

# Swan Walk 1 Wells - Tor Hill circular walk

-  Feature of Interest
-  Walking Trail
-  Public Toilet
-  Wall / Fence
-  Stream
-  Track
-  Roads
-  Park / Recreation
-  Woodland
-  Farmland



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## Wells - Tor Hill circular walk - 1.8miles long and takes approx. 45 mins.

Includes one steep climb, steps, a stile and possibly livestock at certain times of the year. The red text identifies points of interest to look out for.

Standing on what was the drawbridge, with your back to the beautiful 13<sup>th</sup> century Bishop's Palace, turn right and walk over to the viewing area beside the moat.

1) From here you can see a little window on the side of the gatehouse and if you look carefully you can see the metal bell beneath it that the swans here on the moat have been ringing for food for over 150 years. The large swan floating on her nest on the water, was one of sixty swans here in Wells during 2012, celebrating the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

Walk back past the drawbridge for 150m, keeping the moat on your left. 2) To your right you can catch a glimpse of the bandstand on the recreation ground with the beautiful 15<sup>th</sup> century Bishop's Tithe Barn in the background. Walk straight ahead for 50m until you see 3) a large stone pointing the way to Glastonbury Tor.

This marks the way along a cycle path that finishes at the foot of the Tor. The stone there is marked with three swans, leading you back to Wells. Leaving the moat behind you, walk past the stone, through two adjacent gates and into the Palace Fields ahead of you (a 13<sup>th</sup> century hunting ground favoured by King John for its deer).

As you walk along the tarmac path through two fields and two gates, glance to your right for a lovely view of 4) Glastonbury Tor. Glastonbury and surrounding area is a land steeped in myth and legend and is also thought to be the site of the first Christian church in England. Once through the second gate you will walk downhill a little way to a busy road. Cross over and pass through the kissing gate that greets you at the other side.

Turn sharp left and walk up the hill and through the gate. 5) As you carry on up the hill keep your eyes peeled ahead for a pillbox and make sure to stay to the right of it, heading for the kissing gate. There are many defensive structures along the Mendip Hills left over from the Second World War including pillboxes and tank traps. Once through the kissing gate, cross the track and climb over the stone stile to the left of the gate, then head across the field aiming for the far right corner. Turn right into the grassy track and keep left along the hedgeline for 400m until you see a wooden gate in the distance.

Go through the wooden kissing gate next to the large gate and follow the path for 100m until you emerge from the woods into a field. 6) Walk straight ahead and keep a sharp look out above the tree line for the top of the pinnacles of Wells Cathedral. The path begins to go downhill. Walk through the gate ahead of you into Tor Woods and follow the path and steps down to Tor Lane at the bottom. Areas of the wood have been quarried over the centuries so do take care. 7) You can see a lovely view of the east end of the cathedral from Tor Lane.

Turn left and walk 20m along the track to the busy road. Cross over and walk through the gap to the right of the large gate ahead of you. 8) As you walk along keep an eye out for the mosaic set back in the grass on your left. This tells the story of the dragon that terrorised locals during the 13<sup>th</sup> century (it loved eating children and sheep!). It was slayed by Bishop Jocelyn, but not before it had warned that if it was not honoured every 50 years, it would come back to life. The mosaic was made by local children in 2001 to show the dragon it had been remembered! 9) Now look to your right for a wonderful view of the waterfall, just some of the water emerging from the springs that give wells its name. Keeping the moat on your right, retrace your steps back to the Bishop's Palace.

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