

A photograph of a dirt path winding through a forest. The path is covered in fallen leaves and leads into the distance. The trees are mostly bare, with some green leaves still on the branches. The lighting is warm, suggesting late afternoon or early morning. The text "Walks Around Winkleigh" is overlaid on the bottom half of the image in a white, serif font.

**Walks
Around
Winkleigh**

WINKLEIGH

Winkleigh is among a group of large villages or small towns situated on the higher points of the mid-Devon plateau, Winkleigh being about 550 ft above sea level. Its large hilltop church can command huge prospects. It lies on the watershed between Taw and Torridge, with the north part of the village draining to the Torridge and the rest to the Taw.

Like most Saxon foundations, Winkleigh was probably in existence by 800 AD, a group of farmers coming together for defence, and for the sharing of equipment. It probably had an open-field farming arrangement, but all evidence has long since gone.

Winkleigh was, and is, an 'open' village, that is there was not a single squire family who owned the whole place and more or less determined what went on. The situation of having two Norman castle mounds belonging to separate families was never resolved. In many cases a squire gave permission for a regular weekly market, which made it a town, but Winkleigh remains a village though with an annual Fair now over 750 years old. Typically its population reached a peak at the 1851 census of 1,554 declining with the agricultural depression to 881 in 1931, before rising again to its current figure of about 1,600 with new commuter housing. One major reason for decline was that the railway followed the Taw valley and not the old stage roads.

In Kelly's Directory for 1902 there were four major landowners including the earl of Portsmouth and at least 25 separate trades are mentioned, including expected rural businesses, such as the miller and wheelwright, but also dressmakers, photographers, earthenware dealer and watchsmith. There was little need or opportunity to go to Okehampton or any other town.

Peter Howard

THE WALKS

With the exception of the Heywood and Winkleigh Heritage walks, for which normal walking boots/shoes are ideal, wellington boots are recommended for all the walks. Please take care to keep your dog under close control & fasten all gates. You may come across other walk signs – feel free to explore.

