



The Heart of Wessex Rail Partnership
Supported by First Great Western

three churches, a secret trackway and inverted animals

A short ramble on the edge of Blackmore Vale taking in three interesting Dorset Churches and spectacular panoramic views.

Length: 3 miles **CHECK THIS** **Time:** 3 hours
Station: Chetnole. Trains only stop at this station on request, tell the conductor that you wish to get off at Chetnole.
Note: Flag the train down on your return journey.
OS Map: Explorer 117. Binoculars essential
 Chetnole, Melbury Bubb, Stockwood and Melbury Osmond



Directions:

- On arrival at station take gate from platform to road and turn left, over bridge.
- Just past Chetnole village sign, take footpath on left, through narrow gap in hedge.
- Cross field to gap in opposite hedge, continue through meadow towards houses.
- At gate turn right and join track. At T-junction turn left.
- Route takes next left into School Lane. (However to see Chetnole church (1), visit shop or pub, carry straight on. Retrace your steps until you see School lane on your right and rejoin route.)
- At end of track by The Old Smithy, follow narrow footpath to right of property.
- Go through gate, follow hedge towards Railway Bridge.
- Walk under bridge, go through gate on left.
- Continue straight across next three fields crossing the stiles in the middle of the hedges.
- Walk across fourth field, over stile and plank bridge. Turn left here, following way marker for The Macmillan Way; follow hedge to gate in corner.
- Once over gate, turn right through gate into "The Drove"(2). This appears overgrown but is passable.
- Continue to the top of the track and follow footpath through gate on left. Go through into field keeping hedge on left; at top of field, you will meet road, pub is on right(3).
- Follow footpath through gate immediately on left. Cross stile to stile in left hand corner, before field narrows.
- Follow wood line on left; take gate almost at far left hand corner of field, where line of hedge and trees extends out from woodland.
- There are farm buildings ahead, follow hedge line on right to stile.

- Follow path that continues straight ahead to gate that joins road.
 - Turn right and take road on left signposted to Church Farm House.
 - St Edwold's is on the right over bridge (4).
 - Continue on path through into next field. Do not follow track, but walk uphill following line of electricity poles.
 - Over stile and follow path along boardwalk.
 - Leave wood over stile, walk straight up steep hill. On reaching tree line on top, near Trig Point, enjoy magnificent views across Blackmore Vale (5) to Glastonbury Tor, Mendips, Dorset/Wiltshire chalk downland.
 - Continue over hill to gate at bottom of field on your right.
 - Follow path round to left, through gate in front of farm buildings.
 - Continue straight through farm, passing the old grain store(6) raised on staddle stones and Melbury Bubb Church(7).
 - At T-junction turn left. Take next left through field gate, following footpath sign.
 - Cross this field to gate in far right hand corner. Cross bridge over railway line. Go through gate on left.
 - Follow hedge on right through a traditional English meadow(8) with Knapweed and Ox-eye daisies, teeming with butterflies and insects in summer.
 - Cross stile and plank bridge into next field. Walk across field to left, path is marked by old tree stumps in centre of field.
 - Go through field gate, follow path along right hand hedge. You will be able to see Chetnole Halt from here.
 - Join road and turn left back to the station. **Don't forget you will need to flag down the train - it will not stop automatically!**
- Local taxis:** Beaver Cabs: 01935 816620
 Economy Cabs: 01935 817817 Ideal Taxis: 01935 816691

chocolate box cottages and a wiggle along the river wriggle

A gentle stroll along the course of the meandering River Wriggle with pretty villages and ample opportunity for sampling the local brew and food.

Length: 4 miles **Time:** 2 hours
Starting Station: Thornford. Trains only stop at this station on request, so inform the conductor that you wish to get off at Thornford. You will need to flag the train down on your return journey.
OS Map: Explorer 129
 Thornford, Bradford Abbas, Clifton Maybank



Directions:

