

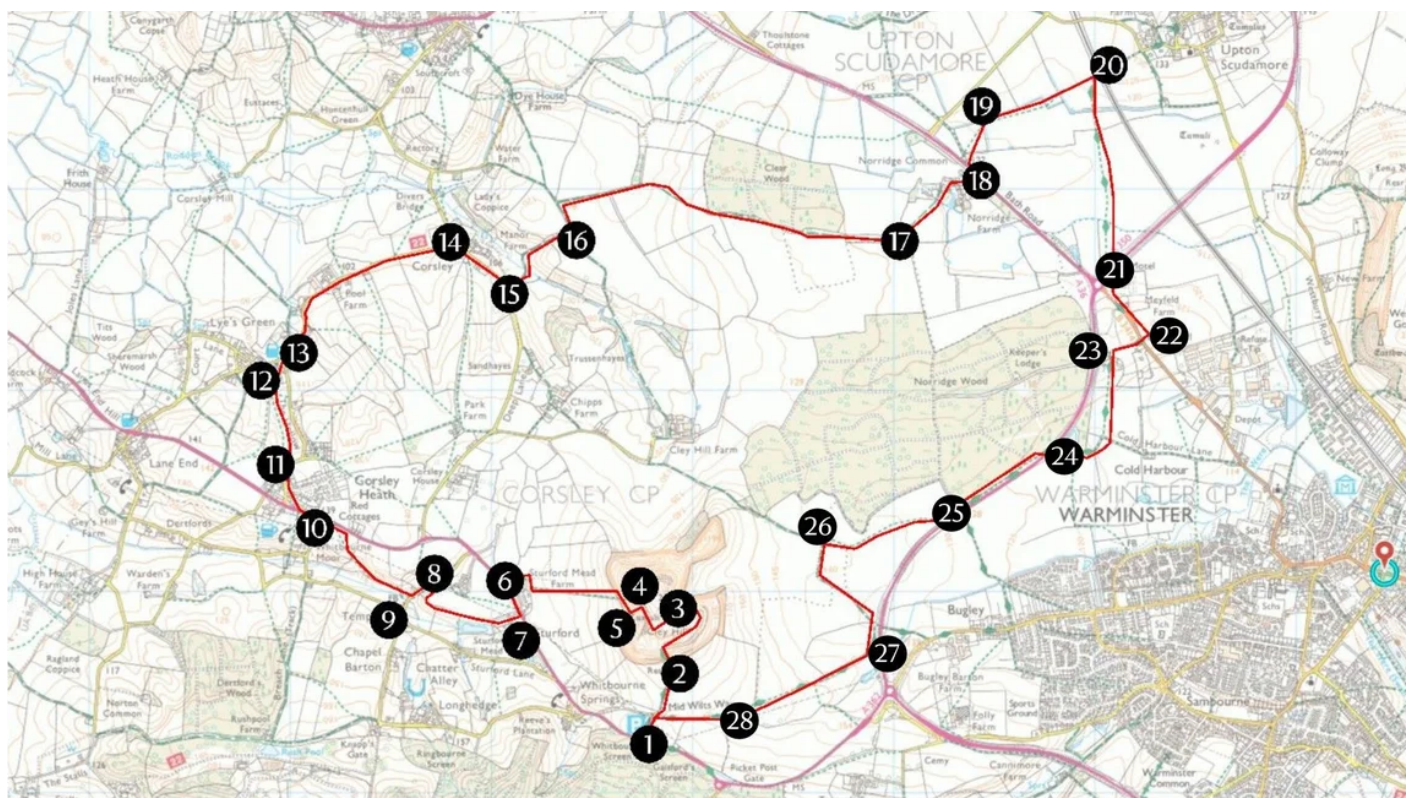
## WILTSHIRE

# Cley Hill trail

The 360-degree view from the top of Cley Hill is just amazing. While climbing to the top is most visitors' first thought, make time to enjoy the lower slopes on the west and north sides; here you can expect to see buzzards, kestrels and the occasional hobby soaring above the hillfort ramparts and yellowhammer darting through the hedgerows.