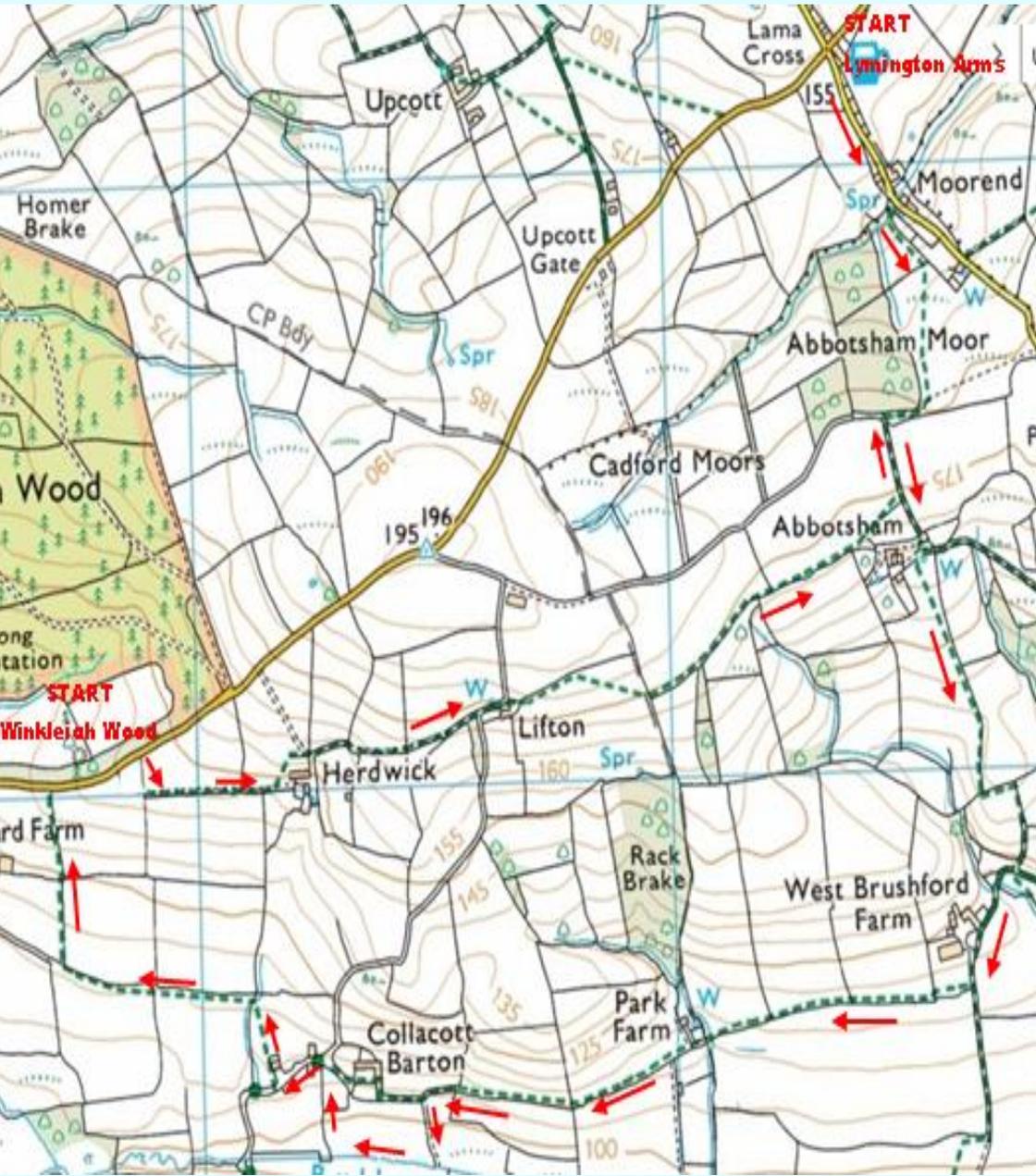


Hollocombe Walk
Wellies needed!

