



A Walk From Exeter To Killerton (Moderate)

Distance: 9.6 km or 6 miles one-way. Option of return via bus (No. 1 Service), or retrace route (for a total of 12 miles).

Time: Approximately 2.5 - 3 hours in one direction.

Summary: From Exeter (Pennsylvania and University Campus) to Killerton. Much to see including: nature, wildlife, history and archaeology. Fine views over Exe, Culm and Clyst Valleys. Walks ends at historic Killerton House and Park (National Trust) where refreshments are available.

A very varied route. Some on surfaced paths and tracks. Some on unsurfaced footpaths. Some sections on quiet country roads. One short section on busier minor road. Several moderate hills. A few sections can be muddy following wet weather, so stout footwear advised. Some gates, no stiles. Not suitable for Buggies/wheelchairs. Return journey: Bus available (Stagecoach no.1 Service) back to Exeter from near Killerton at Budlake, or from Broadclyst, or retrace route on foot.

Killerton House. If you were intending to visit Killerton house and gardens check for details and availability at [Killerton | National Trust](#).

Numbers are key points marked on the map. (See end pages).

Getting to The Start: take a P Bus from Exeter city centre. Or a ten minute walk from top of University of Exeter Campus (Northcott Theatre, Great Hall, Innovation Centre etc) via Belvedere Road or Higher Hoopern Lane.

1. Start – Pennsylvania, Exeter. Junction of Pennsylvania Road and Argyll Road Marked on the map as number 1.

This is also on the Exeter Green Circle 12 mile walking route.

And we are off!

Head North along Pennsylvania Road to the junction with Stoke Valley Road.

2. Cross Stoke Valley Road and turn right into the lane that begins at the house Hilltop. Signpost pointing right Two Counties Way. Follow the lane.

View - Look out for the long views on the right over the eastern edge of Exeter and out over the Clyst Valley.

3. Pass the lane on your right, (which is Exeter Green Circle and leads towards Mincinglake) and head straight on.

4. Pass another right turn and go straight on and enter the lane between two high hedges.

Archaeology - Up on the top of the hill to your left, aerial photography revealed the presence of a Roman Signal station. Lanes such as the one you now follow, sunken between high hedgebanks are known as hollow ways, and are often very ancient routes.

Follow the lane onwards and look out for views on the right, over Mincinglake, the eastern edge of Exeter and the Clyst Valley.

After a sharp left bend, at the top of the hill, the track bends sharply right.

5. Pause to look over the gate ahead.

View ahead you have fine views over Stoke Woods, the Exe Valley and the Raddon Hills.

Archaeology To the left of the Iron deer sculpture you can see the ditch and bank forming part of the defensive ramparts of a hillfort, probably of pre-Roman Iron-Age date. This monument is not open to the public.

Continue on the lane as it heads downhill towards Stoke Hill Farm. Passing a barn on the left turn sharp left, and then go ahead keeping the farm buildings to your right. At the corner of the house, you see a cattle grid to your left.

6. Go out through the gate. And then around to the right, outside of the garden fence. Signposted Bridleway. Head for the gate in the right corner of the field.

Then follow the gravel surfaced path which follows the line of the ridge eastwards towards the Clyst Valley.

Archaeology: The large hedge bank on the right of the path along this ridge is believed by archaeologists to be an ancient boundary.

7. Views - To your left you can see the upper edges of Stoke Woods, and beyond fine valley views. Once you reach the high point of the ridge you can see across the Culm Valley and catch your first distant sight of the wooded volcanic hill where Killerton, your destination on the edge of the Clyst Valley is located.

8. Coming downhill you come to gate onto a minor, but busy road. Take great care crossing over and heading left. After a few hundred metres cross back onto the wide grass verge. Continue past the two right hand junctions (Road sign marked "Stoke Post"). Pass the cottages and the footpath also signposted to right.

9. After a further hundred metres your route is a public bridleway through a gate to the right. This is another marvellous hollow way between increasingly high banks as you gradually descend the long hill to Huxham.

