

Mendip Hills AONB



TRAIL TYPE

Walking

GRADE

Easy

DISTANCE

4km (2½ miles)

TIME

About 1-1½ hours

OS MAP

Explorer 141:
Cheddar Gorge &
Mendip Hills West;
Landranger 182:
Weston-super-Mare

CONTACT

01761 462338
mendiphills@somerset.gov.uk

FACILITIES

Pubs in Cross: New Inn
and White Hart.

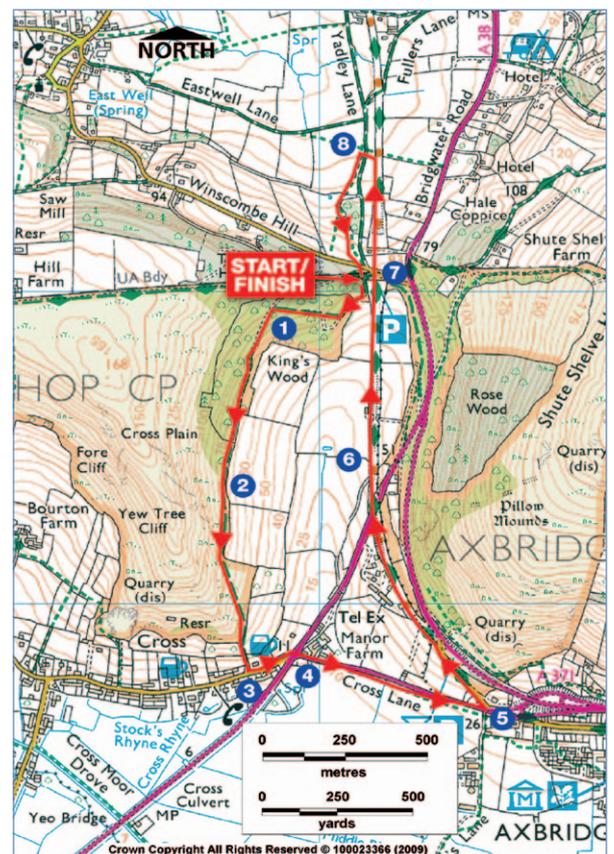
Pubs in Axbridge: Oak
House, Lamb Hotel and
Crown Inn.

The Almshouse Tea
Shop, Axbridge.

Village post office and
stores in Axbridge.

King's Wood

The term 'ancient woodland' is generally applied to woods where there has been continuous woodland cover since at least AD 1600. Such woodland is identified by the UK Biodiversity Action Plan as broadleaved woodland which typically supports almost twice as many wildlife species as any other habitat. Through forest clearance, the rise of agriculture and the march of industry, most of our ancient woods have disappeared. Fortunately some pockets remain. King's Wood is among them and formed part of a medieval 'royal hunting forest', or land used specifically for hunting. King's Wood has a medieval ditch and bank to protect it and is bordered by part of an older Saxon manorial boundary. The nearby Forest of Mendip, and King John's Hunting Lodge in Axbridge (National Trust) are further clues to the one-time importance of hunting in the area. The wood is part of the Crook Peak to Shute Shelve Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and is rich in wildlife, with varied and interesting ground flora that indicate continuous woodland cover over a long period. The wood supports a wide variety of birds and insects, mammals such as badgers and deer, and a range of fungi, ferns, mosses and lichens which favour the damp conditions. Plants like bluebell, wood anemone, wild garlic and dog's mercury are common, as are trees and shrubs such as small-leaved lime, oak, beech, field maple, ash, whitebeam, hazel and guelder rose.



Mendip Hills AONB



START/END

King's Wood car park,
OS Grid Ref ST 421 560

HOW TO GET THERE

BY BIKE

The route follows the Sustrans national Cycle Route 26 (the Strawberry Line) from points 5 to 8.

BY BUS

Service 126 Weston-super-Mare to Wells stops near the start of the walk.

BY CAR

The start point is the car park just off the A38 between Axbridge and Winscombe.

DIRECTIONS & INFORMATION

Waymarking: Look for waymarkers wherever there are stiles, gates or changes of direction.

Take the bridleway through King's Wood **(1)** and once clear of the trees **(2)**, walk down the short steep slope to the road at Cross.

Walk left along the lane past the New Inn at Cross **(3)**. Take care when crossing A38.

Continue along Cross Lane and after a few yards, you will find the footpath next to the field gate **(4)**.

Walk along the hedge in the field and over the stile, then cross the road and walk along the lane to find the entrance to Strawberry Line **(5)** for a level and easy return walk **(6)**.

Continue through the tunnel under the road **(7)**, then turn left through gate **(8)** and follow the footpath up through the meadow to return to the car park.

Other things to look out for at or near King's Wood

- Saxon manorial boundary
- Crook Peak and Wavering Down (see view from, right)
- King John's Hunting Lodge and Museum at Axbridge (National Trust)
- The Strawberry Line Heritage Trail

