



Walk 99. Fyne Court and Kingston St Mary.

- 6 miles, ascents and descents of 300 metres. 2 hours 20 minutes continuous walking, allow 3-3½ hours.

Terrain: Paths, fields and roads. Some paths are very stony and there are two shallow streams to ford.

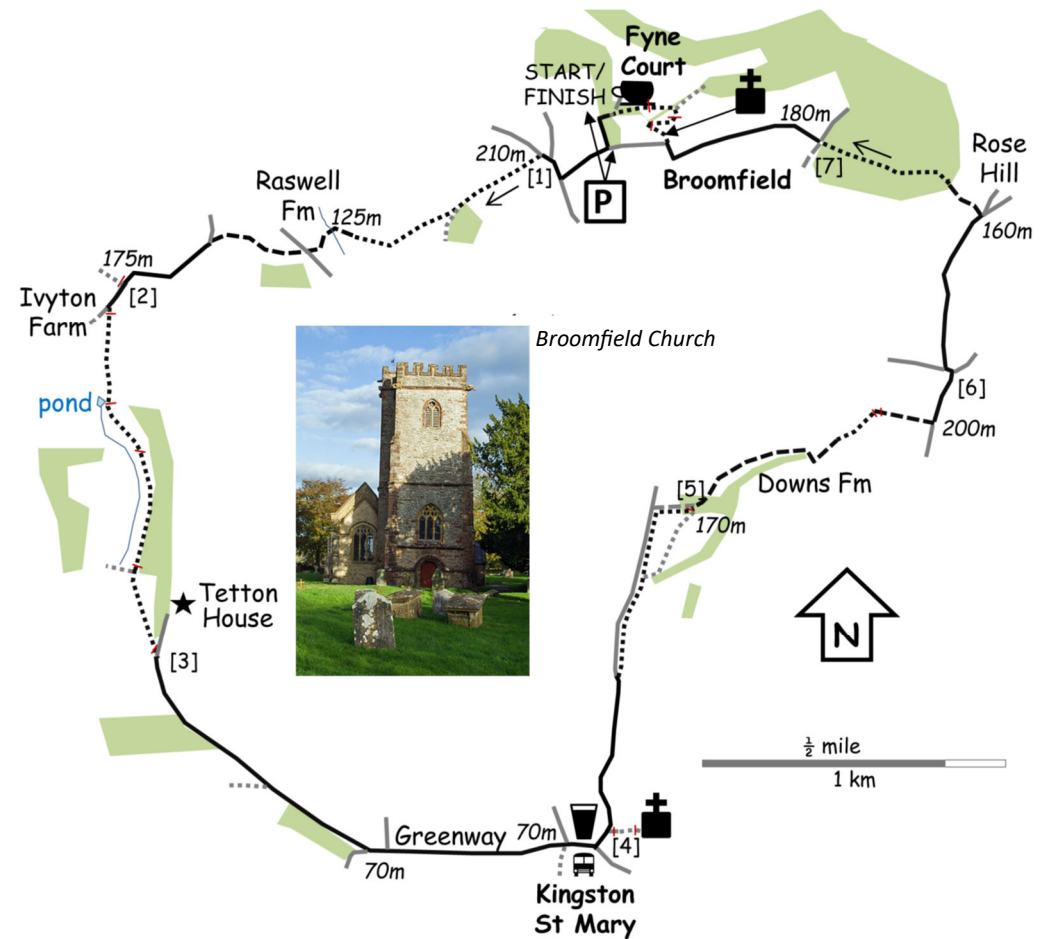
Access: By car, park at Fyne Court (ST 222 321, TA5 2EQ). Fyne Court is a National Trust property near Broomfield north of Taunton (parking charge for non-members, access to grounds free). The walk can also be started from Kingston St Mary by taking bus 23 from Taunton (town centre or station) to the Swan Inn (weekdays only); current timetables (2023) allow a maximum of 3 hours 20 minutes to complete the walk. If you miss the last bus back, Taunton station is just under 3 miles from the Swan, or call a taxi.

