

5 DOWLISH WAKE This small ancient Somerset village, with the Dowlish Brook running through it, contains many delights for the visitor. Entering from the north the first notable building to be seen is the 13th century hamstone Norman Church of St Andrews which contains the remains of John Hanning Speke, a Victorian explorer who spent time in Africa looking for the source of the Nile. Further on are the old manor house and the 17th century packhorse bridge which still crosses the brook. Other highlights include the Pottery and Craft Gallery and Perry's Cider Mill - a working cider mill with a museum, a cafe and shop.

3 BARRINGTON COURT (NT) House and gardens. Tel: 0644 800 1895 Web: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/barrington

4 DILLINGTON HOUSE is set in mature parkland with beautiful formal gardens. Once home of Prime Minister Lord North, Dillington House now operates as a residential centre for adult education. (Public access is limited to the cycle path and footpaths, the house is not open to the public.)

2 MEETING HOUSE ARTS CENTRE Once a Unitarian Chapel, the Meeting House today operates as an 'Arts Centre'. There is an art gallery, a cafe and workshop space that also doubles as a performance area in the evenings. The exhibitions in the gallery change monthly and show a range of work from traditional to the truly modern.

1 ST MARY'S CHURCH, ILMINSTER More usually known as 'The Minister' due to the town's links with the monks of Muchelney Abbey who built a church on the site as early as 720 AD. The present church with its 90' tower was probably built in the 1400s. The chapel to the north contains the tombs of three members of the Wadham family - Sir William who was instrumental in the building of the church and Nicholas and Dorothy Wadham who were the founders of Wadham College, Oxford. Other items of interest include: the Jacobean screen, the brass chandeliers, a redos, with its hidden slugs and snails, and a modern addition, the engraved glass doors that mark the Millennium in 2000.

A Fortress Ilminster: WW2 defences
B The Canal: The Story of the Canal

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WALKS: For peaceful countryside walks in the area follow the signed footpaths to Cricket Malherbie, Chaffcombe woods and Dowlish Wake.

9 ST MARY MAGDALENE CHURCH: A beautiful Grade 2* listed building with historic connections and an interesting crypt.

The parish of Knowle St Giles lies to the west of Cricket Malherbie and north east of Chard. It is more a series of dispersed hamlets and farms rather than a traditional village. It lies in beautiful rolling countryside with views of Ilminster and the Blackdown Hills.

E Knowle St Giles: Local history and WW2 Stop Line defences.

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8 ST MARY'S CHURCH Christians have worshipped on this site for over 700 years. This splendid church was built in the 15th Century, with particularly fine bench ends. Outside, Hunky-punks (grotesque carvings in the likeness of primitive faces) adorn the parapet string course.

7 DONYATT POTTERIES Evidence suggests pottery making started here about 1200 and lasted for 800 years. Many potteries made everything for everybody, including: jugs, bottles, chamber pots, dishes, roof tiles, bread crocks, puzzle jugs and the famous 'fuddling cups'.

6 THE DEER PARK and THE DOMESDAY BOOK IN 1086 The DOMESDAY BOOK entry for Donyatt included a Deer Park; it is claimed this is the only such park noted in the book. In 1567, 500 deer were recorded in this 448 acre park and by 1613, it no longer served as a deer park.

C Donyatt Cutting: Wildlife depictions
D Donyatt Halt: The Railway and WW2 Stop Line defences

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DONYATT & KNOWLE ST GILES

THE STOP LINE WAY

Ilminster to Chard
 (5-mile long metalled section)



The Stop Line Way is a long distance coast-to-coast walking and cycling route which in parts is suitable for wheelchairs and pushchairs. The cycle route is 75 miles long and partly follows the 'Taunton Stop Line' built by the Army in 1940 to contain any Nazi German invasion of the South West. These defences ran for 50 miles, from Burnham on the Bristol Channel to Seaton on the South Coast. Canals, railways and rivers were made into a continuous anti-tank obstacle with road blocks and over 380 concrete pillboxes. Between Ilminster and Chard it largely follows the track of the old Great Western Railway.



