

# CLASSIC SUMMER WALKS

# BELLEVER



Kirstie Smith from the Forestry Commission shares some great ideas for a walk in one of Dartmoor's larger forests.

Bellever Forest near Postbridge is a beautiful place for a walk. Whether it's a gentle stroll by the East Dart River or an exhilarating walk up to Bellever Tor it's a beautiful and tranquil setting and a great place to visit with the whole family. It's also a wonderful place to bring dogs for a walk, with plenty of space for them to burn energy and the beautiful river for a swim or a quick drink of water. It's advisable to keep dogs on lead around the picnic area.

Bellever is a working forest and the Forestry Commission have been growing Timber there since 1931. Bellever produces some of the best softwood available in the South West and it is widely used from the construction industry through to chipboard manufacturing, fence posts and firewood. Bellever is also focused on recreation with waymarked trails to explore. The forest is bursting with archaeology from its clapper bridge and the Lich Way to the more subtle but abundant stone cists, burial cairns and field boundaries. There are over thirty hut circles within the forest, just a hint that there were many more people living on the high moor during the Bronze Age (4000-2600 years ago) than there are today. Excavations in the 1890s found flint knives, scrapers and shards of pottery, some of it highly decorated.



## Bellever Moor and Meadow

Bellever Moor and Meadow is one of Devon Wildlife Trust's most recently acquired nature reserves and also one of its most exciting. The 70 hectare reserve is made up of a beautiful patchwork of traditional haymeadows, wet grassland and moorland and is divided into two compartments.

Bellever Moor and Meadow has been leased to Devon Wildlife Trust by the Forestry Commission under a 25 year management agreement.

The Forestry Commission identified the opportunity for the land to be managed more effectively for wildlife and approached Devon Wildlife Trust to propose the partnership agreement. It will be open to the public to explore and enjoy for free, 365 days a year. Like all of Devon Wildlife Trust's nature reserves, it will be managed as a haven for local wildlife.

**Further information**  
[www.devonwildlifetrust.org](http://www.devonwildlifetrust.org)



# POSTBRIDGE TRAIL



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## POSTBRIDGE TRAIL

A circular route along forestry tracks with stunning views out across open moorland and the opportunity to make a detour up Bellever Tor.

**LENGTH:** 3 miles (4.5km)

**TIME:** 1.5 hours

**START/FINISH:** Forestry Commission car park, Postbridge SX646787

**TERRAIN:** Mostly surfaced forestry tracks with some steep rocky sections.

**MAPS:** OS Explorer OL28 Dartmoor

**Leaflet:** Explore Bellever Forest

**PUBLIC TRANSPORT:** The 98 Tavistock to Yelverton bus service runs via Postbridge and Bellever daily Monday – Saturday.

**PARKING:** Free forest car park.

**NEARBY ATTRACTIONS:** Postbridge Visitor Centre Postbridge clapper bridge.

**Refreshments:** There is a village shop, pub and hotel in Postbridge all within walking distance of the start of the route.



**This trail is waymarked with yellow**

- ① Leave the car park through the gate and take the public footpath uphill along the main forestry track. Ignore first right turn and continue straight on uphill.
- ② Where the track divides take the right fork and look out to the right above the young trees for wonderful views to Higher White Tor and Longafor Tor. Keep to the main track over the brow and gently downhill until the junction. Bellever Tor should now be in view on your right.
- ③ Take the right fork of the main surfaced track following the yellow waymarkers. When you come to the broken down stone wall you can either continue along the grassy path beside the trees on your left or take a detour up Bellever Tor.  
  
If you stay close to the trees, continue to follow the rocky path downhill beneath the Tor until you come to a drystone wall. Bear left following the yellow arrow and continue downhill past a bench to meet the main track.
- ④ Turn left then immediately right along the lower waymarked track. When you come out of the trees you will have great views out to your right towards Soussons Forest, Hameldown and Haytor in the distance.
- ⑤ Continue to follow the main track uphill ignoring all side turnings and enjoying the stunning views out to the right.
- ⑥ At the T-junction turn right and retrace your steps downhill to the car park.

# BELLEVER TRAIL



**This trail is waymarked with red**

- ① From the main car park leave the toilet block on your right and follow the main track and red waymarkers. After a short distance you will see a picnic area on your right. Follow the path between the picnic benches and go out through the gate on the far side. Take the track uphill straight ahead.
- ② When you reach the boundary wall keep following the main track round to the right.
- ③ Where the track divides keep right gently downhill following the red waymarkers. Continue to follow the track out of the forest and between the fields.
- ④ Go through the gate and turn right along the tarmac road passing the entrance to Bellever YHA on your left. Where the road divides keep right and turn right along the road. After a short distance turn right along the forest track to return to the main car park.

Cyclists are also welcome but asked to stay on the stoned forest roads and, with the exception of bridleways, horse riding is by permit only.



## BELLEVER TRAIL

A peaceful walk through the forest where you may stumble across silent hut circles, grazing ponies and even deer.

**LENGTH:** 2.5 miles (4km)

**TIME:** 1.25 hours

**START/FINISH:** Main Forestry Commission car park, Bellever SX656773

**TERRAIN:** Mostly surfaced forestry tracks with some gentle slopes.

**MAPS:** OS Explorer OL28 Dartmoor

**Leaflet:** Explore Bellever Forest

**PUBLIC TRANSPORT:** The 98 Tavistock to Yelverton bus service runs via Postbridge and Bellever daily Monday – Saturday.

**PARKING:** Forestry Commission car park. Pay & Display - £1 for 2 hours. Accessible toilets and baby changing facilities are available.

**NEARBY ATTRACTIONS:** Bellever YHA

**Refreshments:** There is a village shop, pub and hotel in Postbridge.

## Guided Walks

There are guided walks available run by the Dartmoor Pony Heritage Trust. Tel: 01 626 833234.

## Other forests to visit ...

A short distance away from Bellever, on the edge of Dartmoor, another wonderful place for a walk is Haldon Forest Park. Haldon has over 40km of walking and cycling trails to suit all abilities as well as a range of other activities on offer. It is home to Go Ape, the high wire ropes course and Segway Southwest. There are also other activities available such as Nordic Walking and archery and A Touch of the Wild runs a range of children's activity sessions including bushcraft as well as other events such as birthday parties. The Ridge Café is open every day on site too.

**Further information**  
[www.forestry.gov.uk/bellever](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/bellever)

