






# SOMERSET AND THE MENDIPS

## Outstanding Circular Walks

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guides

# At-a-glance

| Walk   | Page |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|------|---|---|---|---|---|
| <b>1</b> Meare and the Abbot's Fish House                  | 10   | Meare   | ST 455 414  | 3½ miles (5.6km)  | 80ft (25m)  | 1½ hrs  |
| <b>2</b> Brean Down  | 12   | Brean Down  | ST 296 585  | 3¼ miles (5.2km)  | 475ft (145m)  | 1¾ hrs  |
| <b>3</b> Nunney Combe                                      | 14   | Nunney  | ST 736 456  | 3½ miles (5.6km)  | 115ft (35m)   | 1¾ hrs  |
| <b>4</b> Nettlebridge and Harridge Wood                    | 16   | Nettlebridge  | ST 649 486  | 3½ miles (5.6km)  | 245ft (75m)   | 1¾ hrs  |
| <b>5</b> Leigh Woods and the Avon Gorge                    | 18   | Leigh Woods car park  | ST 552 739  | 3½ miles (5.6km)  | 330ft (100m)  | 1¾ hrs  |
| <b>6</b> Lollover Hill and Dundon Beacon                   | 20   | Dundon  | ST 479 324  | 3½ miles (5.6km)  | 610ft (185m)  | 2 hrs   |
| <b>7</b> Ilminster and Herne Hill                          | 22   | Ilminster   | ST 361 145  | 4 miles (6.4km)   | 245ft (75m)   | 2 hrs   |
| <b>8</b> Axbridge and Cheddar Reservoir                    | 24   | Axbridge  | ST 431 545  | 4¾ miles (7.6km)  | n/a   | 2¼ hrs  |
| <b>9</b> Langport and Muchelney Abbey                      | 26   | Langport  | ST 419 266  | 5 miles (8km)   | n/a   | 2¼ hrs  |
| <b>10</b> Chew Magna and Stanton Drew                      | 28   | Chew Magna  | ST 576 631  | 4¾ miles (7.6km)  | 330ft (100m)  | 2¼ hrs  |
| <b>11</b> Nether Stowey and Dowsborough                    | 32   | Nether Stowey   | ST 192 397  | 5½ miles (8.8km)  | 960ft (295m)  | 3 hrs   |
| <b>12</b> Mells and the Wadbury Valley                     | 35   | Mells   | ST 727 491  | 6 miles (9.6km)   | 625ft (190m)  | 3 hrs   |
| <b>13</b> Bruton and Creech Hill                           | 38   | Bruton  | ST 684 348  | 6 miles (9.6km)   | 775ft (235m)  | 3 hrs   |
| <b>14</b> Weston Woods and Sand Bay                        | 41   | Sand Bay car park   | ST 328 632  | 6½ miles (10.4km)   | 560ft (170m)  | 3¼ hrs  |
| <b>15</b> Chew Valley Lake and Breach Hill                 | 44   | Hérons Green Bay  | ST 554 594  | 6½ miles (10.4km)   | 620ft (190m)  | 3¼ hrs  |
| <b>16</b> Castle Neroche and Mount Fancy Farm Reserve      | 47   | Castle Neroche  | ST 273 157  | 6½ miles (10.4km)   | 900ft (275m)  | 3½ hrs  |
| <b>17</b> Stoke St Gregory and West Sedge Moor             | 50   | Stoke St Gregory  | ST 347 271  | 7 miles (11.3km)  | 305ft (95m)   | 3½ hrs  |
| <b>18</b> Hinton Charterhouse and Wellow                   | 53   | Hinton Charterhouse   | ST 771 581  | 7 miles (11.3km)  | 755ft (230m)  | 3½ hrs  |
| <b>19</b> Ham Hill, Montacute and Norton Sub Hamdon        | 56   | Ham Hill Country Park   | ST 479 168  | 7 miles (11.3km)  | 720ft (220m)  | 3½ hrs  |
| <b>20</b> Cheddar Gorge                                    | 59   | Cheddar   | ST 461 535  | 6 miles (9.7km)   | 1,130ft (345m)  | 3½ hrs  |
| <b>21</b> Glastonbury                                      | 62   | Glastonbury   | ST 498 389  | 7¼ miles (11.7km)   | 755ft (230m)  | 3¾ hrs  |
| <b>22</b> Broomfield and Goathurst                         | 66   | Broomfield  | ST 223 320  | 7¼ miles (11.7km)   | 900ft (275m)  | 3¾ hrs  |
| <b>23</b> Cadbury Castle and the Corton Ridge              | 70   | Cadbury Castle  | ST 632 253  | 7¾ miles (12.5km)   | 755ft (230m)  | 4 hrs   |
| <b>24</b> Wells, Ebbor Gorge and Wookey Hole               | 73   | Wells   | ST 549 457  | 8½ miles (13.7km)   | 970ft (295m)  | 4½ hrs  |
| <b>25</b> Wiveliscombe and Maundown Hill                   | 77   | Wiveliscombe  | ST 080 278  | 8½ miles (13.7km)   | 1,290ft (395m)  | 4½ hrs  |
| <b>26</b> The Frome Valley and Iford Manor                 | 80   | Rode  | ST 806 541  | 9 miles (14.5km)  | 605ft (185m)  | 4½ hrs  |
| <b>27</b> Steart Marshes and Bridgwater Bay                | 84   | Combwich  | ST 260 423  | 10 miles (16.1km)   | 145ft (45m)   | 4¾ hrs  |
| <b>28</b> Burrington Combe, Dolebury Warren and Black Down | 88   | Burrington Combe  | ST 476 588  | 9¼ miles (14.9km)   | 1,380ft (420m)  | 5 hrs   |

