



# The Granite Way



Okehampton to Lydford  
via Meldon and Lake viaducts

Part of the NCN Route 27

'Devon Coast-to-Coast'



Mostly traffic-free on a former railway line

TRAVELWISE



## How to reach the Granite Way

### OKEHAMPTON:

**By train:** from Exeter (on Summer Sundays) – cycles carried  
**By bus:** service numbers X9, X90 and 510 (timetables subject to change; please check with Traveline – details on back cover)  
**By cycle:** please contact Devon County Council (details on back cover)  
**By car:** from the A30 follow signs for Okehampton station along the B3260

### LYDFORD:

**By bus:** service number 86 operated by First between Plymouth and Barnstaple  
**By cycle:** please contact Devon County Council (details on back cover) for the most suitable route  
**By car:** via A386 at Dartmoor Inn, follow signs for Lydford/Lydford Gorge

## About the Granite Way

This excellent, mainly traffic-free cycle/walkway between Okehampton and Lydford is part of the National Cycle Network (NCN) route number 27 'Devon Coast to Coast' between Ilfracombe and Plymouth. Much of the Way is within Dartmoor National Park.

The trail is ideal for families and those new to regular cycling. The Granite Way is mostly built along the course of the former Southern Region railway line. The Way is entirely off-road for 6 miles / 9km between Okehampton and Lake Viaduct with additional off-road sections towards Lydford (see map over page).

Most of the traffic-free section is **wheelchair accessible** although there are gates at the A30 underpass. There is no access for wheelchairs from Bearslake to Lake Viaduct.



Access to the Granite Way

## Meldon Viaduct and industrial archeology



Meldon Viaduct

Meldon Viaduct was built in 1874, three years after the London and South West railway reached Okehampton. Spanning 341 feet (165 metres) the steel viaduct looks down upon a complex area of industrial archeology. Meldon Dam can be seen to the south west and Exmoor 20 miles away to the north east. In the valley to the south is Meldon Pool, the remains of mineral mining, such as copper and arsenic, and quarrying including limestone in the 18th and 19th centuries, with two lime kilns. An embryonic glass industry based on the naturally occurring aplite essential in glass manufacturing was started in the early 1920s but didn't flourish.

Today, quarrying continues with Aggregate Industries extracting railway ballast, roadstone and other industrial aggregates which are taken out by rail through Okehampton Station and on to the mainline at Exeter.

## Meldon Dam and reservoir

A few hundred metres west along the trail from Meldon Viaduct is a turning, by a Sustrans milepost , that gives access along a lane – a few minutes by bicycle – to Meldon Dam and Reservoir. The dam was built in 1972 in the West Ockment valley and has a span of 660 feet (201 metres) and is 145 feet (45 metres) high. It is possible to walk around the reservoir using a permissive path and access land to admire the magnificent views of the Dartmoor scenery

**Horses and motorcycles are not permitted on the traffic-free sections of the Way** between Okehampton and Lydford. Some local residents may be issued with a permit to ride a horse along certain sections of the route.

**Please take your litter home with you**

## The Granite Way

This 11 mile (18km) cycle / walkway runs along the north-west edge of the granite massif of Dartmoor. The Way has been constructed by Devon County Council in partnership and with the welcome support of a wide variety of organisations and individual landowners. These include: South West Regional Development Agency, the European Union, the Millennium Commission, Sustrans, Aggregate Industries and Dartmoor National Park Authority.

### Useful contacts

**Devon County Council**  
T: 0845 1551015  
[www.devon.gov.uk/cycling](http://www.devon.gov.uk/cycling)  
Email: [environment@devon.gov.uk](mailto:environment@devon.gov.uk)

**Dartmoor National Park**  
T: 01822 890414  
[www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk](http://www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk)

**Sustrans**  
T: 0117 9268893  
[www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk)

**CTC**  
(Cyclists Touring Club)  
T: 0870 8730060  
[www.ctc.org.uk](http://www.ctc.org.uk)

**Okehampton Tourist Information Centre**  
Museum Courtyard, 3 West St,  
Okehampton, Devon EX20 1HQ  
T: 01837 53020

**Cycle Shops & Cycle Hire in Okehampton**  
Please refer to the details on the map over page.



**Dartmoor Railway,**  
Okehampton Station,  
T: 01837 55330  
T: 01837 55667  
(talking timetable)

DARTMOOR RAILWAY



This cycling map was produced by CycleCity Guides for Devon County Council Environment and Culture Directorate. © 2008  
[www.cyclecityguides.co.uk](http://www.cyclecityguides.co.uk)  
Tel: 01373 453533

