



Abbotsbury and Two Dorset Coast Paths

A varied walk along two of Dorset's coast paths, and through the hills of Ashley Chase. An opportunity to visit Abbotsbury Swannery

Essential Facts

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| ▪ Route distance: | 15.0 km (9.4 miles) |
| ▪ Approximate time: | 4 hours 30 mins |
| ▪ Optional shorter route: | 9.5 km (6.0 miles) |
| ▪ Approx. total ascent: | 300 metres |
| ▪ Start point Grid Ref: | SY 576 846 |
| ▪ GPS Ref: | SY 57660 84618 |
| ▪ Recommended O.S. Map: | Explorer OL 15 |
| ▪ Toughness Rating | Dorset 2 |

Please see the notes on Toughness Ratings at the end of this report

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CHALLENGE ?**

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**An Individual Walk
A Team Effort**

Full Info from the Great Walks web site

THE ROUTE

You start this walk from the car park at Abbotsbury Swannery, south of the village. Locate the finger-post near the Swannery car park entrance, **S**. Pass the Swannery main entrance and soon turn left, following the permissive path signed to the Coast Path and West Bexington. At a stile turn left and keep close to the boundary on your left, following white permissive waymarkers until you reach a stream. Cross and turn left onto the Coast Path. After about 2.3 km turn right along a track leading to East Bexington Farm, **A**

Pass the farm buildings, follow the track round to the left and when it ends go diagonally left across a field heading for a house. Cross a stile and follow a permissive path to farm buildings. Turn right and climb to a gate. Turn left signed to Tulks Hill and at the next finger-post turn right to join the Inland Coast Path. Continue climbing to a finger-post, then turn right to reach a gate beside the road, **B**

The short walk continues along the Coast Path, crossing the road at the next gate and following a path round the ramparts of the Hill Fort, past a triangulation pillar and down to a road at **E**.

The full route crosses the road to a stile. Go half left across a field to a stile. At the next gate continue in the same direction across a field. At the end turn right, signed to Litton Cheney YHA, and follow the hedge on the left. When the hedge ends go through a gate and turn left to descend to a stream. Cross a bridge and turn right, keeping the stream on your right until you reach the road. Turn right, go through buildings and turn left. Just past a house cross a stream on the right, **C**

Keep a hedge on the right through two fields, then go to the right of buildings to reach a track. Turn right and follow the track for about half a mile. Turn left over a stile and follow a narrow path as it winds through woods to the ruined Chapel, **D**

With the archway on your right, follow a narrow path up to a stile. Cross it and keep a hedge on your left to cross a stream. Bear right to a gate and continue in the same direction to a gate onto a track. Turn right and follow the track until it meets the Inland Coast Path at **E**.

Turn right and follow the path along the ridge. Go through a gate and fork right. Descend to a gate on the right signed to Abbotsbury and carry on downhill to the village street. Turn right, and right at the next junction. Turn left beside the Village Stores. Shortly fork left to return to the Swannery. (There is an option to fork right and climb to St Catherine's Chapel.) Keep the wall on your left, take a right fork and continue to a stile. Go left to another stile and then straight ahead back to the Swannery, **S**.



The Alter At Chapel Coppice



Gentle landscape
Near Abbotsbury



Chapel In The Woods

Refreshment

Old Schoolhouse Tea Rooms Tea Rooms Back Street, Abbotsbury Tel: 01305 871808 Light lunches and clotted cream teas Walled garden	Bakehouse Tea Rooms 11 Market Street, Abbotsbury Tel: 01305 871990 Traditional Tea Rooms
Swan Inn Public House Rodden Row, Abbotsbury Tel: 01305 871249 Freshly cooked local food Outside seating	Ilchester Arms Public House 9 Market Street, Abbotsbury Tel: 01305 871243 16 th Century Coaching Inn Bar snacks and restaurant meals Garden
Abbotsbury Tea Rooms Licensed Tea Rooms 26 Rodden Row, Abbotsbury Tel: 01305 871143 Morning coffee, light lunches, cream teas Sun Terrace	

LOCAL INFO

Chesil Beach is a unique geographic feature within the British Isles. There are numerous theories about its creation, the most probable being that it was formed in a violent Atlantic storm some 6000 years ago. The beach is 18 miles long and up to 15 metres high It contains over 100 million tonnes of pebbles - though nobody has actually counted them. The pebbles are graded in size along the beach, at Portland they are often up to fist sized but at Abbotsbury they are little larger than peas.

The pebbles on the landward side of the beach allow a number of specialised plants to grow, many have adapted to the conditions by developing thick succulent leaves and forming deep roots in the shingle.

The name 'beach' is somewhat misleading, as it is incredibly treacherous for bathers. The fierce under-tows and strong tides make it extremely unwise to swim from this shoreline.