- Climb steps from platform, turn left onto road, continue to junction and turn right. Follow road into Thornford village.
- Turn left into Church Rd by The Kings Arms pub. Follow lane along to church, past pretty 17th, 18th, and 19thC houses & cottages.
- Approach church and footpath starts immediately to the left. The church tower & chancel are medieval, the rest is a Victorian rebuild but attractive seen through the Lytch Gate with roses round the arched doorway.
- Follow path through kissing gate and across field.
- Continue following path across two more fields and through two kissing gates and across wooden footbridge over stream. This is the first crossing of the River Wriggle, joined by the River Yeo. Downstream they flow into the River Parrett and eventually out into the Bristol Channel – the only Dorset rivers to flow northwards.
- Keep following path to kissing gate to the left of house and up drive to road.
- Smiths Bridge – a 16thC scheduled monument - worth a few steps detour to the left to admire the handsome, honey coloured limestone, much in evidence in the buildings hereabouts.
- Cross road and continue along footpath to Bradford Abbas.
- On reaching road, turn left. Look out for the unusual War Memorial on your right just before The Rose & Crown pub and the plaque on the pub wall showing distances to local towns and villages. A visit inside the pub will not only reward you with welcome refreshment but also give you a chance to find out about the "lads" of the village!
- The church is next to the pub and is very grand for what was once a small village. It is reckoned to be one of the

- best churches in northern Dorset with a rare survival of exterior stonework niches. Inside there are carved angels on the roof corbels and pew ends. There is a display in The Lady Chapel describing the church's restoration. In the churchyard are the remains of a 15thC preaching cross.
 - Turn down lane on left after school, following footpath signs.
 - Cross wooden footbridge, another crossing of the River Wriggle, and follow path, keeping river to your right and making for railway viaduct.
 - Go through wooden kissing gate, under viaduct, through another gate into field beyond. Continue straight across this field to far side and through galvanised field gate onto road.
 - Turn left and walk along road to the apex of left hand bend and take footpath on your right. Follow this gravelled farm track past farm buildings (Broadclose Farm), on and up the track (past Clifton Farm) until it reaches open fields.
 - At field gate after Clifton Farm, leave farm track and take path straight ahead across field, entering next field where the electricity transmission lines cross field boundary.
 - Take left hand (of the two) paths hugging hedge on your left until about three quarters of way across field, then look for exit close to farm buildings.
 - Continue straight on over two more fields towards Trill Dairy Farm.
 - Keeping farmhouse to your right, pass between farm buildings and across stile towards footbridge. Cross River Wriggle twice and keep following path, to come out through gate to Trill Farm. Follow farm track to road.
 - Turn left, follow road back to Thornford station. Don't forget to signal for the train to stop. It will not do so automatically!
- Local taxis:** Dorset Taxis 01935 873742



Whether it's a gentle stroll or a more energetic trek, there is no better way to see beautiful Dorset than on foot. Start your walk by train which to drop you right in the heart of the stunning landscape. Discover the countryside beyond the carriage windows and explore the secrets and delights of Dorset from the Heart of Wessex Line.

The Bristol to Weymouth line is one of Britain's most scenic routes and stops at twenty stations as it travels through the rural countryside of South West England. Each station is a gateway to the landscape beyond and this leaflet will introduce you to some of the less well known landscapes of inland Dorset. There is a choice of walks depending on how far you want to go, how much time you have or how energetic you feel.

These four circular walks weave together landscape, history, wildlife and culture with a train ride – presenting you with the ultimate means of exploring the gorgeous Dorset countryside.

All the walks use sections of the county's rights of way network and in addition, incorporate a short section of the Wessex Ridgeway, Frome Valley Trail or South West Coast Path National Trail – to tempt you to come back and explore further.

Each route has detailed directions to help you find your way around but it is recommended that you take a relevant OS Explorer map with you as changes do occur from time to time in a working landscape.

Always plan your walk with the train times in mind and check with the train operators that services are running normally. See the Train Information section for contact details. There are also information points at stations.



