

# Explore Yeovil Town Centre

## – *past and present*



**This walk is 45 mins to 1 hour in duration and is designed to give you an overview of Yeovil past and present.**

We suggest parking in Petters Way Car Park and begin this walk at the front of Petters House, named after the family that in 1895 manufactured the first internal combustion engine to be made in the United Kingdom. Turn left into South Street (the Yeovil Baptist Church, which has been used as a meeting house since 1717, is on your right hand side). At the mini-roundabout, turn right into Upper Hendford. In front of you, you will see the Millennium Town Clock, which was constructed for AD2000. The hamstone plinth has carvings of local scenes and was designed by the late, local historian Leslie Brooke.

Walk past the National Westminster bank on your left hand side (previously the site of the Angel Coaching Inn) and carefully cross the road north into Princes Street. On your right, you will see an arched entrance to the Mermaid Hotel, once the longest serving public house in Yeovil. Half way up the street on the left hand side, you will reach The Emporium, which is a collective of traders selling antiques and bygones from many eras. The last building on your left, as you reach Park Road, is Old Sarum House, built in 1730 by Samuel Dampier, a wealthy clothier.

Turn left up Park Street and carefully cross over Clarence Street into the Park. With the Armoury Pub on your left hand side, you will see a footbridge over Queensway in front of you. Cross over the dual carriage way and walk into the Park and into Sidney Gardens, (formerly Ram Park), presented to the town by Alderman Sidney Watts to celebrate Queen Victoria's Jubilee in 1897. The fountain, built in honour of Queen Victoria's 80th birthday, is now purely decorative. Take time to enjoy the planting. If you are interested in tracking family graves, Yeovil Cemetery is located at the top of Park Street, on the other side of Preston Road. It contains 15 Commonwealth burials of the First World War and 46 graves from the Second World War.

Otherwise, please make your way back across the footbridge and into town via Park Road. Instead of turning right into Princes Street, mind the traffic and bear left into the narrow lane called North Lane. You will find a car park on the right hand side. In former times, this was the site of Yeovil's market and earlier still, a walled garden. Make your way up through the car park and through the gap in the ancient wall, into St John's Churchyard.





Built in the early 15th Century, St John's is probably the most photographed building in Yeovil and is known as "The Lantern of the West" because of the superb windows. It is built of Yeovil stone (a local limestone) with Ham stone dressings under lead roofs. Take some time to admire the municipal gardens at the front of the Church and then walk down the stone steps, across Silver Street into the Quedam Shopping Centre. It was named after an old street of that name but the name Quedam fell into disuse in the 19th Century in favour of Vicarage Street.

Carry on down the sloping path through the shopping area, passing the Vicarage Street Methodist Church on your left hand side. In front of you is the Yeovil Bandstand, formerly the site of Yeovil's underground public toilets, which is available for hire for musicians and entertainers. Look right, up the hill, to see more shops, including Marks and Spencers, Boots and Primark. At the bandstand, walk left down Middle Street until you reach the William Dampier Wetherspoons Pub on your left hand side and the Premier Inn on your right. Turn right into Old Station Road and you will find a number of restaurants, ranging from Thai, Italian to Indian. A bit further on, you will see a pedestrian crossing. Walk over to the Yeo Leisure Park, with more restaurants, a Cineworld cinema and Hollywood Bowl tenpin bowling centre.

Keeping the Leisure Park building on your right, walk across the car park and find a gap in the hedge/wall to join a foot and cycle path. This path follows the route of the old Yeovil to Taunton railway line. Head east towards Ninesprings and Yeovil Country Park. Stroll along a pleasant wooded path which eventually opens out on to an attractive park area, home to many insects and birds. There is a small lake and eventually you will reach Ninesprings Cafe next to Goldenstones Swimming Pool.

You can then either carry on following the old railway line until you reach Lysander Road or you can turn right at the swimming pool and cross Brunswick Street at the pelican crossing. Follow the path ahead of you straight up the hill, past the Octagon Theatre and you will find yourself back at the beginning of the walk, in the Petters Way Car Park.

**To celebrate the Millenium, the Town Council affixed historic 'blue' plaques to a number of buildings across the town centre. The plaques are a fun way to learn about the past use of many of the town's famous landmarks. Copies of the Historic Plaque Trail are available from the Town Council's offices in Union Street, . A useful Yeovil town guide is also available to download at [www.yeovil.gov.uk](http://www.yeovil.gov.uk)**

**Disclaimer** – please check individual places for latest opening times and guidelines.

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01935 829333



[visitSS@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:visitSS@somerset.gov.uk)



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South Somerset Visitor Information Centre, Cartgate Picnic Site A303/A3088, Stoke sub Hamdon TA14 6RA