## Along the way

People have been drawn to this landmark, for its 2,500-year-old Iron Age hillfort, Bronze Age burial mound and the beauty of the wildlife, for millennia. Steep slopes, thin soils and grazing cattle provide perfect conditions for chalk grassland flora and fauna to thrive, including common-spotted and pyramid orchids in spring and Adonis blue and wall brown butterflies.



## Information

Address: National Trust car park, off A362. Grid reference: ST83704430.

OS map: OS Explorer Map 143

Activity: Walking

Challenging: A long walk, crossing farmland and open grassland. For further details, please see Terrain section.

Dog friendly: Dogs welcome, please keep under control due to cattle grazing.

Full trail: Miles: 9.5 (km: 15.2)

Access: Challenging

Duration: 5 hours 30 mins

## Terrain

This walk follows hard tracks, muddy footpaths and country lanes, as well as public footpaths and bridleways across farmland and open grassland with stiles and pedestrian gates. This route also crosses

## Total steps: 28

Start point: National Trust car park, off A362. Grid reference: ST83704430

1. Park at the Cley Hill National Trust car park, signposted from the A362, and leave via the gap next to the large wooden gate. Follow the stony track as it bends round to the right and then left.
2. At the end of the track go up the steps and through the kissing gate with a Cley Hill National Trust sign. Follow the path round to your right and continue as it bears round to the left in a spiral up the hill. At the crossroads with another grassy track, continue straight on curving up and left. Just after this you are faced with a climb straight up and to the left to the top of the hill.
3. At the top, head towards the trig point to your right, which you can see beyond the next barrow mound. From here you can enjoy a spectacular 360-degree panorama of the surrounding landscape. From the trig point at the centre of what was an Iron Age hillfort, on a clear day you can see Alfred's Tower at Stourhead and even as far as the Mendip Hills.
4. Looking westwards towards the A363 Warminster-Frome road, you should be able to see a low row of farm buildings, made of concrete block with an asbestos roof and a sparse hedge line running from them towards the hill. You are aiming for the point at the bottom of the hill where this hedge line meets the boundary fence. Taking care on the steep slopes, head down this western side of the hill to the fence at its base and the only stile on this boundary.

major and minor roads and takes you along roads without pavements, so please take care.

5. Climb over the stile and, keeping to the right of the hedge line, follow it down towards the farm buildings. At the end of the field follow the hedge around to the right and then left. At the junction with the track, bear left and follow the track to the road.
6. Turn left onto the road and walk along the wide grass verge.
7. Just past the Sturford Mead Farm sign, on the opposite side of the road, is a public footpath sign. Cross the road with care and climb over the stile into the field. Keep left and follow the field edge all the way around the field, passing a lake down to your left. Continue on the path between a large oak tree and horse paddocks, bearing right between two fences towards the stables. Just before the stables, turn left and take the path downhill towards a metal gate and tarmac lane.
8. Go through the gate and turn left onto the lane towards the village. Go past a number of cottages then, just before the junction, you will see a public footpath sign on your right.
9. Go through the gate and follow the path towards the stream with a bridge on your right. Once over the bridge, go through another gateway and turn left, following the contour of the hill and hedge on your left. Eventually you'll see a stile with a public footpath sign in the hedge ahead of you. Climb over the stile and into the next field. Turn right and follow the boundary of the field as it bends round to the left. You will see two metal gates ahead – climb over the stile to the right of them and onto the road.
10. Turn left and follow the pavement towards the Royal Oak pub, passing the garden centre and village reading room as you go. Just before the pub, cross over the road to the bus stop and walk down the road at the back of the bus shelter. At the T-junction with the White Horse Motor Co. in front of you, turn right and follow the lane.
11. Just before the playground caution sign, turn left through a pedestrian gate marked "Teresa Watt's Gate". Follow the bottom of the dry valley until you see a kissing gate ahead.
12. Go through the gate and turn right onto a track. At the end of the track go through a metal gate (the hook to open it is on the right) and onto a gravel driveway.
13. At the end of the driveway, turn right onto a lane. Follow this until you get to the Cross Keys pub, then carry on along the lane until you eventually see a church.
14. At the T-junction in front of the church turn right, passing between the church on your left and the cemetery on your right.
15. Continue on around the bend and along the road until you reach a layby with a view of Little Cley Hill straight ahead and a bridleway sign pointing left. Turn left down here, between the Manor Farm offices and the lay-by and follow this sunken lane for about 550 yards to a T-junction with another bridleway.
16. Turn left to the T-junction and then right at the next bridleway sign, just past a large wooden post in the path. Continue on this path between two hedges, following it eastwards for some distance as it passes through fields, alongside small patches of woodland and into Clear Wood, a hazel coppice with mature oak trees.
17. Eventually, you'll come to a metal gate and a grassy field. Head diagonally left across the field towards the big metal gate between two sets of farm buildings. Go through the gate and carry straight on along the concrete road and through a second metal gate. Once through the gate, the concrete road bears round to the right through the farm yard itself – be aware of moving farm vehicles and machinery – and exit the yard through a small black gate, adjacent to a larger one ahead of you. Follow the driveway down to the main road.
18. At the road turn left onto the wide grassy verge and after about 50 yards you will see a public footpath sign on the opposite side of the road. Cross this busy road with care and head towards the footpath. After about 20 yards you will see a stile on your right, partially obscured by bushes. Climb over and into the field; head diagonally left across the field to the stile in the corner.
19. Climb over the stile and across the little bridge into the next field. Continue straight on by turning left and then immediately right, following the field boundary, keeping the hedge and the stream to your left (don't go through the gap on your left into the adjacent field). Keeping the hedge on your left, carry on until you reach an uncultivated grassy triangle and head for the stile on the far side of the triangle. Climb over the stile and across the small bridge then carry straight on across the field and cross over another bridge on the other side. Continue straight across this field towards the railway bridge ahead.

