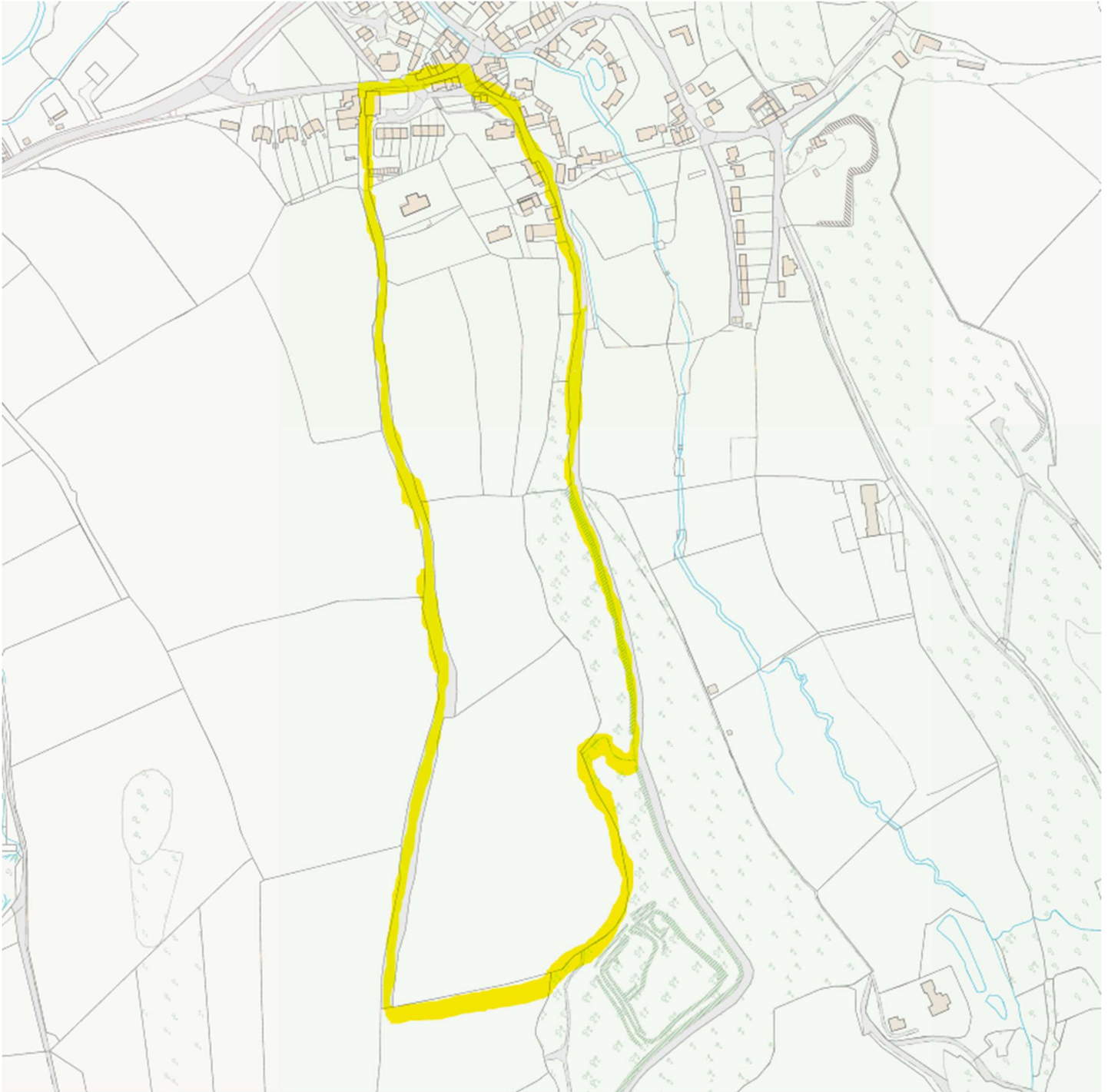


Timberscombe Hill Fort

Distance	Elevation gain	Difficulty
1.05 miles	61m	Easy (some steep sections)

Turn right out of the gate. After 20 metres, take the footpath to the left through the school. Follow the sunken path all the way to the top of the hill. Through the gate, follow the path along the left-hand edge of the field (this field normally contains horses). At the next gate, follow the path to the left. The remains of Timberscombe hill fort are on your right-hand side here. Continue following the path. It will take a sharp right turn and descend down the hill to the road. Turn left and follow the road back into Timberscombe. You'll come out by the pub and post office, so turn left to get back to the house.

