

## The East Well & Winscombe Church

2¼ miles: Fairly easy

Allow 1–2 hours. Mostly level. Muddy after rain; Eastwell Lane floods in very wet weather.

**1** Walk down to the main road, cross with care and turn left along the pavement. **2** Pass the entrance to Kelvin House then, opposite Hale Farm, turn right through a gate. **3** Walk down the side of the field to a gate onto the Strawberry Line. **4** Cross straight over and follow the path through a gate-within-a-gate and cross the bottom of Slater's Leigh nature reserve to a kissing gate. **5** Cross the sunken path beyond (Yadley Lane) and go through another kissing gate into a field. **6** Head diagonally across the field to a footbridge in the far right-hand corner. **7** Keep to the right of the next two fields then turn right through a kissing gate into Eastwell Lane. **8** Turn left and follow the lane for ¼ mile to the East Well, which rises to the right of the path. **9** Continue along the lane beyond the spring until you meet a driveway. **10** Continue out to the road. **11** Turn left and walk up the hill. **12** Turn right into Church Lane and go through the gate into the churchyard. **13** Leave the churchyard via the path from the north door, passing left of an ancient yew tree. **14** Descend steps by a cottage and follow the lane downhill. **15** At a junction, cross straight over through a waymarked gate into a farm opposite. **16** Pick up a path to the left of the farm buildings and continue through a gate along a line of poplars. **17** Cross a footbridge and cross the field to a gate. **18** Cross the footbridge on your left and bear right across the next field. **19** Beyond a slab stile, cross another footpath and follow the fenced path beyond to Yadley Lane. **20** Turn left then, just after the entrance to Paddock Ridge, right along a footpath between gardens. **21** Drop down steps to the Strawberry Line and up the other side. **22** Follow the path past the playing fields to Fuller's Lane. **23** Turn left and walk out to the main road. **24** Cross and turn right, back to the Sidcot Arms.

## Crook Peak

(8 miles: Fairly strenuous)

Allow 4 hours. Long ascents and descents. Encounters with mud and livestock possible.

**1** Walk down to the main road, cross with care and turn left along the pavement. **2** Pass the entrance to Kelvin House then, opposite Hale Farm, turn right through a gate. **3** Walk down the side of the field to a gate onto the Strawberry Line. **4** Turn left and follow the trail through the Shute Shelve Tunnel. **5** Exit from the tunnel and,

after about 175m, double back right along a narrow path off the Strawberry Line signposted 'King's Wood car park/pedestrians only'. **6** Turn left through a hand-gate then, when you meet a brideway, turn left. **7** Beyond a gate, follow an undulating brideway along the bottom of Kings Wood, passing another gate partway along. **8** After climbing beside the mossy remains of a wall on the left, the path starts to descend through a scrubby area. **9** Ignore a path off to the right, but take the second right, where a path crosses, by a waymark with a horseshoe roundel. **10** Follow this path up the slope then cross the open hillside straight ahead, with views to Glastonbury Tor and Brent Knoll. **11** Continue between brambles and below some rocks and scree until you meet a wall. **12** Follow the wall down a rocky section then bear right to pass a gate below a disused quarry. **13** Beyond the quarry, go through a gate and cross a field; keep right at a junction of paths beyond a metal kissing gate, aiming for the buildings of Bourton Farm. **14** Cross the lane below the farm and take the footpath opposite. **15** Bear right to a gate, then left along the bottom of the field to the second (a gate on the right gives access to Coral Cave, but the diversion is barely worth it). **16** Beyond a house, head half-left and continue along the bottom of a series of fields towards Compton Bishop (ignoring a footpath to the left through a gate in the hedge as you approach the village). **17** The last gate leads into a driveway, which you follow between houses before it bends left. **18** On meeting the road, walk up Church Lane, ignoring Coombe Lane to your right. **19** Turn left at the church along Butts Batch and pass the Manor on your left. **20** Turn right into Vicarage Lane and when the road ends follow the track ahead as it curves left to a gate. **21** Keep left along the wall at a junction of paths, then turn right (uphill) at a crossing of paths. **22** At the top of the slope, turn sharp right up the grassy slope. **23** Climb the Razor ridge (which has a false summit) until you reach the rocky summit of Crook Peak. **24** Having admired the views, turn left along the lip of the rocks, then double back right to pass below the low cliff. **25** Head down the hill to a saddle with a crossing path, and continue along the broad ridge with a wall on your left. **26** Follow the wall as it bends right across a second saddle, also with a crossing path, then bear left uphill, still following the wall, climbing to the trig pillar on Wavering Down via a stone memorial bench (inscribed "Only a hill but all of life to me"). **27** Return to the wall and descend to Cross Plain. **28** Turn left through the farm and follow the entrance drive down to a crossing track (Barton Drove). **29** Take a few steps to the right and go through a kissing gate on the left. **30** Follow the fence along the side of a paddock. **31** Go through a kissing gate and bear left then right to descend a steep, stepped path through the trees. **32** Exit the wood via a stile and walk down the side of a paddock and into the churchyard. Follow steps **13** to **24** of the **Winscombe and the East Well** walk (left) to return to the Sidcot Arms.



