

More to read...

Further trail leaflets are available at Ninesprings Café to discover easy access routes, wildlife, art and more:



Yeovil Country Park
Exploring the Park



Accessibility Guide
Easy Access Trails



Wildlife Guide
Wonderful Wildlife



Free Children's Activities
30 Things to Do



Artistic life Outside
Art in the Park



Nature Trail Activities
Ranger Rik's Adventure

Visit us



P Goldenstones Car Park
BA20 1QZ

Further information

Follow us on social media for up to date information and photos:



@SSDC
Countryside



Yeovil
Country Park



@southsomerset
countryside

If you would like more information about the country park, Ninesprings Café, our events & activities, the volunteers or Friends group please contact us:

W: southsomersetcountryside.com

T: 01935 462462

A: South Somerset
District Council,
Council Offices,
Brympton Way,
Yeovil, Somerset,
BA20 1QZ

A: Ninesprings Café,
Brunswick Street,
Yeovil, Somerset,
BA20 1QZ



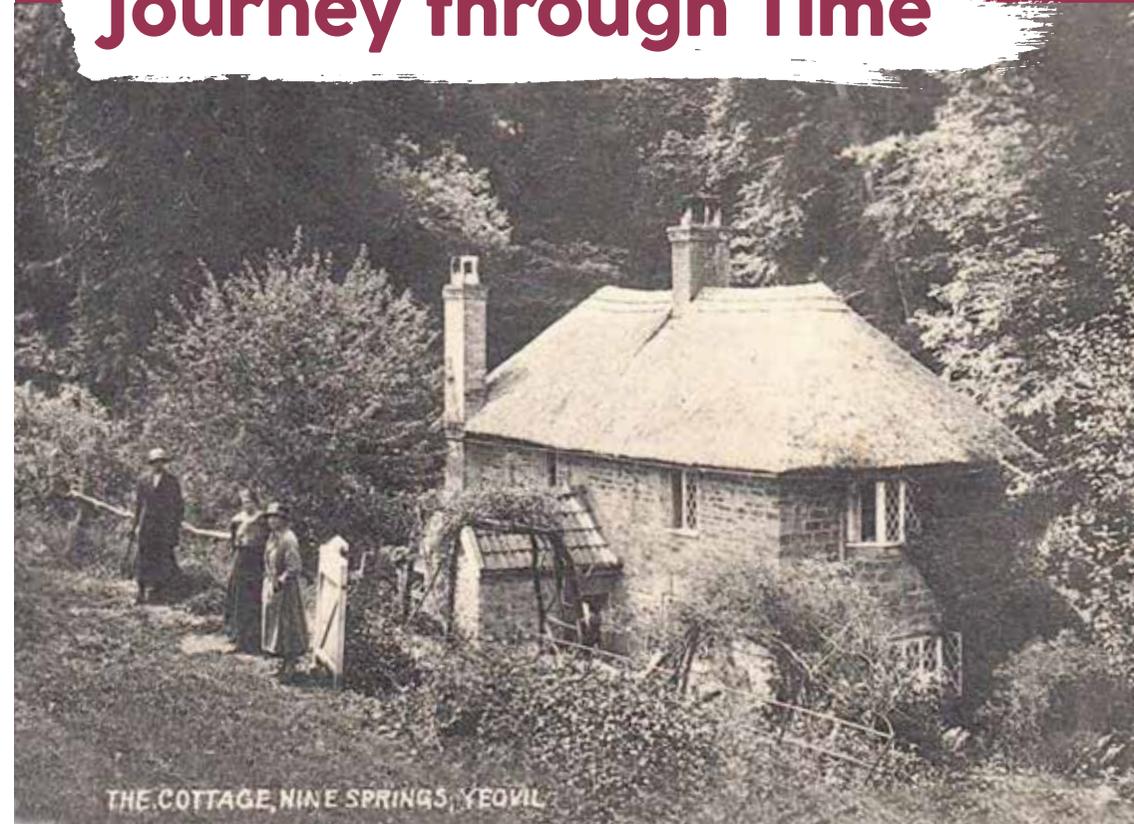
**South Somerset
District Council**

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Yeovil
Country Park



History & Heritage Journey through Time



THE COTTAGE, NINE SPRINGS, YEOVIL

**Are you ready for
a journey to discover
the country park's
historical past?**

Yeovil Country Park sits on the south-eastern edge of the town and has always been connected to it through the industry that has developed around it. The Country Park has both a rich heritage from the urban environment it is now a part of, and a natural heritage that connects it to the surrounding countryside.



LOTTERY FUNDED

Historic photographs of Yeovil Country Park

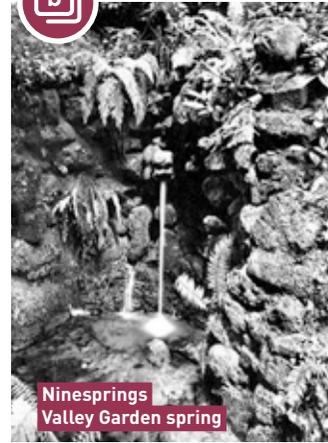
See where these were taken on the inside map.

a



Hendford Line

b



Ninesprings Valley Garden spring

c



Ninesprings Cottage

d



Ninesprings Valley Garden archway

e



Dodham brook and railway line

f



Gloving templates

g



Glovers in Dodham Brook

h



Wyndham Hill Then and now 50 years apart



Yeo Leisure Park car park

Special thanks

This leaflet was enhanced by the contributions of many local people who were able to share their childhood stories about Yeovil Country Park.

