

BRISTOL to CHEDDAR - 20 MILES

Chew Valley and the Mendip Hills

Start the walk by crossing the **Clifton Suspension Bridge**, O/S 172, Exp. 155, G.R. 566732. Looking across to the left you will see **Dundry Tower**, which is the first major landmark, about four and a half miles away. Having crossed the Bridge, walk straight on up the road. Take care crossing the busy Portishead Road, and enter through the gatehouse into **Ashton Court Estate**.

N.B. The gates of the Estate open from 8.00 a.m. (when it becomes a public right of way) to dusk. If you wish to start earlier in the morning, you would need to skirt around the **Ashton Court Estate** by turning left after leaving the **Suspension Bridge** and into Burwalls Road, eventually finishing up at **Long Ashton**.

Having entered the Estate, continue along the drive. **After a while** there is a Deer Park on the right. The drive then winds down left towards **Ashton Court Mansion**. Do not turn right at the end of the deer park, but continue to the next junction, bear right and leave the Estate by the gate on the South side.

Taking great care, cross over the Clevedon road into **Long Ashton** and continue up the road until you reach the Angel Inn. After the Inn, turn left down Church Lane. With the Church on your left, go through the churchyard and pass through a gate into a field on the right. Keep close to the right hand boundary, **go through gate**, continue over two more fields, **go through gates**, and then bear left to a small stream and over a footbridge. After the footbridge turn right, keeping close to the stream, then go over a stile and arrive in Yanley Lane. Turn left, go underneath the Long Ashton Bypass.

Immediately after passing under the flyover take the track on the left (opposite the entrance to a business site.) About 0.16 miles along here where three tracks meet take the right hand track. Ascend the hill by wood on left to where there is a junction of paths. Take the left path which climbs up over an old rubbish tip (now landscaped). At the next junction turn left. Soon the path goes down the hill (with steps). At the bottom turn right (do not go under the road bridge.) This permissive path is waymarked as the Avon Community Forest Path. It crosses a foot bridge over the brook and then rises to join the verge at the side of the road. From here take the path on the right going up over the field. After crossing a few stiles / kissing gates you reach the busy A38. Cross over, taking care, turn right and take a small track on the left. Go over a stile and up the hill, crossing diagonally across the field to reach grid reference ST557680 where turn to the left towards a farm.

This is also still on the Avon Community Forest Path.

Pass through a gate and go down the farm track, turning right when you reach the road. Keep right at the next junction of lanes, and soon on the left you will see some bungalows (*). At the side of the second bungalow take a track on the left, then **go through gate** into a field. Turn right, following the hedge on your right, and **go through gate**. Still follow the right hand boundary. Go over a stile in the corner. Continue on, then up some steps to meet the road. Turn left and proceed uphill.

The section from (*) can be narrow and muddy. Alternatively continue up the road and bear left at junction. Can be hazardous with traffic. Take care.

On reaching the village of **Dundry**, turn right and go uphill, with the Church on your left. You can visit the church and also enjoy the view over **Bristol**. On a clear day the **Cotswold Hills** can be seen, and to the left the **Forest of Dean**. Leave the churchyard by the gate opposite the **Dundry Inn** then turn left down the road. Approximately a quarter of a mile down the road you will come to a junction. Go **through** a gate and continue in the same direction with the boundary on your left. At the end of this field, pass through a **pair of gates** and carry on, still with the boundary on the left. Go **through a gate**, then a few yards further on go **through another gate**, and follow the path down a short way between a hedge and a communication station on the left, then **go through gate**. Go straight ahead for a few hundred yards, across the corner of the field and **go through a gate**

You will come out into the open with an excellent view of the valley. Keep to the top of the field with the boundary on your left, then **go through a gate** and on to a road. Turn right down the road (taking care), then after a few yards take the gate on the left and continue along the field in the same direction as before and **through a gate**. Go down this field with the boundary still on your left, **go through a gate** in the corner, down another field in the same direction, through a gate and over to a **gate** opposite, then turn right on a lane. Follow the lane down around a left-hand bend, and after a short way take a stile on the right, opposite a house. Follow the field down, keeping fairly close to the left-hand boundary, then go over a footbridge on the left. Turn right and continue close to the right hand boundary. At a corner, when you run out of boundary, cut over the field in the same direction, **go through a gate** then go up the next short field close to the right hand boundary to the stile opposite. In the next field, continue close to the left-hand boundary. Go **through gates** and carry on the same way, still close to the left-hand boundary. When the boundary runs out, cut straight over the field in the same direction to a well-concealed **gate** in the hedge. Drop down some steps into a field, then bear left down this small combe to a gate near the bottom corner. Once through the gate, continue down this long field, past a house on your left, to the very end. Go **through gates**, on a few yards to the **gate** opposite, down a few steps and on to a road. Turn right, continue for approximately 300 yards then take a road on your right "North Chew Terrace". You have arrived in **Chew Magna**.