Trains to Trails

Trains to Trails

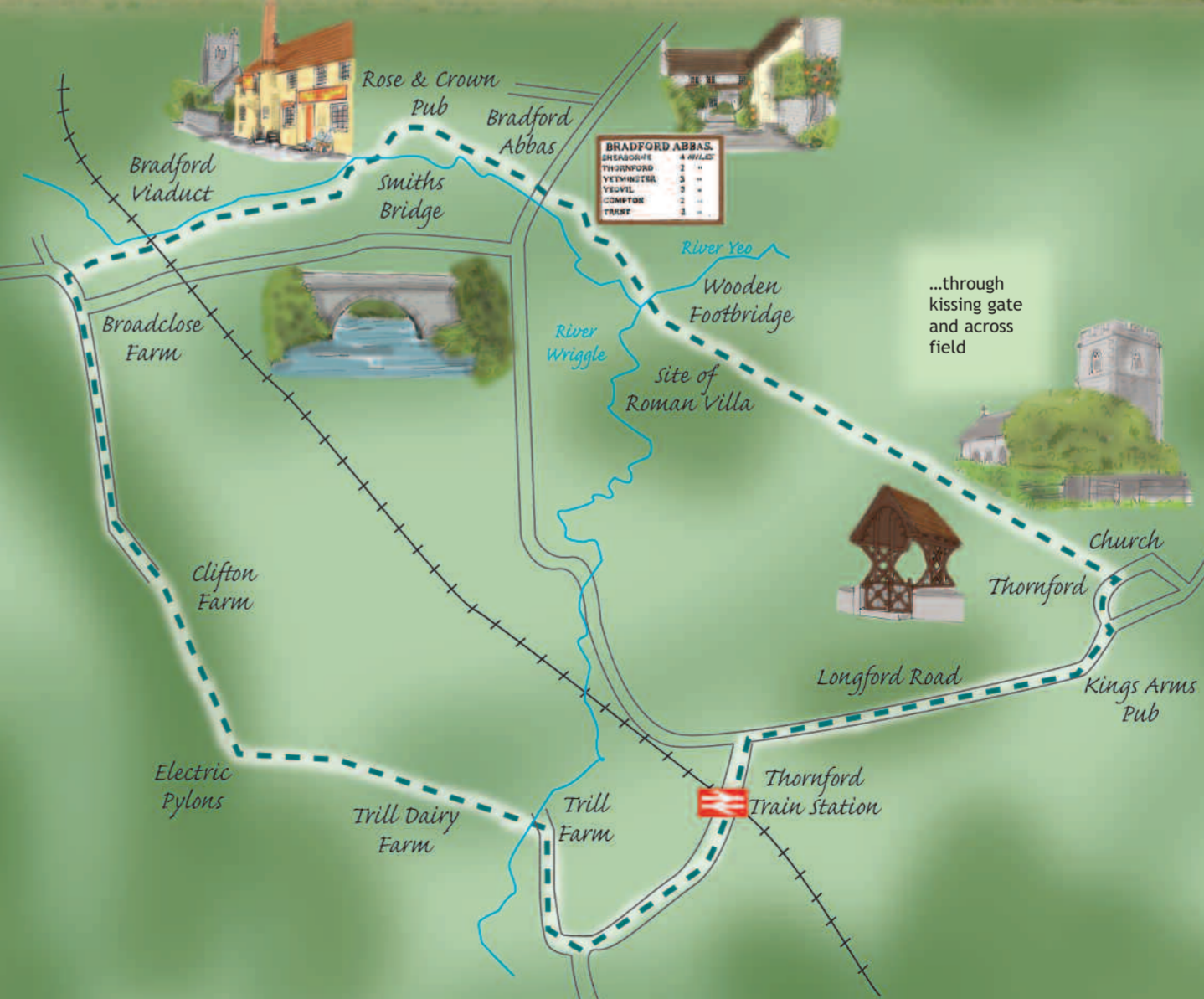
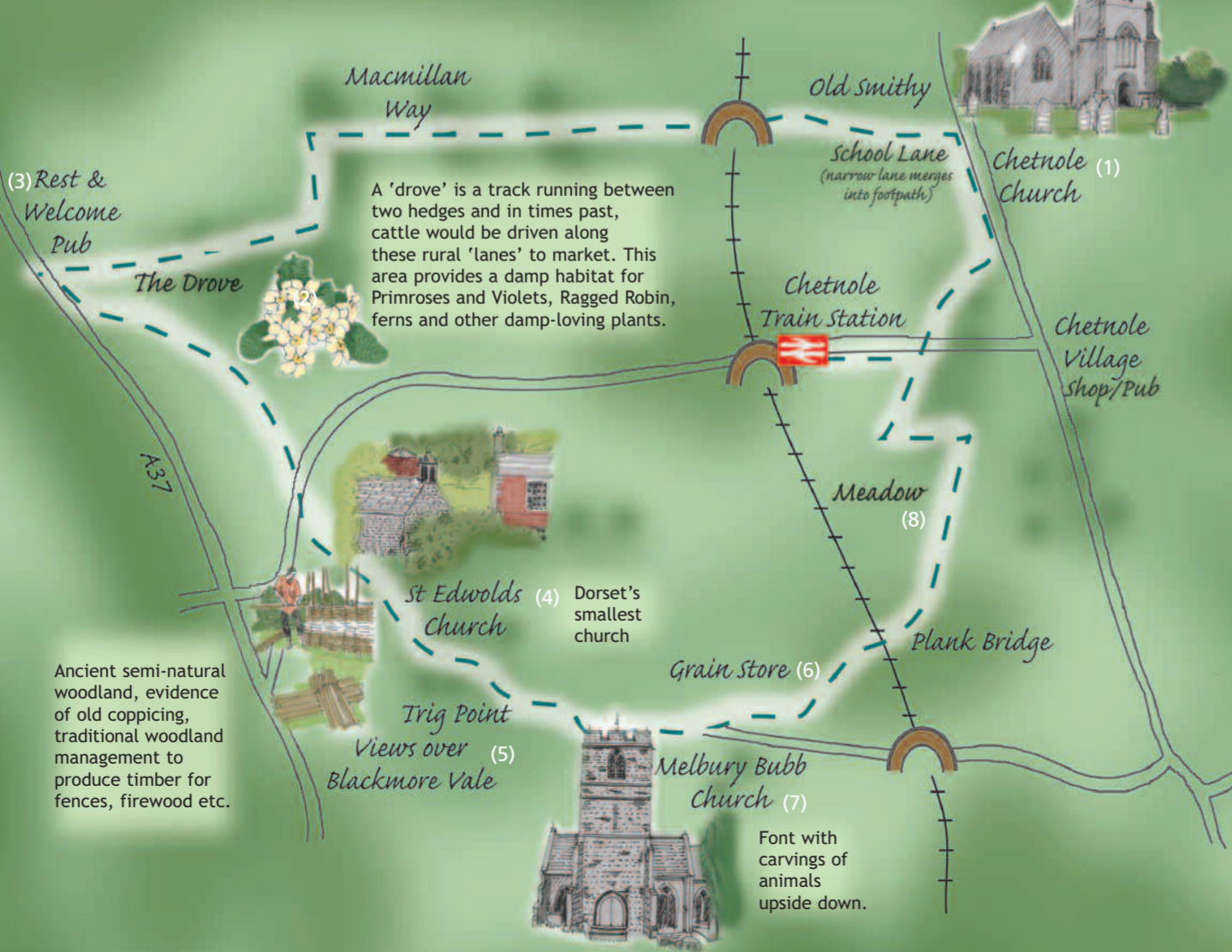
Discover the countryside beyond the carriage windows

