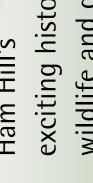




### wildlife and geology exciting history,







## If you need this information in large print, Braille, audio or another language, please contact 01935 462228

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The National Lottery\*

Este documento encontra – se didpaníen portugís, a pedido. Dokument tem jest na yczenie udost pniany w jzyka polskim.

If you would like to join the mailing list to receive South Somerset District Council's Countryside Events leaflet annually, please contact 01935 823617, email hamhill@southsomerset.go.uk or to download the events guide for free visit www.southsomerset.go.uk/countrysideevents

www.visitsouthsomerset.com/hamhill

For more information or if you have any queries about Ham Hill Country Park please contact the Ham Hill Office on 01935 823617, email hamhill@southsomerset.gov.uk or visit

tourism signs from the village of Stoke sub Hamdon.

Ham Hill Country Park is situated approximately 6 miles west of Yeovil, and a monument is clearly visible from the A303. The villages of Montacute, Stoke sub Hamdon and Norton sub Hamdon lie at the foot of the hill. There are brown

# How to get to Ham Hill Country Park:

hed and extremely valuable 'friends' group that support the work nprove, and celebrate Ham Hill Country Park. Every year the Friends r team in organising and running events. They also help to raise funds buntry Park, which fund various things such as part funding a casual nal ranger post and buying equipment for educational activities such

The Friends of Ham Hill

the wildlife, history, geology and rangers of Ha Hill. Find out the answers with clues that are given to you, by investigating, or by reading

Learning & Discovery for All

Ham Hill Country Park

Places and features of Interest

Introduction

# COMPASS TRAILS - There are two compass trails, one located in the stone circle for beginners, and the other located in Witcombe Valley for the more adventurous! This involves using a compass to take bearings, pacing out a given distance and finding

Visit the recreation page on the Ham Hill website to download all of the above activities: www.visitsouthsomerset.com/hamhill

Ham Hill Country Park

A quick guide to

ORIENTEERING - Ham Hill Country Park has a permanent orienteering course – this involves usi a special map with a key to find lots of markers

## Activities all year round

In **Victorian times** (1850 onwards) Ham Hill's quarries developed – getting deeper as technology

Offering superb views across the Somerset countryside, Ham Hill has something for everyone. Large wildflower meadows, peaceful mature woodlands, steeply sloping Iron Age ramparts, and a deserted medieval village all offer fantastic opportunities to explore this unique piece of Somerset countryside. There is an exciting landscape of hilly mounds left from Victorian quarrying on the hill, which makes Ham Hill such an interesting place to come and explore

Curriculum and your school/college project. From the The environment at Ham Hill offers diverse study complete independent research projects. plans, visitor surveys and artefacts to enable you to can offer a range of resou pre–school to sixth form. For higher level students we outdoor, hands on opportunities for your students from habitat studies to erosion and geology – we can offer Iron Age to Victorians (via the Romans!), and wildlife & opportunities that easily link into the National arces such as management

every two months on a Saturday, which is a morning of fun activities just for children. The activities are designed to promote an interest in wildlife, history and the great outdoors. junior "Look Out Club" for children aged 8-12 once The Ham Hill and Yeovil Country Park rangers run

We can provide formal and informal learning opportunities for all groups of all descriptions; from parent & toddler groups and out of school clubs to groups with disabilities, special interest societies and also corporate team building days. There are a range of ways in which everybody can learn and discover more about the fascinating history and wildlife of Ham Hill, either in your own venue or at Ham Hill.

