

chalk streams, dragonflies and St. George

A walk along a typical chalk fed river valley, colourful and abundant with insect life in summer, open views to the chalk downs and a mural of St. George and the dragon.

Length: 4.6 miles
Time: 3 hours
Station: Maiden Newton
OS Map: Explorer 117 **Note:** some areas may be muddy
 Maiden Newton, Chilfrome, Wraxall and Cattistock



Directions:

- The walk starts from Platform 1. Leave station and walk down road towards village. Pass Village Hall on your left, at T-junction turn left.
- Turn right at war memorial into Church Road. For shop, pub and bakery, continue past memorial and the main street is in front of you, shop on your right. Opposite shop are the remains of Maiden Newton's 15th Century Market Cross.
- Pass Maiden Newton church(1) on the left. Norman carvings and what is thought to be the earliest doorway in Dorset can be seen inside. Follow Frome Valley Trail (FVT) sign through gate at the corner.
- Follow sign to Chilfrome, through meadow and into wood. Path follows the clear chalk waters of the River Frome. The river is fed from underground rainwater held in the chalk, forming shallow pools in places where you can watch fish catching flies on the surface.
- Cross footbridge and follow path round to right.
- Continue through the wetland, bright with yellow flag iris and purple water mint in June, with water crowfoot and watercress in the river itself. At bridge, follow path round to the left, signposted "Chilfrome".
- Go through field gate and under bridge. Continue through field and over small bridge, follow signs for Wessex Ridgeway and FVT.
- Follow path round to left and through small gate in hedge.
- The rolling chalk downs rise steeply on both sides of the river valley here providing feeding and breeding areas for many bird species – Skylarks, Linnets, Kestrels, Buzzards.
- Follow path across field, where horses are often kept, to gate to right of Chilfrome Church(2) - an unexpected medieval gem.

- Follow sign towards Chilfrome. At junction turn left and walk up road.
- At junction turn right to Grove Stall Farm(3).
- Continue up lane. At summit follow FVT sign to Lower Wraxall.
- Pass Grove Stall Farm on left and follow track straight ahead.
- Cross ford, continue down track. It can get muddy here where the stream runs along track.
- At T-junction, turn right.
- Continue along track until you reach road. Turn right, sign posted to Cattistock and Maiden Newton.
- Continue along road to reach village of Cattistock. (You will pass the village shop on your right. Continue round to the left on the road and you will come to the Fox & Hounds Inn, a nice spot for lunch!)
- Take path through the churchyard(4), full of wild flowers in Spring and Summer. There has been a church here since 11th Century, spare a few minutes to look inside this beautiful church where you will see an "Arts & Crafts" style window designed by William Morris and, in the star-studded Baptistry, a lively mural of St. George slaying the dragon.
- Leaving churchyard, notice a small wellhead on your right.
- At junction with road turn right, pass Cattistock Cricket pitch on right. Take next right turn, signposted to Chilfrome. Continue along this road until you return to the Church at Chilfrome.
- Retrace your steps back along the river following FVT signs to Maiden Newton.

Local taxis: Bob's Cars 01305 269500
 Dorset Cars 01305 250666 Countyline Taxis 01305 269696

