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Little Dartmouth Circuit

Starting point and OS Grid reference	Little Dartmouth – NT car park (SX 874491).
Ordnance Survey map	OL 20 South Devon
Distance	5.3 miles
Date of Walk	7 July 2015
Traffic light rating	

Introduction: This is a really pretty circuit with probably the most spectacular view over Dartmouth and Kingswear you are likely to get. It culminates along an attractive coastal section with expansive views around Start Bay. It follows part of the Diamond Jubilee Way, created to commemorate the 60th anniversary of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's accession to the throne in 2012 and part of the South West Coast Path.

Along the way, you get the chance to visit Beacon Parks with its replica beacon, lit to celebrate the Jubilee and the amazing view over Dartmouth and the Royal Naval College.

Later, you also pass the entrance to Dartmouth Castle, which has protected the entrance to the River Dart for over 600 years.

On the hill above Kingswear on the opposite side of the river you will see a tower. This is the Grade II listed Day Mark, a navigational aid for shipping in the days before sat. nav!

The walk is straightforward although there are a couple of steep step and hill sections, fortunately not too long.

The walk starts from a National Trust car park at Little Dartmouth (the one with the information board). To get there, turn east off the A379 along the B3205, just north of Stoke Fleming, signposted with a brown tourist sign for Dartmouth Castle. At a cross roads, turn right for Little Dartmouth. The car park is a fraction left at the next junction.

Start: Turn right out of the car park entrance, following the Diamond Jubilee Way fingerpost (SX 874491).

You very soon arrive at the tiny hamlet of Little Dartmouth. Here, turn left at a three way fingerpost, again for the "Diamond Jubilee Way" plus "Weeke Cottage ½ mile" (SX 877492). After a few yards through a gateway, keep straight ahead.

The path to Weeke Cottage is almost a straight line and you join the drive to it. Follow it to the road and turn left.

After a few yards, turn right following a public footpath fingerpost. You are following the drive to Higher Weeke. A large stone with its name is at the start of the drive.

At Higher Weeke, keep to the left of the wall, following a purple Diamond Jubilee Way arrow. After a few yards, the path bends right, round the back of the property, following a clear track. On arriving at a quiet road, turn left.

Just before arriving at the main road (the A379), turn right following the Diamond Jubilee Fingerpost. You still join the A379 but this turn means you have only a very short distance to walk along it – just as well as it is narrow and busy!

Walk along the main road and as it bends left, branch off right along a tarmac lane – Jawbones Hill (SX 870502). Again, there is a Diamond Jubilee fingerpost pointing the way.

Just over a quarter of a mile later, turn left by the water tower and continue past it into Beacon Parks, little more than a field, where the grass is mown into a series of paths. There is an information board before the entrance. Take the first path on the right off the main path, to get to a viewpoint with a spectacular panorama of Dartmouth and a good view of the Royal Naval College. Return to the main track around the park and turn right to see the beacon itself. There are a number of picnic tables in this area.

Retrace your steps to the information board and turn left along a descending broad track. When this splits, turn right to follow the “Diamond Jubilee Way” and “Dyers Wood ¼ Mile” fingerposts through a kissing gate (SX 876502).

Follow the path along the hillside. At SX 877509 you come to a bench which would make a nice picnic spot with a spectacular view over Dartmouth and Kingswear. You can watch the unusual vehicle ferry plying its trade, comprising floating platforms propelled by tug boats. This is unique in Britain.

Follow the path through the trees eventually going down some steps and reaching a two way fingerpost. Turn left for the “Diamond Jubilee Way”.

The path exits into a tarmac lane. Turn right and almost immediately left down some steps to join the coast road. Turn right here. The road here is “Southtown”. As you follow it along, and it becomes “Warfleet Road”.

Turn left at Castle Road, following the fingerpost for “Coast Path” and the brown tourist sign for “Dartmouth Castle” (SX 883504).

When the road forks, keep left for the Coast Path and left again at the next fork.

The route goes through the churchyard of Petrox Church then passes the entrance to the castle. Continue on the coast path following the fingerpost for “Stoke Flemming”.

Climb some steps and at the top, turn left for the Coast Path and “Little Dartmouth 2¼ miles”.

The road goes uphill to a dead end but you go left past Sugary Green following the yellow Coast Path arrow.

Some steep steps take you down to then up from Sugary Cove. At the top is a bench handy for a breather. Turn left at this junction, continuing to follow the Coast Path indicated by a yellow arrow.

After a short climb, turn left along a tarmac lane. At Compass Cottage, turn left, following the fingerpost for "Little Dartmouth 2 miles".

The path descends to the very edge of the coast at Blackstone Point. Ignore a fork to the right part way down.

SX 885495 reach a three way fingerpost. There is a short path down to Compass Cove should you wish to explore it. Otherwise, continue on the coast path for "Little Dartmouth Car Park 1 $\frac{1}{3}$ miles".

There is quite a steep climb from Compass Cove. Part way up is a bench (which you might be grateful for!). From here, follow the yellow arrow for the Coast Path.

At SX 881490, pass and ignore a path on the right indicated by a green arrow.

After going through a stone gateway to grassy cliff tops at Combe Point, turn right and follow the wall along. Stoke Fleming comes into view. At a gated entrance to a field, turn right along a path to the car park (do not go into the field) (SX 877487).