Explore the secrets and delights of Dorset combined with a relaxing trip on the train

These four circular walks take you into spectacular Dorset landscapes with a wealth of wildlife and heritage to enjoy. The walks start at Chetnole, Thornford Halt, Maiden Newton and Upwey stations on the Bristol – Weymouth Heart of Wessex Rail Line and allow you to start and finish your day out with a train ride.



This is the edge of the Blackmore Vale where the fairly flat clay vale is made up of large arable and dairy farms with uniform shaped fields.



Train Information

The Heart of Wessex Line:

One of Britain's great scenic rail routes, the Bristol to Weymouth, "Heart of Wessex" line calls at twenty stations up to eight times a day, connecting to other mainline services at several points along its route including Bristol, Bath, Westbury, Castle Cary and Weymouth.

To plan your journey:
www.nationalrail.co.uk
 or call 08457 48 49 50

For general information about the Heart of Wessex Line:
www.heartofwessex.org.uk

For timetables, to book tickets online and for special offers:
www.firstgreatwestern.co.uk

Tickets can also be obtained at staffed station offices, or from the conductor on the train where no ticket office is open. Travelling along the scenic Heart of Wessex Line is a relaxing and enjoyable experience, and will take you directly into the beautiful and unspoilt countryside of Dorset to begin the trails outlined in this leaflet.