# walk 13

## Start

St Mary's Church,  
Silver Street, Bruton

## Distance

6 miles (9.6km)

## Height gain

775 feet (235m)

## Approximate time

3 hours

## Route terrain

Field paths (some undefined) and tracks; quiet lanes; non-taxing ascents/descents

## Parking

Station Road









## Dog friendly

Under control at all times; on leads on farmland (dairy cattle); non-dog-friendly stiles

## OS maps

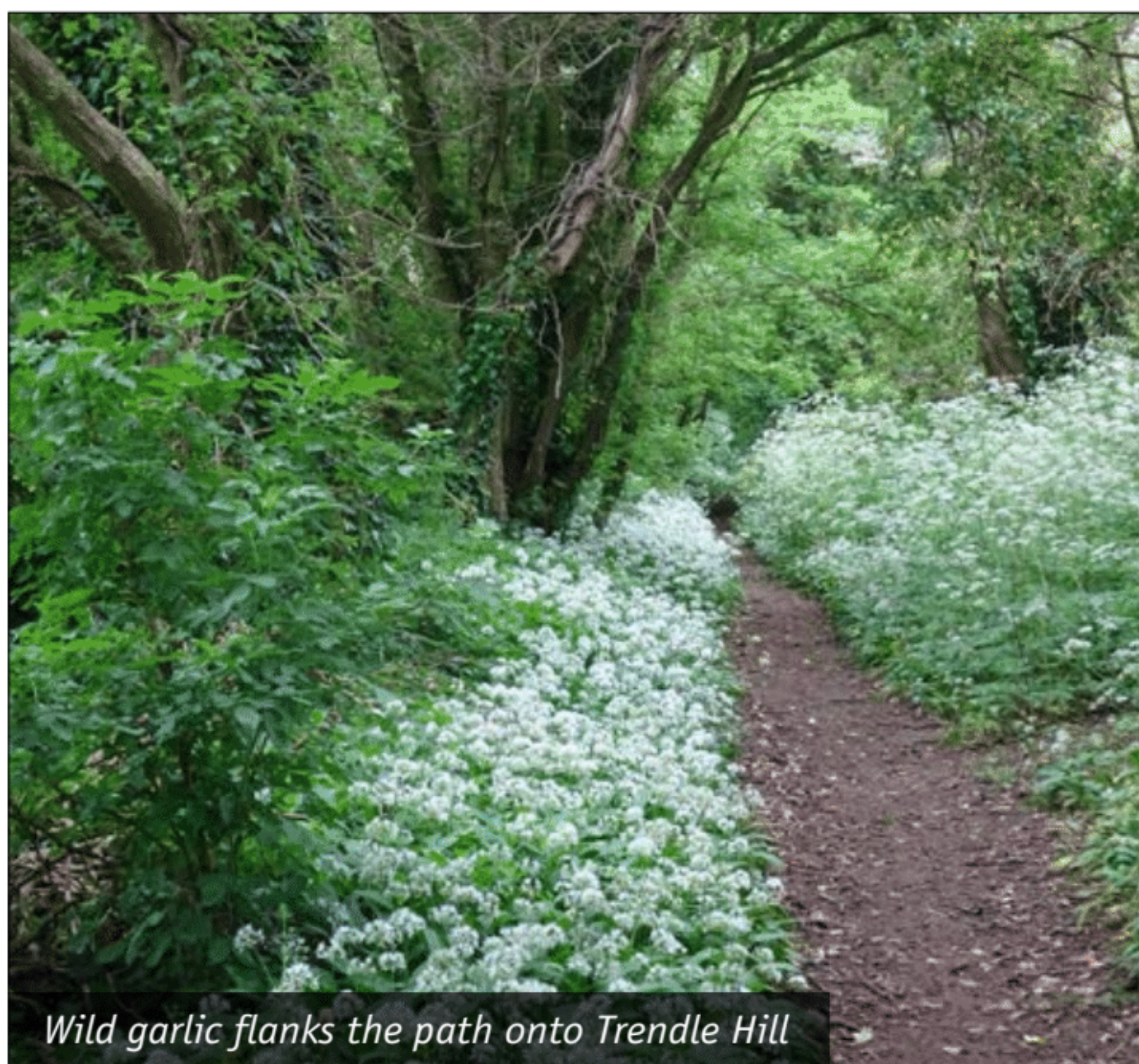
Landranger 183 (Yeovil & Frome); Explorer 142 (Shepton Mallet & Mendip Hills East)