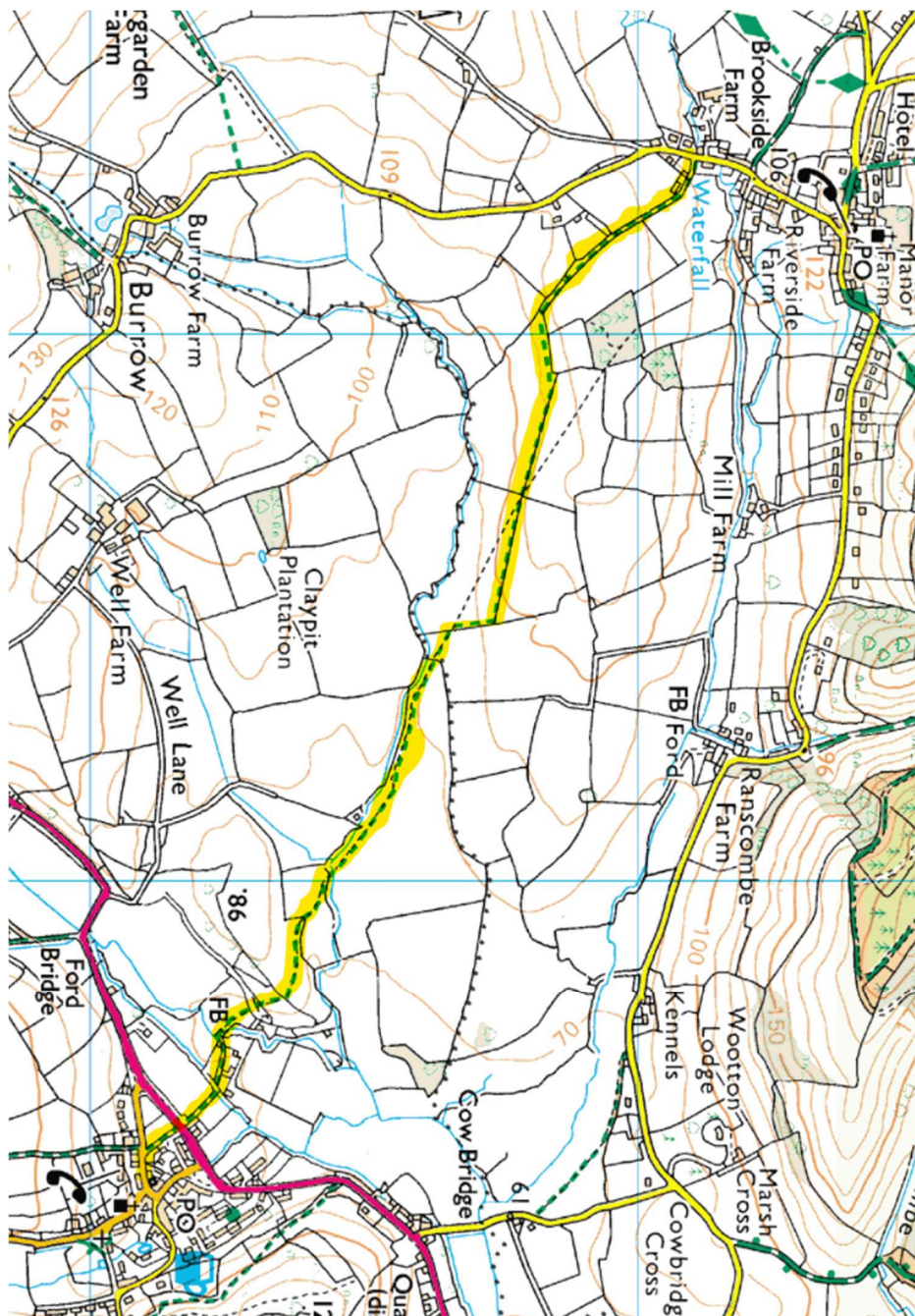


Wootton Courtenay

This is a nice walk which quickly brings you into some open fields. Note however that these are typically full of sheep so please keep dogs under control.