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## Along the Granite Way

### The Granite Way has three main sections

(For convenience and clarity this description assumes a cycle ride or walk heading south west from Okehampton station towards Lydford)

#### 1. Okehampton Station to Meldon Viaduct (2 ½ miles / 3 ¾ km traffic-free)

From Okehampton Station the trail runs entirely traffic-free parallel to the railway line which takes passenger trains to Meldon and carries aggregate from Meldon Quarry. To the north there are superb views with Okehampton's motte and bailey castle (English Heritage) in the valley below. To the south rises Dartmoor with High Willhays, the highest point on the Moor at 621 metres (2038 feet), not far away. At Meldon Viaduct there is a railway station, visitor centre and café in the former buffet carriage, all run by Dartmoor Railway. Trains run from here to Okehampton Station.

#### 2. Meldon Viaduct to Lake Viaduct (3 ½ miles / 5 ¼ km traffic-free)

Continuing along the railway line the trail passes the highest point on the railway in a deep cutting before emerging at the gates where the lane leads to the water treatment works at Prewley. Crossing this lane by the cattle grid, the trail continues west towards Lake Viaduct. The dramatically craggy features of Sourton Tors are clearly visible to the south, and further west in the far distance is Brentor church on a distinctive knoll.

Although along a former railway path, the trail has been built to meander to and fro, offering a more attractive cycle ride or walk. Sourton church and the views along this section warrant a stop for a picnic by the granite seats. Please ensure you close the gates behind you when passing through the short permissive section between Sourton village and Lake Viaduct.

At Lake Viaduct, built of local stone and offering spectacular views of the Moor and the surrounding countryside, the trail splits. You can continue on road to the former Bridestowe station (2 miles / 3 ½ km) where you rejoin another 1 ¼ mile / 2km traffic-free section to Lydford. Alternatively, continue south to the current end of the traffic-free section for a further mile to Southerly Halt picnic site (see map over page). You will then need to return to Lake Viaduct.



#### 3. Lake Viaduct to Lydford via Bridestowe (4 ½ miles / 7 ½ km, 1 mile traffic-free)\*

From Lake Viaduct take great care when crossing the main A386 road at Bearslake before travelling along undulating quiet lanes through the village of Bridestowe and on to the site of the former Bridestowe railway station. Here the trail is again off-road on level ground with superb views across Fernworthy Down before emerging at Lydford. In Lydford the trail is again on a minor road through the village past the Norman castle (English Heritage) and Lydford Gorge (National Trust). From Lydford the 'Devon Coast to Coast' NCN route leads south towards Tavistock and Plymouth. There are further traffic-free sections through Tavistock and south of Yelverton for 7 miles on the Plym Valley Trail. (\*distances are approximate)

## Good cycling code

**Keep safe, be courteous and enjoy your cycling**

**When cycling on shared paths please:**

- keep left as you pass other cyclists and walkers
- if you are cycling, respect other users, especially those on foot
- some people using the path may be hard of hearing or partially sighted – please don't assume they can see or hear you
- use your cycle bell

**Thank you for cycling**

**Cycling does not cause pollution or contribute to climate change**

### Other cycle maps in the series

Cycle maps of Barnstaple, Exmouth, Newton Abbot, Tavistock, Tiverton & Culm Valley and the Tarka Cycle Trail are also available free of charge from Devon County Council.



# The Granite Way



Okehampton to Lydford Cycle/Walkway  
Part of National Cycle Network Route 27  
'The Devon Coast-to-Coast'