14 FORDE ABBEY is a former medieval monastery with beautiful gardens. Tel: 01460 220 231 Web: www.fordeabbey.co.uk

13 CHARD MUSEUM The Museum tells the story of Chard, together with details of its pioneer aviator, John Stringfellow. Another pioneer was James Gillingham who greatly improved artificial limbs. The houses of these two men can still be seen. The museum also tells the story of Margaret Bondfield, Britain's first woman cabinet minister and person who did so much to improve the welfare of shop workers.

12 HOLYROOD LACE MILL, BODEN'S MILL and WEST CHARD The mills were built at the last great time of change in the 1800s when much of the town was rebuilt, the money coming from new industry such as the two great machine plain-lace mills. Visit the TIC and take the Blue Plaque walk and/or the Lace Mill audio-walk and see the supporting foundries and engineering works.

11 FORE STREET & HIGH STREET The next age of Chard was when a new town was built around a market area in 1235. Evidence of this phase can be seen at the middle and bottom of Fore Street where former great houses belonging to wealthy cloth merchants were built. Spring water running down on the north side of the main street finds its way to the Bristol Channel and water on the south side to the English Channel.

10 ST MARY'S CHURCH is now the oldest building but even this has traces of an older Norman building (see church guide). Behind it is Ivy Green and beside this is a building that was formerly the Manor Farmhouse. From here, Old Town ran down Silver Street and East Street.

The town centre grew in three main phases - see (11), (12), and (13). The name Chard is thought to have meant "the house on the common".

F Chard North: Chard Common Incline and WW 2 Stop Line defences
G Chaffcombe Lane: The fascinating history of the reservoir
H The Reservoir: Wildlife depictions
I Chard Central: Two railway stations and the Canal Wharf

INTERPRETATION BOARDS

CHARD

USEFUL INFORMATION

TOWNS & VILLAGES

www.ilminsterforum.co.uk

www.chard.gov.uk

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donyatt

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knowle_St_Giles

MUSEUMS & other recording organisations

www.chardmuseum.co.uk

www.somerset.gov.uk/museum

Somerset Environmental Records Centre: www.somerc.com

Chard History Group: www.users.globalnet.co.uk~carterw

www.somerset.gov.uk/archive (includes a photographic collection of Ilminster entitled: *Heritage of the Ile*)

PUBLICATIONS

Somerset. The complete Guide (1994)

Now you see it - then you didn't! - Stop Line (2000)

Working the Chard Branch - Railway (1991)

Roads, Canals and Railways of Chard (2001)

Somerset Steam (2009)

The History of Donyatt (2002)

Excavations in the Donyatt Potteries (1989)

Book of the Ile (1890) (Library reference only)