The spectacular 360° view from **Crook Peak** is dominated by the M5 heading towards the obvious eminence of Brent Knoll, with the Parrett Estuary backed by the Quantocks and Exmoor beyond. To the west the island of Steephelm lurks beyond the ridge of Brean Down; to the north are Avonmouth and the outskirts of Bristol; looking east over Cheddar Reservoir is a glimpse of the Gorge; and to the south are the Somerset Levels, with Glastonbury Tor prominent in the south-east.

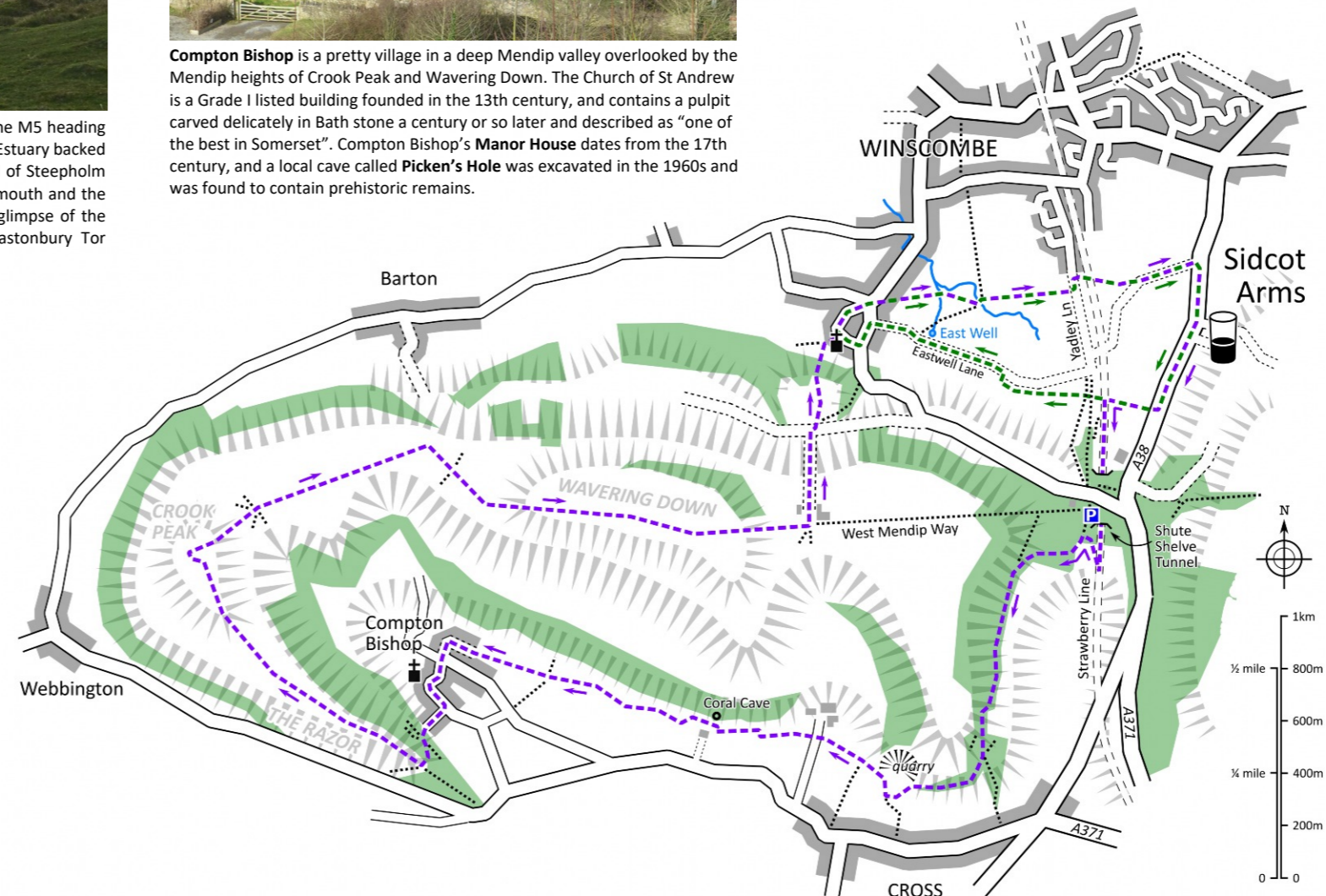
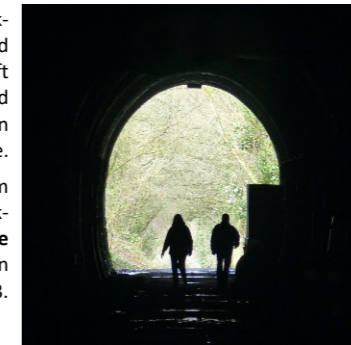


