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with IBG

Trading town

A self-guided walk around Bideford in Devon



www.walktheworld.org.uk

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This booklet is to be used alongside the audio commentary for this walk

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Cover image: Bideford Long Bridge © Mike Jackson

Trading town

Discover Bideford's seafaring heritage

The small but attractive town of Bideford in North Devon became famous in the Victorian era as the 'little white town' of Charles Kingsley's novel, 'Westward Ho!'.

But this North Devon port by the River Torridge has a rich and much older maritime heritage. In fact, Bideford was once one of the great ports of England.



Its success can be attributed to a combination of its geographical location, a great Elizabethan adventurer and some entrepreneurial merchants.

On the walk you will find out about some of these people and the trades that they were involved in from cod and clay to pottery and pipes. There are also stories of sailors and smugglers, death and disease.



This walk has been written to complement the town's excellent Heritage Trail by highlighting how Bideford both influenced and was influenced by different countries around the world.

It is one of over 20 Walk the World walks that explore how international connections have been part of the UK's history and geography for many centuries.

Practical information

Location	Bideford, North Devon
Getting there	<p>Car - Bideford is just off the A39 (Atlantic Highway). From the A39 follow the signs for Bideford town centre. This takes you along Heywood Road and Kingsley Road (A386).</p> <p>There is a range of short stay and long stay parking available in the town but we recommend parking at Riverbank car park which lies between Victoria Park and the River Torridge. Access is from the corner of Kingsley Road and The Quay which is the start point of the walk. Parking charges apply.</p> <p>Train - The nearest mainline station is Barnstaple (7 ½ miles away) which is served by hourly services from Exeter St Davids.</p> <p>Bus - Bideford is well served by local buses including a regular service from Barnstaple railway station; alight on The Quay.</p> <p>Bicycle - National Cycle Route 27 (The Tarka Trail) runs through Bideford</p>
Start point	Statue of Charles Kingsley, north end of The Quay
Finish point	Bandstand in Victoria Park, north end of The Quay
Distance	Just under 1 ½ miles
Terrain	Pavements and streets around the town
Level	Moderate - There are some steep slopes and steps
Suitable for	<p>Families - Take care of young children by the quayside</p> <p>Wheelchairs - Although there are some steep slopes, a step-free route is available</p>
Toilets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Victoria Park (near start and end of route) - with disabled access and baby changing- The Quay (Stops 2 and 3) - with disabled access and baby changing- Pannier Market (Stop 9)

Refreshments

There are plenty of cafes, restaurants and pubs in the town including:

- Cafe du Parc, Victoria Park (near start and end of route)
- Quayside Cafe, 22 The Quay (near Stop 2 and Stop 15)
- The Rose of Torridge (Stop 4)
- The Market Cafe, Pannier Market (Stop 9)

Also look out for Hockings ice cream vans for excellent locally-made ice cream.

Places to visit

Burton Art Gallery & Museum

Kingsley Road, Bideford EX39 2QQ

Excellent displays on the town's history.

Open 7 days a week all year round

Admission free

www.burtonartgallery.co.uk

Tourist information

Bideford Tourist Information Centre

Located on the edge of Victoria Park within the Burton Art Gallery & Museum (see above)

Telephone: 01237 477 676 and 01237 421853

Email: bidefordtic@torridge.gov.uk

Visit North Devon and Exmoor

www.northdevon.com



Boats moored at Bideford Quay with the new bridge over the Torridge behind

© Mike Jackson

Route map



Stopping points

- S** Statue of Charles Kingsley, north end of The Quay
- 2.** Half way along The Quay
- 3.** Half way along The Quay
- 4.** Rose of Torridge, The Quay
- 5.** Corner of Allhalland St and Chapel St
- 6.** Corner of Allhalland St and Bridge St
- 7.** St Mary's Church
- 8.** 12 and 13 Buttgarden St
- 9.** Pannier Market, Grenville St
- 10.** King St
- 11.** Bottom of Cooper St
- 12.** 26 Bridgeland St
- 13.** Willet St
- 14.** Rope Walk
- 15.** Old Custom House, The Quay
- F** Bandstand, Victoria Park

Directions

Listen to each track then read the directions below to get to the next stop.