Thank you to everyone who volunteered their time to share their memories of the Park.

Did you know?

Factories used to line the brook and the effluent from the factories flowed through its waters. It was then a steep-sided ditch, taking the chemical run-off from those factories. The water would run many different colours depending on which dyes had been used in the factories. The stench and fumes were intolerable; Yeovilians used to call the area by the brook and the train line 'Hell' and the walk up the valley to the gardens would lead you to 'Heaven'.

is a haven
e if you can
er vole among
grass at the

The old railway ran through Ninesprings, then alongside Summer House Hill and into Wyndham Hill. Look at the photo of the trail at Wyndham Hill today compare to 50 years ago.

Did you know?

Now journey back in time a few years. Yeovil was a centre for leather production, exporting leather throughout the world, using the train lines. Throughout the 1800s and early 1900s, much of the local workforce worked in the leather industry, often whole families. Generally the men worked in the tanning factories or cutting; the sons were apprentices; the women and girls sewed the gloves.



It is now a scene of tranquility: willow trees and alders bob their catkins over the gentle waters in spring; water voles and moorhens breed on the banks in the summer; fallen golden leaves rush along its surface in the autumn; and you may glimpse the otter family which swims here during the shorter winter days.

FACT: The Yeovil Town football club is still nick-named 'The Glovers'.

FACT: Pittards is the only factory which remains, and has an international reputation as a leather producer.

Did you know?

The Otter bench here marks the site of the old gardeners cottage.

Families used to come here to purchase cream teas or lemonade and enjoy them in the woodlands, watching kingfishers flying low over the ponds as ducks and swans swam by. The cottage was occupied by a couple; the husband was the caretaker for the Valley Gardens and his wife ran the tea rooms.

It was a difficult place to live, tucked away up in the woods, with no mains water, electricity or gas. Eventually, the cottage was abandoned and the area became wild and overgrown with dark laurel bushes.

Children used to play nearby, but not many would play inside the dilapidated building as there were stories of a wicked witch who lived there among the spooky trees. It then fell victim to an arson attack and was destroyed in 1973. All that now remains are some of the cottage floor stones.



There is an audio trail to accompany this walk. Download the audio trail at <https://www.southsomersetcountryside.com/yeovil-country-park/> and listen to local people's memories along the trail when this icon is shown.

Stand a while and see if you can spy any of the kingfishers which live in this area.



Dodham Brook

Leather to voles

Retrace your path and return to the ford, carefully walk down the steps and walk alongside the stream.

Follow the stream to the brook at the bottom of the lake. This is **Dodham Brook** which runs through Yeovil, rising to the West of the town. It is fed by the stream at Ninesprings and joins the River Yeo below Wyndham Hill.

Retrace your steps to the **Ninesprings Cafe**, and perhaps take the time to discover more about **Yeovil Country Park** while you enjoy a hot drink and slice of cake. You can also view some of the exhibits and photographs of the park's heritage in the Community Heritage and Access Centre.

10



09



07

08

END 11

Discover the Journey through Time

Did you know?

Westlands constructed their factory near to this station so that they could despatch their products by rail. Journey back in time: can you imagine the rush of the steam trains as they pass you; the smell of the coal fires; clank of the rails as they carry off airplane parts, such as the Westland Wallace plane, ready to fly in World War 2?



Look up underneath the brick arched bridge. Can you spot the woodcarving?



Did you know?

There is a listening post available in Ninesprings Café with the full versions of local people telling their childhood memories of what Yeovil Country Park was like many years ago and their childhood adventures.

Now this area for wildlife; see spot a shy water reed and the reeds and water's edge.

Brunswick Street

Water Road

11 END

03

04

02

05

START 01

The History & Heritage Trail

1.5 miles / 2.4 km

Ninesprings Café

From steam trains to bicycles

- START 01** Start from the Ninesprings Café, turn right and stroll along the cycle path. This wide tarmac path follows the route of the old Hendford train line, which formed a connection on the Yeovil to Taunton line.
- 02** Follow the path along and you will come to the brick walls constructed with the railway line in 1857.
- 03** Take a seat on a bench between the bridges and admire the Victorian construction.
- 04** At the end of the wall, a large shop now stands. This was the site of **Hendford Halt Station**. Turn around before the gate and retrace your steps on the main tarmac path.
- Valley Gardens**
- The mystical Victorian Valley Gardens**
- 05** Turn right where the tarmac path heads up towards the woods, and follow the trail next to the fence of Remembrance Garden.
- 06** Follow the markers into the **Valley Gardens**, pause by the ford and look around you.

Did you know?

These Victorian Valley Gardens were created by the Batten family during the 1830s, to provide local people with work when the factories were quiet, and to make their very own pleasure garden. The valley and springs were here long before on the ancient green sands soil, and, together with the springs at Rustywell, supplied Yeovil with water in Roman times.



FACT: The Victorian gardens made a feature of nine of the springs through waterfalls, grottoes, archways and decorative stonework. Hence the name Ninesprings.



Offer Bench

The Old Cottage, cream teas, witches and lemonade

- 07** Cross the ford and go through the archway. Follow the path until you come to a waterfall, instead of crossing the bridge, turn left and go up the steps.
- 08** Follow the steps to the **offer bench**, and sit here a while to journey back in time to when **this was the site of the old cottage**.

Follow the markers into the **Valley Gardens**, pause by the ford and look around you.