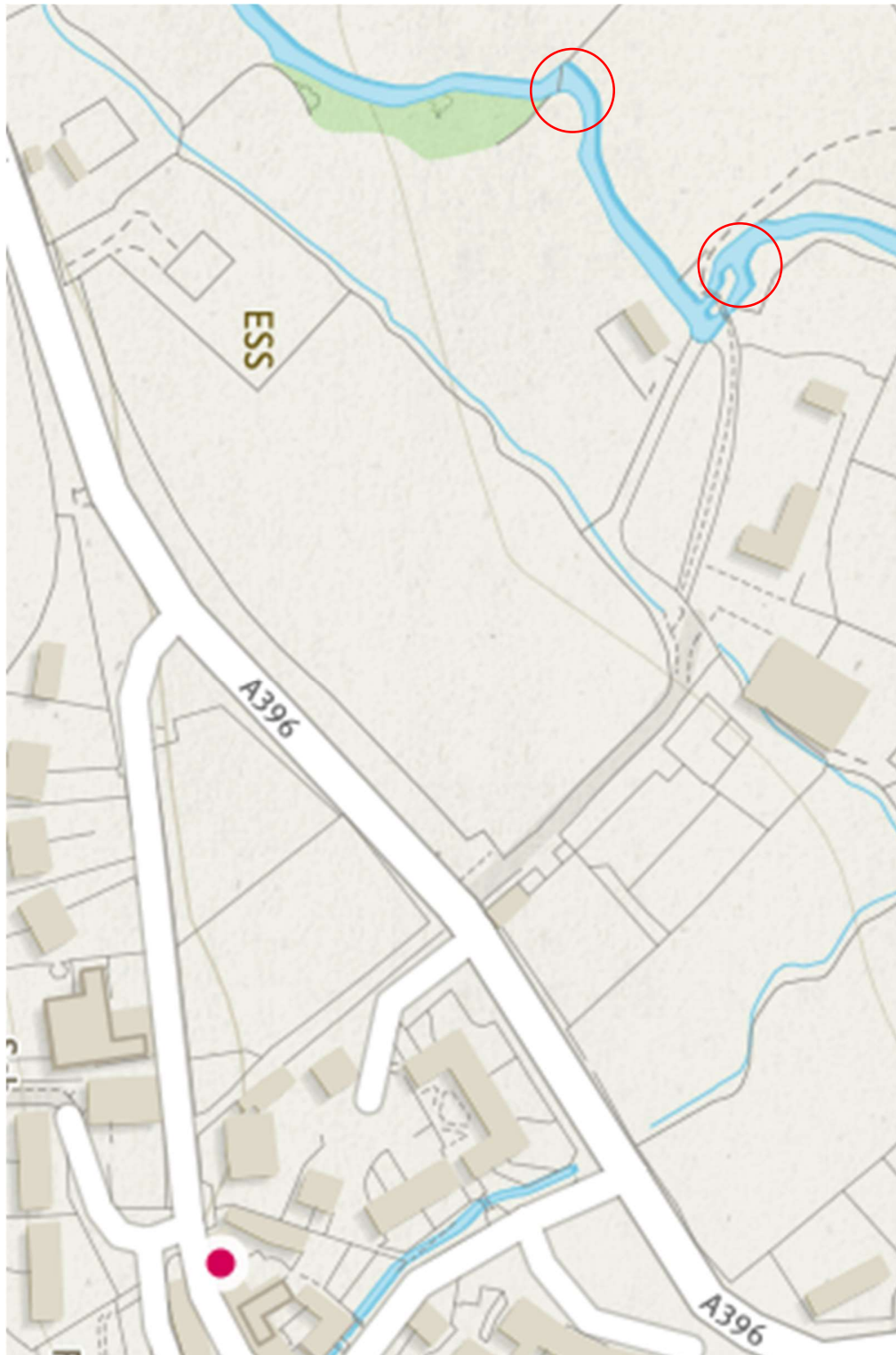
Turn right out the gate. After 10 metres, take the footpath to the right and cross the main road. Follow the path to cross a river footbridge and into a field. Now bear right to a gate ahead to cross a track to a kissing gate opposite. Now bear slightly right to a stile in the hedge ahead. From here bear slightly left almost parallel to the telegraph wires on your left to reach the far corner of this field and a stile. From this stile bear left again, again almost parallel to the telegraph wires to the corner with another stile. Cross the small stream footbridge and now follow the left boundary of this large field with the stream on your left, to reach the next stile ahead. From this stile bear right to a gate in the hedge ahead and now bear right uphill to the top corner of this field, soon ignoring the gate in the top field boundary on your right. Cross the stile and continue ahead level. Soon ignore the gate on your right continuing ahead to the far narrow corner of this field and a stile. Now follow the sunken lane ahead, continuing straight until you reach the road.

Turning right on the road will bring you out by the village store and church.



Local Swimming Spots

If your dogs are water babies, then there are a couple of great little swimming spots locally. These are on the way to Wootton Courtenay. Turn right out of the gate and take the footpath to the right. Cross the main road and continue following the footpath. You'll arrive at the bridges crossing the stream. There's a swimming spot just across the bridges on the right-hand side, or a deeper one if you follow the left edge of the field.



Dunkery Hill

Distance	Elevation gain	Difficulty
9.6 miles (there and back)	520m	Moderate (Mainly good paths but big elevation gain)

Dunkery is the tallest hill in Exmoor. The views from the top provide a great overview of the National Park, with the sea to the north and the rolling moors to the south. If you just want to tick the beacon off your list, then the quickest way is to drive and park at Dunkery Gate and then walk up the hill (highlighted purple on map). You'll see this signposted if you drive towards Exford from Wheddon Cross. The walk from Dunkery Gate is fairly steep - if you carry on driving up the road from Dunkery Gate there are some smaller parking bays which give a flatter walk to the beacon.

