

*The Coleridge Way
In the Footsteps of the Romantic Poet*

*From the Quantock Hills to Exmoor
36 Miles from Nether Stowey to Porlock*

***NETHER STOWEY TO BICKNOLLER
9.2 Miles***

Steady climb from start for first 2.5 miles to Woodlands Hill. Downhill to Holford and then generally undulating to Bicknoller, with a few short sharp descents and climbs in and out of small combs. Much of this section also follows a route signed as the Quantock Greenway.

Start point: Coleridge Cottage, Lime St. Nether Stowey

Toilets: Nether Stowey, car park in Castle Street.

Places to Eat & Drink: pubs, shops & tea rooms in Nether Stowey; pub & tea rooms/gardens in Holford (all just off route); pub and shop (just off route) in West Quantoxhead; pub (just off route) & shop at Bicknoller.

Maps: You are advised to carry with you OS Explorer Maps
140 Quantock Hills & Bridgwater
OL9 Exmoor

You may find reference maps with the Coleridge Way route marked on them at pubs and B&Bs. You can use these to mark the route on your own OS maps.

Waymarking: *The route is waymarked with a distinctive quill waymark.*

ST 191 399 NETHER STOWEY

From the front door of Coleridge Cottage turn R and walk down Lime Street. Turn R into Castle Street by clock tower (A). Continue up Castle Street (B) and walk up hill. At brow of hill climb to top of Castle Mount (C) on R (take stile on R). Return over stile to road and continue to T junction at bottom of hill.

(A) *Clock tower erected in 1862 using the bell from the former market cross.*

Also site of Old Gaol.

(B) *Toilets & information in library car park in Castle Street.*

(C) *Remains of 11th C Motte & Bailey Castle with fine views of Nether Stowey, Quantocks and across Bristol Channel. Castle destroyed in 15th C. Interpretation Panel.*

ST 185 393

Turn L and after 100m take first bridleway on R. Along this bridleway take path above the stream. At cross roads, with a cottage on your L, turn R uphill on hedged lane to gate on L. Go through gate and go uphill on L hand edge of fields and L of small quarry to gate at top of hill onto minor road (D).

(D) *Site of Walford's Gibbett - In 1789 John Walford, a local charcoal burner, murdered his wife and was subsequently hanged here and left for 12 months.*

ST 174 394 1.5 miles

Turn L and walk up road for around quarter of a mile and, just after road bends slightly uphill to L, turn R on to signed sunken path into woodland. Keep to this path through woodland, ignoring any paths off to the L. Eventually this path emerges from the woods onto open heathland. Keep ahead on this path until you reach a crossroads of paths (E). Turn R and walk uphill on main track (ignoring path on R) to a cairn on the top of Woodlands Hill.

(E) *On the hill to the left is Dowsborough Hill Fort - an Iron Age hill fort. Earthwork defences comprise a rampart and ditch. A Bronze Age barrow lies in NW corner.*

ST 156 399

Keep ahead and descend the hill on the main track, again ignoring paths to the L and R, to enter woodland. In the woodland keep to main path on L hand edge of wood, ignoring R fork above stag pond. The path eventually meets a minor road (may be a mobile catering van in layby on R). Turn L along road. Turn R at next junction 'The Triangle' and first left 'Silk Mills' to Holford Car Park and village green (Bowling Green) (F).

(F) *To look round Holford village go back to 'Silk Mills' and turn L. Remains of old Huguenot silk mills in woods to left. Follow this road round to right to visit 19thC St Mary the Virgin church and go further down this road to visit pub on A39. Tea rooms 150 yds along Hodders Combe, which runs alongside the village green (from car park rough track on L). Tea rooms 500 yds along Holford Combe, tarmac no through road from 'The Triangle'.*

ST 154 410 HOLFORD 3.6 miles

From Holford Village Green Car Park take the tarmac lane to the R of the Village Green. At the junction of paths turn R at Dog Pound (G) and continue on tarmac lane. This bears round to the L and skirts the edge of woodland (look out for deer in fields on R) before reaching a gate close to Alfoxton Park Hotel (H). Go through gate and keep on tarmac path to the R of the hotel and uphill on lane signed to a Youth Hostel. At R hand bend bear R then L. (YHA entrance is on R). After passing Alfoxton Cottage on L, bear R downhill on rougher track to pass another cottage on R.

(G) *Stray dogs were kept here in the 18thC.*

(H) *William Wordsworth & his sister Dorothy lived here for a year in 1797/8. Coleridge was a frequent visitor.*

ST 143 417

Ignore first path immediately L and turn L at bottom path signed to Perry, and follow this path with fence on R for around 1.5 miles. It goes downhill to cross a stream and then keep ahead on obvious path onto open heathland, still with fence on R. At a fingerpost crossroads of paths keep ahead signed to Perry. Path goes steeply down to cross another stream at Smith's Combe. Cross and follow signs to Perry, with fence still on R. After passing a group of pine trees bear R, still with fence on R. At the next sign, by a spring and a gate to A39 on R, keep ahead signed to Perry. You are now joined by the West Somerset Coast Path to West Quantoxhead. At the next fingerpost keep to R (white permissive path sign). This soon goes steeply downhill to steps at the bottom of Perry Combe.

ST 120 424 6.4 miles

Keep straight ahead keeping close to R hand fence all the way, parallel to A39. When the path reaches a gate on the R next to A39 turn L uphill and then immediately R. Keep to path close to fence on R, to soon reach a kissing gate entering St Audries Forest. On reaching a T junction of paths, turn R on wide forestry track to West Quantoxhead. Keep on main track, ignoring 1st gate to A39. The track rises to pass a seat (I). Keep on this main track on R hand edge of wood, ignoring turns off left, until it bends to the R and narrows to go down hill to a gate. Go through gate and turn R towards main road. On reaching road opposite church (J) turn L on path to The Windmill Pub (shop further along main road).

(I) *Good viewpoint overlooking St Audries Manor and Deer Park.*

(J) *St Etheldreda Church, built 1854.*

ST 112 418 WEST QUANTOXHEAD 7.6 miles

Facing the road from The Windmill Pub go L and then turn L at road signposted to Bicknoller. Walk for about half a mile with extreme care along this road as there are no pavements. At Staple Cross keep straight on (now Weacombe Road). As road bends to R, just before speed sign, take track on L at Mayfield Cottage. Go past cottage to reach bridleway gate. Go through gate and follow path along edge of woodland. This reaches a gate at Weacombe.

ST 111 408

Go through gate and turn R. Go through next gate onto lane and then after a few

yards turn L at a fingerpost sign over stream. Go through gate and continue uphill in same direction on edge of woodland with boundary fence on R, passing a muddy spring, to eventually descend across a stream to Bicknoller Combe. Here turn R down track to gate. Go through gate and down road to reach Bicknoller Community Shop (K).

(K) To visit church of St George, part 12thC, and Bicknoller Inn - turn L at shop and then first R.. Church is on L and pub is on R further down into village.

ST 110 396 BICKNOLLER 9.2 miles

04/09/07