Archaeology: This hollow way is also likely to be an ancient route, forming as it does the boundary between two medieval parishes.

10. View - On the left you will catch fine glimpses of views out over Stoke Canon and the meeting point of the Rivers Culm and Exe. On your right you will pass the mixed woodland of Huxham Brake.

At the end of the hollow way, emerging into a large field, stay close to the left hand hedgebank and keep following straight ahead.

11. View – here you have long views ahead over the Culm valley, and soon coming into sight the wooded hill of Killerton “Clump”.

In the field corner re-enter a hollow way and follow the path downwards to a gate at the bottom of the hill and a small stream. Emerge onto the track and follow it ahead.

12. You are now in the tiny village of Huxham. You are now half-way to Killerton!

Archaeology: Pass Huxham church on your left. Huxham was a medieval parish and is mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086. The church is of 14th Century construction, but has an earlier Norman font.

13. At the staggered cross road junction go right and immediately left (ie overall; straight on!) Signposted Columbjohn.

(Alternative route – if you go left here from Huxham you will in just ten minutes reach Stoke Canon where a pub, a shop and a bus route back to Exeter can be found).

You follow this is a quiet country road for the next 2km there are many wild flowers to see in the hedges, but be vigilant for traffic! This road through fertile farmland lies on the edge of the floodplain of the River Culm, the Clyst valley begins just over the rise of low hills on your right.

14. At Brookleigh Farm Go straight on past a right hand junction.

15. Eventually you reach Columbjohn, on the edge of the Killerton Estate. Pass the right hand road and bear left towards the bridge, keeping the cottages that were the original farm house, on your right.

Just before the bridge turn right,

16. Then take the footpath signposted into the field to the left.

[Alternative quicker route to Killerton – instead of the path to the left, keep ahead on the track past the farm buildings. This permissive path leads you direct to Killerton shaving nearly 1km and a hill from your route, though misses the lovely woodland walk.]

Archaeology – the bridge here may not be as old as you imagine! It is believed to be of early 19th Century date, as Reverend Sweete in his 1801 journal describes fording the river at Columbjohn, suggesting there was no bridge here at that time. The fields you are now passing through once contained a mansion house, the forerunner to Killerton House, built in the reign of Elizabeth I and demolished in the 18th Century. All that remains of this now are humps-and-bumps in the field and the grand arch of a stone gateway, which you can see close to the farm buildings and track. Ahead see the tiny private chapel for the Killerton estate which dates from the early 19th Century.

Head towards the small chapel.

Pass the right side of the chapel and follow the path to the left passing a cottage.

17. Archaeology – Look out on the left where hidden amongst trees and undergrowth you will see overgrown stone walls and a disused sunken track. It leads down towards the site of Columbjohn mill first documented in 1689, but long vanished as it was destroyed by fire in 1888. On the top of the hill ahead and to the right are the foundations of a folly, an ornamental landscape feature, in the designed parkland of Killerton house.

At the track turn left.

18. At a fork in the track go neither left or right, instead take the small footpath gate ahead. This path winds up through marvellous woodland replete with masses of bluebells and wild garlic in the spring. It's a gradual but long climb along the volcanic hill on which Killerton stands. Pause often to enjoy the sights, sounds and smells of the woodland!

19. Archaeology Higher up the hill you will come to an uneven hollow on the right. This is all that remains of the foundations of the never-completed predecessor to Killerton House. It was only recently discovered by archaeologists. An interpretation board tells the story.

At the gate leave the wood into the parkland.

20. Follow the path uphill.

Archaeology If you wish a short detour to explore the gate in front of you leads up to Killerton Clump, where you can find the remains of another Iron Age Hillfort, Dolbury, which has a legendary dragon associated with it.

If not turn right...

View – looking past the giant wooden picture frame you have amazing views back over the direction you came from. You can see the ridge of Stoke Hill, the woods of Huxham Brake, and on a clear day; views beyond the Exe Valley to far off Dartmoor.