Church of St James, Winscombe



**Compton Bishop** is a pretty village in a deep Mendip valley overlooked by the Mendip heights of Crook Peak and Wavering Down. The Church of St Andrew is a Grade I listed building founded in the 13th century, and contains a pulpit carved delicately in Bath stone a century or so later and described as "one of the best in Somerset". Compton Bishop's **Manor House** dates from the 17th century, and a local cave called **Picken's Hole** was excavated in the 1960s and was found to contain prehistoric remains.

**Shute Shelve Tunnel** is brick-lined at its northern end where it passes through soft marl, but the walls of hard limestone at the southern end are lined with flowstone. The **Cheddar Valley Line** from Yatton to Wells was nicknamed the **Strawberry Line** because of the local trade in soft fruit. It closed in 1963.



five circular walks from



# THE SIDCOT ARMS

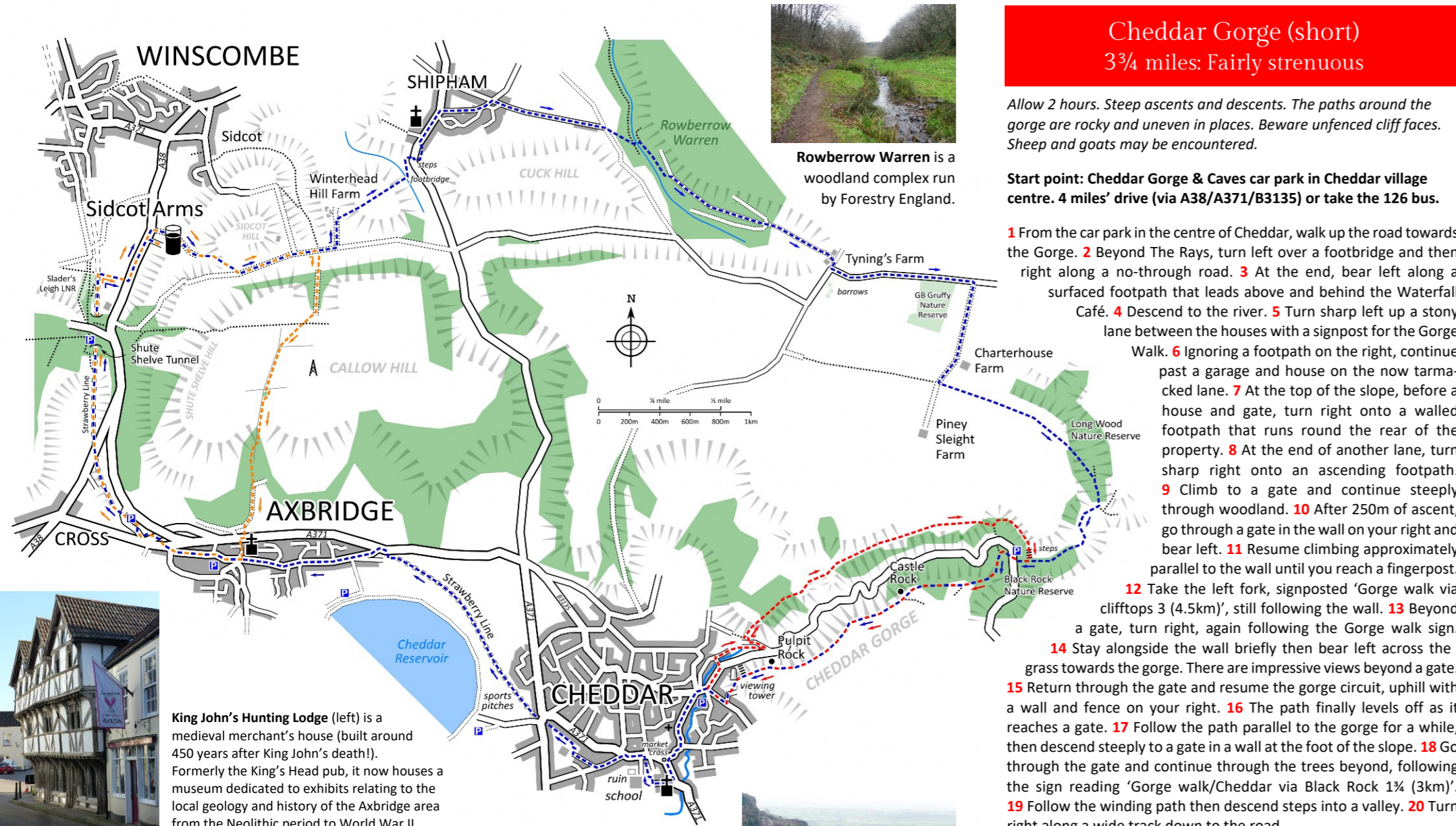
**East Well & Winscombe Church 2¼ miles**  
Stroll across the fields past a vigorous Mendip spring to a Grade I listed Somerset church.

