

Route 4

Shaftesbury & the Blackmore Vale

Explore the Blackmore Vale, described by Thomas Hardy as 'The Vale of Little Dairies'

Slow right down with this tranquil ride through the Blackmore Vale. Still a very rural area of dairy farms, you can relax and enjoy the seemingly endless landscape of lively hedgerows, lush fields and ... lots of cows!

The puff – or push – up to Shaftesbury is well worth the effort. Take a break to get your breath back on Gold Hill, with its vast views over the Vale. Then onto Turnbull's cheese shop to appreciate all those dairy farms first hand, including our delicious Dorset Blue Vinny Cheese.

Want to know more about this areas cheese making heritage? What Turnbull cheesemonger in Shaftesbury doesn't know about cheese isn't worth knowing!

SAY CHEEEESE

The 'vale of the little dairies' of Hardy's time still holds true today – the fertile clay soils produce the lushest of grasses which is perfect for dairy herds. The cheese heritage of the area is still celebrated with Shaftesbury's Gold Hill Cheese Run in May and the Sturminster Newton Cheese Festival in September.

GOLD HILL

Relive that evocative Hovis 'Boy on a Bike' advert or simply catch your breath and enjoy the view from this cobbled, super-steep little street. Find out about this Saxon towns long and colourful history at the Gold Hill Museum. goldhill.org.uk

BURSTING WITH LIFE

Through spring and summer you will see (and hear!) the hedgerows burst into life. Those hedges don't just add to the unique look of this landscape, they are home, larder and safe corridor for countless birds, insects and small mammals.

JACK OF ALL TRADES

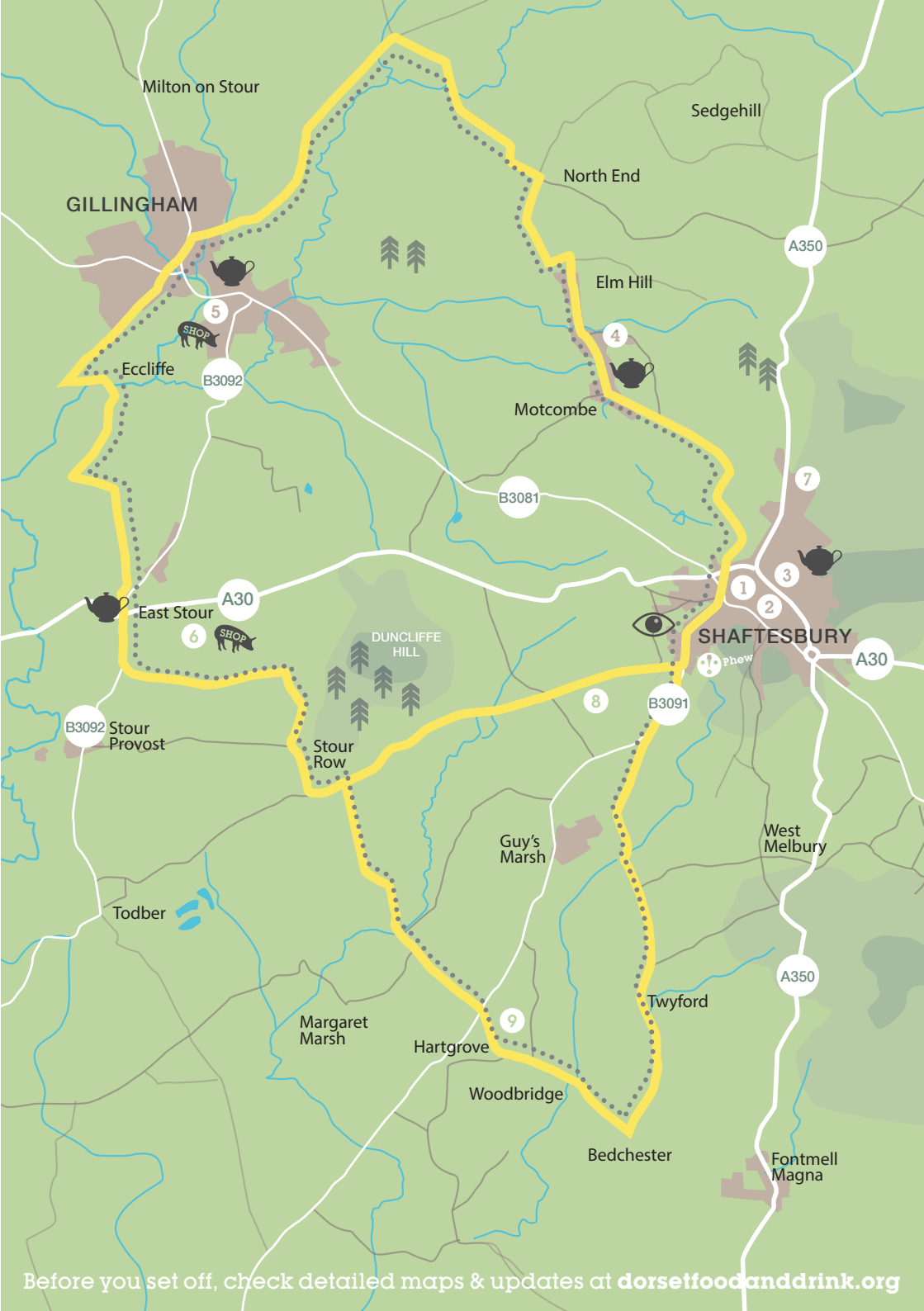
The stone age barrow in Gillingham is evidence that people have lived in this most northerly town of Dorset for a very long time. Since then, it's been home to a royal hunting lodge, silk spinning, brick making, printing, soap making and of course making CHEESE! It is the inspiration for Hardy's 'Leddenton' town and was also captured by artist John Constable.