LIBRARIES

Chard: Holyrood Lace Mill

Ilminster: Ditton Street

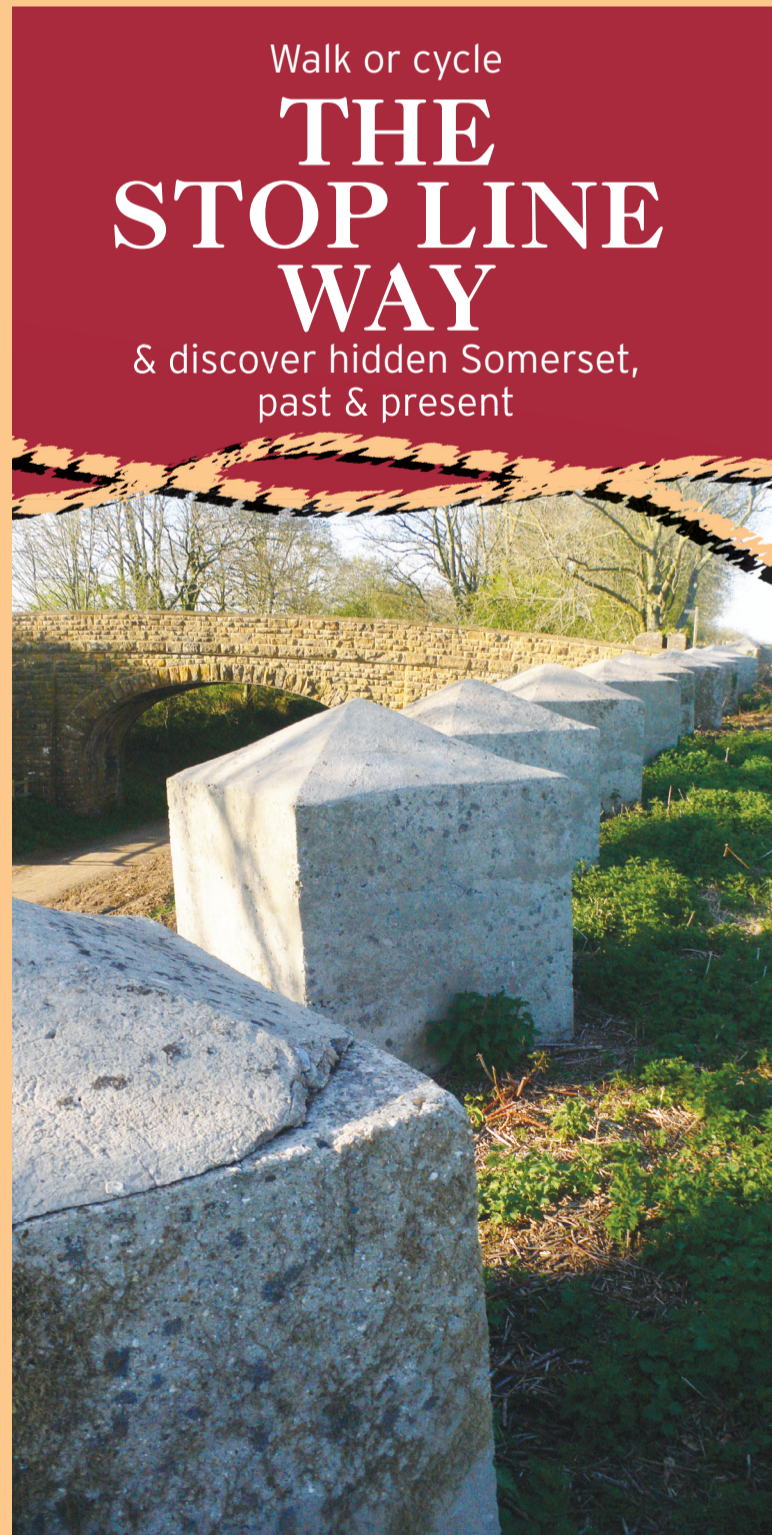
TOURIST & LOCAL INFORMATION CENTRES

Chard: Guildhall, High Street (TIC)

Ilminster: Meeting House, East Street

The Old Railway Heritage/Community Project For Ilminster, Donyatt, Knowle St Giles, & Chard

From 2005 to 2009, a group of volunteers from Ilminster, Donyatt, Knowle St Giles and Chard joined together to design a heritage project linking their communities along part of the National Cycle Network 33 (The Stop Line Way). In 2008, the Heritage Lottery Fund awarded them a grant. This leaflet gives additional information about the heritage of the area covered by the project and suggests further links to examine.



Walk or cycle
THE STOP LINE WAY
 & discover hidden Somerset,
 past & present



2 miles NE of Ilminster



Fuddling cups



THE STOP LINE WAY

Ilminster to Chard
(5-mile long metalled section)



Chaffcombe Woods



4 miles south of Chard



KEY

- A** Interpretation boards
(refer to content overleaf)
- 1** Refer to features overleaf
- The Stop Line Way
- S** Seat
- 🍴** Food
- 🚌** Bus Stop
(www.transportdirect.info)
(www.traveline.org.uk)
(0871 200 2223)

Footpath Note

There are many well signed footpaths leading off The Stop Line Way. These and others are shown on special footpath maps available from the Tourist Information Centres. See also Ordnance Survey Explorer maps 116 & 128, & <https://ilminsterweb.com>

SCALE