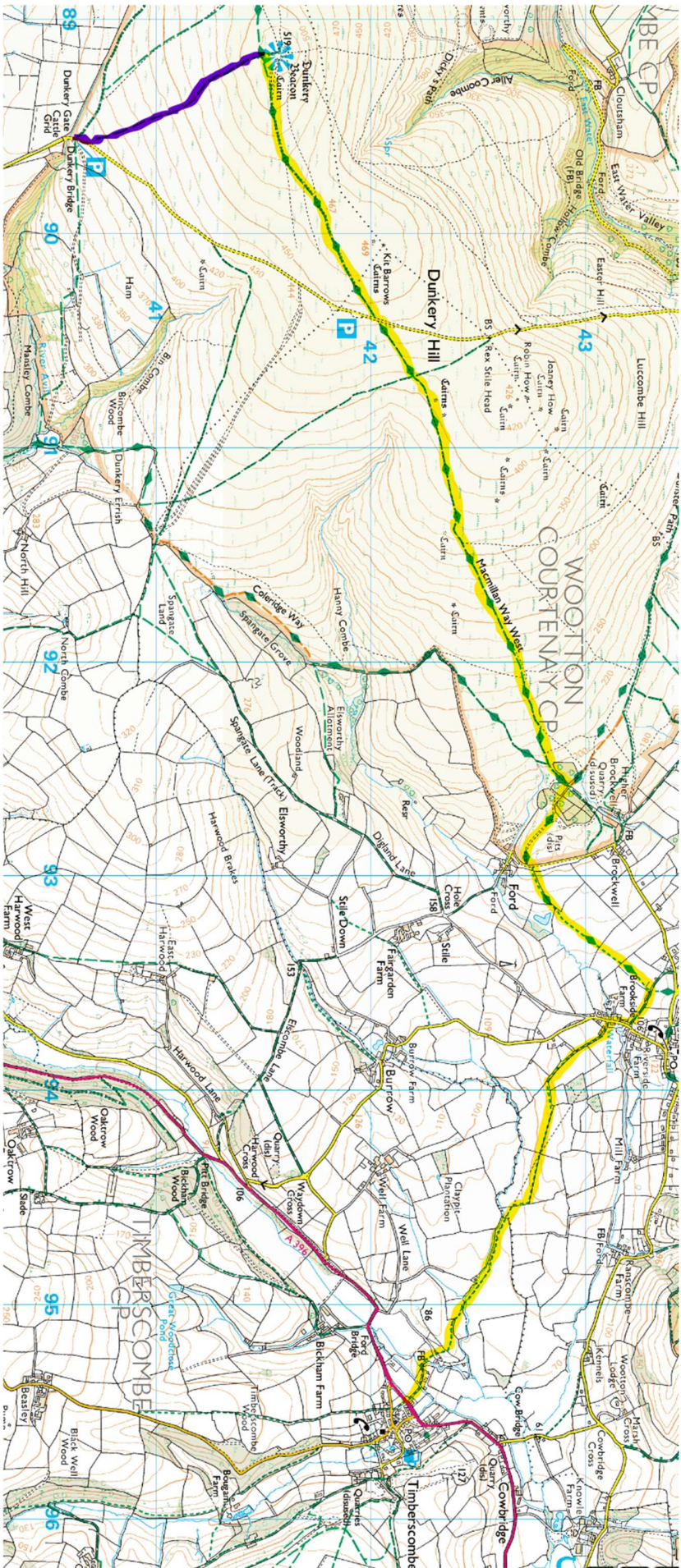
If you're looking for a bit more of a challenge you can walk there from Timberscombe (highlighted yellow on map). Be prepared, especially in winter, as the weather on top of the hill can be completely different to here.

Turn right out the gate. After 10 metres, take the footpath to the right and cross the main road. Follow the path to cross a river footbridge and into a field. Now bear right to a gate ahead to cross a track to a kissing gate opposite. Now bear slightly right to a stile in the hedge ahead. From here bear slightly left almost parallel to the telegraph wires on your left to reach the far corner of this field and a stile. From this stile bear left again, again almost parallel to the telegraph wires to the corner with another stile. Cross the small stream footbridge and now follow the left boundary of this large field with the stream on your left, to reach the next stile ahead. From this stile bear right to a gate in the hedge ahead and now bear right uphill to the top corner of this field, soon ignoring the gate in the top field boundary on your right. Cross the stile and continue ahead level. Soon ignore the gate on your right continuing ahead to the far narrow corner of this field and a stile. Now follow the sunken lane ahead, continuing straight until you reach the road.

At the road in Wootton Courtenay, turn right, and then left up the Butt's Lane footpath after a few metres. Follow this footpath until you see the footpath up some steps on your left. Take this footpath across the cricket field, then the small airstrip, until you come to a small road. The path continues the other side of the road a few metres to your left, signposted Dunkery Hill. The path continues into a small wooded area with lots of paths going different directions, so it can be tricky to follow the correct path. General rule of thumb is to keep left, then keep going uphill, until you come out of the trees to a fork in the path. Take a right at the next fork and continue following the Macmillan Way all the way to the Beacon.

To come home, retrace your steps, or take a different path down from the beacon and use the Coleridge Way to come into Ford from a different direction. You can then join back up with the footpath and home from Wootton Courtenay.