ABBOTSBURY & TWO DORSET COAST PATHS G.P.S. WAYPOINTS

WAYPOINT NAME	MAP REF	CO-ORDINATES	ELEVATION: Metres
ABB S	S	SY 57660 84618	11
ABB A	A	SY 54664 85454	10
ABB B	B	SY 54689 86745	160
ABB C	C	SY 54896 88841	58
ABB D	D	SY 55778 87960	118
ABB E	E	SY 55762 86413	185



Great Walks
IN BRITAIN



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MAP LEGEND					
	Great Walks route		Church with tower		Spot height - metres
	M6 Motorway		Church with spire		Information centre
	A23 Main road		Other place of worship		Parking
	B2116 Secondary road		Cathedral / Abbey		Public convenience
	Minor road		Building		Public house
	Other road		Built up area		Picnic site
	Track		Woodland		Camp site
	Footpath		Sand, shingle or mud		Major tourist feature
	Bridleway		Water feature		Other tourist feature
	National trail				
	Railway				

Safety First

Safety should always be your first priority in planning and undertaking a walk, whether on your own or leading a group. Please read these Safety First and Walking Our Routes notes.

Lead a group of other walkers only if you have leadership and navigational experience adequate for the 'worst case' conditions which may be encountered on the particular walk, bearing in mind the terrain, possible weather and navigational demands.

Weigh up the capabilities of your party, in terms of fitness and walking speed. Adjust your time expectations accordingly.

Ensure all your party are adequately clothed for the weather and conditions. Footwear is particularly important. Clothing must protect against cold, wet or strong sun according to the time of year.

Emergencies are quite rare, but it is essential to think ahead about what to do if someone in your party sustains an injury. Will you have a First Aid kit? Is there a qualified First Aider in the party? How could help be summoned in a serious eventuality?

Refreshment, particularly water, can be vital. Dehydration in hot summer conditions can be rapid, and frequent intake of fluids is essential.

On tougher walks it is a good idea to tell someone where you are planning to go – and when you expect to be back. Remember - mobile phones often lose reception in mountainous or isolated areas.

All our walks use legitimate routes: Public Rights of Way, Public Footpaths, Bridleways, Permissive Paths, Access Land, Byways and Roads.

Road walking calls for particular care. When there is no defined footpath or verge wide enough for safe walking it is usually best to walk on the right – facing oncoming traffic. An exception may be a tight bend, where walkers would be more visible on the left.

Occasionally you may find a public footpath blocked or unuseable. It is perfectly in order to take the shortest available diversion without damaging crops, perhaps around a field margin.

It is courteous to close gates after passing through, sometimes even if the gate was open when you arrived – particularly if it is obvious livestock may escape.

Mutual respect for farm animals is to be encouraged! Don't frighten or annoy them, but equally don't put your party members in danger or discomfort. You certainly wouldn't be the first walkers to go round the outside of a field of frisky bullocks.

Dogs should always be kept on a lead anywhere near farm animals, and under close supervision elsewhere in the countryside.

Walking Our Routes

Our walks are designed to be negotiated using the route directions in conjunction with the map section provided. We suggest walkers also take the Ordnance Survey Explorer or Outdoor Leisure map recommended for each walk.

On mountain, moorland and open heathland walks it is **ESSENTIAL** to have navigational expertise and tools, including the recommended Ordnance Survey map(s).

Take care to observe any cautions in the route description; exposed paths, areas liable to flooding etc.

Consider conditions before setting off. Will heavy rain have made a water meadow impassable? Will frost or snow make a path slippery?

When navigating the route look for clues to confirm you are in the right place. Are map features where you would expect on the ground? Are features mentioned in the text where expected? If you suspect you may have taken a wrong turn, take action sooner rather than later. It is better to re-trace to a known point rather than carry on regardless with the possibility of becoming increasingly confused.

All our routes are carefully checked before publication, but features can change on the ground – sometimes surprisingly quickly. Footpaths may be re-routed, buildings can appear or change significantly and these days pub names seem to change frequently.

The approximate time given for each walk is based on an average walking speed of 2.5 miles per hour (4 km/hour), plus an allowance for ascent, descent and any difficult terrain.

Total ascent is the approximate total ascent over the whole walk.

GPS users can enter in the waypoints provided in each of our walk reports. It is important to read our guide **Introducing GPS for Walkers**, available as a PDF file from the Great Walks in Britain web site.

Remember that GPS is a great navigational tool, but only one of those available to the navigator. Never dispense with conventional map and compass – and the training and skills to use them, especially on mountain, moorland or open heathland walks.

TOUGHNESS RATINGS

All our **Dorset** routes can be undertaken by reasonably fit walkers able to utilise our map segments, together with the route guidance notes. Always consider recent and forecast weather.

Each walk has been allocated a **Toughness Rating**:

1. Easier walks with modest ascent and generally on well defined paths. There may be stiles or narrow gateways to negotiate.
2. Routes which are more demanding. They may include more ascent and possibly paths which are looser or more difficult underfoot.
3. More strenuous walks with some steep sections, higher paths or places which may be wet and boggy.
4. The most demanding walks in this edition. There may be prolonged steep ascents. Conditions may be challenging underfoot.

Toughness Ratings are allocated in the context of the terrain in the edition area. For example a walk rated as demanding in Dorset may be equivalent to a moderate route in Devon & Dartmoor..