1. Welcome to Bideford

Statue of Charles Kingsley, north end of The Quay

Directions 1

Go across the car park access road to the riverside. Turn right and walk along The Quay with the water on your left. Stop half way along The Quay at the Lundy Ferry building.

2. Stone arches

Half way along The Quay

Directions 2

Remain in the same place on The Quay.

3. Tidal trade

Half way along The Quay

Directions 3

Continue along The Quay towards the Long Bridge. After about 100 metres use the traffic island to cross the main road. Stop outside a fish restaurant called The Rose of Torridge.

4. Cod and ships

The Rose of Torridge, The Quay

Directions 4

Take the narrow passage between the Rose of Torridge and the Kings Arms which is called Conduit Lane. At the end turn left into Allhalland Street. Stop after a few metres by the passageway into Chapel Street on the right.

5. Refugees

Corner of Allhalland Street and Chapel Street

Directions 5

Continue to the end of Allhalland Street. Stop at the junction with Bridge Street and look across the road at the ornate redbrick building which is the Town Hall.

6. Grenville's legacy

Corner of Allhalland Street and Bridge Street

Directions 6

Go straight across Bridge Street into Church Walk. Go through the gates of St Mary's Church and up to the main door.

7. Death and disease

St Mary's Church

Directions 7

With your back to the church door, turn left and go up the steps to the top gate of the churchyard. Continue straight ahead up the narrow lane (Tower Street). At the top of the steps turn left into Buttgarden Street. Stop outside numbers 12 and 13 on the right.

For a step free route - Go back to the church gates onto Church Walk. At the junction with Bridge Street turn left up the hill. At the top turn left into Grenville Street which immediately becomes Buttgarden Street.

8. Tobacco traders

12 and 13 Buttgarden Street

Directions 8

Retrace your steps along Buttgarden Street. Stop at the first main junction where you will see a single-storey stone and brick building diagonally opposite. This is the Pannier Market.

9. A basket of goods

Pannier Market, Grenville Street

Directions 9

Continue along Grenville Street (with the market on your left) and go straight across at the next junction down the hill. At the bottom turn right into High Street. When you reach The Quay turn left and immediately left again into a narrow lane called King Street. Stop at the bend in the lane.

10. Lofty sails

King Street

Directions 10

Continue along King Street. Stop at the end and look left up Cooper Street.

11. Hogsheads

Bottom of Cooper Street

Directions 11

Continue straight on with the small square on your right and into Queen Street. At the end turn left into Bridgeland Street. Stop by Number 26 on the left side.

12. Wealth of nations

26 Bridgeland Street

Directions 12

Continue along Bridgeland Street past the church. At the junction turn right and immediately right again into Willet Street. Stop at the bend in Willet Street.

13. Pots and pipes

Willet Street

Directions 13

Continue along Willet Street. At the end turn right into The Strand which soon after becomes narrow and changes its name to Rope Walk. Stop by the large brick warehouse on the right side called Blackmore's Depository.

14. Twisted straight

Rope Walk

Directions 14

Continue along Rope Walk which leads back to The Quay. At the end on the right side is the Old Custom House, now a pub. Stop outside.

15. Anything to declare?

Old Custom House, The Quay

Directions 15

Turn left along The Quay. Cross over the main road at the first crossing and turn left. Go past the statue of Charles Kingsley where we started the walk, across the entrance to the car park and through the gates into Victoria Park. Follow the main path to the right and then take the first path on the left. Go across the grass to the bandstand which is a platform surrounded by cannon.

16. Making a bang

Bandstand, Victoria Park

Directions 16

Do visit Burton Art Gallery & Museum here in the park where you can learn more about Bideford's heritage. There are some excellent displays about the town's social history as well as some excellent collections of pottery.

Credits

The RGS-IBG would like to thank the following people and organisations for their assistance in producing this Walk the World walk:

- **Mike Jackson** and **Gary Gray** for researching the walk and taking photographs
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The
Heritage
Alliance





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we are a hub of worldwide connections.

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