

Discover Ludwell Valley Park: Self-guided Walk

Walk 1. Pynes Hill & the Cherry Orchard – Circular route

This walk is designed to be used in conjunction with a walk map available here:

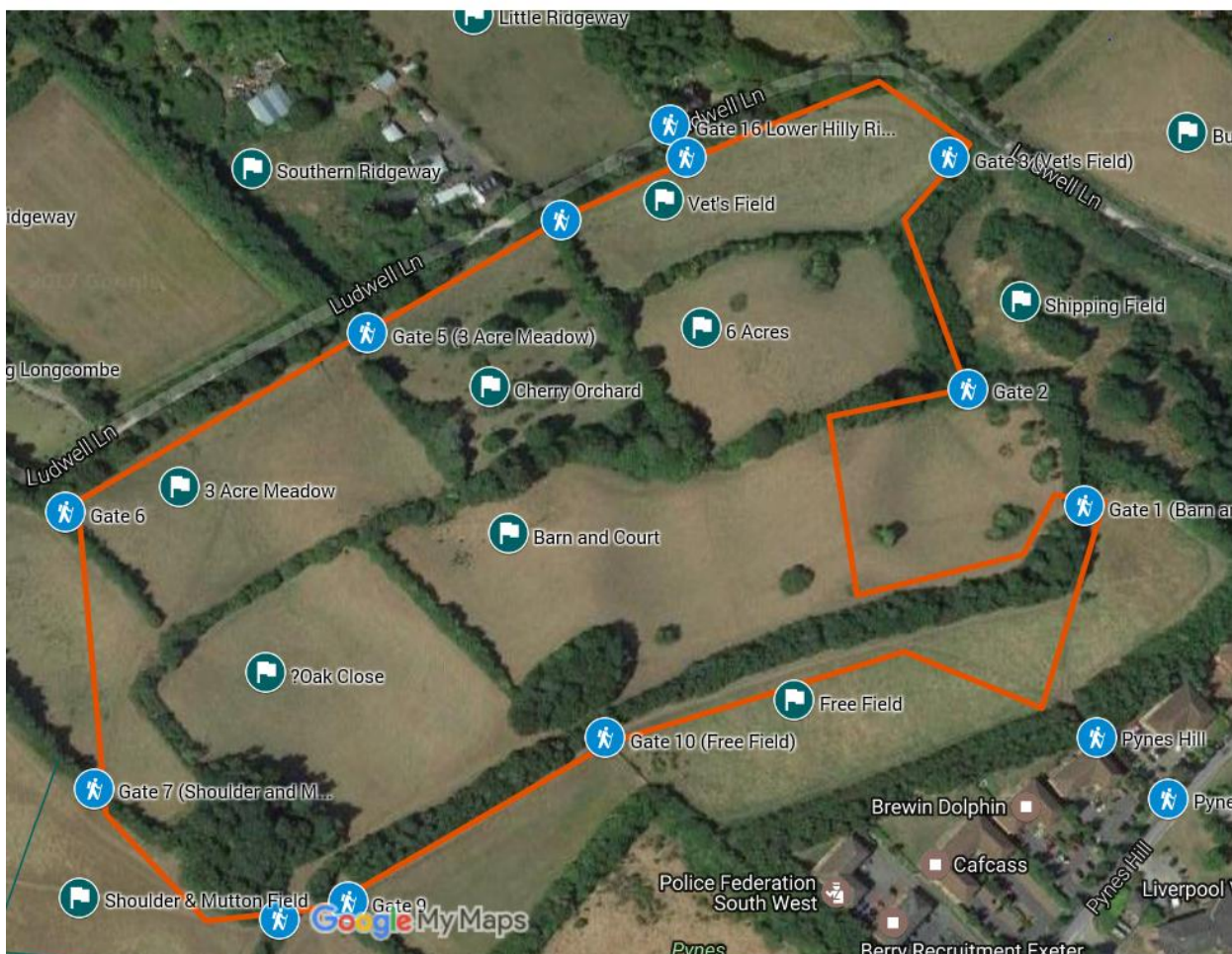
<https://www.google.com/maps/d/edit?mid=1ySrJhOAYVG6geHWcKXMKsHH0bBM&ll=50.70925758416091%2C-3.495937599999934&z=15>. See also picture on following page.

The numbered gate references, park entrance points and field names in this walk guide are shown on this map.

Duration 30 minutes approximately

Level Moderate. One uphill and one downhill slope.
Rough paths, not suitable for wheelchairs and pushchairs.