20. Just before the railway bridge turn right, following a well-worn path towards a gap in the trees ahead. Pass through the gap and into the next field. Cross this field and over a small bridge into the next field and continue straight, heading for the petrol station sign ahead. Cross over the bridge and stile at the end of the field and continue over the next field still heading for the petrol station sign. Climb over the stile at the end of the field onto the road verge.
21. Carefully cross the road and the petrol station exit road onto the grassy area ahead. Pass between the petrol station sign and the fast food signs and continue straight ahead along the verge of the B3414 signposted to Warminster. When you reach the turning for the petrol station, carefully cross over the B3414 and continue walking along the verge.
22. At Croft House Farm B&B turn right, following the Mid Wiltshire Way footpath sign. At the end of the track climb through the stile to the left of the big metal gate and turn immediately left, following the Mid Wilts Way sign through the wood.
23. When you emerge at the far end of the wood, climb over the stile just ahead of you signposted as a Public Footpath and with Mid Wilts Way signs on the step, and head across the field aiming for the stile in the middle of the fence ahead. Continue straight across the next field, keeping parallel to the conifers on the right, aiming for the stile ahead. Climb over the stile and carry straight on. At the end of the tree-covered path cross straight over the field, aiming for the left-hand corner of the trees ahead. Continue along the field boundary with the trees on your right until you reach the road and a stile on your right.
24. Climb over the stile and turn left, walking along the lay-by and continue along the verge until you see Battlefront Paintball on your right. Cross the road into the drive and turn left, following the footpath sign.
25. Just before the lay-by at the end of the path turn right to climb over the stile then continue straight on along the field boundary, keeping the hedge on your left following the public footpath sign. After a short way the path veers off diagonally to the right towards the trees. Follow the path as it bends first to the left and then to the right around the block of trees and then heads diagonally left towards Cley Hill itself.
26. When you reach the main track at the end of the field, turn left onto it and continue following the path until you see a road bridge ahead. Just before the bridge turn right, following the public footpath sign onto a concrete track.
27. At the top of the incline you will see a stile on your right. Cross over and continue following the Mid Wilts Way sign, along the field boundary, keeping the hedge and ditch on your left. At the end of the first field climb over a stile into the next field and continue straight on, following the field boundary.
28. About 50 yards further on you'll see a stile in the hedge on your left, cross over and turn right following the path along the bottom of the hollow. At the end of the path, go through the metal gate and turn left, passing in front of some metal barns to return to the car park.
- End point: National Trust car park, off A362. Nearest postcode: BA12 7RE
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