## GPS waypoints


-  ST 684 348
-  ST 679 346
-  ST 661 344
-  ST 667 352
-  ST 660 357
-  ST 669 364
-  ST 675 360
-  ST 681 354


# Bruton and Creech Hill

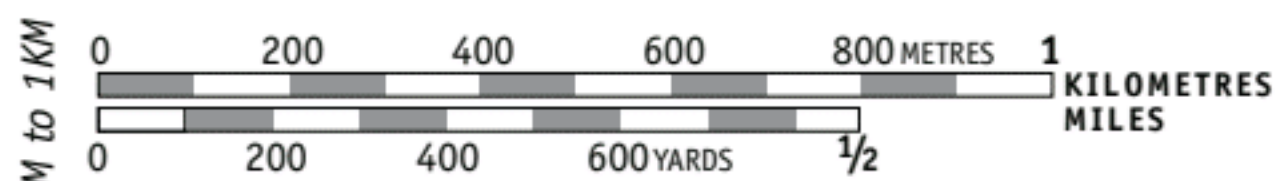
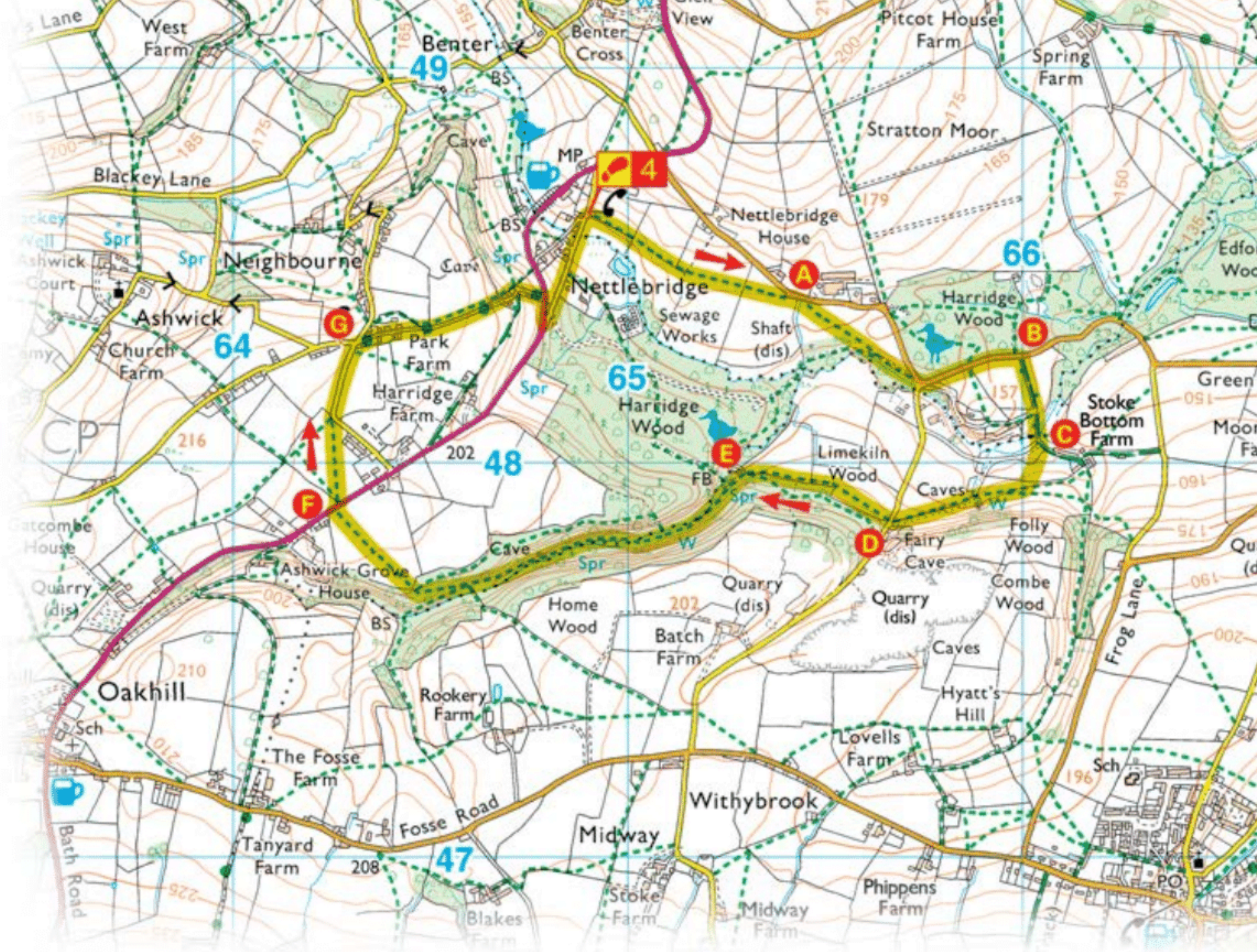
*An exploration of the lush, peaceful and pastoral combes and hills circling the popular little town of Bruton in south-east Somerset. Many of the lovely buildings clustered around the River Brue resulted from medieval 'wool wealth', and there is much of historic interest: traces of Bruton Abbey, sold after the Dissolution and demolished two centuries later; 16th-century dovecote; narrow medieval alleys (bartons); packhorse bridge; 200-year-old water pump by Church Bridge; and King's School, founded in 1519.*



*Wild garlic flanks the path onto Trendle Hill*

 From the gates of the 15th-century church, cross over Silver Street, then cross Church Bridge. Turn immediately left on a path alongside the river, meeting a lane (Lower Backway) and passing stepping stones. Head down Lower Backway, turning sharp right into Mill Lane to meet the one-way system.

Cross the road and turn left, passing the **Hive** café. Follow the main road past the Wyke Champflower road (right) and then immediately turn right up narrow Trendle Lane . Continue on an ascending path between high banks. The path levels under trees, flanked with cow parsley and wild garlic in early summer. Pass a footpath (right), then go through a gate and follow a hedged path between fields, broadening to a track as it crosses Trendle Hill.