Map overleaf



Dunster via Wootton Common and Dunster Forest

Distance	Elevation gain	Difficulty
9.3 miles	511m	Moderate (All good paths, some steep sections)

This is a stunning circular walk which has incredible views of the Severn Estuary, lets you explore Dunster, and brings you home via the Dunster Estate Forest. In this route we've taken you past the Luttrell Arms pub, as their secret garden is a wonderful place to have a halfway breather or maybe even some lunch whilst overlooking the castle.

Turn right out the gate. After 10 metres, take the footpath to the right and cross the main road. Follow the path to cross a river footbridge and into a field. Now bear right to a gate ahead to cross a track to a kissing gate opposite. Now bear slightly right to a stile in the hedge ahead. From here bear slightly left almost parallel to the telegraph wires on your left to reach the far corner of this field and a stile. From this stile bear left again, again almost parallel to the telegraph wires to the corner with another stile. Cross the small stream footbridge and now follow the left boundary of this large field with the stream on your left, to reach the next stile ahead. From this stile bear right to a gate in the hedge ahead and now bear right uphill to the top corner of this field, soon ignoring the gate in the top field boundary on your right. Cross the stile and continue ahead level. Soon ignore the gate on your right continuing ahead to the far narrow corner of this field and a stile. Now follow the sunken lane ahead, continuing straight until you reach the road.

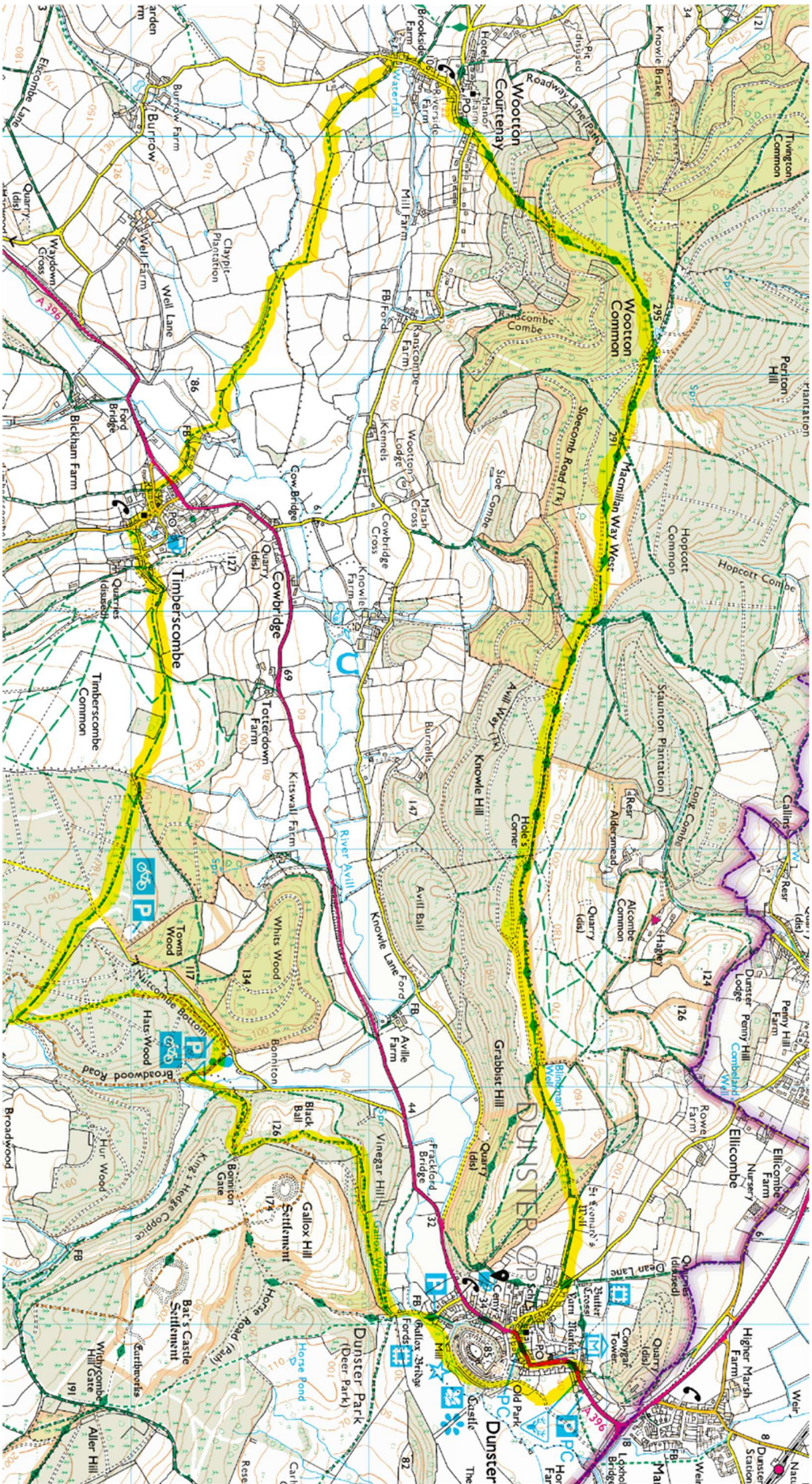
At the road, turn right and follow the road until you get onto the high street. The village shop is a good place to top up with supplies for the climb ahead! Turn right down the high street, follow the road to the left, and then take the path in front of you as the road bends to the right. Follow the path as it bears slightly right up through the field to the woods. Over the stile and follow the track up. Ignore the gravel track and continue following the path uphill. Soon you reach another main track coming in from the left. Continue ahead along it and soon another track comes in from the left. Continue ahead on the bridleway towards Dunster. As this track goes over a brow, turn left to go through to another track (the Macmillan Way) almost parallel to this one and turn right on to it, immediately ignoring a track off to the left. Continue along the Macmillan Way and admire the views out to your left and ahead.