Please note that Thornford, Yetminster and Chetnole are request stops, which means that the train will not stop unless you request that it does. Please inform the conductor on the train that you wish to alight there, and, when rejoining the train, signal clearly to the driver that you wish him to stop and pick you up.



www.heartofwessex.org.uk
 Copies of this leaflet can be downloaded from any of these web addresses.



www.dorsetforyou.com/countryside



www.dorsetaonb.org.uk

All leaflets can be made available in audio tape, large print and Braille, or alternative languages on request.

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 326334/00

Much of Dorset's countryside is so important that it has been designated as an "Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty" (AONB) — a national treasure.



It is protected to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the landscape but the Dorset AONB is more than just nice scenery — it is a collection of some of the most varied and distinctive landscapes in the country, shaped over time by nature and people.
Further information from: www.dorsetaonb.org.uk

The circular walks described in this leaflet contain "taster" sections of the long distance trails outlined below. Hopefully you will be tempted to explore them further and enjoy some of the best walking experiences in the county.



Wessex Ridgeway

The Wessex Ridgeway is part of an ancient trade highway, winding 137 miles from Marlborough, Wiltshire to the coast at Lyme Regis through some of Dorset's most spectacular scenery. The Dorset AONB includes some 62 miles of this route, taking in villages such as Cerne Abbas and hill forts such as Hambledon Hill.

Further information from: www.dorsetforyou.com/countryside

Frome Valley Trail

The Frome Valley Trail is a long distance trail, that explores the unique habitats of the Frome Valley. The young Frome chalk streams and surrounding chalk downland is home to a unique range of species, shows evidence of varied landuse over centuries and has been a favoured place for settlement since the Bronze Age. The Frome Valley arrowhead waymarker is a reminder of its early settlers.

Further information from: www.dorsetforyou.com/countryside

South West Coast Path

The South West Coast Path is Britain's longest National Trail, 630 miles of coastal walking from Minehead on the edge of Exmoor National Park to the shores of Poole Harbour in Dorset. The path includes all 71 miles of Dorset's coast, all within the Dorset AONB. Here, you can walk through 185 million years of history along The Jurassic Coast, England's first natural World Heritage Site.

Further information from: www.nationaltrail.co.uk

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, some areas may be muddy
Starting Station: Maiden Newton
OS Map: Explorer 117
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 15thC Market Cross.
- Pass Maiden Newton church on the left. Norman carvings and what is thought to be the earliest doorway in Dorset can be seen inside. Follow Frome Valley Way (FVW) 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 FVW.
- 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 - an unexpected medieval gem.

- Follow sign towards Chilfrome. At junction turn left and walk up road.
 - At junction turn right to Grove Stall Farm.
 - Continue up lane. At summit follow FVW sign to Lower Wraxall.
 - If you are short of time you can take path on right across field to join with St Helen's Lane.
 - 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, full of wild flowers in Spring and Summer. There has been a church here since 11thC, 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 FVW signs to Maiden Newton.
- Local taxis:**
Bob's Cars: 01305 269500 Dorset Cars: 01305 250666
Countyline Taxis: 01305 269696



chalk streams, dragonflies and St. George

a victorian tourist attraction, sea views and lumps & bumps

Gentle walking with some stiff climbs produces some of the best views in Dorset together with a journey through 5000 years of history.

Length: 8.5 miles
Time: 4 - 4.5 hours
Starting Station: Upwey
OS Map: Explorer OL 15
Broadwey, Upwey & Friar Waddon



Directions:

- Descend steps from station, turn right, after 50yds, take footpath (FP) on left. Turn left at road, follow through residential estate until you reach pathway between gardens on right hand side, by "Springfield Rd" sign.
- Turn left at end of cut-through, continue to main road, turn right. Cross main road, turn down Mill Street.
- Follow lane to right, alongside a pretty tributaries of the River Wey. Continue along lane under old railway bridge.
- At junction, continue straight on into Church Street. After Island Garden Nurseries sign, take FP between cottages on right, up gravelled drive. Cross stile, keep straight ahead through field. Go through field gate and bear left, keeping close to left hand hedge. Go through kissing gate and along path, taking first FP on left, crossing field towards row of cottages (Elwell Street). Turn right when you reach road.
- Take first lane you see on left (Little Hill) after approx 10 yards, take left hand path. Continue straight on, over several stiles. Keeping hedge and farm buildings on left look for stone stile at bottom left hand corner of field. After several more stone stiles, continue through garden and grassy drive coming out on road beside modern houses.
- Cross road, walk down hill towards Upwey Wishing Well Tea Rooms take FP immediately to right of Tea Rooms.
- Follow concrete track uphill and over wooden stile (signed Friar Waddon). A stiff climb through woodland and over another stile brings you out almost on top of ridge.
- A further short climb, following Friar Waddon sign will reward you with 180 degree sea views. By gateway, turn right, follow track along top of ridge till you reach FP sign pointing right, marked Friar Waddon. Along this ridge, you will have glorious sea views on your left and on your

- right, the "lumps & bumps" of Bronze Age Barrows.
- Follow farm track down to Friar Waddon. Take path marked Ridge Hill. At top, follow track round to left in front of the two round barrows until it meets with South West Coast Path. Turn right and through gate beside barrows. Views inland to Maiden Castle and across to Bulbarrow, another ancient hillfort.
- Follow path along to road and cross; continue along SWCP following signs for Bincombe.
- Turning right at sign for Bincombe and Upwey, follow track downhill to The Old Ship Inn.
- This track, running parallel to the modern road, is the old coach road north following the line of the Roman road.
- Turn right immediately after pub, (Little Hill) then right again at road (Elwell Street) till you see FP on left hand side, between garages, from which you exited earlier. Retrace your steps across field and back to lane near sign for Island Garden Nurseries.
- Turn left along lane, follow round as it bends to left. After Upwey Manor House (on right), take FP on right hand side. Path enters field after left turn in front of houses. Follow right hand boundary to top right hand corner and through small metal gate, then through alleyway towards main road. Station is approximately 10 mins walk from here.
- Turn right, continue down main road, crossing at pedestrian lights. Continue to junction, turn left. Station approach is on opposite side just before railway bridge.

Local Taxis: Bee Cars 01305 769900
Central Radio Taxis 01305 781212
Fleetline 01305 784282
Weyline 01305 77777



a victorian tourist attraction, sea views and lumps & bumps

English Meadows



In traditional meadows grazing livestock are excluded during spring and summer allowing fine grasses and flowering plants to grow, flower and set seed before the hay is cut. This cycle maintains a rich diversity of species year on year. A hay meadow in summer is a beautiful and busy place, full of insects visiting the hundreds of colourful flowers in bloom.



Dragonfly

Dragonflies are among the most ancient of flying creatures. Fossil records indicate that they were flying around some 300 million years ago, however they only live for a few weeks as adults. They are active fliers and can often be seen during the day in the vicinity of water, hunting for food.

Hare & Maiden Castle



Maiden Castle is the largest hillfort in Britain. Covering an area equivalent to 50 football pitches, some of the ramparts rise to 20 feet or more, even after 2000 years of erosion. Even older, the Bronze Age Barrows of the South Dorset Ridgeway would have been an impressive sight, covered in fresh cut chalk.



Ghostly Bubb Down Hill

Mr Baker of Bublawns Farm Melbury Bubb was a carrier in the 17thC conveying goods and money between Evershot and Bristol. One night his horses returned home without him. He was found murdered on Bubb Down Hill. Eventually, the murderers were caught and hung from a gibbet on the hill close to where the murder had taken place. Sometimes at dusk, a ghostly horse and cart can be seen carrying the body of Mr Baker down the hill to his farm.

Photo credits: Dragonfly by Mike Taylor. Hare and Maiden Castle by John Walker, with kind permission of Pierpoint Gallery, Bridport www.pierpointgallery.co.uk

Please be considerate in the countryside:

- Keep to public rights of way and leave farm gates as you find them.
- Protect plants and animals and take your litter home.
- Keep dogs under close control

The maps accompanying the walks are a guide only and not definitive. It is recommended that you take a relevant OS Explorer map with you. Also that you wear strong shoes/walking boots and take drinks, food and waterproofs on your day out.