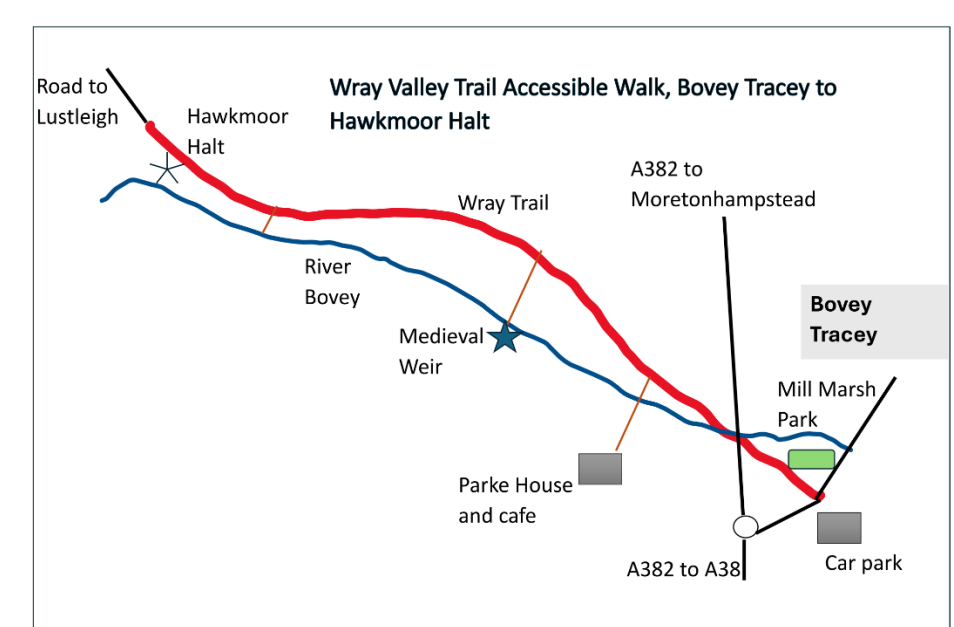


# The Wray Valley Trail from Bovey Tracey to Hawkmoor Halt – an accessible walk

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This walk is lovely throughout the year and is a good option in winter when it is too windy or wet to go on the moor. The surface is good and the main route has a gentle slope though the extension to Lustleigh has steep hills and the track to Parke house and café also has a steep climb. It is suitable for those with mobility issues, people pushing prams and pushchairs, and for wheelchairs and mobility scooters. Disabled Ramblers would classify the main route as Category 1, though the extensions would be Category 2/3. It has been tested by the Wheeled Access Group on several occasions.



The main walk is 2.5 kms in each direction, the extension to Lustleigh along a road adds about 1.5 kms to your walk.

Park at Station Road car park in Bovey Tracey (TQ13 9SB). There are accessible toilets adjacent to the car park. Cross the road on the zebra crossing and enter Mill Marsh Park. The River Bovey flows along the edge of the park and there is access to it in several places. Follow the river and pass the new children's play area. At the end of the park there is a stand of white poplars whose trunks are covered in a variety of crustose lichens. Go under the road adjacent to the river and then turn right onto the old railway track. The gravel path of the old railway line starts here.



*1 The River Bovey in Mill Marsh Park*

The line was opened in 1866 with bands and bunting. 2000 people attended the street fare. The line brought tourists to Bovey Tracey and Lustleigh Cleave. It also brought in coal and other commodities. Timber, livestock and agricultural product was moved out of the valley. The pottery industry in Bovey Tracey grew and artists moved to Lustleigh. But as road transport became more efficient it was closed to passengers in 1959 and to goods in 1964. Planning permission was obtained in 2009 to redevelop the route and open it to the public. The final stage was completed in 2019.

This walk follows the railway line. It has a good surface and a gentle incline. After about 1km there is a side route to the left which takes you to Parke house, now owned by the National Trust and which is headquarters for the Dartmoor National Park Authority. The house was built in 1826 on the site of a Tudor house. There is an interesting walled garden which is open at times and an excellent NT café. The path from the railway line to the house and café has steep down and steep uphill sections. It is possible to hire a mobility scooter from the office opposite the café.





*2 A tunnel of trees in the railway cutting*

The woodland along the railway line is mostly beech with hazel, oak and several other species. The beech forms a tunnel during the summer months. This area was covered in spruce at one time but has since been cleared and a range of broadleaved trees have returned. Some of the hazel has been recently coppiced to allow more light to reach the ground encouraging flower growth.

The building of the railway was not straightforward as it was built into the valley side above the river. There is a large cutting and along most of this walk the flat bed of the railway has had to be dug out or built up.

You can see the River Bovey as you go along the path. It has been used as a fishery and for drinking water. A weir and leat were built in 1641 to provide water to power the water mill for the pottery in Bovey Tracey. There are several tracks down to the river of varying steepness, one of which leads to the weir.

There is a substantial bridge over the path after 1.6km which was built to link the fields on either side. There is no road across it. Later you go over a bridge with the road below.





*3 Bridge over the path*

Just before you meet the road there are the remains of a station, Hawkmoor Halt. This was used by passengers to reach the nearby Hawkmoor Sanatorium. It was renamed Pullabrook Halt in 1955 but closed in 1959. After this the trail follows the road for a mile before it rejoins the railway at Lustleigh, continuing to Moretonhampstead.





#### *4 Hawkmoor Halt*

This walk, though, ends at the road so you should turn round. It is possible to walk back along the river but the riverside path is not suitable for anything with wheels. Return to Mill Marsh Park and make your way back to your starting point.

If you would like any further information about the Wheeled Access Group, please visit [www.dartmoorwags.org.uk](http://www.dartmoorwags.org.uk)

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