Follow the Macmillan Way for quite some distance, until you reach a fork where the main path starts descending into the woods to the right. At this point fork left, then straight ahead at the next crossroads in the path. Fork left again and you'll emerge onto Conduit Lane, where a right turn through deer fence gates takes you down into Dunster. Turn right down St George's Street until you reach the corner of the churchyard. Follow the path through the churchyard and turn left down the road. Walk the short distance down the road until a left bend brings you onto the main high street. The Luttrell Arms is at the far end of the high street on the right hand side. Enjoy the views from the secret garden.

To come home, take the gate out the top corner of the secret garden into the Dunster Castle car park. Walk to the gates by the National Trust information centre, and then take the footpath down to the left towards the stream. Cross the bridge, then follow this path round to the right along the edge of the stream. Dunster Watermill will be on your right hand side, and you'll then meet another small road. Bear left on the road past the cottages on your right, then take the track to the right up into the forest. Continue following this track, do not turn off either left up the steeper track or right down the footpath. Bear left round the hill and you'll come to Black Ball lookout. Continue on the path and turn right down the hill at the next cross roads. When this path meets the road, follow the road in front of you over the stream. As the road then bears left, there is a small car park on your left, and this is home to the tallest tree in England. To continue the walk, take the path sharp right, which will bring you to Nutcombe Bottom car park.

Follow the path out the top of Nutcombe Bottom. Bear left at the first fork then straight ahead at the cross roads. This will bring you to a track where you turn right back towards Timberscombe. Cross the road and continue following the track. As the track bears left up the hill, go through the gate on the right slightly below you into a field. Stick to the left edge of the field until you come to a large wooden gate, through this, and the next small gate, and follow the right edge of this field down through another gate into a small farmyard. Keep going downhill, through the gate, and left down into Timberscombe. Follow the road straight ahead, across the ford, and fork right up the steps. Turn right down the road with the church in front of you, and The Lion Inn pub will be on your right hand side. Turn left here to get back to Kiln Cottages.

