

BAT TRAIL-8

Chudleigh Town



Photo: Surrounding Countryside

Chudleigh is an ancient town on a limestone ridge, meaning that the landscape is riddled with caves and old quarries. Lanes and footpaths crisscross the rich countryside which is a Special Area of Conservation for greater horseshoe bats.

Bats are insect feeding creatures and Britain's only flying mammal. Of the 18 species of bat in this country, the greater horseshoe bat is one of our larger and rarer species. As bats are nocturnal, it is very unusual to see them during the day; this walk will take you through some of their favoured habitat. Evening walks in and around Chudleigh may reward you with glimpses of

common pipistrelles as well as many other species.

This walk leads from the brightly lit town past the limestone caves where up to 13 species of bat can roost. It follows the Kate Brook valley, past hedges used for navigation by the bats and over hilly pasture land grazed by cattle and sheep on the higher slopes. These slopes are well wooded, providing foraging and roosting areas.

DEVON
GREATER
HORSESHOE
BAT PROJECT



ROUTE INFO

Start:	Chudleigh Town Car Park 50p per hour, £3 over 5 hours
Distance and timings:	1.5 miles (less than 1 hour)
Circular Walk:	Yes
Terrain & Description of paths	Road and footpaths across fields. Moderate grade difficulty. Not wheelchair or pushchair friendly
Obstacles and Gradients:	Muddy with some slippery rock, not very steep
Public Transport:	Bus No's. 39 and 182
Toilets:	Car park and Town Hall
Refreshment & Other Facilities:	Variety of cafés and pubs in Chudleigh
OS Map:	Explorer OL44; Landranger 191 and 192
Grid Reference and postcode:	SX 868 796