– keeping by a stream on the right, passing limestone rock faces and at one point a waterfall. In spring the wood is

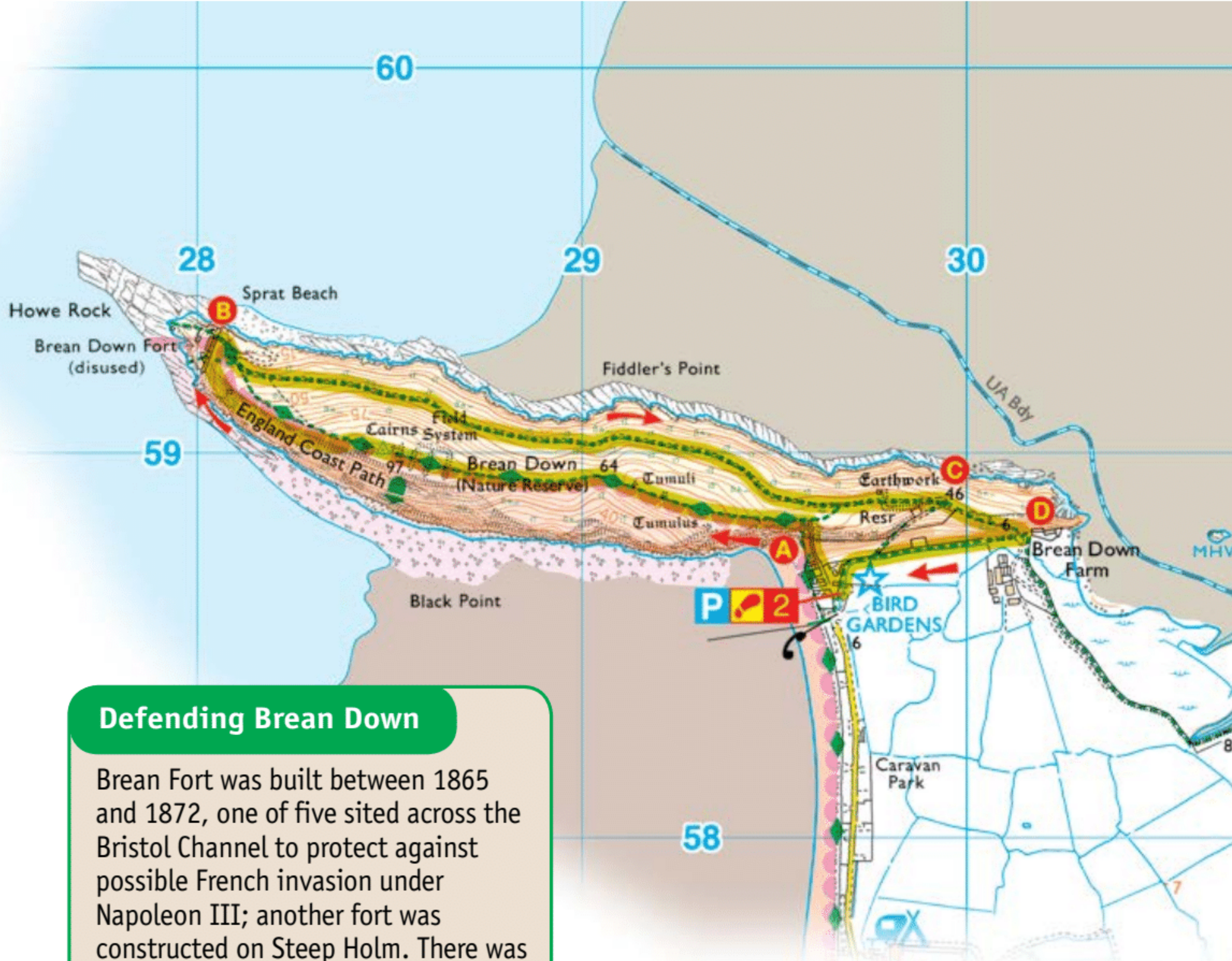


Harridge Wood

carpeted with bluebells. At a three-way fork by a footpath post, take the right-hand uphill path, by a wall on the left, which curves right to a stone stile. Climb it and head straight across a field to climb another one in the far left

corner just to the right of a house. Turn right **F** along the road, almost immediately turn left over a stone stile, head diagonally across a field and climb another stone stile on to a lane.