A short distance on, with a stream on the left, bear left over an old stone bridge, arriving at St. Andrews's Church. Pass through the churchyard on to a major road. Turn right and continue past a couple of inns and some shops. Further up the road (approximately a quarter of a mile) are some staddlestones (or stone toadstools) on the left, where you turn left down a path. At the bottom of the path, do not cross the river, but turn right **go through gate**. Go up the field and **through another gate**, then turn left and up through a small combe, and **go through gate**. **Bear slightly right to a large Beech tree, go through a gate and small buildings, and then bear right through a gate**. Bear right, with a house on the right, and **go through** another **gate** near the wall. Then go ahead and **through a gate**, turn right and arc around a playing field. Keep on in the same direction as before the playing field, crossing a series of **gates**. After the fourth one, bear right to the top **left hand corner** of the field, **go through another gate**, coming out on to a track. Turn left here, and follow the track around to the road, where you turn left. Soon you will arrive at a major junction (take care) where you go into Pilgrims Way, straight ahead. Continue down this minor road. This is **Chew Stoke** and should you decide to take a rest, you may find suitable accommodation in the area.

To continue, bear left at a **junction** and carry on down the lane, passing the Rectory on your right. Going downhill, bear right on a lane called "The Street", over the bridge, then take School Lane to the right. Continue up the hill, passing the school and other buildings. On a **right hand** bend, **go through a gate** on the left, heading for **gate** opposite. As you continue up the fields, keeping fairly close to the left hand boundary, look back and see **Chew Stoke** with its church and, in the distance the slopes of **Dundry**. A few yards further on, keeping to the right of a barn, you will have a view of the **Chew Valley** and its lake. Continue through the left-hand gate, then **straight on, keeping** close to the hedge on the right, pass through another gate and down the next long field. At the end, go through a gate and come on to a road. Turn right, and a little further on go past an obelisk and a farm on the right. Carry on up the **hill** for a while. You are now on **Breach Hill**, a good habitat for wildflowers. Just before the power lines, **go through gate** on your left, and another **gate** beyond. From here there are good views of the **Chew Valley**, and also the **Mendip Hills**.

Continue in the same direction, with the hedge on your left and some farm buildings on the right. Go **through gate**, then through **another** gate on the left, arriving at a junction of footpaths. Keep to the track closest to the hedge on **your** right. Follow the track around until you reach a gate. Go through it, then bear left down the middle of the field, crossing the stile opposite. Keep in the same direction **through the left of two gates in the corner**, then continue down to the far corner of the next field. **Go through gate**, and carry on with the boundary on your left, and then go **through a gate** on to a road.

Walk straight over, then continue up the track opposite. Look out for the spindle bushes, whose presence probably indicates an ancient trackway. After about one mile **you will reach a minor lane**. **Cross this and carry on to** the main road, then turn left into the village of **Compton Martin**, with the Ring o' Bells inn on your right. Just past the inn, turn right into a lane called The Coombe. Continue on up until you reach a series of footpaths and bridle paths at the top. Follow the narrow path on the right near the building, which will take you on a long, steep climb through **Compton Wood**, coming into open ground. Continue up the grassy slope on your left to a wall, **follow wall on right then over stile in corner**, then go diagonally left and **near** farm buildings and bear right on a well-formed track. You are now on the **Mendip Hills**.

At the top of this farm track, turn left and carry straight on **soon coming to** an avenue of beech trees, eventually passing a house on the right. Keep in the same direction until you reach a major road. Cross straight over and take the track opposite. A little further on, where the surfaced track swings right, take a short green track and go through a gate. Follow the left-hand boundary and go **through a gate** into a Nature Reserve, eventually coming upon open ground. Work your way around this area, along a gravel path, and bear left towards a car parking area. The track bears slightly right; a few yards further on go left through a gate. Follow the path to a road, turn right, and go up a few yards, then left and on to a well-defined track, entering another Conservation Area, and down to **Velvet Bottom**.

Continue down this delightful combe for approximately one mile, then go **through a gate**, keeping to your left, and enter a National Trust area known as **Black Rock**. Eventually cross over the road and on to the footpath opposite. A

very steep ascent will take you through woodlands and eventually into open country. Go through a gate, stay on the main path (avoid bearing left, but not too far right - there is a 500 foot drop). You will reach an escarpment with Cheddar Lake before you, Brent Knoll beyond, and below you **Cheddar**, one of the most popular villages in England.

To the right lies **Cheddar Gorge**, a natural habitat for the rare Cheddar Pink. To the far left, on a clear day, **Glastonbury Tor** can be seen, which will dominate the walk for a few days until you arrive in the **Quantock Hills**.

Descending the hill by a knobbly pathway, you will come to Jacob's ladder, which is a concessionary way. Its 237 steps will take you down into **Cheddar** Village, famous for its caves, cheese and cider and, in the right season, its strawberries, and cream teas.

As an alternative to Jacob's Ladder, take the public right of way. Continue past the steps on your right, then bear left. The path winds down to a lane. Turn right and walk approximately 100 yards, turn right again and go down another lane to a main road. Turn left, cross over the bridge, then bear left at a major junction into Cliff Street and follow the road for a quarter of a mile until you arrive at the Market Cross. There are plenty of shops here to replenish stocks.

(If going for the hostel, at the Cross, bear right into Bath Street, continue to a major junction and a war memorial, then turn right into a road called the Hayes. Carry on until you get to a lane on the left, Hillfield. The Hostel is up here).

