

A CIRCULAR WALK TO FONTMELL MAGNA &



The Walk

1 Facing the phone box go down the lane between the wooden pedestrian gate and the church gates. On your return have a look at the war memorial. The village lost five men in WW1 and the churchyard contains a Commonwealth War Grave to Private P J Brown. Carry on down the slope and bear right to keep to the footpath.

2 At the end of the path turn left. Carry on straight down the lane until you see the sign to Gore Clump to the right. Take this and you will pass through Watery Lane. Don't worry it is only muddy for a very short way! Carry on until you reach a gate and pass through it. Walk straight across the field on the obvious beaten track and climb the small hill until you reach the National Trust gate. Pass through this and keep going uphill. In front of you is Clubmen's Down. The Clubmen were a group of local craftsmen and farmers who got tired of accommodating armies during the Civil War. They met in the natural amphitheatre you see before you and eventually took on Cromwell's New Model Army. They were led by the Rector of St Mary's Thomas Bravell. It is another of our walks.

3 When you see a stone route marker enter the gate above and to your right. Soon you will see and a well-trodden path rising towards a copse. The gate may warn you about the state of the livestock so please heed the instructions. Continue to climb towards a clump of trees which look like dragons. You are on Fontmell Down. Don't forget to take in the view!

4 When you are at the top get your bearings. St Mary's spire where you started is clearly visible. Cast your eyes to the left and identify the square tower of St Andrew's at Fontmell Magna. At all times now you should be heading towards this landmark. Descend the hill diagonally to the left and you will arrive at a gate. Cross the field to the next gate and turn right into another field. You now have signs. Climb over the makeshift stile through another field to yet another stile. A short distance further and you will emerge into a lane. Watch the traffic here!

5 You have arrived at Mill Street Fontmell Magna. In front of you is Collyer's Brook which gives the Font part of the village title. Turn right toward the centre of the village and be very careful when you cross the road towards the Fontmell pub. Either rest for some refreshment or carry on along West Street with the pub on your right and pass through the village out into the country again - this time on the flat! Carry on for a mile or so until you come to a crossroads.

This is Bedchester crossroads. There is a defibrillator in the phone box so you will know you are in the right place. You are at the halfway point. Turn right and enter the hamlet of Twyford. To the right you will see Brach Farm.

6 After about a half mile you will see a turning to the right which is Hawcombe Lane. This is signposted as the St. Edwards Way. This is part of the pilgrimages of the British Pilgrimage Trust. The whole route is three days and goes as far as Wareham.

7 Quite soon you will see a No Through Road to your left with a gate which is almost always open except when the farmer is moving livestock. You are now on Drones Lane. Pass Drones Farm go up the hill and emerge in front of a newly constructed and reimagined house. Pass by that house keeping on the track from where you can see West Knoyle some 14 miles away.

8 The track widens, and you will need to pass through a very wide gate to proceed and eventually you will go up the last part of the track where you will see remains of Iron Age fortifications to the left. Eventually you will arrive at the A350. Be incredibly careful and cross strait across ! You are now back in East Compton.

9 Gourds Farm to your right dominates the village and by following the lane you will walk all around it. Having passed the

farmhouse you can see the remnants of the old St Mary's Church which was constructed in the 13th century. Stay a while and imagine that in 1866 the village decided to reposition the whole church from where you are to where you started this walk. The whole thing took only 15 months including the bells.

10 As you bear right at Lower Lane House very soon the white cottages of Twintown will appear on your left. Keep going and you will pass Lots Cottage one of the oldest dwellings in the village. Another few steps and you will pass Horders. The Horder family lived in the village continuously for some 700 years. In all that time all male Horders used only six names.

11 Soon, on your right, you will pass Fanners Field in Memory of Margaret Honour (nee Fanner) who gave it to the village in 1997. A little further you pass the Old Reading room where the home guard did shooting practice during WW2 and the Old Forge to the right. Excellent glamping here! To the left before the main road you will see a "Footpath" sign up some steps. This will lead you back to the start of this walk. Hope you enjoyed it!

Map below:

Pontmell Magna And Twyford Via Fontmell Magna - 5.80 miles