Turn left and at a crossroads turn right **G** (No Through Road), along very narrow Ash Lane which later descends steeply and rounds a right-hand bend to reach the main road. Cross over and turn right along the pavement for 20 yards, then turn sharp left on a quiet lane that heads downhill and back to the start.

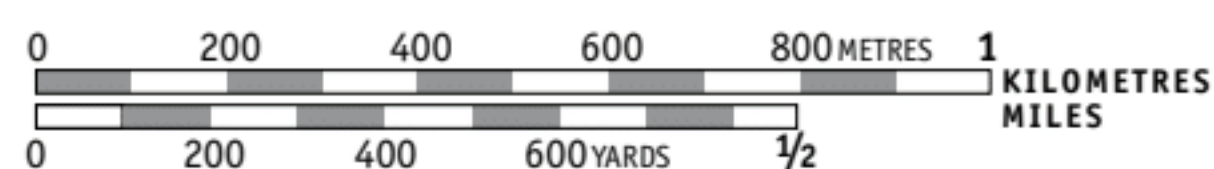


### Defending Brean Down

Brean Fort was built between 1865 and 1872, one of five sited across the Bristol Channel to protect against possible French invasion under Napoleon III; another fort was constructed on Steep Holm. There was an abortive attempt to build a harbour in the mid-19th century, and the fort was refortified in 1941 during World War II, but never came under fire and was largely used for training purposes.

Continue heading west – it almost feels as if you’re going to drop off the end! – to get a view of the old military fort on the point. A couple of grassy paths descend towards the fort **B**, but you can keep along the narrow cliff-edge path. There are great views to the island of Steep Holm, 3½ miles (5.6km) off the point (also part of the Mendip ridge): visited by Vikings, home to an Augustinian priory in the 12th century, fortified in Victorian times and World War II, today a bird sanctuary and nature reserve.

Explore the fort, then follow the old military road back along the more sheltered northern side, with views towards Weston Woods and Worlebury Hill (see Walk 14) and Weston-super-Mare’s famous Grand Pier, burnt down in 2008 and reopened two years later.



SCALE 1:25000 or 2½ INCHES to 1 MILE 4CM to 1KM

An earthwork to the right of the road after a small ascent towards the eastern end is thought to be a pillow mound; rabbits were farmed here until around 1600. The Down has a long history of human habitation: there are Neolithic field boundaries, and a small Iron Age fort once enclosed the eastern end. And around AD340 a Roman temple was built on the East Knoll, and thought to have been dismantled around 50 years later.

The road rounds a U-bend at the east end of the Down **C**. Either continue down the road to return to the start point, or (more challenging) turn left down a narrow unsigned path alongside a fence, and cross a stile. Descend steeply under trees to reach a track opposite Brean Down Farm **D**. Turn right, passing the end of the military road and curving left to reach the start point.

## Exploiting the marshes

It is said

that the manor of Meare was given to Glastonbury Abbey in AD670, and successive abbots utilised the marshes for fishing, fowling and grazing. Meare Pool – north of the present village – provided pike, tench, roach and eels, collected every week by boat. The Fish House accommodated the head fisherman. The pool – quoted as being four miles in circumference in Elizabethan days – was drained in the 1700s.



*The River Brue at Meare*

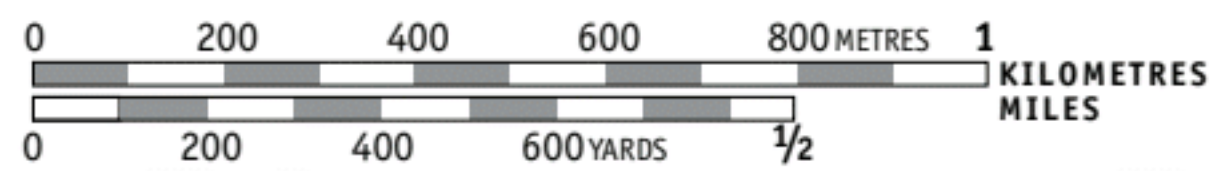
Enjoy expansive views across flat Meare Heath to the Mendip Hills.