**Axbridge & Shute Shelve 4¼ miles**  
Cross the Mendip ridge to pretty Axbridge and follow the Strawberry Line back via a spooky tunnel.

**Cheddar Gorge (short) 3¾ miles**  
An exciting circuit high-level circumnavigation of Cheddar Gorge from Cheddar village.

**Crook Peak 8 miles**  
An energetic climb from a pretty village is rewarded by superb views over the Somerset Levels.

**Cheddar Gorge (long) 12¼ miles**  
A superb expedition to one of England's most spectacular landforms, returning via Axbridge.



## Cheddar Gorge (short)

3¾ miles: Fairly strenuous

Allow 2 hours. Steep ascents and descents. The paths around the gorge are rocky and uneven in places. Beware unfenced cliff faces. Sheep and goats may be encountered.

**Start point: Cheddar Gorge & Caves car park in Cheddar village centre. 4 miles' drive (via A38/A371/B3135) or take the 126 bus.**

- 1 From the car park in the centre of Cheddar, walk up the road towards the Gorge. 2 Beyond The Rays, turn left over a footbridge and then right along a no-through road. 3 At the end, bear left along a surfaced footpath that leads above and behind the Waterfall Café. 4 Descend to the river. 5 Turn sharp left up a stony lane between the houses with a signpost for the Gorge Walk. 6 Ignoring a footpath on the right, continue past a garage and house on the now tarmac lane. 7 At the top of the slope, before a house and gate, turn right onto a walled footpath that runs round the rear of the property. 8 At the end of another lane, turn sharp right onto an ascending footpath. 9 Climb to a gate and continue steeply through woodland. 10 After 250m of ascent, go through a gate in the wall on your right and bear left. 11 Resume climbing approximately parallel to the wall until you reach a fingerpost. 12 Take the left fork, signposted 'Gorge walk via clifftops 3 (4.5km)', still following the wall. 13 Beyond a gate, turn right, again following the Gorge walk sign. 14 Stay alongside the wall briefly then bear left across the grass towards the gorge. There are impressive views beyond a gate. 15 Return through the gate and resume the gorge circuit, uphill with a wall and fence on your right. 16 The path finally levels off as it reaches a gate. 17 Follow the path parallel to the gorge for a while, then descend steeply to a gate in a wall at the foot of the slope. 18 Go through the gate and continue through the trees beyond, following the sign reading 'Gorge walk/Cheddar via Black Rock 1¼ (3km)'. 19 Follow the winding path then descend steps into a valley. 20 Turn right along a wide track down to the road.

Now follow steps 39–47 of the **Cheddar Gorge (long)** walk (right) to return to Cheddar via the other side of the Gorge.



**Rowberrow Warren** is a woodland complex run by Forestry England.



**Cheddar Gorge** was formed by melt-water unable to enter the underlying caves during periods when they were blocked by permafrost. Britain's oldest complete human skeleton, Cheddar Man, dating from around 7000BC, was found in Gough's Cave.