Follow the path downhill keeping the iron fence of Killerton gardens on your left.

21. At a wooden farm gate ahead you will see a small gate in the hedge on your left, go through and into the landscaped parkland adjacent to Killerton House. Go straight ahead and keep close to the fence on your left. See the amazing mature trees in the parkland. Parkland trees grow much larger than their woodland counterparts. They are rich wildlife habitats but require careful management to thrive.

22. Pass Killerton House on your left hand side, behind the stone walled gully of the "Ha-ha" designed to keep livestock out of the gardens without blocking views.

Archaeology Killerton is a grand Georgian house with beautiful landscape gardens and parkland now in the care of The National Trust. Entrance is via the stable block (ahead). There is lots to explore and is a whole day out in itself!

The footpath keeps ahead parallel to the drive on your left.

23. At the Iron estate gates go through the pedestrian gate to the road.

Well done you have reached your destination!

The entrance to the House and gardens is signposted just to your left where facilities refreshments and information are available in the stable block.

You could choose to walk and return to Exeter the way you came. Everything looks different in the other direction!

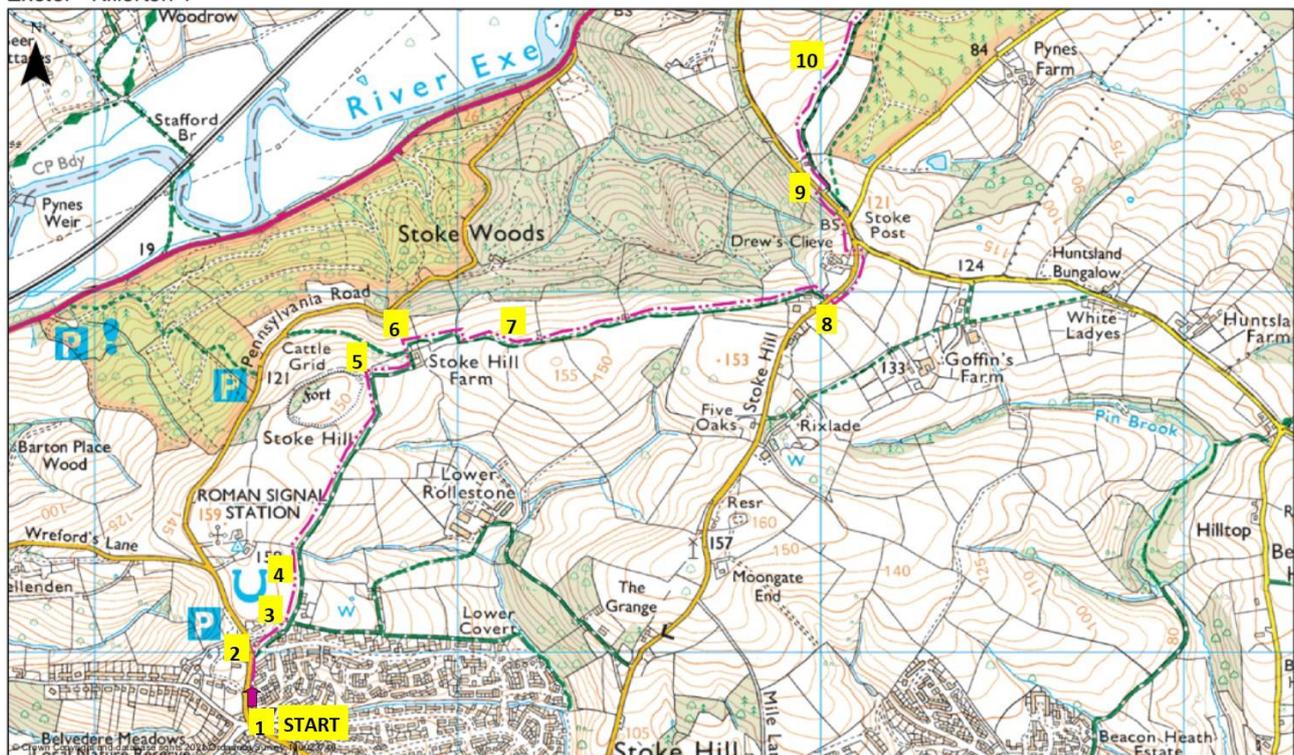
Or: there are walking and cycling routes to the nearby village of Broadclyst (4.5km).