Turn right along the riverbank, passing through several fields, enclosures and gates. The final gate gains a lovely stone bridge, to the north of Meare's 14th-century church.

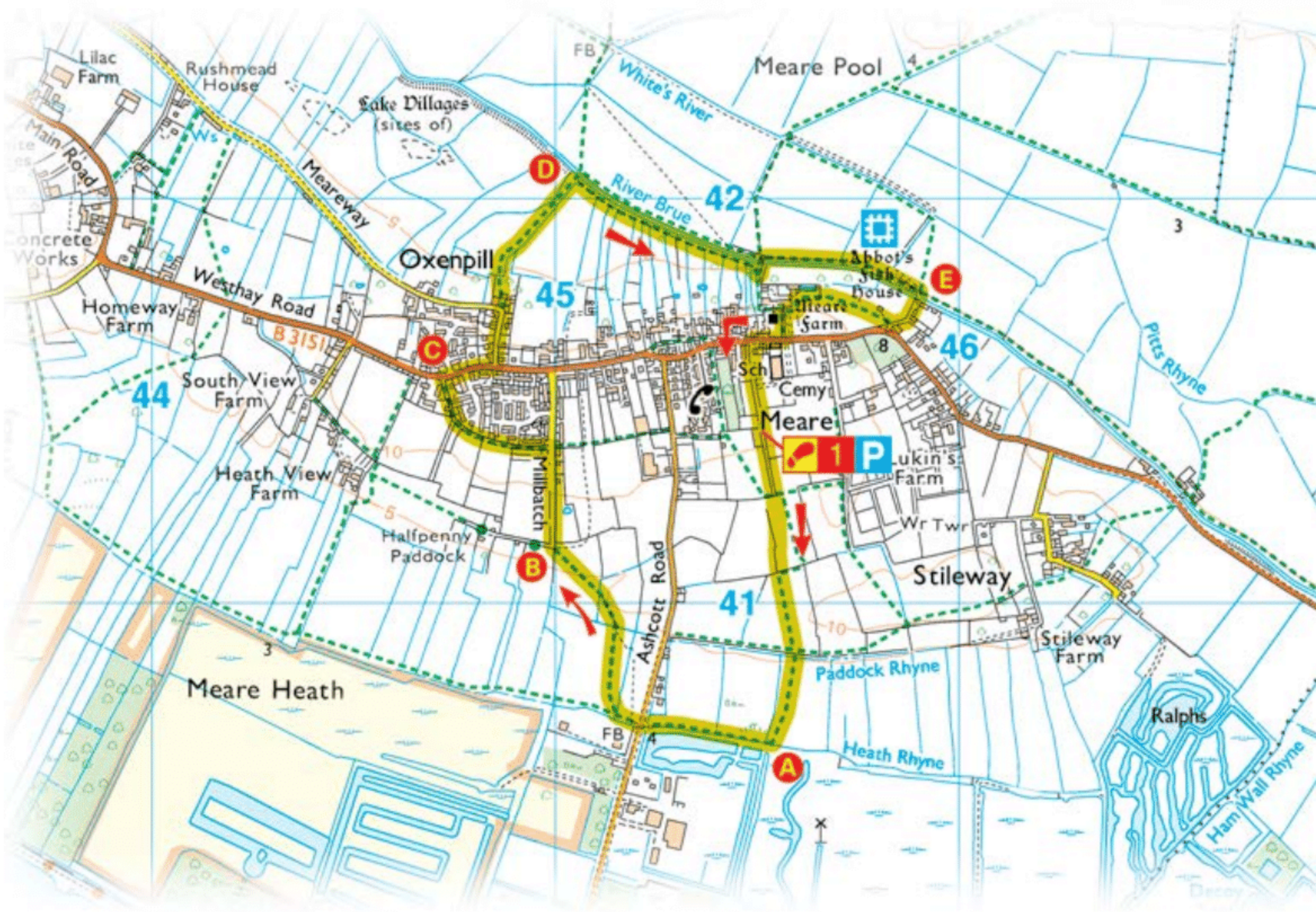
Cross the river; turn right and continue upstream. The Abbot's Fish House comes into view on the opposite side – and Glastonbury Tor ahead (there's a Lake Village site north-west of Glastonbury).

