



Stowey walking

Nether Stowey, Over Stowey and the Quantock Hills

Nether Stowey to Holford and back

Length. 12.9 km or 8 miles. Three and half hours plus lunch stop.

Maps: OS Explorer 140 Quantock Hills & Bridgwater & OS Landranger 181 Minehead and Brendon Hills area also Around and About The Quantock Hills, The Yellow Walk Maps

Refreshments: The Plough Inn and Combe House Hotel in Holford.

Public Toilets: Library car park, Nether Stowey.

Public Transport: Occasional buses from Bridgwater and Minehead stopping at Castle Street, Nether Stowey and Holford on the A39 near the Plough Inn.

Start and parking: Library car park in Castle Street, Nether Stowey. GR: ST190395



The waterwheel at Combe House Hotel

Description

A circular day walk to The Plough Inn at Holford over the Quantocks, taking in part of the Coleridge Way, Walford's Gibbet and Holford Combe with fine views of the Somerset Coast. There are some lengthy climbs and descents. Can get muddy in places.

Grade – Moderate

Directions

1. From the carpark turn right up Castle Street and Castle Hill. Just after crossing Channel Close take the right hand fork up Butcher's Lane. At the end of this lane, turn left at the 30mph sign and after 20 yards take a path on the right up to a kissing gate. Climb directly uphill to the far top corner of the field. Through another kissing gate and turn right into a narrow country lane, Hack Lane.

2. After descending along this road and after 250 yards, turn left along a wide dirt track. Follow this round to the right and then when you hit a left hand bend, go through the gate on the right, entering a large grassy field. Head left uphill, keeping the fence to your left and aim to the left of an old quarry scar ahead of you. Walk to the top of the field to a 5 bar gate and onto the road at Walford's Gibbet. Turn left here and walk up the road.

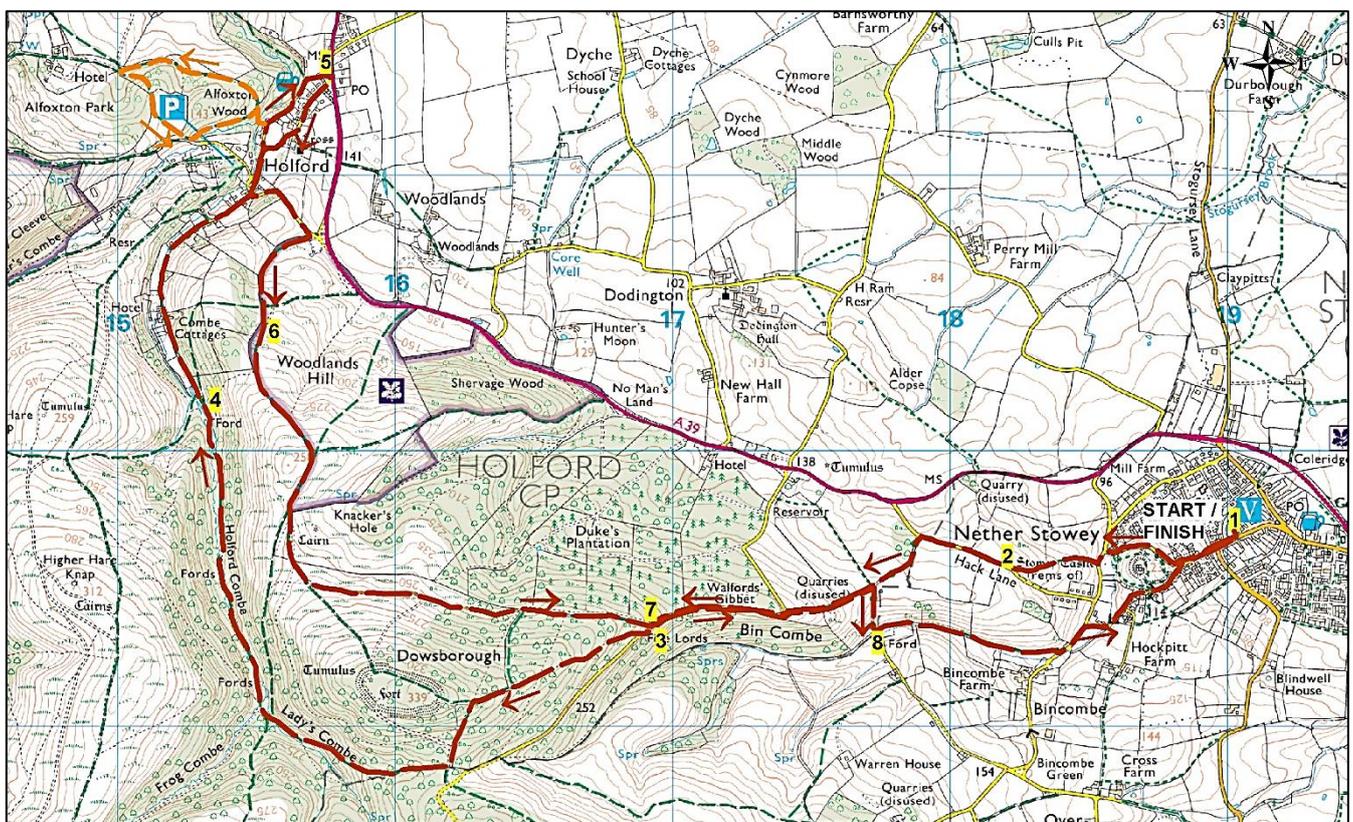
3. Just past a Quantock Greenway (“QG”) and Coleridge Way (“CW”) sign (about 15 yards) take a path right at 45° and head uphill. Ignore a path crossing diagonally and follow the path through a break at the corner of an earth and beech bank and after about 100 yards meet another path crossing. Turn left here and head downhill. On just passing a grassy clearing with a solitary tree, turn right down a dirt path and head downhill. This path follows to the right of a small brook. On meeting a stream/ford across the path, cross over this and continue downhill following the stream as it meanders down the valley. The path criss-crosses the stream, although the best paths tend to be those to the right of it. On reaching a clearing, walk straight ahead down a track.