### Rangers

Ham Hill Country Park is managed by a small ranger team and a dedicated group of volunteers. With so many important historical features and habitats within the Country Park, a detailed management plan has been written for the site. As a team we need to make sure that we protect and conserve the geology, archaeology and ecology of Ham Hill, whilst also managing the Country Park for the huge range of visitors it attracts. To find out more about the ranger team go www.visitsouthsomerset.com/hamhill

walk/activity session for your school or join the Look Out Club, or would like to receive a a ranger led talk/ Countryside 823617 or email hamhill@southsomerset.gov.uk by volunteering or by joining the Friends of Ham Hill group, please contact the Ranger's Office on **01935** effectively we need the valuable To manage Ham Hill for the year, copy of our Please use the same contact details if you would like If you are interested in getting more involved either even help out with wildlife surveying or in the busy us lead children's activities, school visits and maybe practical conservation work isn't for you, why not help help conserve your local wildlife and heritage. If old clothes, a sense of humour, and a willingness to are needed; all that is required are enthusiasm, so variety of tasks. No formal qualifications or experience conservation volunteers to help assistance and support of practical Volunteers Ham Hill office! with a



and ditches that follow the natural contours of the land. The ramparts are almost 5km long, and enclose an area of approx 200 acres (about 100 football pitches!) where people used to live during the Iron Age. Archaeological digs in the early 1900s and recent geophysical surveys have produced some evidence for at least two concentrated areas of occupation on Ham Hill. Roundhouses, trackways and field systems divided up the hillfort's plateau. The hillfort was a busy settlement, with its inhabitants farming the land and trading for goods

History

Ham Hill forms part of the **Iron Age hillfort** called Hamdon Hill, the largest of its kind in Great Britain, possibly in Europe! Built between 600BC to 100BC, the earthwork defences (ramparts) are man-made slopes

archaeological evidence has been found relating to the Roman occupation of Ham Hill. The settlements their occupation has left behind remains such as coins, brooches, roof tiles and pottery. Masses of The **Romans invaded** Ham Hill around 55AD,

focused on two sites; a military base out near hamstone villa in the field known as the war memorial and a 19 roomed

The most significant discovery of coins was of 3 full jars of over 2000 coins, which were found in 1882.

the occupation have

Later on, in **medieval times** (12th – 16th century) there was a village in an area just outside the hillfort called Witcombe Valley. The villagers used to farm the slopes, and every year they used to have a fayre near to where the war memorial now stands.

As well as farming, quarrying was one of the key activities that took place on Ham Hill in the medieval era. Many buildings were made from Hamstone from the 10th to 16th century, especially from 1400 - 1530.









### Ham Hill Geology

Ham Hill Country Park is one of the most important geological locations in Somerset. The warm golden Hamstone, a Jurassic shelley limestone, has many special features and is one of the reasons for Ham Hill's exciting

past and it's current habitats. Hamstone is a limestone composed of crushed up fragments of shells and other sea creatures. The fossils found in the rock include ammonites, which date the stone to 170 million years ago - the Jurassic period. Hamstone is golden in colour, because of iron compounds present in the rock. Look out for beautiful crystals formed naturally in the cracks. Visit

the stone circle to see if you can find any fossils and

crystals, but please leave them where they are for other people to see.

There is access to several old quarry faces, which includes a Regionally Important Geological Site (RIGS) and a geological Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). These important designations ensure that the Hamstone

is preserved for many years to come, and allows geologists and palaentologists to study it. All the villages surrounding the hill are made from Hamstone, and it has been quarried for nearly 2000 years. The busiest time for quarrying on Ham Hill was 100 - 150 years ago in Victorian times - it would have been very noisy and dusty up here! The Hamstone is still quarried for use in local buildings and sculptures.

Be safe, plan ahead and follow any signs

Leave gates and property as you find them

**The Countryside Code** 



There are some wonderful woodlands to explore within the Country Park. In early spring, the woodland floors are a sea of yellow when the lesser celandines are the first flowers to emerge, closely followed by primroses, violets and then in April a carpet

Horses Wood is frequented by Greater Spotted woodpeckers due to the amount of dead trees left standing. This wood is situated in the wide, open area known as Witcombe Valley, which is grazed during the summer months to maintain a tussocky grassland habitat where buzzards can be seen by day, and owls by night. This grassland is also home to many green woodpeckers that feed off the many ants nests, and many fungi species thrive in the humid grass tussocks.

Walking along the scrub-edged paths from one area to another offers a chance to glimpse a variety of wildlife species, from the beautiful blackthorn blossom of spring, to the prehistoric looking bracken, and hedgerow plants of summer, followed by the browns