Map: OS Explorer 140 Quantock Hills and Bridgwater.

Refreshments: National Trust café at Fyne Court, or Swan Inn on the route.

FYNE COURT, INTRODUCED IN WALK 98, is an ideal base for exploring the foothills of the southern Quantocks. This less strenuous route starts by reversing the end of walk 98 then heads south through the grounds of Tetton House to the attractive village of Kingston St Mary, just north of Taunton. It returns to Fyne Court via rolling farmland before coming to Broomfield and its 15th-century church.

From the main car park, at Fyne Court, return along the drive and turn right on to the road. Arriving a T-junction, turn right signposted Enmore and Spaxton, and walk past the old post office. Keep left then turn immediately left on a restricted byway (5mins, [1]), heading downhill between two banks. Take the right-hand, upper fork where the track splits. Splash through a shallow stream, walk uphill to a road, and cross over to continue on another byway. After a steady climb, turn left on to a narrow road and follow it through bends. Continue straight ahead between two houses (Ivyton Farm). Come to a metal gate with views to the Blackdown Hills (35mins, [2]). Go through and cross the field to a large knarled ash tree in the hedge opposite. From here, bear left slightly to come to a gate above and to the left of a pond. Follow the contour and pick up a more defined path that takes you almost to the field corner: don't descend in to the valley. Carry on close to the left-hand field boundary, to come to a gate at the far corner (not the vehicle gate halfway down the valley). Go through two gates and head slightly to the left, but not as far as the octagonal house. Come to a tarmac driveway, and turn right (50mins, [3]); this is the drive to the late-18th century Tetton House, now divided into flats, which you will soon see back to your left. Follow the long driveway



until it comes to a road just after a house; turn left here. Follow this road past a school and into Kingston St. Mary. Continue ahead to pass the front of the Swan (the bus stop for Taunton is opposite).

To leave Kingston, take the first road left past the Swan (Lodes Lane) (1hr10mins, [4]). Be careful of traffic on this narrow lane. To detour to Kingston's church, turn right after the second house, go through a metal kissing gate and follow the path across a small field; return the same way. Continuing along Lodes Lane pass a house called Hillside, then two or three minutes uphill turn right on a footpath into a field. Walk along the field edge parallel with the road. The field narrows at a belt of oaks; the official path crosses to the trees, follows them for a short distance, then heads left across the field to a stile. Depending on the crop in the field it may be easier to continue to the corner of the field, then turn right; the stile is on the left before the path drops too steeply (1hr35mins, [5]).

Just after crossing the stile, turn right on a vehicle track. Come to some buildings (Downs Farm) and follow the track right and then left to go around them. Continue ahead through a field gate, and follow the line of the telegraph poles to the opposite corner. Go through two gates, past farm buildings, and across a farm track to come to a road. Turn left here. At the next junction (1hr50mins, [6]), turn left and immediately right to go downhill. A little over five minutes later, turn left on a byway; the driveway for Rose Hill is in front. Keep right at a fork, cross a small stream and then continue ahead and uphill. Coming to a road (2hr5mins, [7]), continue ahead into Broomfield. Arrive at the village hall and church. Cross the churchyard to the corner of a small green; turn sharp right here to enter the grounds of Fyne Court. Keep left around the hedge, go through a pedestrian gate on the right, then when the path comes into the open head left on a grassy path and go through a gate to arrive in front of the Fyne Court buildings. The car park is straight ahead.

Short walks around Fyne Court. Most of the signposted trails are under a mile. The attractive Five Ponds Wood route is longer, but has been closed since 2021 to let dying ash trees decay naturally. Check at the information centre in Fyne Court.

Longer walk: Fyne Court, Cothelstone Hill and Kingston St Mary (● 9.6 miles, 3 hours 40 minutes, ascents and descents of 460 metres). Follow the instructions in walk 98 for the shorter Cothelstone Hill route until you come to Ivyton Farm. Turn right instead of left, joining the main walk above at the 35-minute point ([2]).