP 24 – Installed 2024

Below: Footbridge on FP 1 - 2019



FP15

Whitebear Farm to Chapel View

The starting point for this path is Whitebear Farm.

Proceed through the farm yard (there are possibly 2 gates and an electric fence to pass through) in an easterly direction. Please remember that this is a working farm and if you come across an electric fence hold the orange or black insulated handle to break the fence whilst you pass through and then replace the handle. The rear of the yard opens into an ancient track which you follow through a wooded area until you reach 2 farm gates which are side by side. Through the left side gate and then follow the hedge on your right until you reach a pedestrian gate which you pass through to bring you out onto the lane near to Chapel View. This is the end of FP15.

Turn left and continue along the lane for approx. ¼ mile where you will come to a finger post and stile on your left, opposite the entrance to Lower Walland (FP 7).

FP 7

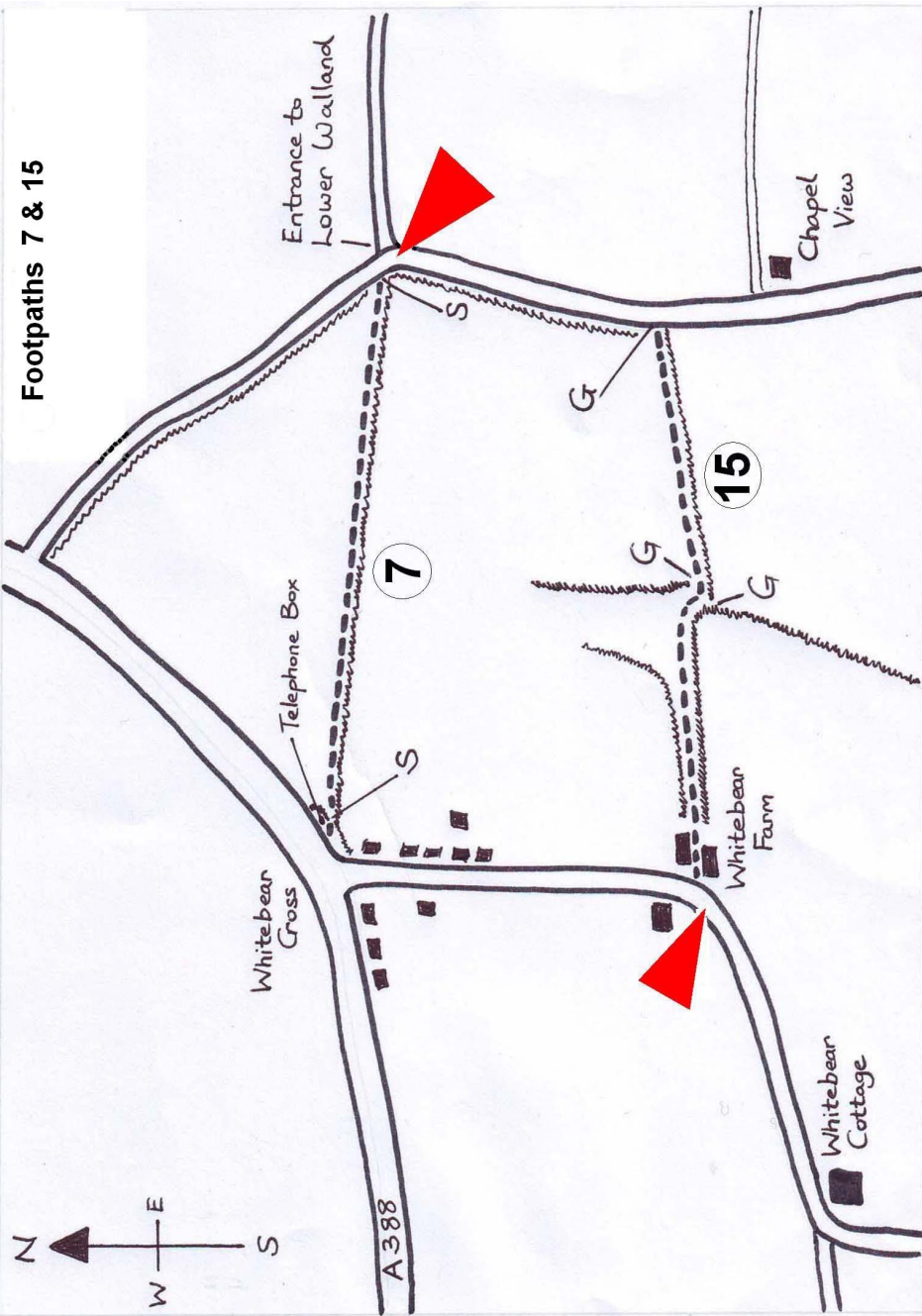
Lower Walland Gate to Whitebear Cross

The starting point for this path is opposite the entrance to Lower Walland.