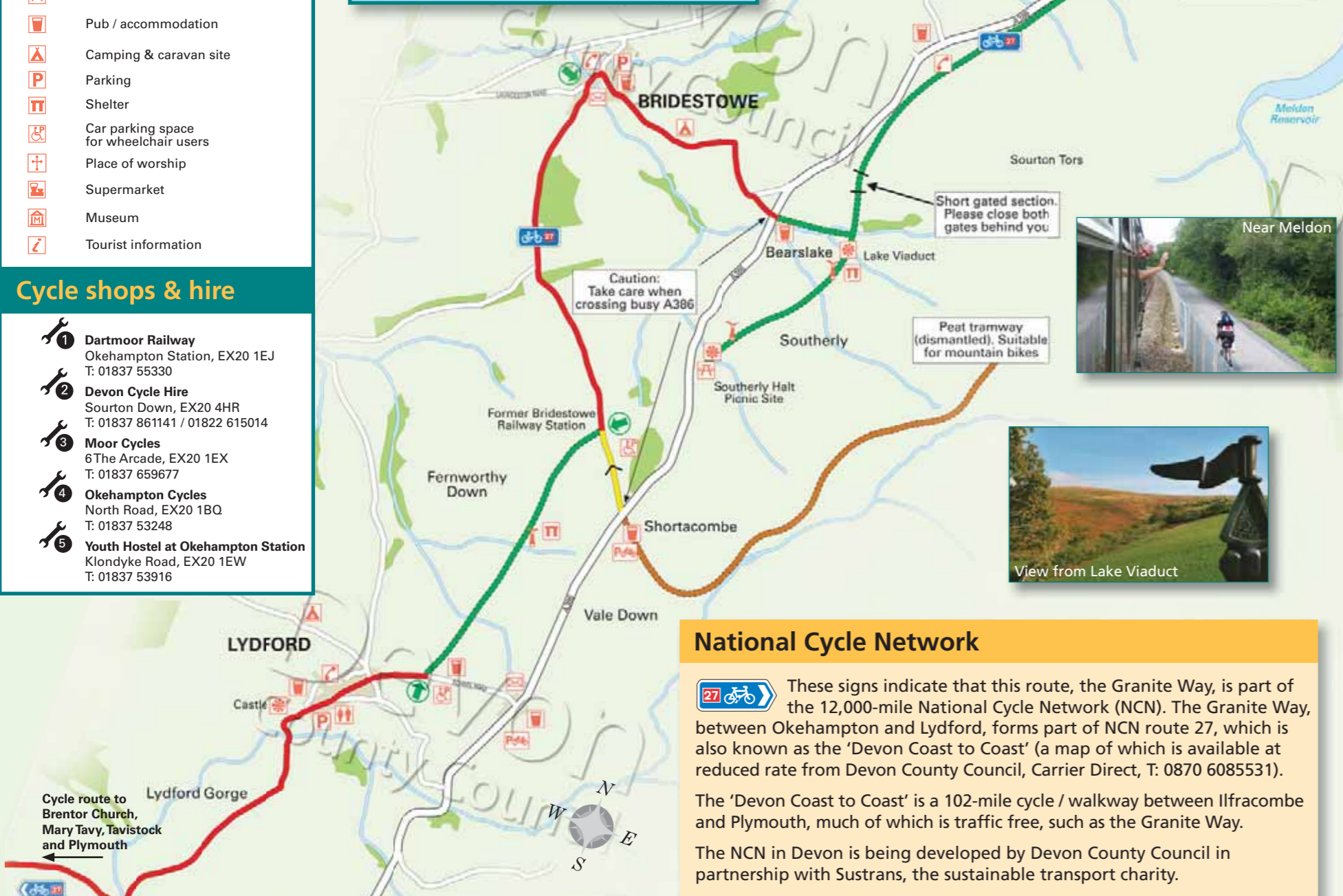
## Key

- The Granite Way – traffic-free section
- On-road signed cycle route
- On-road advisory cycle route
- Steep hill (arrow pointing downhill)
- Traffic-free cycle route (mountain bike only)
- Cycle/walkway link to Meldon Dam
- National Cycle Network route 27 (The Granite Way)
- Main access to The Granite Way
- Sustrans milepost
- Viewpoint
- Cycle parking
- Telephone
- Toilets
- Post office / shop
- Picnic site
- Pub / accommodation
- Camping & caravan site
- Parking
- Shelter
- Car parking space for wheelchair users
- Place of worship
- Supermarket
- Museum
- Tourist information