Hollocombe Walk

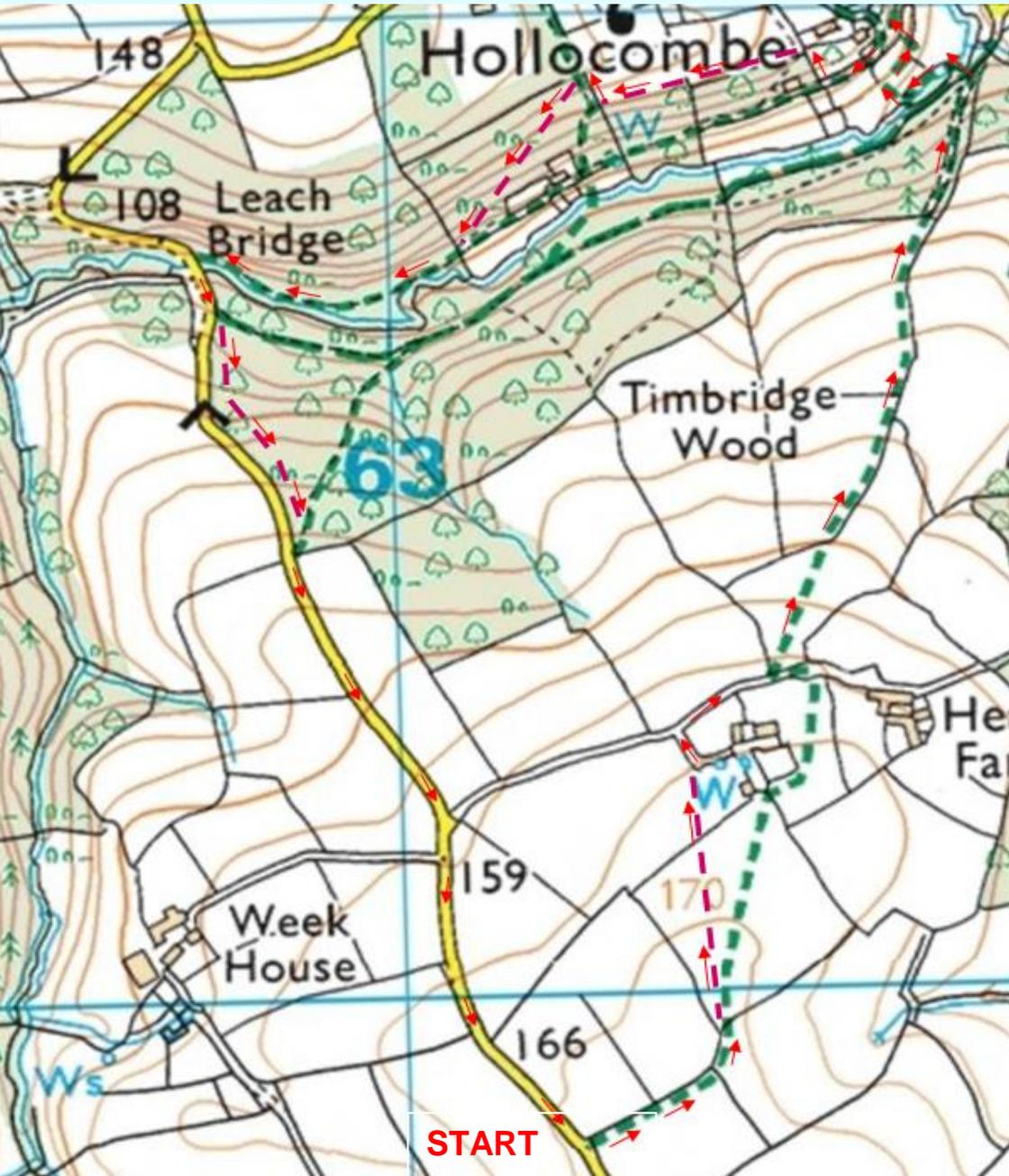
LYMINGTON ARMS WALK

Take Eggesford Road out of Winkleigh. Start at the second footpath sign on your right when you get to Winkleigh Wood on your left. Or, stay on Eggesford Road till you get to the Lymington Arms, park in the car park. Walk takes approx. 2½ hours. Watch for the signed temporary footpath diversion to avoid Collacott Barton.



HOLLOCOMBE WALK

Take A3124 North from Winkleigh, at the sharp bend bear right and then left to Hollocombe. Proceed until you come to chicken sheds and a footpath sign on your right. Park, taking care not to block the gate. Alternatively, start the walk from Hollocombe village. Walk takes approx. 1½ hours. Watch out for signed temporary footpath by-passing farmyard.



BROADWOODKELLY WALK

Leave the village square, walk past the Post Office and Methodist Chapel to Exeter Road, turn right and left down Townsend hill. Approx. three quarters of the way down, look out for the footpath sign on your right by a metal gate. Walk takes approx. 2 hours.

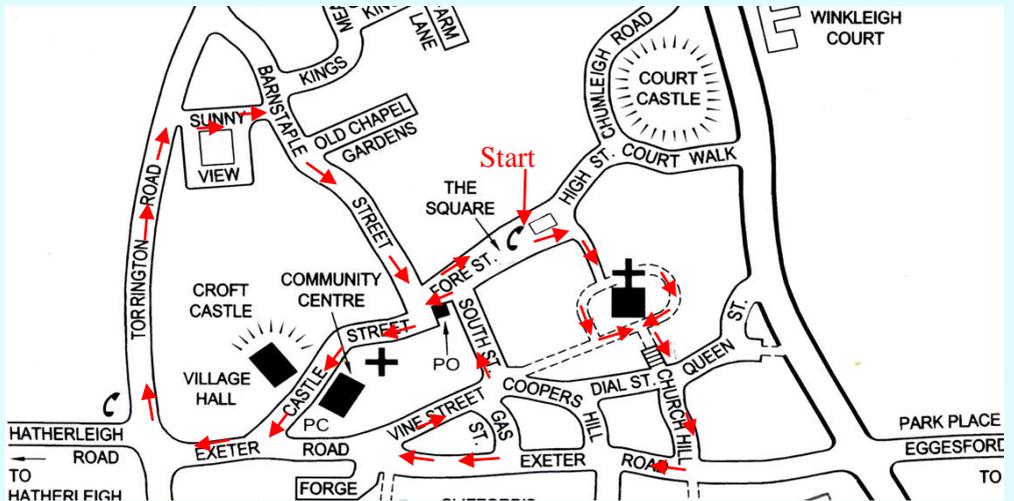


WINKLEIGH HERITAGE WALK

The hill on which Winkleigh stands is a high point between Dartmoor and Exmoor. Winkleigh means: Wink - corner; and Leigh - clearing or high place.