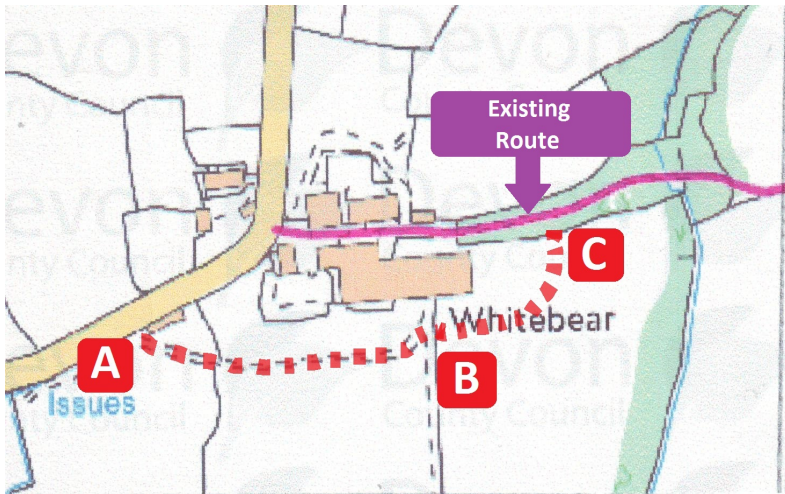
Over the stile and follow the line of the hedge to your left (I understand that the Parish football pitch was sited on part of this field many years ago). Continue until you reach another stile. Continue over the stile which brings you out at Whitebear Cross behind the telephone box. This is the end of FP7. If you come across an electric fence hold the orange or black insulated handle to break the fence whilst you pass through and then replace the handle, to maintain the integrity of the electric fence.

Turning left along the lane it will bring you back to Whitebear Farm and the starting point of FP15.

Footpaths 7 & 15



Alternative Route for part of Footpath 15 avoiding the working farm yard at Whitebear Farm.



This alternative route has been provided by kind permission of the landowners as an alternative to passing through the busy working farm yard.

Starting from the western end of the footpath at Whitebear Farm yard entrance, take the lane south for 100 metres to point **A**. Pass through the farm gate on your **left** and immediately turn **left** onto the farm track. Follow this track until you come to a pedestrian gate at point **B**. Through this gate and follow the line of the fence on your **left** until you reach another pedestrian gate at point **C**. Through the gate and down the short slope to turn **right** onto the farm track. You are now back on the original route.

Please be aware that there may still be cattle in the various fields which you cross on this route.