Cross the river at the next bridge **E** and head up the lane. Just before the road, turn right through a gate on a paved path to the Fish House. Continue across the field (no path), aiming for a gate just in front of Meare Farm (the manor house).

Go through the gate, bear left then head down the drive. Cross the B3151 and turn right, then left down Muddy Lane.



SCALE 1:25 000 or 2½ INCHES to 1 MILE 4CM to 1KM



# Outstanding Circular Walks in SOMERSET AND THE MENDIPS

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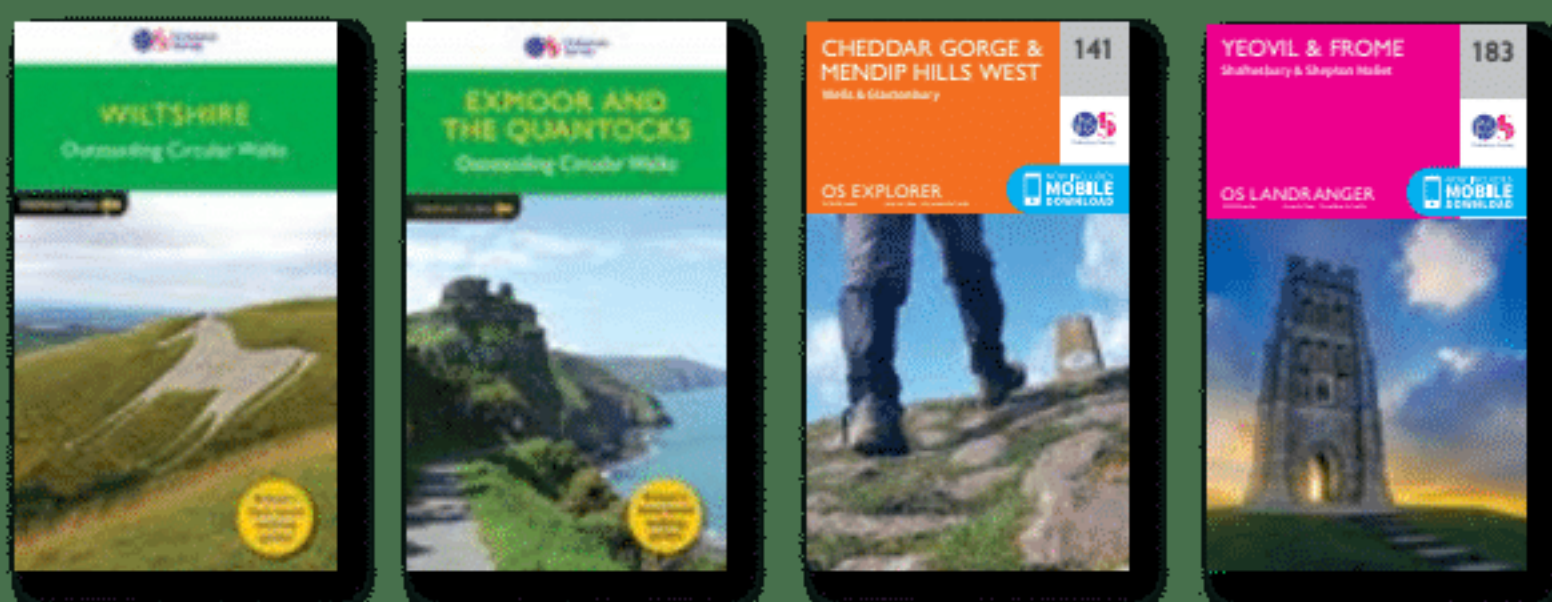
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