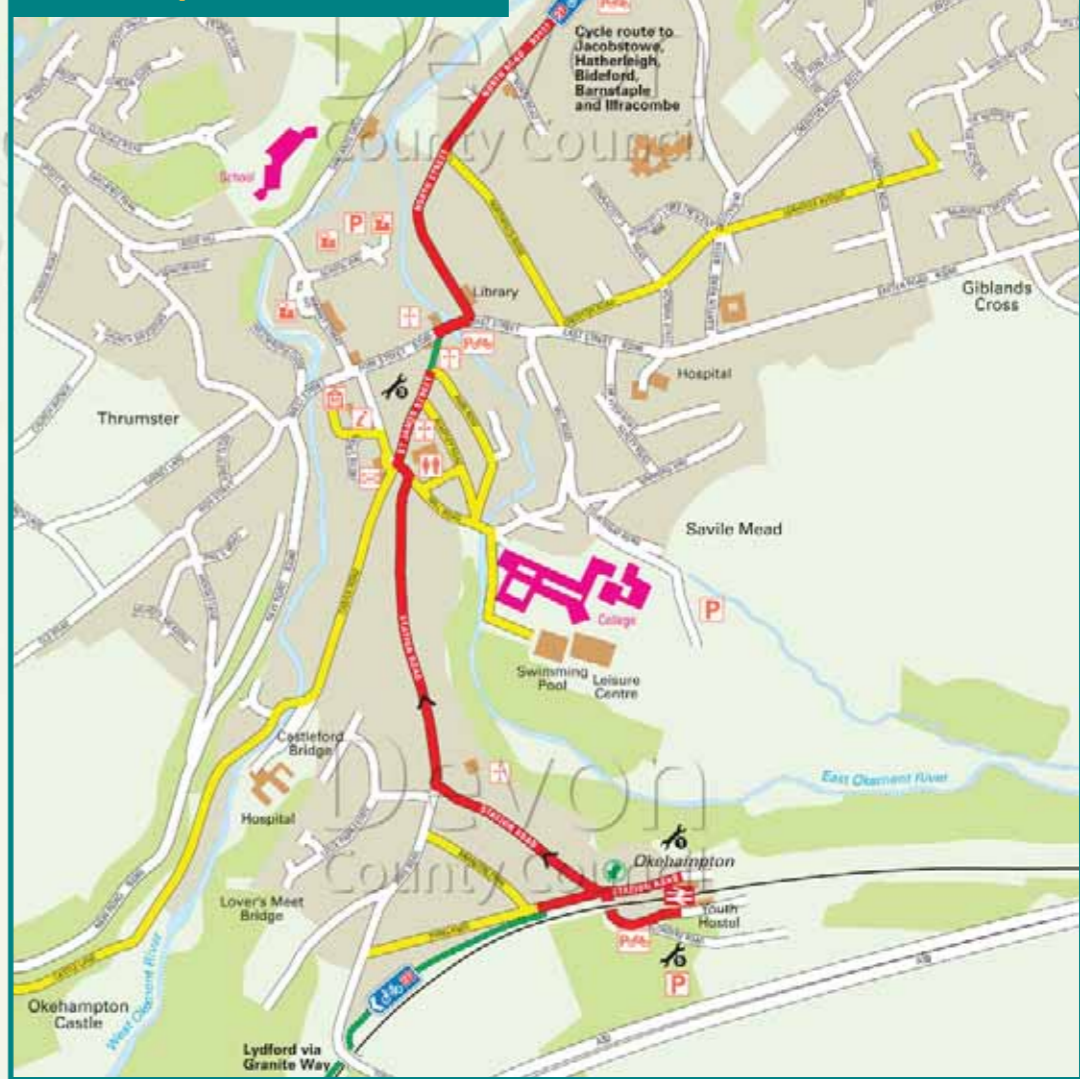
## Cycle shops & hire

- 1 Dartmoor Railway**  
Okehampton Station, EX20 1EJ  
T: 01837 55330
- 2 Devon Cycle Hire**  
Sourton Down, EX20 4HR  
T: 01837 861141 / 01822 615014
- 3 Moor Cycles**  
6 The Arcade, EX20 1EX  
T: 01837 659677
- 4 Okehampton Cycles**  
North Road, EX20 1BQ  
T: 01837 53248
- 5 Youth Hostel at Okehampton Station**  
Klondyke Road, EX20 1EW  
T: 01837 53916

## Locator map



## Okehampton town centre



- Okehampton Station**
- Buffet / WC\*
  - Bus services\*
  - Trains to Meldon (cycles carried free)\*
  - Trains to Exeter / Crediton (summer Sundays)\*
  - YHA
  - Information centre
  - Cycle & car parking
  - Model and gift shop\*
- \* It is advisable to check service and opening times in advance

- Meldon Viaduct**  
(no access by motor vehicle)
- Spectacular 19th Century metal rail viaduct
  - Buffet / WC\*
  - Visitor centre\*
  - Trains to Okehampton\* (cycles carried free)
- \* It is advisable to check opening times before arrival at Meldon

## National Cycle Network

These signs indicate that this route, the Granite Way, is part of the 12,000-mile National Cycle Network (NCN). The Granite Way, between Okehampton and Lydford, forms part of NCN route 27, which is also known as the 'Devon Coast to Coast' (a map of which is available at reduced rate from Devon County Council, Carrier Direct, T: 0870 6085531).

The 'Devon Coast to Coast' is a 102-mile cycle / walkway between Ilfracombe and Plymouth, much of which is traffic free, such as the Granite Way.

The NCN in Devon is being developed by Devon County Council in partnership with Sustrans, the sustainable transport charity.

Cycle route to Brentor Church, Mary Tavy, Tavistock and Plymouth