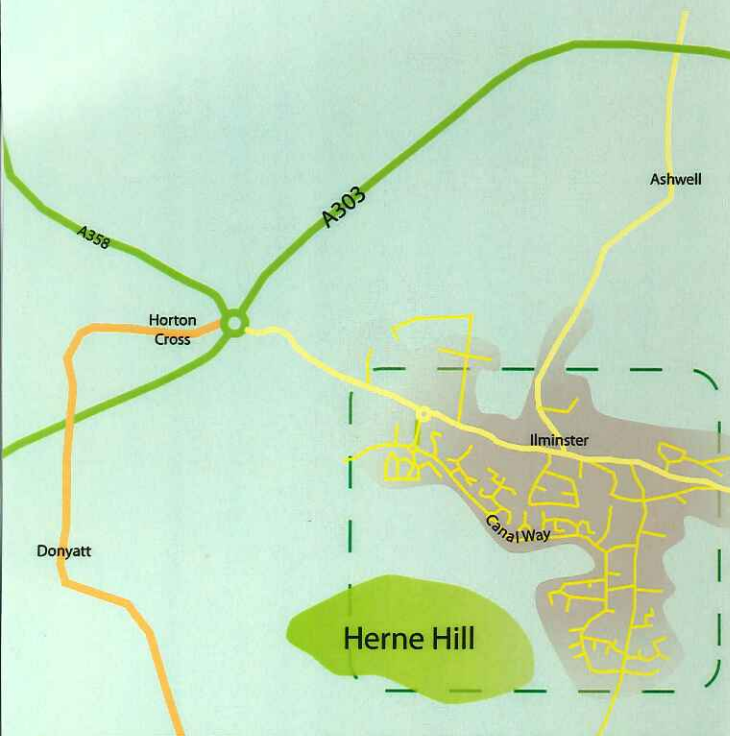


## Location of the Herne Hill Nature Trail.

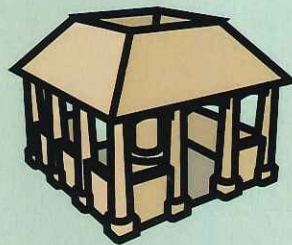


The old Somerset market town of Ilminster makes an ideal base for those wishing to experience a relaxing holiday in a rural setting. The pace of life here is still slightly slower, so there is plenty of time to get out and explore the countryside on foot, on a bicycle or by car. Any one of these modes of transport will eventually lead you to some hidden but picturesque villages where a pub lunch accompanied by a glass of 'Zummerset Zider' awaits you.

The Local Information Centre is open Monday to Saturday from 10am to 1pm, Easter until October. You can call us on 01460 57294, pop in, or write to:

Ilminster Tourism  
The Meeting House  
East Street  
Ilminster  
Somerset  
TA19 0AN

Ilminster Town Council  
North Street  
Ilminster  
Somerset  
TA19 0DG



Ilminster Forum



[visitilminster.co.uk](http://visitilminster.co.uk)

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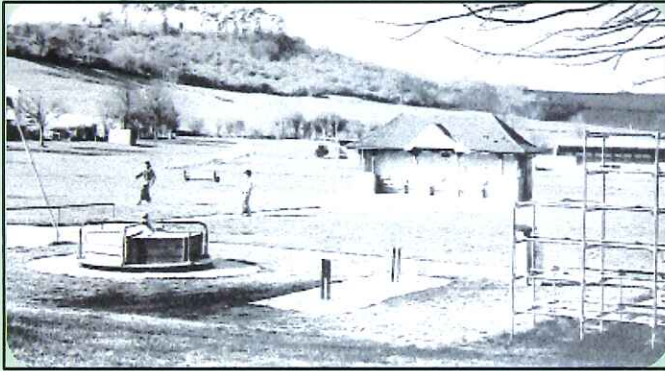
# Herne Hill Nature Trail



Appendix 3 -  
'Herne Hill Nature Trail' leaflet

# The History of Herne Hill

Herne Hill has a long history; from a mediaeval deer park to an informal arboretum.



In 1931 the Hill was given to the town of Ilminster by Major Sir George Davies MP and Walter Trivett as an early example of "amenity woodland" and a landscape feature which gives the town its unique character.



# Woodland Management

Herne Hill is managed by Ilminster Town Council for the benefit of the people of Ilminster.

The object is to create and maintain as great a diversity of native species as is practical.

Introduced and non-native species are controlled and dead wood left in piles for wildlife.

Hazel coppice maintained at various stages will improve the diversity of the wood.

The result is a woodland that can be visited and enjoyed all year round.



# The Countryside Code

Whilst on the Hill we ask that you obey the Countryside Code:

Respect other people

- Consider the local community and other people enjoying the outdoors
- Leave gates and property as you find them and follow paths unless wider access is available

Protect the natural environment

- Leave no trace of your visit and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under effective control

Enjoy the outdoors

- Plan ahead and be prepared
- Follow advice and local signs



### 1. Brittens Field

To the left of the entrance to Brittens Field lies the remains of Ilminster's canal. Follow the tree line to your left up the field.



### 2. The Ridge Path

At the top of the incline the path turns right where there is a gate. As you face this gate the lane to your left is the old road to Donyatt.

Through the gate runs the ridge path with views of Ilminster. This lane is also flight path of Common Pipistrelle bats.



### 3. Cleeves Close

This area of scrub and thistles is valuable for seed-eating birds and mammals. Two species of nationally rare beetle have been found here. The Close has been pasture in the past and was once managed as a rabbit warren.



### 4. The Hill

The ridge path ends and takes you up gently at first and then rather steeply through the tree line and onto the hill.

The Hill rises at its highest point to around 360ft (100m) above sea level and covers approximately 25 acres.



### 5. Swanmead School Plantation

Swanmead School pupils helped establish this area, using Guelder Rose, Spindle, Wild Service Tree, Field Maple and Hazel, amongst other species.



### 6. Badgers

Badgers have made the hill their home for many years. Traces of their ramblings can be seen throughout the area, from scratch marks on the trees to freshly turned earth.



### 7. The Fir Pound

The Fir Pound is found on the summit of the hill. The pound has been here since 1760, and was originally surrounded by a hedge and wall of which traces can still be found. The Scots Pines that dominate this area were planted in the 1850's.



### 8. Donyatt Gate

The ancient trees as you descend the slope are host to a wide range of fungi in Autumn and the woodland floor is carpeted with bluebells in the Spring.



### 9. Lower Slopes

In open areas Bracken tends to shade out the other plants but the more recent planting to your left will create more Hazel coppice with opportunities for woodland birds and dormice.



### 10. Northern Edge

The hedge includes a number of fine trees, one oak is over 300 years old. This is a good area for small birds such as Nuthatch, Tree Creepers and Tits.



### 11. The Pale

The irregular hedge line is evidence of the fence or pale that once surrounded the ancient deer park. At this point the path returns to Brittens Field, where you can follow the hedgeline back to the trail starting point.

#### Key

- Pathways
- Seating
- Triangulation Point
- Hazel Band