Start Pynes Hill Gate, between the Redrow building and Aston Court, Pynes Hill, Exeter, EX2 5AZ



Directions

1. Go through the **Pynes Hill entrance gate**, along the short path, through the next gate and enter Free Field where you will see a display board. Take the diagonal path across the field, to your right, towards the end of the hedgerow. Follow the fence round to the left and go through Gate 1 into Barn and Court field on the north side of the ridge.
2. Walk along the top of the ridge for about 50 metres (noting views of the Exeter cityscape) then walk down the gentle slope on your right, making your way towards Gate 2 at the bottom right of the field. Go through this gate and follow the shaded footpath past the sharp right bend. Just before the footpath emerges onto Ludwell Lane, go through Gate 3 on your left into Vet's Field.
3. Follow the perimeter fence on the right of this field, adjacent to Ludwell Lane. Go through Gate 4 into the Cherry Orchard, continuing to follow the lower path at the bottom of the old orchard. Go through Gate 5, into 3 Acre Meadow, keeping to the lower path alongside the boundary fence, adjacent to Ludwell Lane.
4. Go through Gate 6 and turn immediately left following the path steeply uphill heading towards the gate at the brow of the hill. *Look backwards to see views of Heavitree.*
5. Go through Gate 7 at the top of the hill into Shoulder and Mutton Field and turn left on the footpath along the field boundary walking towards the crest of the hill. Rest on the "Fool on the Hill" seat and admire the views over the valley towards Haldon Belvedere tower. You can extend your walk by taking any of the paths around Round Hill and back to the top of the field.
6. Keeping to the left perimeter fence, go through Gate 8 at the top and immediately right into a further field with a bench. Here you can admire the fine views over the Exe Estuary towards Topsham and Exmouth. You can further extend your walk by taking the footpath around the perimeter of the field and back to this gate.
7. Go through Gate 9 on the left and walk along the hedgerow boundary of the field, which is full of wildflowers in the summer. Go through Gate 10 on this path and back into Free Field where you began your walk. You will see a path on the right leading back to Pynes Hill entrance.

What to look out for

Look over the Exeter skyline and identify landmarks – Exeter Cathedral, Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital, University, Heavitree Church, St Leonards Church

Enjoy the view over the Exe estuary towards Exmouth and note Haldon Belvedere tower on the horizon to the west

Spot the wildlife including a great variety of British and migrating birds including buzzards, woodpeckers, goldfinches. Foxes, rabbits and squirrels are often seen in the valley as well as dragonflies near the Northbrook (or, as it is known locally, the Panny)

Enjoy the trees and wildflower meadows and look out for butterflies and bees.

Enjoying your visit

To get the most from your visit without harming the wildlife that lives there, please remember:

Respect wildlife

Please don't pick flowers or disturb nesting birds! If you see anything particularly exciting during your visit, please tell us about it via Facebook, Twitter or email

Dogs

Dogs are welcome in the Valley Park, but please keep them under control and clean up after your dog. There are a number of dog bins at entrances to the Valley Park.

In the winter, there are likely to be overwintering birds looking for food, particularly in those fields where you see the signs explaining this. It is particularly important to control your dog in these fields ie keep them to the edges of the fields only, as they are specially planted to attract important bird species such as chirrup buntings and the birds will not use these fields if disturbed.

Cattle

There are cattle in some fields from April to October – please keep your dog under close control and do not allow them to approach the cattle.

Be properly dressed

Generally the terrain is uneven and after rain, some paths can be very muddy.. Make sure you have the right footwear – Wellington boots or stout shoe / walking boots are advised – and wear sensible clothing. You may find a walking stick helpful on the slopes.

Toilet facilities

Wonford Sports Centre, (Burnthouse Lane, Exeter EX2 6NF) have very kindly said that anyone doing one of the Ludwell Life guided walks is welcome to use the Centre's toilet facilities. Just tell the staff on reception that you are on a 'Ludwell Life walk' and they will show you the loos.

About Ludwell Life

Ludwell Life is an independent community group, set up to protect and enhance Ludwell Valley Park. There are lots of ways to support what we do, from joining as a Friend, to coming along the regular conservation, litter picking and other events we organise. Sign up to our monthly newsletter, follow us on Facebook or Twitter or email us.

Volunteers have put this walking guide together, to encourage more people to enjoy and get to know the wonderful public space that is Ludwell Valley Park



@LudwellLife



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