

## Walk 12: Doniford to East Quantoxhead Circular



**Length:** 9.3 miles – 15km

**Good for:** keen walkers

**Theme:** Nature

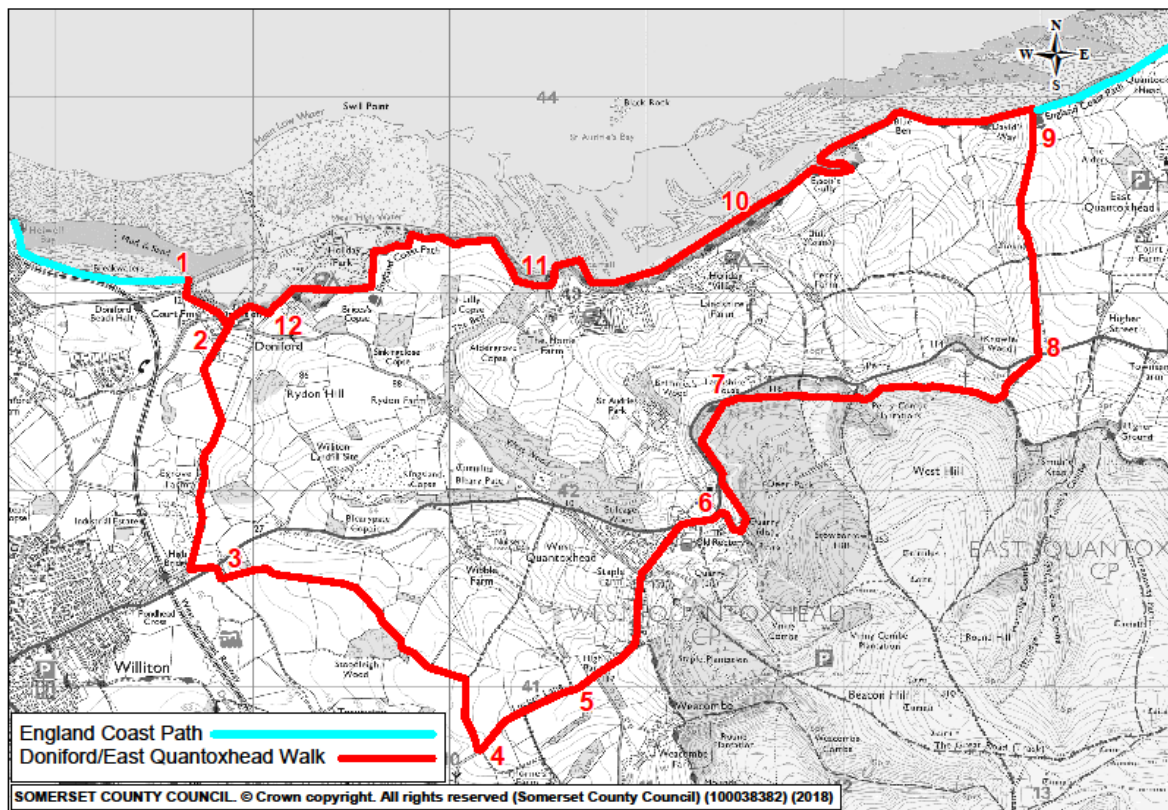
**Duration:** 5 hours

**Notes:** *This walk is tidal - please check tide times before setting off. Dogs are welcome but need to be kept under close control on working farmland. The walk takes in the foothills of the Quantocks – the first place in England to be designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty – and nature lovers will be able to spot flowers including Pyramid and Bee Orchids, Wild Rose, and Bluebells as well as birds like Oyster Catchers, Dunlin and Peregrine Falcons.*

### **Points of Interest:**

- St Ethelreda's Church
- Rock formations
- Deer Park
- Grade 1 Listed Manor
- Steam Trains

## Map:



**Directions:** The walk begins at the Doniford car park (1) where you cross the road, turn left and walk along the pavement passing Court Farm on your right and Doniford Farm on your left. Cross Liddymore Lane and walk along the road for approx. 75 metres before taking the signposted footpath on your right (2).

Walk along the track and follow the footpath through the gate. Continue along the track and after a short distance leave the track and go through a field gate on your left. You are now in working farmland so keep dogs under close control.

The footpath crosses the field and when you get to the other side of the field go straight ahead into the next field, turn right and follow the footpath with the hedge on your right. Go over the stile and continue along the footpath to the next stile.

Follow the footpath passing the old stable block on your right. Go through two further gates and pass through the farm buildings. Continue along the track to join the road at the village of Highbridge, on the outskirts of Williton, which was once a Royal Hunting Estate.