FP12

Gidcott Mill to Halsepark

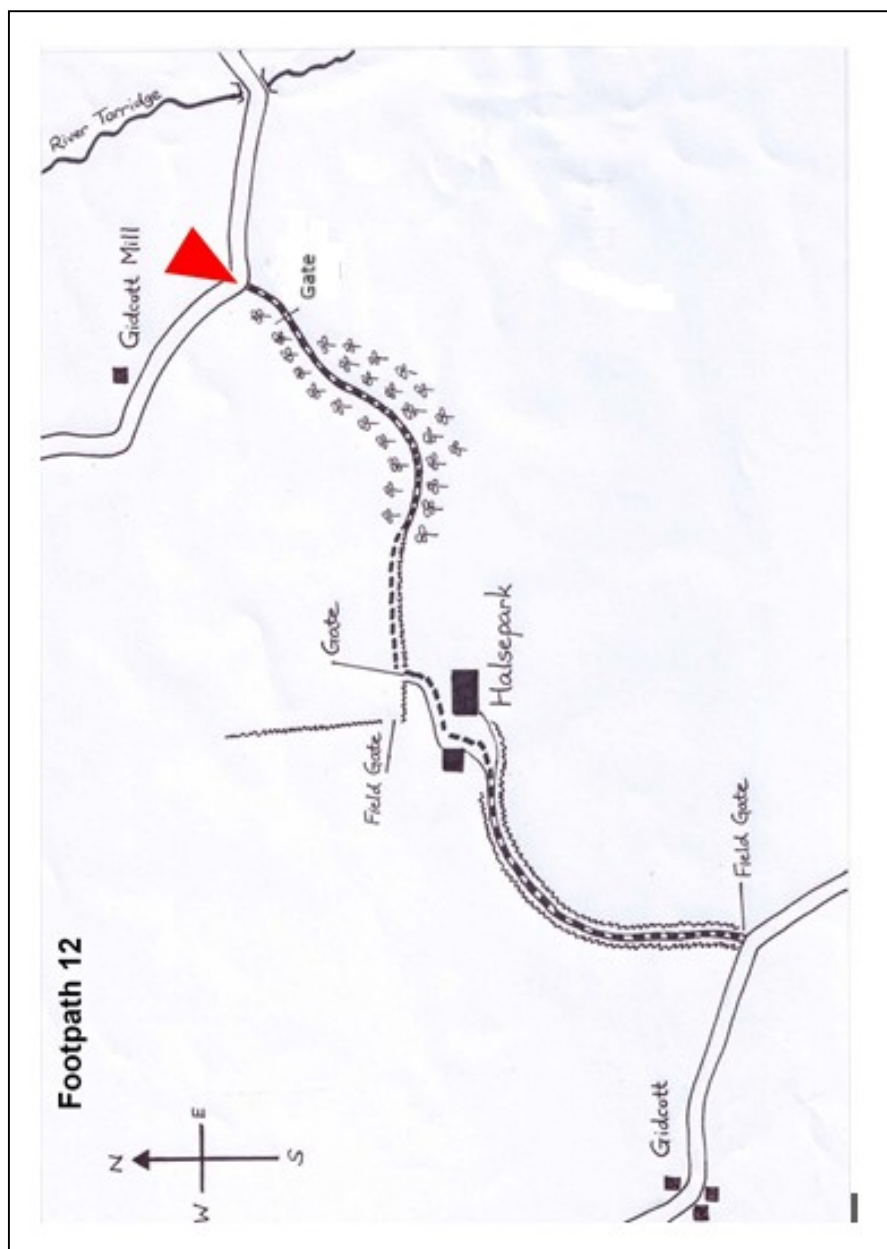
The starting point for this path is midway between Gidcott Mill and Gidcott Mill Bridge, which are on the Shebbear Road.

Follow the direction of the fingerpost onto the track for a short way until you reach a gate with a stile to the side. Over the stile and continue along the track which is now tree lined and starting to climb gently upwards. On reaching the top of the rise the trees to the right finish and open out into a field. The track continues with hedging and trees to the left. After a short distance you reach a pedestrian gate on the left, with a fingerpost, and a field gate straight ahead. Go through the pedestrian gate, immediately turn right① and follow the path which goes round between the house and an outbuilding until you exit the property into another hedge lined track. Continue until you reach another gate and on through which is the end of this path and back onto a minor lane.

Turning right will bring you to Gidcott Cross which gives you a number of route options.

Turning left will take you through Henscott and onto Bradford.

① **Note:** on some maps the path turns left and takes you across the front of the property. Please respect the privacy of the occupants of the property and follow the way-marked route.