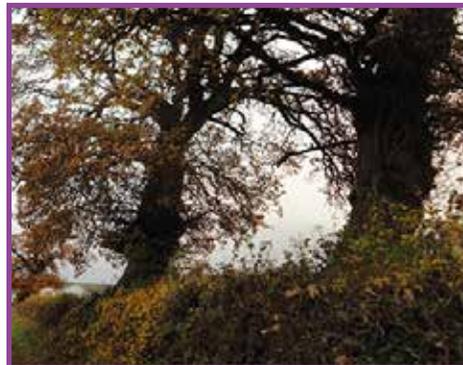


Photo: Hedgerow with large trees



Photo: Country path



Photo: Phil Richardson



Photo: Frank Greenaway



Photo: Chudleigh Town Hall

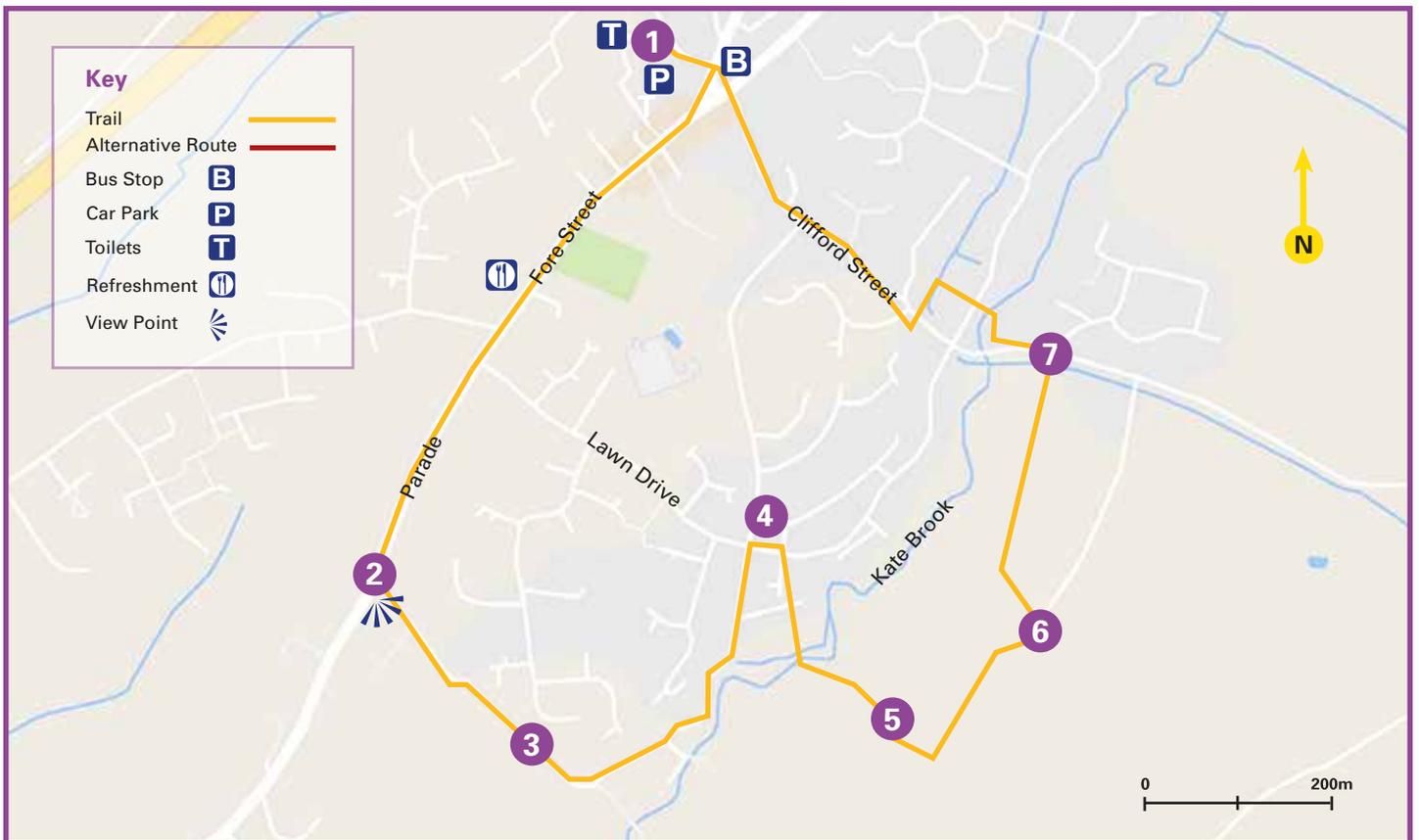


Devon
Wildlife Trust



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DIRECTIONS

- 1 Turn right from car park, in front of Co-op and then turn right into Fore Street for half a mile.
- 2 Go past the church and pubs and turn left onto Rock Road. On the right is the limestone rock containing caves, but it is very slippery and potentially dangerous so it is best avoided. Bats are always to be seen in summer evenings at the corner and in the deep lane by the Kate Brook. There is a lovely view to the quarry on the left and sunset to the right.
- 3 After 70m on the left there is a patch of grass and two old oak trees, on the right is the Rock and caves. Greater horseshoe bats like to overwinter in caves as they have a constant temperature and humidity allowing the bats to expend minimal energy, and not dry out whilst they hibernate. Bear left at the corner. Follow Parkway down to the left, along the bank of the Kate Brook then up to the crossroads with Lawn Drive.
- 4 Take the first right after 20m going through the passage to a footpath leading to a footbridge over the Kate Brook. Streams like this are really important for greater horseshoe bats, which will fly low over them, using them to navigate through the valley.
- 5 200m up the footpath go through a kissing gate on the right, go another 100 metres and through a kissing gate on the left, turn left and along the hedge line to an old quarry with patch of woodland. Woodland edges provide good feeding grounds for bats. Insects congregate in sheltered areas, almost like a bat buffet!
- 6 Go through another kissing gate and after 100m turn right onto Garden Spot lane. The permanent pasture here is important for greater horseshoe bats which rely on cow pats to provide a home for one of their favourite foods – dung beetles!
- 7 Turn left onto Cemetery Hill and walk down towards Kate Brook foot bridge. Then cross the road, turn slightly left and continue up Clifford Street to Conduit Square and cross the road in front of the Town Hall to the car park.