Winkleigh was formed sometime in the Saxon occupation of Devon. During the Norman Conquest the village was known as Winchelia and belonged to a Saxon called Brictric of the Golden Hair. It had a 500-acre wood and the only wildlife park in Devon.

William the Conqueror gave Winchelia/Winkleigh to his wife Matilda. During the twelfth century Winkleigh was split up into two unequal portions — the larger portion to the Keynes family and the smaller to the Tracey family. The families constructed fortified manors at each end of the village — known as Court Castle and Croft Castle. The houses have not survived but in between developed a medieval borough.



Parking in Winkleigh Village Square.

[Walk Directions — start at the Village Pump in the Square pass the King's Arms; look up to the left towards the Seven Stars and turn right at Bank House to reach the church]

- **The Square** — The buildings “in the heart of the village” are nearly all traditional stone / cob / render, but some are brick and granite. At one time most were shops.
- **Village Pump** — The pump was built to commemorate the men who were mainly responsible for the Great Reform Bill in 1832 during the reign of William IV. The pump “has never been known to run dry” and was restored in 1994.
- **King's Arms** — The public house is a prominent island feature of the square. It is over 200 years old and is cob built with a thatched roof. The Butcher's shop opposite escaped a major fire in the 1870s and is therefore older than the adjoining buildings.
- **Seven Stars** — This pub once also included a grocer's shop.
- **Bank House** — This house was once the bank of the village and was established by a local farmer. Lloyds Bank bought it from him in the early 1940s.
- **All Saints' Church** — The church is mainly of the 14th and 15th centuries, with major restoration in 1870 and 1975. The 14th century tower is in three stages with battlements, part buttresses, pinnacles and an octagonal lantern. Seventy carved angels support the wagon roofs and the many interesting bosses including one thought to represent Catherine of Aragon. The gargoyles show that the medieval carvers had a sense of humour!

[Proceed around the church and down Church Steps, pass Queen Street; down Church Hill into Exeter Road]

- **The Alms House** — Originally four cottages. During WW2 the end two cottages were made into a mortuary and a NAAFI. Just before WWI, Mrs John Ware lived in one of these cottages with her five children. She emigrated to Canada but today, a member of the same family lives nearby. Andrew Ware lives with his wife Sue in Queen Street.

[Turn right, proceed along Exeter Road; pass Coopers Hill; turn right up Vine Street and then up into South Street.]

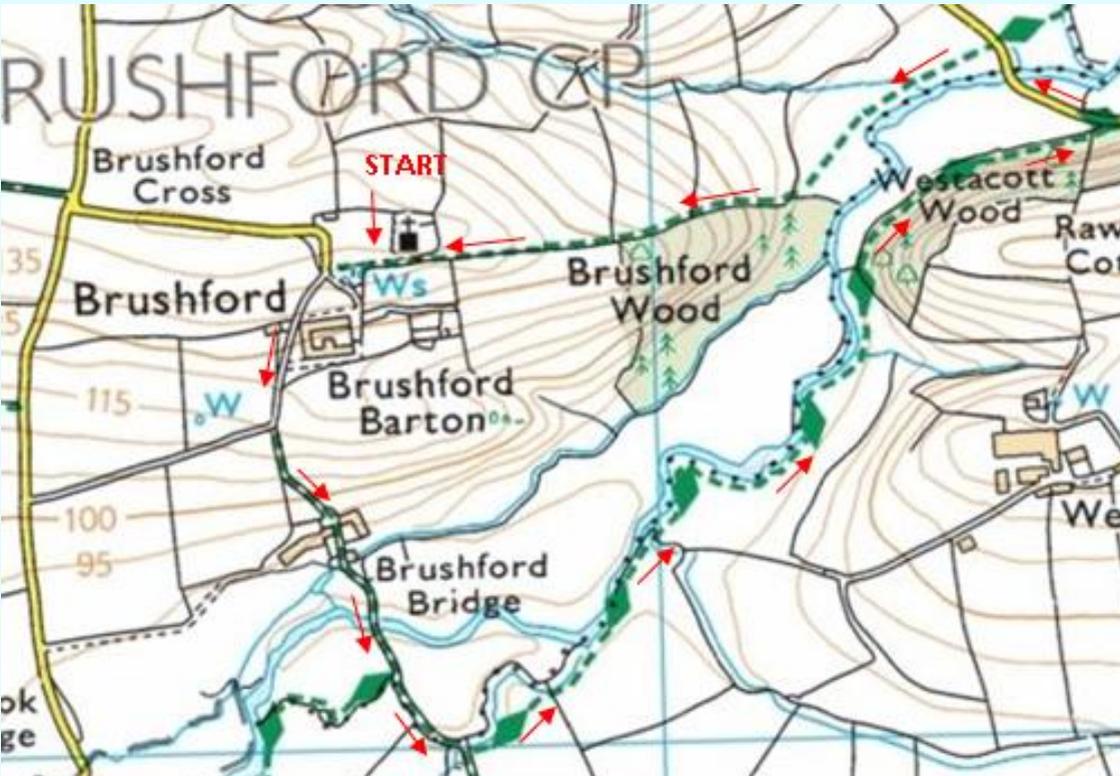
- **Coopers Hill** — This street was once a hive of economic activity with a piggery, a cooper (a maker of barrels and casks) and a watchmaker.
- **Wesleyan Chapel** — This chapel was built in 1864. In the 1980s it was converted into two private houses.
- **Pound House** — This house was once the site where animals were housed overnight before market. On the left, opposite Pound House was another old forge and the village prison.
- **Vine Street** — The street contains a number of 17th and 18th century cottages. On the left, the cottages originally formed one old Devon Long House. The Old Malt House and adjoining cottage were originally built as three cottages and were part of a brewery and coach inn.
- **Site of Ring O' Bells** — Next to the church gates there was once a pub that became nationally known in 1956 when The Daily Sketch offered it as a prize. The Ring O' Bells burnt down in 1968. It originated from the 14th century and was built to house the workers who built the church.
- **Linden House** — This is a late 18th century building with an impressive original portico and delicate fanlight entrance. Its garden sited on the opposite side of the road used to be the village bowling green.
- **Myrtle Cottage**—This cottage used to be the bicycle shop.