FP 21

Waldon Farm to Sutcombe

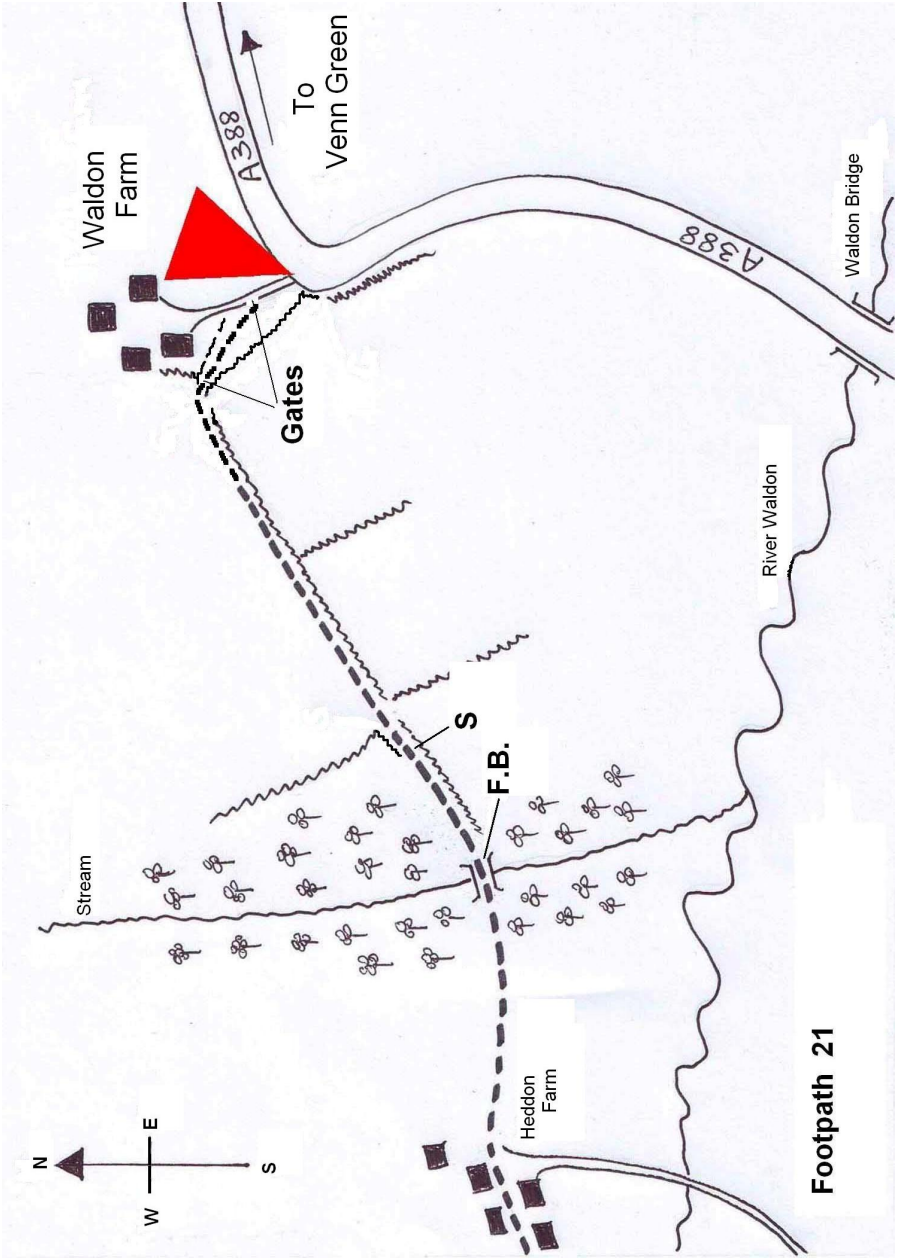
The starting point for this path is the entrance to Waldon Farm which is situated on the bend at the top of Waldon Hill and marked by a finger post.

Proceed along the drive for approx. 30yds until you come to a wooden pedestrian gate, on the left, before you reach the first building. Through the gate and following the direction of the indicator to the right for a few yards through some small trees until you reach a grassed area. Continue, following the edge of the grassed area, through a fruit garden, until you reach a metal personal gate. Through the gate and straight on, following the hedge on your left all the way to the corner of the field which then goes into a narrow bush lined track and after a short distance you will come to a stile. Over the stile and continue along the track until you reach the River Waldon which runs through a small copse. Ahead you will see the footbridge which takes you across the river. The river is the Parish boundary and the end of footpath 21.

The path does however continue. Follow the short board walk and then across the field to Heddon Farm, through the farm yard and continue to follow the contours of the hill in a north westerly direction across 5 fields for $\frac{3}{4}$ mile to Hawkwell Farm. Straight on in a westerly direction (not along the farm lane) for approx. 200 yards to where you will reach a country lane.

Turning left will take you to Sutcombe Mill.

Turning right and right again at the next lane will take you back to Derworthy Cross where it is right again back to Venn Green.



Footpath 21



Above: Footbridge on FP 21
Below: Footbridge on FP 16



Sources for Additional Walks

The countryside and coastal areas of North Devon provides rich and varied habitats for people who are interested in recreational walking, over a wider area. The following websites are useful sources of information with many interesting links which you should find to be of benefit:

- www.ramblers.org.uk
- <https://holsworthywalkandtalk.co.uk>
- www.devon.gov.uk/prow/

Local 'Walk & Talk' groups providing regular short walks for health and recreational purposes.

Bude contact:

michael.heryet@talk21.com

Holsworthy Contact:

holsworthywalkandtalk@gmail.com

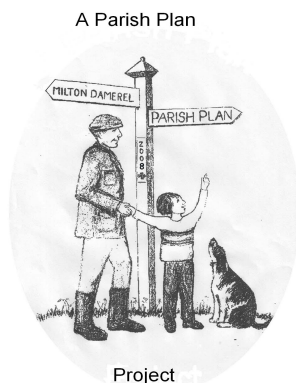
To Bideford



Thank you for your interest in this booklet.

Any suggestions which you may have for improving the content of the booklet would be gratefully received.

If you come across any problems which affect the use of any of these paths will you please contact the Parish Clerk or any of the Parish Councillors, whose contact details can be found on the Milton Damerel website detailed below.



This booklet can also be obtained as a free download from:
www.miltondamerel.com

Produced and Published for Milton Damerel Parish Council
email: miltondamerelpc@gmail.com