Turn left and go along the road until you reach the A39. (3) Cross with care and walk slightly to the left along the verge until you come to a metal 2 in 1 gate on your right.

Go through the gate and follow the field edge path - with the hedge on your left - for approx. 80 metres until you come to a pedestrian gate on your left waymarked for the Coleridge Way and West Somerset Coast Path (WSCP) – where you can walk in the footsteps of literary giants Samuel Taylor Coleridge and his friend William Wordsworth. Follow the field edge path up the hill to the next gate.

Go through the gate and continue - with the hedge on your right - and pass through another gate. The path continues along various fields for some distance – you will pass Stoodleigh Wood on your right.

At the next gate on your right go through and walk straight on with the hedge on your left until you reach the metal gate on Luckes Lane. (4) Once through the gate turn left and walk up the lane until you come to another road. (5) Bear left and follow this road straight through the village of West Quantoxhead until you come to the A39. Turn right and walk along the grass verge in front of The Windmill Inn – a great place for lunch - heading for the footpath, which is adjacent to the road and behind the hedge.

Here you see the beautiful and historic St Ethelreda's Church –also known as St. Audries - on your left.

At the end of this path (6) turn right up the drive, and continue for approx. 150 metres then turn left and go up the hill and through the gate. Follow this path along the edge of Staple Plantation, which eventually opens to reveal stunning, panoramic views to the west with a welcome bench for a breather to take it all in. On a clear day, you can see the Brendon Hills, Exmoor and Minehead and in places the West Somerset Railway – 20 miles of heritage railway with steam trains that were once commonplace travelling along the old country branch of the Great Western Railway.

Continue along the path and you will pass a gateway and parking area on your left. (7) From the gate follow the path in the same direction for approx. 65 metres and you will see a permissive path signpost on your left.

Leave the track at this point and follow the path through the trees to a kissing gate. Continue along this path going around the edge of a small quarry, then left towards the A39. Do not go through the gate onto the A39 but turn right and follow the path up the steps.

At the next junction, turn left following the signpost to the A39, Minehead and Bridgwater. Go through the gate and follow the path down past a cottage and along the drive past another two cottages. Before you reach the road take a path on the right, signposted West Somerset Coast Path, go through the gate and follow this path until you reach a gate, which takes you onto the A39. (8)

Cross the road and straight over to the next gate and once through turn right and follow this headland path to the next junction of paths. Go straight ahead through a gate and head for the coast. Continue in this direction towards the coast through another two gates.

Here gaps in the hedge afford great views of the beautiful village of East Quantoxhead and the Court House behind a medieval church tower.

The Luttrell family has owned the Grade I Listed manor since 1070. The village also boasts thatched cottages, medieval fith barn, duck pond and mill house. Keep walking until you come to a metal 2 in 1 gate. Go through this gate and you are now on the England Coast Path near David's Way. (9)

Turn left with stunning views across to West Somerset and Wales and follow signs for the England Coast Path to Doniford. Continue along the clifftop path and just before you get to Esson's Gully turn left and follow the England Coast Path (ECP) signposts inland for a short distance.

Continue to follow the ECP signs until eventually you will come to a slope (10) which leads to the beach at St Audries with its wonderful waterfall, which cascades over the cliff straight onto the sand below.

The beach is part of the Somerset Jurassic Coast, which is a must for fossil lovers. Ammonites and other fossils including devil's toenails can be seen in the rocks. This section of path is unavailable at high tide so please check tide times before you begin.

Continue along the beach for approx. 1 km and you will come to two sets of metal steps to help you over the stunning and geographically important limestone pavements – carved by the elements over millions of years. Once past the waterfall continue for a short distance and take a flight of steps to your left. (11)

At the top of the steps follow ECP signs up the slope and at the top turn right and go up the drive for approx. 100 metres. You will see a waymark post on your right. Leave the drive and take the path on your right through the wood. The path opens onto the cliff top and follow this all the way until you are walking round the perimeter of the caravan park. After the last caravan on your right you will come to a 2 in 1 gate on your right.

Go through the gate and the caravan park where eventually a track crosses your path. Continue straight on heading for the hedge. Turn left and go through a field gate down the track to join Sea Lane.

Keep straight along the lane and you will come to a kissing gate on your right. (12) Go through the gate down the hill, over the bridge and follow the field edge path to a concrete drive. Turn left and follow the drive until you come to a kissing gate.

Go through the gate, turn right and walk along the verge for short distance before crossing the road with care to retrace your steps to the car park.

**Facilities:** Public car park, toilets.

**All information correct at the time of publication.**