**King John's Hunting Lodge** (left) is a medieval merchant's house (built around 450 years after King John's death!). Formerly the King's Head pub, it now houses a museum dedicated to exhibits relating to the local geology and history of the Axbridge area from the Neolithic period to World War II.

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Please refer to our website or social media for opening hours and food service times.

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## Axbridge & Shute Shelve Tunnel

4¼ miles: Moderate

Allow 2–3 hours. One steep ascent and descent. May be muddy and slippery in places; livestock likely.

- 1 Walk down the drive to the main road and turn right. 2 Turn immediately right up the lane to the Nethersdale campsite. 3 Keep straight on at the site entrance and pass between two houses. 4 Continue along the drive and take the footpath through the gate into fields beyond the last house. 5 Walk up the valley then through a gate in the fence on your right. 6 Bear left then swing right uphill to a kissing gate at the top of the field. 7 Turn left along Winscombe Drive. 8 Pass a metal barrier and continue past a track on the left. 9 At the bottom of a dip, turn right through a kissing gate and walk up the right-hand side of a field (which may be very muddy). 10 Go through a gate and climb a stony track through woodland. 11 In the field beyond the wood, bear half-right to a kissing gate onto Callow Drive, an old track. 12 Take a few steps to the right then go through another kissing gate on the other side. 13 Cross the field diagonally to a gate in the far right-hand corner. 14 Follow the right-hand field edge to another gate. 15 Skirt left round a thicket then continue downhill along the right-hand side of the field with views over Cheddar Reservoir and the Somerset Levels. 16 Go through a gate on your right and bear left, continuing steeply downhill on a narrow path through the trees. 17 After a wooden kissing gate you meet a track, where you turn right through another gate. 18 Follow the track downhill to a gate and, beyond, look out for a footpath down steps on the left, opposite a door with a postbox marked 'Overlake'. 19 Follow the path down to the A371 opposite the old station. 20 Cross with care, take a few steps to the right, then take an unsignposted path on the left past the end of a basketball court. 21 Go down some steps beyond the corner of the fence and turn right along a walled path. 22 Turn left and walk past the church to the square in the centre of Axbridge. 23 Turn right past King John's Hunting Lodge. 24 Follow the road through the village until you meet the main road again by Compton House. 25 Cross over before the bus stop and follow the NCN26 sign left along the pavement. 26 Turn right up the road signposted to Weston-super-Mare and Bristol. 27 Beyond a driveway on the right, and just before a road sign, turn right onto a narrow path that climbs into the trees then bears left by a small cave, leads up steps and continues to emerge in a car park. 28 Take a short path left from the car park entrance and cross the road onto the Strawberry Line. 29 Follow the former railway for ¼ mile with views over Cross village until you reach the A38. 30 Cross via the traffic island and rejoin the Strawberry Line beyond. 31 Follow the trail for 600m then pass through Shute Shelve tunnel. 32 Continue beyond the tunnel exit for about 250m then, at the end of the cutting, turn right through a gate where a public footpath crosses the trail. 33 Walk up the right-hand side of the field to the A38. 34 Turn left and follow the pavement back to the Sidcot Arms.

## Cheddar Gorge (long)

12¼ miles: Strenuous

Allow 6–7 hours plus time for sightseeing. The paths in the vicinity of Cheddar Gorge are stony and there are unprotected cliff edges. Paths elsewhere may be muddy. Some road walking in the initial stages. Sheep, goats and cattle may be expected.