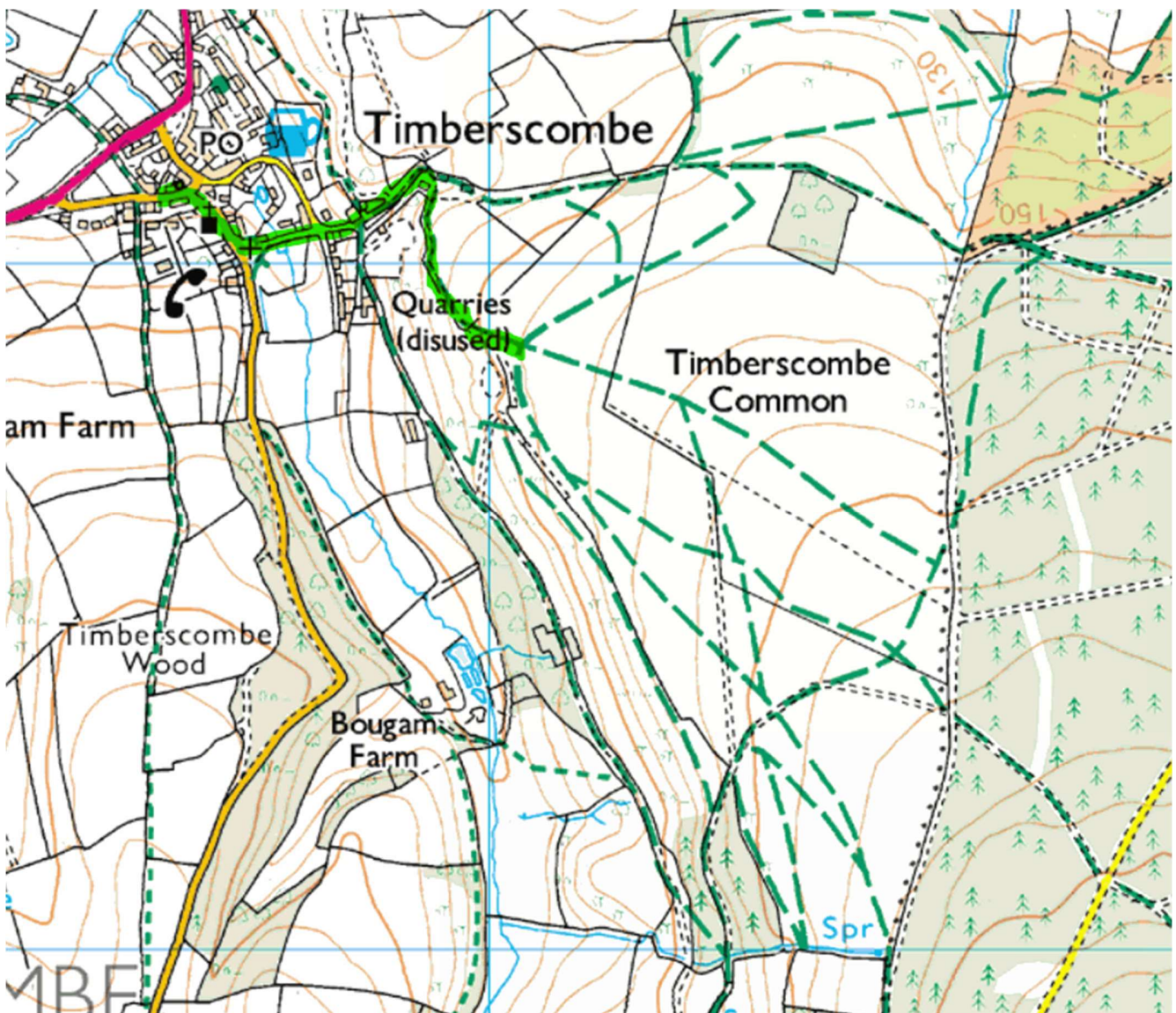
Map Overleaf



Timberscombe Common

It's a bit of an uphill slog to get there, but the common has wonderful views of the surrounding countryside and is a great open space for dogs. There are typically cows on the common, but it's a large area and they are normally confined to a small part of it.

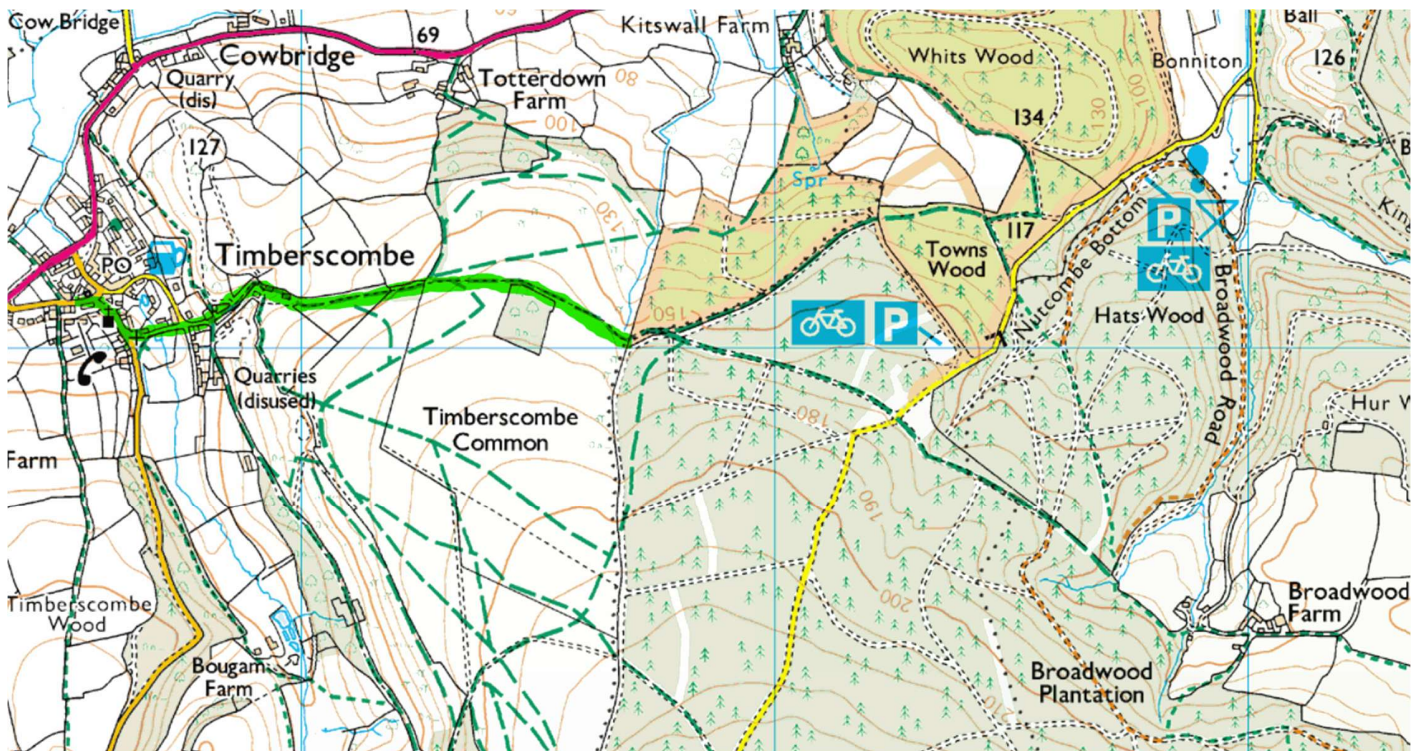
Turn left out of the gate and right before the pub, up Church Street. Just past the churchyard where the road crests, take the path to the left down some steps. Cross the river, then follow the road straight on up the steep hill. Near the top, there's a gate on the right which goes into a horse yard. Follow the footpath that forks off to the right above the farm building on the right. Through the gate into the field (typically horses in here), and follow the right boundary of the field to the gate. Once through this gate you are out onto the common, and can enjoy one of the many paths on offer.



