

**WALK 8**  
Beaminster

# Walk Dorset's History

🕒 **90 minutes to walk, sit and enjoy  
reading the information**



Stepping  
into  
nature

Welcome! As part of the Stepping into Nature project led by the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Team, we have produced a series of self-guided walks.

These easy access routes highlight the local history, as well as other fun snippets of information that you will find along the route.

Further Information: [www.stepin2nature.org](http://www.stepin2nature.org)

-  **Distance**  
1.4 miles / 2.3km.
-  **Suggested time**  
90 minutes to walk, sit and enjoy reading the information.
-  **Difficulty**  
Mostly flat and short gentle slopes on tarmacked paths. Dog friendly, except Memorial Playing Fields.
-  **Facilities**  
Accessible public toilets at Yarn Barton Car Park. Refreshments available in town centre.
-  **Transport**  
Suggested parking at Yarn Barton Car Park, charges apply. Bus stop in town centre.
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# Route map



## Suggested start point

Yarn Barton Car Park, Beaminster, DT8 3EF

-  **Points of interest**
-  **Seating**
-  **Parking**



## Start in Yarn Barton Car Park

This walk is made up of three loops around the town centre. The first loop explores Beaminster's charming residential buildings, the second helps you to understand more about the early development of the market town, and the third takes you to a tucked away park to finish your walk relaxed!



**Admire the picturesque beauty of Beaminster seen in this 100 year-old photo taken from the hillside on the other side of the town.**



Exit Yarn Barton Car Park, turn immediately left, and you will soon have a view across The Square to your right – more on this later. For now, turn left into North Street and stop at the house pictured on the next page.



The 'Red House' is a Georgian building with an unusual brick frontage. Around 200 – 300 years ago, stone was cheap and available locally, whereas brick was expensive as it had to be imported from afar, so it was only used on the frontage of this building where it could be seen.

On the far side of the house, there is a 200 year-old footbridge, crossing the first of Beaminster's many hidden streams and rivers that we will encounter.



Continue on North Street, admiring the historic buildings as you go.



On the left, at the top of a slope, there is the late 18th century Manor House hidden behind a high wall.

A little further on, by the junction with Manor Gardens, look across to see what was originally the stables of the Manor House, built 350 years ago.



Continue on North Street for a hundred yards then turn right down Woodswater Lane and continue until the ford.



This is the river Brit, which flows from the hills behind the town, after being joined by several tributaries at Beaminster, flows through Bridport and West Bay to the sea.

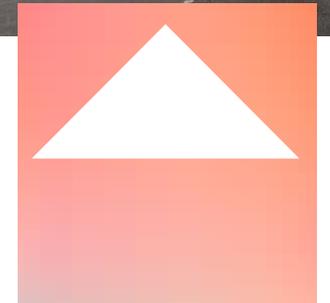
Continue on Woodswater Lane, then turn right into East Street where you will see lots more historic buildings. Over 500 years ago, there were already 60 houses in this street showing what a thriving town Beaminster was.



**Admire the buildings, some with quirky features, as you walk along.**



At the end of East Street, turn right into Whitcombe Road and continue to the junction with Bridport Road. On the right is Beaminster Museum, which you might like to visit. At Bridport Road, turn right to return to The Square.



People have been coming to a market at this spot for over 700 years! You'll see from this photo taken over 100 years ago, that the ancient-looking memorial in the middle of the square is missing, as it was actually built in 1906. We love how posed everyone is for this photo!

Like many Dorset towns, Beaminster was the victim of fires over the years. One of these was caused by a gunshot hitting a thatched roof in 1644 during the Civil War. Because of these fires, the buildings around the Square are generally not more than 200 years old.



**Imagine how different the Square would have sounded back then.**



Go to the far left corner of The Square and turn left down Church Street. At the bottom of the slope turn left, continuing down St Mary Well Street until you reach the river.



This is a tributary of the Brit. Beaminster's rivers and streams are quite narrow and hidden today, but once they would have been wider and often difficult to cross.

It is thought Beaminster grew at a crossing point. Beaminster is first recorded in 862 as 'Bebyngmister' - meaning 'the church of Bebba.' It is possible that Bebba was a landowner who controlled the river crossing, and allowed the church to be built.



**You may wish to follow the path for a few minutes to see a nice view of the river weir.**



Retrace your steps, and at the corner of Church Street compare this old view. Then go up the path into the churchyard and around to the far side of the building to look at the spectacular tower.



The tower was designed over 500 years ago to show off the town's wealth, much of which came from textile industry. At the time, most local people would never have seen anything like it.

Go back to the church entrance for a look inside. This church often has events for a cuppa and chat – this is much like in the Middle Ages, when a church was not just a place of worship but also served as a community's meeting room, and in some cases its agricultural hall!

On leaving the church, head diagonally left past the Strode Room (which was originally a group of almshouses built in 1630) then use the steps or lift to get back to Church Street. Alternatively, go back down the way you came and head left.



From the bottom of the steps, turn left then immediately right up Shadrack Street and continue to the end. Turn right in West Street and continue to the zebra crossing. Cross then take the lane on the left side of White Hart Yard to Beaminster Memorial Playing Fields.





**Take a seat on the green and spend 5 minutes relaxing and taking notice of your surroundings.**

When you are ready to leave, take the path to the left of the railing which bends around the right side of the park. The path will exit the park through a wooden gateway into Fleet Street, yet another of Beaminster's streets full of attractive historic buildings.



Turn right and you will soon find the entrance to Yarn Barton car park on the left.

# Looking for some more things to do?

## Picnic in the Parks



Discover new experiences and enjoy fun health and nature-related activities at Picnic in the Parks.

You can access all of the other History walks from this series as well as lots of other activities, films and resources to help you live well and love nature.

[picnicintheparks.org](http://picnicintheparks.org)



Stepping into nature



Explore the unique, varied, and outstanding natural beauty of this AONB which underpins its designation as a nationally important protected landscape.

[dorsetaonb.org](http://dorsetaonb.org)

Find new places to go, learn new skills and meet like-minded people through nature-themed activities held indoors and out.

[stepin2nature.org](http://stepin2nature.org)

# Stepping into Nature

Stepping into Nature opens opportunities for people to connect with Dorset's fascinating landscape, wildlife, history and culture, helping people live happier and healthier lives for longer.

Using Dorset's natural and cultural landscape, the project creates activities and sensory rich places for older people, people living with long-term health conditions, such as dementia, and their care partners.

The Stepping into Nature project is led by the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Team, funded by the National Lottery Community Fund.



A series of easy access routes  
highlighting local history and  
the stories around them.

Other routes include

**BLANDFORD FORUM**  
**CERNE ABBAS**  
**EASTERN DORCHESTER  
& FORDINGTON**  
**SHERBORNE**  
**SWANAGE**  
**WEYMOUTH**  
**ABBOTSBURY**  
**BRIDPORT**  
**SHAFTESBURY**  
**STURMINSTER NEWTON**  
**WAREHAM**

Further Information

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