- 1 Walk down the drive to the main road and turn right. 2 Turn immediately right up the lane signposted to the Nethersdale campsite. 3 Keep straight on at the site entrance and pass between two houses. 4 Continue along the drive and take the footpath through the gate into fields beyond the last house. 5 Walk up the valley then go through a gate in the fence on your right. 6 Bear left then swing right uphill to a kissing gate at the top of the field. 7 Turn left along the tree-lined path (Winscombe Drive). 8 Pass a metal barrier and continue straight ahead past another track on the left. 9 At the bottom of a dip, ignore the crossing path and continue ahead for a short distance before turning left into the track towards Winterhead Hill Farm. 10 Just before the farm, turn right over a stile with a West Mendip Way roundel, by a field gate. 11 Cross the field to a gate in hedge at the top. 12 Follow the hedge beyond, then descend steeply to a footbridge over a stream. 13 Follow the path up the opposite side of the valley, bearing left up the slope initially then right beyond a stile to the road. 14 Take a few steps to the right then cross and climb steps to an elevated path that runs left parallel to the road. 15 Descend to the pavement and follow it past the church into the centre of Shipham village. 16 Turn right by the war memorial and walk up Hollow Road past a bench. 17 Cross the end of Fair Hill (left) and continue uphill. 18 Beyond the end of Top Road (right), follow Barn Pool (right) and pass the end of Glovers Field (right). 19 When you reach the triangular junction with Lippiatt Lane, turn right past the no-through-road sign. 20 Follow the lane uphill for half a mile. 21 At a junction, cross and follow the path down into Rowberrow Warren. 22 At the bottom of the hill, turn left and ford the stream, then turn immediately right with the stream on your right. 23 Follow the stream for a short distance then stay on the path as it starts to climb the left-hand side of the valley. 24 When you meet a wider track, follow it to the right. 25 Cross a track near the end of the wood and continue ahead out of the wood. 26 Follow the track to Tynings Farm and exit through the farmyard. 27 Turn right to the public road; in the field ahead are a collection of Neolithic barrows. 28 Turn left and follow the road for half a mile, passing the Somerset Wildlife Trust's GB Gruffy reserve on the right (an optional detour follows a circular path within the reserve past a couple of cave entrances). 29 Beyond the reserve, turn right into a farm driveway, identified by a cattle grid and a West Mendip Way waymark. 30 Follow the drive to Charterhouse Farm and keep right along a line of conifers. 31 Continue along the track until you meet a crossing path. 32 Turn left through a gate, still following the West Mendip Way. 33 The path runs along the edge of a long field to a gate in the corner leading into

Long Wood. 34 Bear left down the slope into the valley. 35 At the bottom, go through the gate and turn right down the valley. 36 Keep right (signposted 'Cheddar via gorge walk') at the bottom of the Velvet Bottom footpath to Charterhouse, continuing down the valley. 37 Pass a quarry and limekiln. 38 Ignore a flight of steps descending from the right, carrying on down the main track to the road. 39 Cross with care and follow the gorge walk up a rocky path opposite, past a waymark reading 'Draycott 3½'. 40 At the top of the gorge, bear right through a gate with a Gorge Walk roundel as the path finally levels off, then pass a 'Cliff-top Walk' information board. 41 Continue beyond a tall wooden kissing gate and you are rewarded with wide views above the Pinnacles over Cheddar Gorge, the Reservoir and the Somerset Levels. 42 Descend with a fence to your left, generally aiming towards the distant reservoir and ignoring any turnings off to the left. 43 Pass a series of boards describing and illustrating the wildlife and habitats of Cheddar Gorge, and between them the viewpoint of Pulpit Rock on your right. 44 Beyond another tall kissing gate, you reach the Lookout Tower. 45 Take a narrow path on the left that descends by a fence to meet a driveway (Lynch Lane). 46 Turn right down to a T-junction and turn right. 47 Walk down into Cheddar village to the Cheddar Gorge & Caves car park, passing the end of St Andrew's Road on the left. 48 Turn left over the stream and keep left at the mini-roundabout by the Riverside Inn (signposted to Cheddar village and Wells), passing the Cliff Street car park on the left. 49 Stay on the main street past the end of Redcliffe Street to reach the market cross. 50 Cross the A371 and turn left along Church Street, passing the entrance to Sainsbury's on your left. 51 At the church, turn right into Parson's Pen. 52 At the end of the cul-de-sac, follow a path ahead overlooking the school playing fields and turn right along the fenced path. This winds around the school perimeter to return to the main road; the ruined building within the school grounds is the former chapel of St Columbanus. 53 Turn left across the school entrance and past Hanham Manor. 54 At the war memorial, turn left into Station Road. 55 Just after the turning to the tip, turn right into the Valley Line Industrial Park. 56 Before the builder's merchants at the end, take the fenced path on the right. The path winds past industrial and residential buildings to an overbridge then continues towards Cheddar Reservoir. 57 After playing fields and the last of the houses, cross a track leading to the reservoir and continue ahead. 58 After ¼ mile, the trail meets the A371. Turn left and left again along Cheddar Road into Axbridge. 59 After half a mile you reach the central square in Axbridge, with the church on your right. 60 Exit the square along the High Street past the half-timbered King John's Hunting Lodge.

Now follow steps 24–34 of the **Axbridge and Shute Shelve Tunnel** walk (left) for directions back to the Sidcot Arms.