4. On reaching a tarmac road by the Combe House Hotel, take a moment to see the water wheel, originally used to power the tanning process undertaken here. Continue to follow this road until reaching ‘The Triangle’. Walk straight ahead until meeting another road at ‘Silk Mills’. Keep straight ahead until the road bends sharply to the right and here take the left hand road marked ‘narrow lane’ by ‘Glen Cottage’. Follow this to The Plough *.

5. Turn right out of the pub, along the A39 for a few yards and then right again into road marked ‘Unsuitable for buses and coaches’. Follow this back to ‘Silk Mills’ and ‘The Triangle’ and here turn sharp left and head uphill along the road. Just before joining the A39 turn right along a dirt track into National Trust land (‘Woodlands Hill’). Follow this track uphill until you reach open moorland.

6. Once out into the moorland and a branching of paths, take the track straight ahead, ignoring a green path to the left. Continue uphill towards a large stone cairn at the brow of ‘Woodlands Hill’. Continue to follow the path downhill until meeting a triangular crossing of paths by a short waymark post. Turn left here keeping Dowsborough Hill to your right. Enter a wood and follow this path to the road you walked earlier in the day.

7. Turn left down the road back to Walford’s Gibbet at the corner. Enter into the field to the right hand corner with the gate and turn right here heading down the steep green lane to ‘Broomsquire’s Cottage’.



8. At the crossing of paths take the path signposted in blue to Nether Stowey. This is 'Watery Lane'. On reaching the stream, take the higher path to the left and follow this to the road. On reaching the road, turn left. Turn right at the '>6' 6"<' sign and head up Castle Hill, following this road back to the library car park.

*** Holford Extension (1.6 miles) – start at pub:**

Follow road between pub and car park. Metal stile 30 yards right after Dye House, over bridge, turn right onto tarmac road. Keep eyes open for red deer in field to the right. Over cattle grid continue up drive. Ignore drive to left. Continue for further 100 yards to see back of Alfoxton Park House where the Wordsworths lived in 1798. Unfortunately the house and drive is not open to the public. Retrace steps back to cattle grid turn right, signposted Holford, up short and very steep hill. Over a framed stile and along the right-hand field boundary until a further framed stile. Down the other side and left to the dog pound – supposedly haunted by the ghost of the hunt master torn to pieces by his own dogs. Continue forward past the pink house and Holford Bowling Green (probably used by the silk making Huguenots as a 'boule' green). Follow road round past the ruined silk mill on left (location for Bryan Adams' 'Everything I do, I do for you' video). Follow road round to right and the church. Forward to pub. 1.6 miles.



Sheep and deer grazing at Alfoxden Park

The details of this walk were correct at the time of publication but may be subject to minor changes particularly when walking over farmland. Footpaths may be subject to diversion, please follow local signs on the ground. If you have any problems or feel the directions could be clearer please contact Stowey Walking via our website: stoweywalking.co.uk