Dunster Forest

You can either walk to the forest or drive there and explore the multiple tracks available. If you drive, we recommend parking at Nutcombe Bottom, which is a free car park and tends to be quiet. From here you can easily complete the Tall Trees trail and see the tallest tree in England or use it as a starting point for some longer walks, such as Bats Castle.

To walk there, turn left out of the gate and right before the pub, up Church Street. Just past the churchyard where the road crests, take the path to the left down some steps. Cross the river, then follow the road straight on up the steep hill. Near the top, there's a gate on the right which goes into a horse yard. Go through this gate, then swing left through the yard, and out the gate at the top. Follow the path along the left edge of the field (there are likely to be sheep in here), and you'll get to a gate into a small wooded area. Through this gate and the next larger gate, keep going straight, following the right edge of the field. You'll then go down slightly into the edge of the forest. There are various paths and tracks to be explored in here.



Croydon Hill and Bat's Castle Settlement

Distance	Elevation gain	Difficulty
9 miles	516m	Moderate (Some muddy and overgrown areas)

A hilly walk that has some great views over the Severn Estuary and Dunster. This takes you through the ancient Bat's Castle settlement and gives you two good opportunities to spot some Exmoor ponies.

Turn left out of the gate and right before the pub, up Church Street. Just past the churchyard where the road crests, take the path to the left down some steps. Cross the river, then follow the road straight on up the steep hill. Near the top, there's a gate on the right which goes into a horse yard. Go through this gate, then swing left through the yard, and out the gate at the top. Follow the path along the left edge of the field (there are likely to be sheep in here), and you'll get to a gate into a small wooded area. Through this gate and the next larger gate, keep going straight, following the right edge of the field. You'll then go down slightly into the edge of the forest.

Go through the gate into the forest, and then turn right up a fairly steep hill. Keep following this track, forking left at the third opportunity. Follow this track, ignoring all other tracks, uphill until you reach Withycombe Common. Take the path which goes past the beacon and admire the views, keeping an eye out for the resident Exmoor ponies. Follow the path as it descends down the other side of the hill, and turn left at the cross roads. Follow this path as it curves steadily to the left, and then take the footpath through the wooden gate almost in front of you, following signs for Aller Hill or Withycombe Hill. Continue descending on this path, forking right at the cross roads, until you reach the stream.

Once across the stream turn left for Aller Hill. Follow this path up the boundary fence (it can be quite overgrown and difficult to follow). Go along the edge of the field and through the next gate, continuing straight. Eventually you'll reach the edge of the tree line, where you turn left towards Withycombe Hill Gate. Go through this gate and straight up the hill until you reach Bat's Castle Settlement, taking in the views over Dunster beneath you and again watching out for Exmoor's resident ponies.

From Bat's Castle, continue following the path as it snakes across Gallox Hill. The path then descends down to the left to a tall deer gate. Turn left through this gate, continue straight, and then turn right down the hill at the next cross roads. When this path meets the road, follow the road in front of you over the stream. As the road then bears left, there is a small car park on your left, and this is home to the tallest tree in England. To continue the walk, take the path sharp right, which will bring you to Nutcombe Bottom car park.

Follow the path out the top of Nutcombe Bottom. Bear left at the first fork then straight ahead at the cross roads. This will bring you to a track where you turn right back towards Timberscombe. Cross the road and continue following the track. As the track bears left up the hill, go through the gate on the right slightly below you into a field. Stick to the left edge of the field until you come to a large wooden gate, through this, and the next small gate, and follow the right edge of this field down through another gate into a small farmyard. Keep going downhill, through the gate, and left down into Timberscombe. Follow the road straight ahead, across the ford, and fork right up the steps. Turn right down the road with the church in front of you, and The Lion Inn pub will be on your right hand side. Turn left here to get back to Kiln Cottages.

Map Overleaf