[Left into The Square, down Castle Street, briefly back into Exeter Road, up to the corner of Torrington Road. Up Torrington Road through Sunny View, then right again into Barnstaple Street and back to the Square.]

- **Keswick House** — This house was formerly called “Kings”, a reminder of its former Royal connections.
- **Methodist Chapel** — This was built in 1883 and was one of four places to worship in Winkleigh.
- **The Community Centre** — This was the village school until the early 1970s.
- **Village Hall** — The entrance has grand gates from Eggesford House. The village hall was built in the late 1930s on the site of Croft Castle. Two rich families wanted to build halls for the village, causing much debate at the time. One was built on the mound and the other was Castle School, which was converted into a village hall. This building dates from 1840 and was at one time given to the village for “gentlemen” to use as recreation and reading rooms.
- **Clotworthy House** — Until 1840 this was a coaching inn called the Clotworthy Arms. It was the changeover point for the Exeter to Bideford mail and also had a butcher’s shop,
- **Croft** — Once the Vicarage, a Grade II Listed Building.
- **Sunny View** — This estate was the site of the Military Hospital during WWII.
- **Saunders Mews** — This development was built on the site of the old Fire Station and garage. Back to the Square and the end of the Winkleigh Village Heritage Walk.

BRUSHFORD CHURCH WALK

From Winkleigh take the Eggesford road to the Lymington Arms, turn right towards Brushford, look out for the sign for the church on your left. Walk takes approx. 1 hour. There may be electric fences which can be unhooked to gain access.



HEYWOOD WALK

Take Eggesford Road out of Winkleigh, through Wembworthy until the tree plantation appears on your right. Don't take the sharp right-angle bend but continue straight on, bearing left for about half a mile. Heywood Car Park is straight ahead of you. Walk takes approx. 45 minutes..



NORTH TAWTON WALK

Leave Winkleigh on the A3124 to North Tawton. Take the fourth left then proceed down the hill to the bottom. When the road bears right, turn left and park. Walk takes approx. 1½ hours. Alternatively, start at Bondleigh Church.



Halsdon Wood (not on the map below), just to the West of Dolton, is a Devon Wildlife Trust Nature Reserve about 10 minutes drive from Winkleigh. It has a very pleasant walk through the woods and along the River Torridge. OS Map 127 Ref SS 559117.





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These walks are available in .pdf form at www.winkleighonline.com

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