Or: if you wish to catch a bus back to Exeter, it is 0.8km to the bus stop. Cross the road through the gates for a short walk to Budlake post office, **24**. - then keeping straight ahead, follow the road across the motorway bridge to the B3181.

25. For buses to Exeter (The no.1 Service), cross the road to the bus stop.

Maps: © Crown Copyright and database rights 2021 Ordnance Survey 100023746

Exeter - Killerton 1



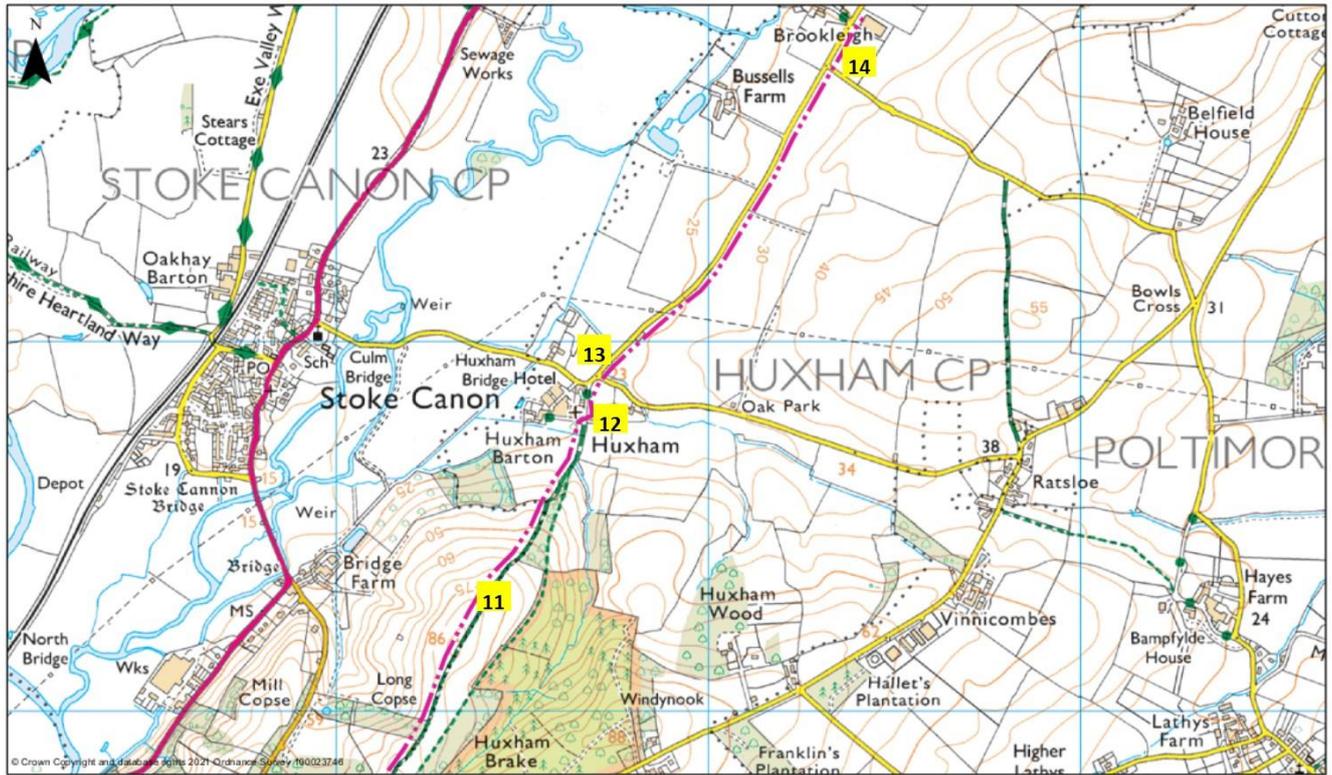
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--- Route of Walk

