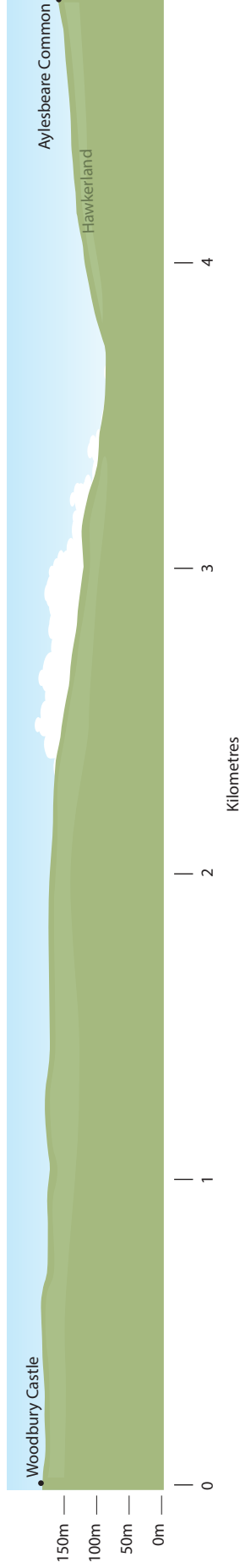
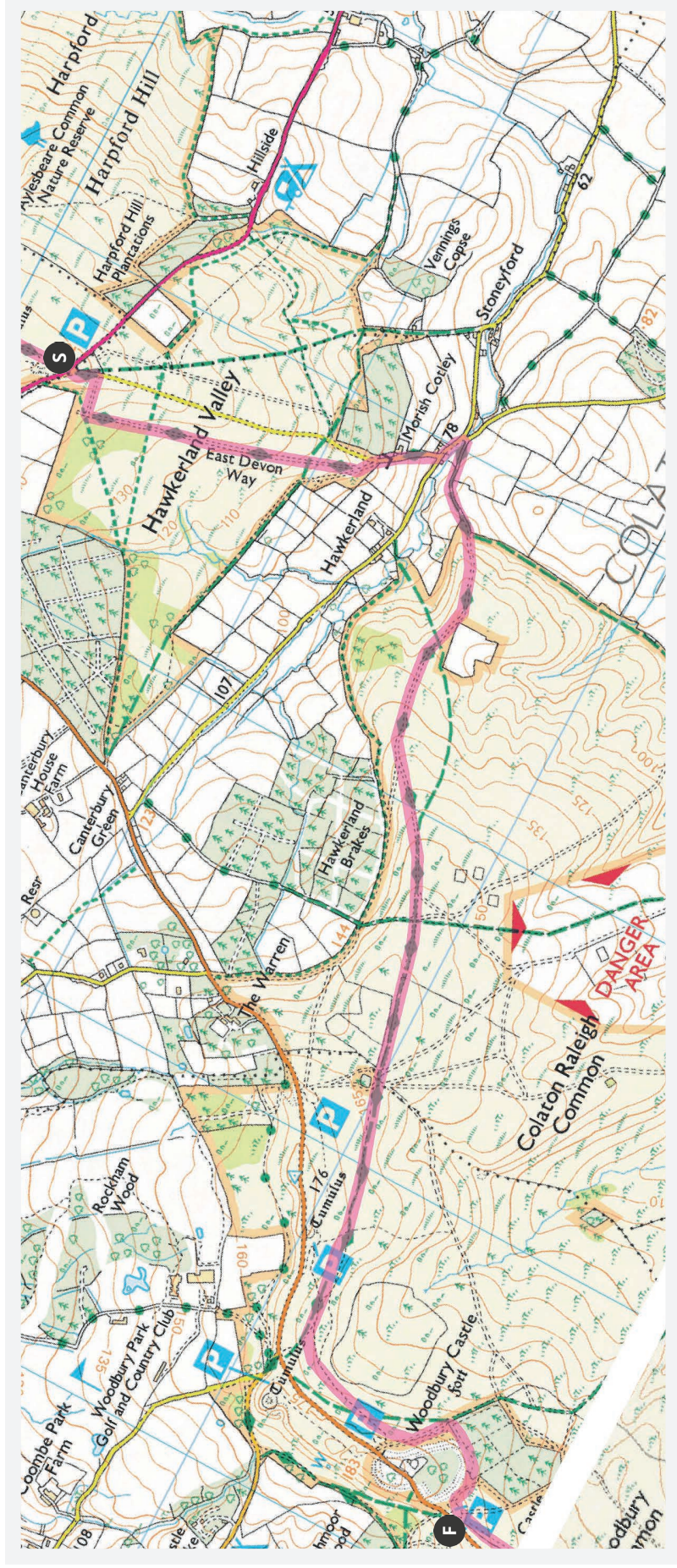


## Stage 5

## Aylesbeare Common to Woodbury Castle



# East to West - Stage 5

## Aylesbeare Common to Woodbury Castle



**Start location:** Aylesbeare Common EX10 0BL  
SY057897

**End point:** Woodbury Castle, EX5 1JJ SY032872

**Length:** 3m / 4.8 km (approx)

**Map:** Explorer 115, Landranger 192

**Route Summary:** This is a very pleasant three mile walk, across the pebblebeds, which were created over 240 million years ago and Woodbury Common.

### Description

- [1] From Hawkerland Hill car park (also known as Joney's Cross) head towards the far right corner and take the path leading to the lane. Cross over the lane and follow the 'to Public Footpath' sign and head west, down the track. After 120 yards turn left down the track south, away from the main road. Follow this wide 'coach and horses' track to near Morish Cotley, with farmland in the distance in front of you.
- [2] The path emerges from the woodland on to the lane. Turn right, with a large white thatched house on your left, heading downhill. At the bottom, at the small red brick barn, turn left for about 100 yards, past a converted chapel (look through the gates to your left) towards Hawkerland cross roads. At the bridge over the stream, turn right up the public bridleway, then take the right fork along a pebbly track wide enough for a vehicle, with high banks on either side.
- [3] At the next fork take the left track uphill to enjoy the wide-open space of the common. Follow the wide track for nearly 2 miles with gorse bushes on either side. There are numerous forks and junctions, but in general keep straight ahead, looking out for frequent waymark posts to guide you. Ahead in the distance you will eventually see the main road and a wooded hill which is Woodbury Castle. On your left are open vistas of the heathland.
- [4] Keep on the track when it eventually veers left, keeping Woodbury Castle ahead of you. There are some boardwalks alongside a stretch which can be

muddy. As you near the castle, walk alongside it on your right and look out for a waymarker to turn right into the woodlands. Here you can clearly see the ramparts - high mounds of earth - of the castle (a prehistoric hilltop fort dating back to 500-300BC). Go immediately left then right into the castle and follow the waymarks which lead you in a horseshoe-shaped curve around the ramparts until a final left turn brings you to the car park.

**Explore:** take time to explore Woodbury Castle, this Iron Age Hill fort is now a magical beech woodland with moss covered tree roots.

The high ramparts (where the old castle walls were) go round in a 1/2 mile circle. During autumn when the leaves turn golden they lay a golden carpet on the ground.

Be king of the castle on this important Iron Age Hill Fort and imagine it guarding the settlement of the Exe Estuary below.

Detour: on a clear and sunny day the views are spectacular; on coming out of the woodland turn left at the Pebblebed Heath information board you will soon be able to see towards the Exe Estuary to the right or the sea in Lyme Bay or over to Dartmoor through to Exmoor and the Quantock Hills in Somerset.