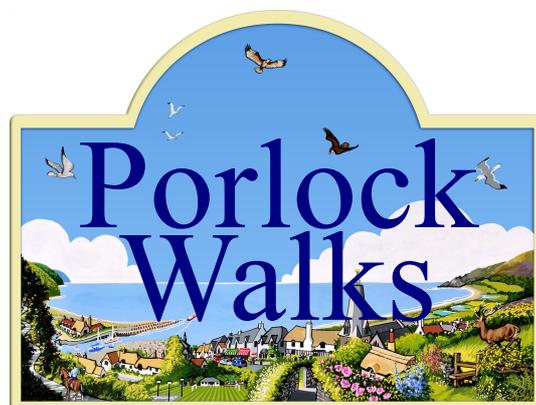


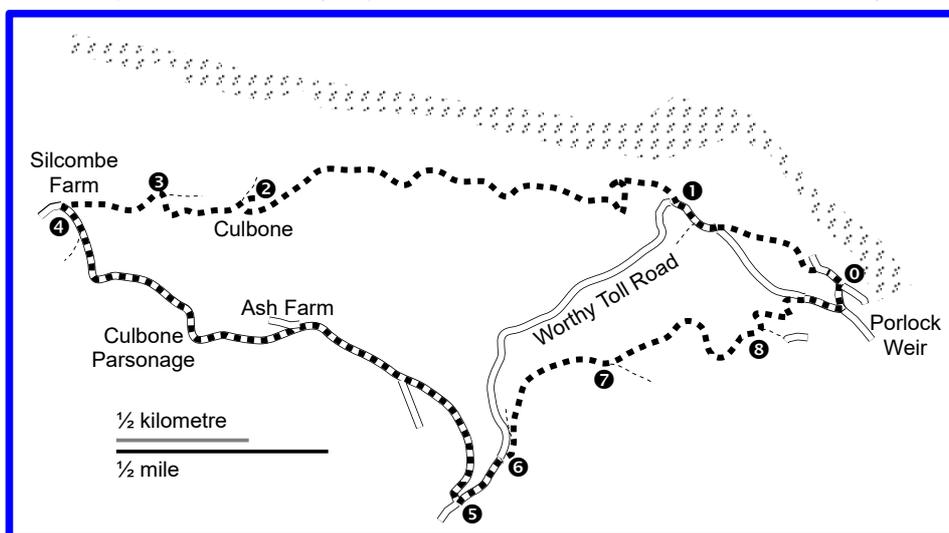
Culbone Church and Coleridge Farms

About 6 miles / 2½ hours



This is a moderate to strenuous circular walk on good paths. The walk starts at Porlock Weir, where there is a car park, toilets, a public house, cafes and a small shop (TA24 8PB; SS 8647 4787). There is a bus service from Porlock to Porlock Weir.

The walk climbs into Yearnor Woods and then traverses the hillside to Culbone. There is then a short climb to the Coleridge farms, with their stunning views, and a gentle walk back through Worthy Wood. the hillside, the walk returns through ancient Holm Oak woods eventually descending Lynch Combe and thus returning to Horner Water.



Porlock Weir has been a small harbour since the 15th century and was once a thriving fishing village. The Porlock Weir Hotel was used by visitors hunting deer in The Parks.



The walk starts in Porlock Weir, taking the small path between the Ship Inn and the Porlock Weir Hotel ①. The path is signed Coast Path and Culbone all the way to Culbone Church.

The Bristol Channel has the highest tidal range in Britain, the second highest in the world. Tides are primarily caused by the gravitational pull of the moon; there are two high and low tides each day. At Porlock Weir the range between high and low tide is frequently over 10 metres, meaning the water rises or falls by more than one and a half metres each hour.

The place name Porlock Weir refers to the stone and hazel fishing weirs that were once common here – small curved walls on the beach that trapped fish as the tide went out.

The path goes behind the Porlock Weir Hotel, through a gate and into a field.



Follow the field boundary for two fields, passing through a kissing gate. Eventually the track passes through two field gates and then rises to the Worthy Toll Road, where you turn right.

Follow the Toll Road to the Toll House, where you leave the road to take the path to the right of this lovely building, through a stone arch ❶.

The path is well signed and passes through a tunnel before zig-zagging up and then traversing the woods to eventually reach Culbone ❷.

Near the tunnels are the remains of Ashley Combe House. In 1835, Ada Byron Lovelace, Lord Byron's daughter and newly married, moved into Ashley Combe, a romantic Italianate house with huge formal gardens. The tunnels were designed to allow tradesmen to get to the house without their carts being seen.

In Culbone, turn right and right again to go into the churchyard.

Culbone church is often described as the smallest complete parish church in England, seating just 33. Parts of it date back to the twelfth century. At sometime in the fourteenth century the lovely old doorway was reconstructed. In recent years Culbone's population has dwindled. Long gone are the charcoal burners who worked in the surrounding woods.



The benches in the graveyard make Culbone a great place to rest.

Follow the path through the churchyard and leave by a small gate. This takes you to a path by the stream, signed Silcombe Farm. The path passes under a bridge and climbs the combe. Eventually, the path curves right and goes through a small gate to continue climbing. This leads to a track ❸. Turn left, signed Coast Path and Silcombe Farm.

Pass through two field gates to reach a quiet lane ❹. Here turn left, signed Ash Farm. Follow this lane, ignoring the right fork to Culbone Inn. Pass through Culbone Parsonage and pass Ash Farm, set back from the road on your left.

There are good views from this high lane across to Porlock Bay, the Bristol Channel and Wales.

The romantic poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge regularly walked these hills and combes, staying in remote farms and enjoying the peace of this area. He wrote his poem Kubla Khan in either Culbone Parsonage or Ash Farm. He perceived the entire course of the poem in a dream (possibly opium induced). Unfortunately, his dream was interrupted by a visitor from Porlock and Kubla Khan remains just 54 lines long and unfinished.

At a junction of lanes, keep straight ahead, signed Worthy Toll Road. At the next junction of lanes, take the left turn ❺, again signed Worthy Toll Road. Continue down the lane until you come to a track on your right signed to Porlockford and Porlock ❻. Take this track through a gate to cross a stream and continue to a junction of tracks. Here, keep straight ahead, again signed Porlockford and Porlock.

The track traverses the hillside and eventually reaches ❷ a small path left ,

signed Porlock Weir. Take care, this can be missed. Follow this narrow path which meanders down through the wood and crosses a more major track to continue ahead, signed Bridleway.



The low bushes that grow all through these woods are whortleberries (pictured). You may know them as bilberries or, depending on where you are from, blaeberry, ground hurts, whinberry, winberry, wimberry, myrtle blueberry or fraughan. On Exmoor, children were given days off school to harvest whortleberries and a cream tea was traditionally served with whortleberry jam.

The path widens to become a track and continues to descend gently through the wood. The track curls left round a small combe and then descends more steeply.

At the next junction, fork right, signed Bridleway. The track then levels out, curving right. About 100 metres after the junction, take a small path going sharp left and down hill, signed Porlock Weir ☺.

Take the path to zig-zag down hill. At its bottom, the path reaches the Worthy Toll Road. Turn right along it. When you reach the first junction, turn sharp left, down hill, back into Porlock Weir.

Walk left to visit the harbour and, beyond it, some small workshops and cafes.

If you have any comments, corrections or ideas that might improve our route description, please email us at porlockwalks@gmail.com.

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