

# A Walk Around Castle Cary & Ansford

**Distance: approx 2 miles – however, for the energetic there are two optional detours, making it closer to 3 miles in all. The short version only is pushchair-friendly, with a few steep inclines.**

Start from the **Market House (1)** Although it may look much older, it was built in 1855 when it was thought that the new railway would bring increased trade to the town.



**DON'T MISS THIS!**

Face the **George Hotel (2)** which is one of Cary's oldest buildings. Look carefully at its walls to see fragments of stone taken from the Norman castle built into the façade.

Turn left and walk up the High Street. Note the buildings on either side with their individual shop fronts. **Pither's Yard** off to the right was once the site of Pither & Son, furniture and cabinet makers and a large employer in the town. Continue up the road to the fine **Methodist Church (3)** on high ground to the right. The present building dates from 1839, 55 years after the first preaching house was secured and John Wesley made the first of five visits to the town.

Opposite the church is **Ochiltree House (4)** built in the early 1820s. John Boyd (horsehair weaver) lived in the house and the name Ochiltree, in Cumnock, Scotland is where he was born. The inscription over the cart passage refers to the foundation of his business in Castle Cary. A plaque commemorates the Macmillan's later occupation and the start, in 1912, of the first cancer relief charity.



**DON'T MISS THIS!**

Continue up the hill, notice a particularly fine Queen Anne façade on the right **The Pines (5)** once belonging to the Donne family. At the top of the hill turn left onto the A371, a little further on, **Cumnock Terrace (6)** 12 dwellings built by John Boyd for his workers and also named after his birthplace.



**DON'T MISS THIS!**

Walk on, past the traffic light to the junction with Ansford Road. On your left is **Ansford House (7)** built in the late 18th century for the Woodforde Family and visited by John Wesley in 1789.

Before turning left down Ansford Road notice the large building on the corner, the former **Ansford Inn (8)**. Now residential, it dates from the 17th century and at one time was probably the best-known inn in Somerset. In his diary, **Parson Woodforde** describes a carnival atmosphere at the Masquerade Ball held here in 1767.

Going down Ansford Road, look out for an oddly shaped building on your right, the old **Turnpike Toll House (9)** used to collect revenue from passing travellers to help towards upkeep of the road.

Turn right at the first junction into Catherine's Close. Follow the path round and enter the **Playing Field (10)** on your right. From this field you can see a Living Cross planted on Lodge Hill to mark the millennium, and on a clear day Glastonbury Tor. Keep to the path and walk to the **children's playground** on your left. The Cary stone building in front of you was originally a silk factory and later used for horsehair weaving. Behind it the imposing building with the dome is Florida House built in 1877 by John Stephens Donne (a rope, twine and webbing manufacturer). It later became a convent and has more recently been unoccupied. At the end of the footpath, you have a choice: for the shorter walk, turn left into Florida Street; for a longer walk, turn right and take Detour No 1.

**Detour No 1 - to Ansford Church**

(about 10 minutes each way)

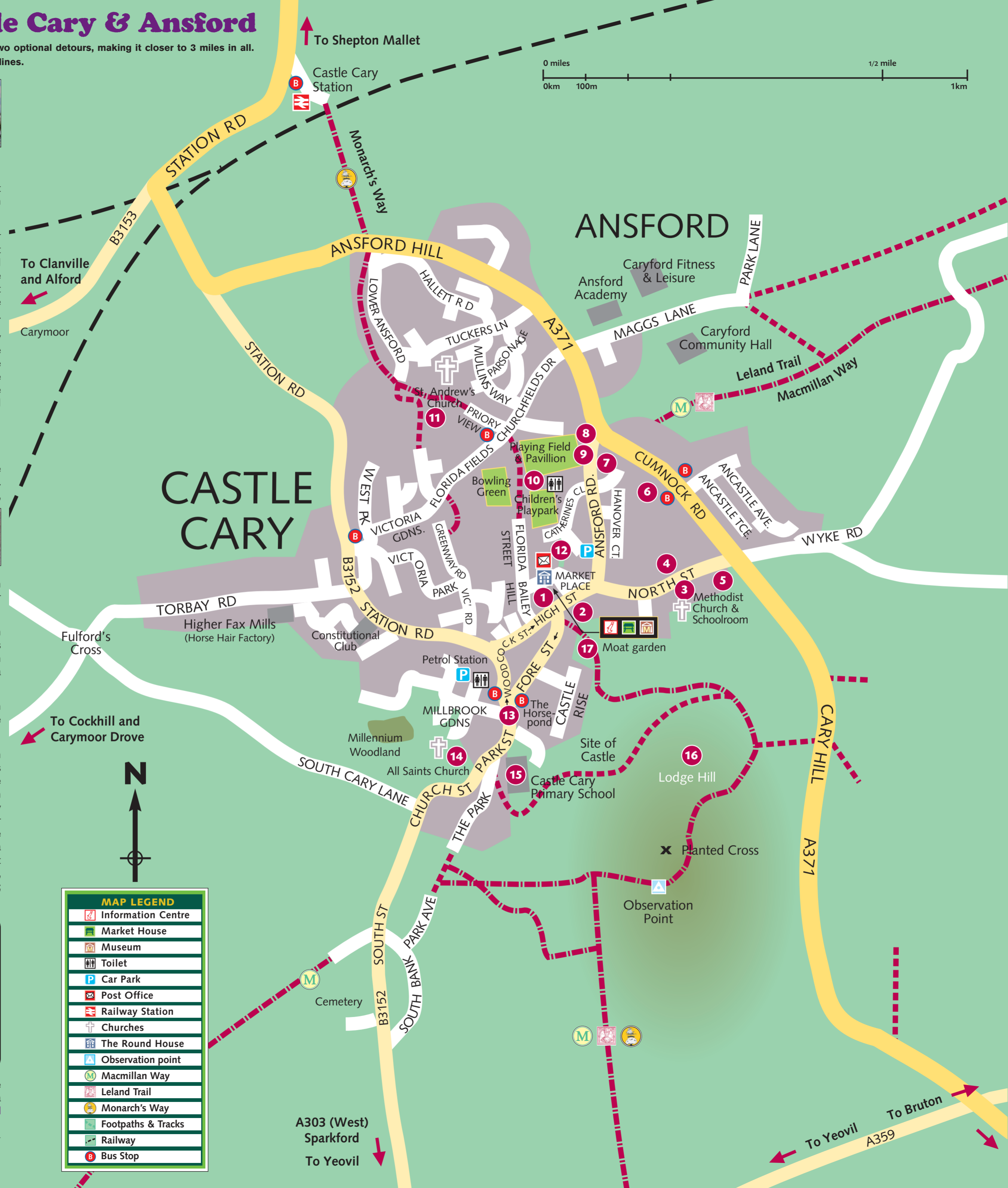
Keep to the path, pass a bowling green on your left and down a short slope to the road, Cross this road and enter **Priory View**. Continue until you see a path leading to **Saint Andrews Church, Ansford (11)** on your right. Visit the church: this is where Parson Woodforde's father was vicar and the family lived in the nearby vicarage. Inside the church notice the 12th century font, and the pulpit which is Jacobean and would have been used by the diarist Parson Woodforde during his time at Ansford. Retrace your steps