Exeter - Killerton 2



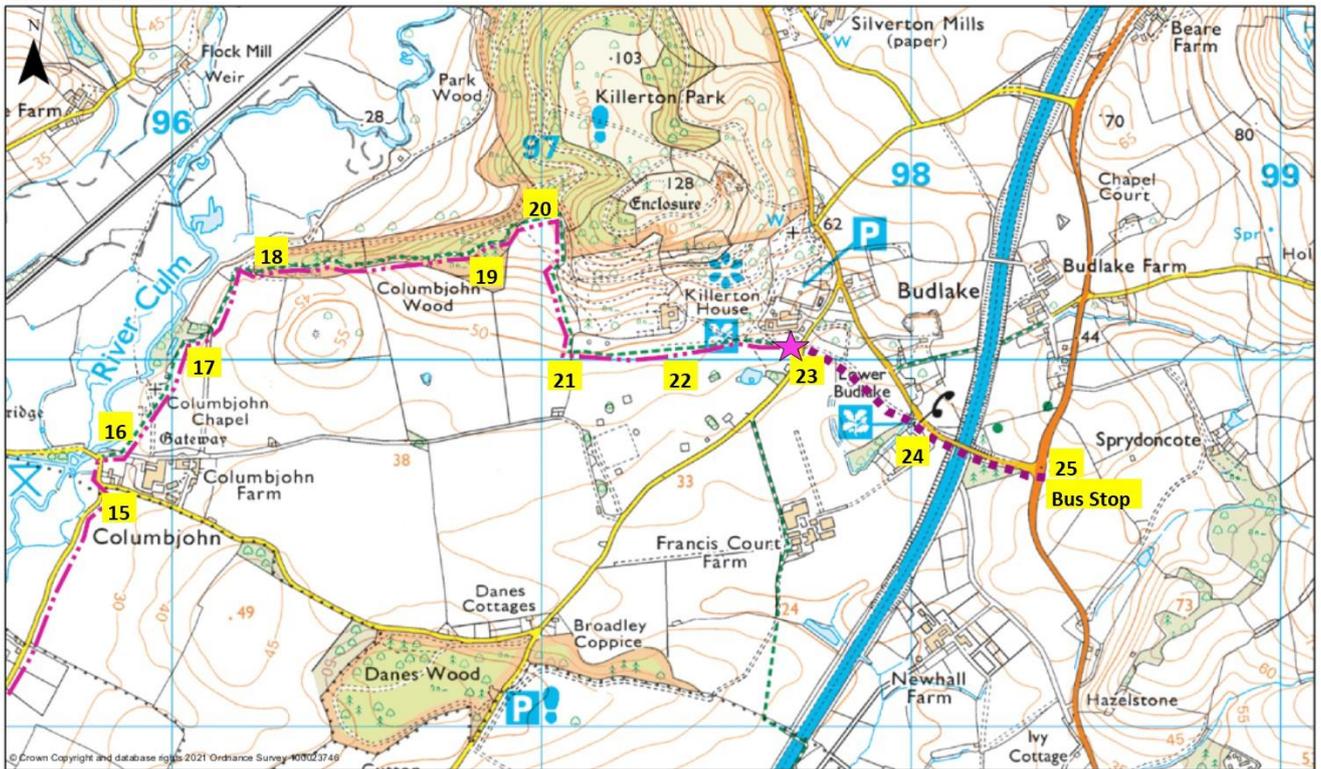
0 0.175 0.35 0.7
km

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Exeter - Killerton 3



0 0.175 0.35 0.7
km

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23 - - - - - = further 0.8 KM to bus stop 25



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