DUNCLIFFE WOOD

You'll see this wooded hill as you cycle towards Shaftesbury. Thought to have inspired Thomas Hardy to write 'The Woodlanders', this wildlife rich woodland has ancient coppice stools said to be the oldest living things in Dorset. Follow the network of paths to explore and picnic. woodlandtrust.org.uk

DORSET BLUE VINNY CHEESE

Once found in nearly every farmhouse in the county, production of this very Dorset cheese almost dried up during WW2. Luckily Woodbridge Farm, on the edge of the Blackmore Vale, revived the cheese and have gone Blue Vinny mad. Not only can you enjoy this special cheese on a Dorset Knob, you can also try Dorset Blue Vinny soup, sausages, bread ... and even chocolates and ice cream!



MAIN: 20 miles
SHORT CUT: 3 miles
 (one way)

-  Eat & drink
-  Great view
-  Farm shop
-  Steep
-  Your route
-  NCN route

Full list of Dorset Food & Drink members can be found at dorsetfoodanddrink.org

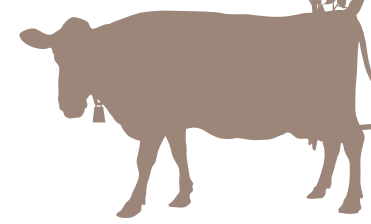


EAT THE VIEW

- 1 TURNBULLS**
 Deli, café & Bistro with the best cheeses inc local classics such as Dorset Blue Vinny. turnbullsdeli.com
- 2 THE GROSVENOR ARMS**
 Traditional yet stylish place for coffee, alfresco lunch or wood fired pizza. grosvenorarms.co.uk
- 3 SWANS LARDER**
 Small shop with a range of locally produced products. swanslarder.co.uk
- 4 MOTCOMBE COMMUNITY SHOP**
 Well-stocked shop with locally sourced food and drinks. motcombeshop.co.uk
- 5 ORCHARD PARK CAFÉ & LAGANS FARM SHOP**
 Award-winning Farm Shop, Café and Garden Centre. orchardpark.biz
- 6 THE UDDER FARM SHOP**
 After your ride, stock up at this farm shop, with café, deli, fishmonger & butcher. (NB don't cycle on the A30) theudderfarmshop.co.uk

- Suppliers only
- 7 BV DAIRY**
 BV Dairy sources milk from accredited farms within 25 miles of Shaftesbury. bv dairy.co.uk
 - 8 YUYO**
 Organic infusions inspired by yerba mate, the original South American super herb. yuyo.co.uk
 - 9 THE REAL CURE**
 Locally sourced, totally natural wild produce www.therealcure.co.uk

Established in 1958 BV Dairy still sources the majority of its milk from the rich pastures of the Blackmore Vale.



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