Go along Florida Street with its pretty cottages to the top of Bailey Hill. Here you will find the **Post Office**, a fine building dating back to 1767, and the **Round House (12)** – a rare 18th century lock-up. The key can be collected from the butcher and pie-maker's shop, opposite.

**DON'T MISS THIS!**

MAP LEGEND	
	Information Centre
	Market House
	Museum
	Toilet
	Car Park
	Post Office
	Railway Station
	Churches
	The Round House
	Observation point
	Macmillan Way
	Leland Trail
	Monarch's Way
	Footpaths & Tracks
	Railway
	Bus Stop



**DON'T MISS THIS!**

Leave Bailey Hill using the right-hand pavement and turn right into Woodcock Street and then turn left into **Lower Woodcock Street**. On your right you will see a shop called Studio 13. Look carefully for evidence that this shop was previously a public toilet! Ahead of you are the Horse Pond and War Memorial. This area is known as **The Triangle (13)**.



**DON'T MISS THIS!**

The source of the River Cary is a spring rising beneath **Lodge Hill** (just beside the town) and it flows into the Horse Pond. From there it runs westwards through an area off Torbay road where watermills were to be found, and on via Cary Moor, to Somerton Moor and into the man-made King's Sedgemoor Drain.



To the right of the Horse Pond up a small incline is a tiny old building with red doors – this is the old Fire Station.

**DON'T MISS THIS!**

From here you can see the spire of **All Saints Church (14)** Spires of this sort are rare in Somerset and this one was added as part of the remodelling of the church in the 19th century. Enter the churchyard by the first gate you come to, and walk round to the main entrance. Inside much of the stone work belongs to the previous church and there are some fine old memorial slabs in the floor.



**DON'T MISS THIS!**

The path in the churchyard will take you to the **Millennium Wood** planted by the community to mark the year 2000. Here you will find some standing stones – full of fossils. A good place to picnic.

Retrace your steps to the road and head back towards the centre of town.



Cross the road in front of **Castle Cary Primary School (15)** – a Victorian building that still retains the separate entrances for Boys and Girls.

**DON'T MISS THIS!**

If you do not wish to take Detour No 2 up Lodge Hill, follow the pavement past the Horse Pond and up through **Fore Street** with its many shops and back to the Market House.

**Detour No 2 - Up Lodge hill**

(about 50 minutes - can be muddy!)



Here is a second detour for the energetic. With the primary school on your left follow the road up the hill – until it becomes a farm track. Continue along this and after a bend to the left you will see a kissing gate and a finger post signing to the left to the Observation Point. Follow this public foot path straight up the hill and you will see the concrete Observation Point (with its telescope) ahead of you. Go there. On a clear day the views are magnificent.

Leave the Observation Point on the opposite side and follow the path, through a gate and on until you pass a couple of bench seats. With the hedge on your right descend towards the town.

You will pass a large grassy mound on your left. This is the site of the old castle. Continue down and go through the next kissing gate. On your left is the **Moat Garden (17)** with its wild flowers, vegetable patch and picnic benches. Then go down through a narrow passage beside the George Hotel to the Market House.

**The Stones of Castle Cary**

Cary is fortunate to have as its local building material limestones which were deposited in the Jurassic Period over 145 million years ago. The most striking perhaps is the honey-coloured Cary stone which was (and is) quarried at Hadsen about two miles away. You will also find Blue Lias used – a durable bluish slate coloured stone. Both are full of fossil oysters and other marine shells and the different colours of the stones are due to the amounts of iron they contain.

To Wincanton, Templecombe and A303 (East)

To Yeovil A359

To Sparkford A303 (West)

To Bruton