

**Walk 5**  
**HEWOOD & PARTWAY**  
**Distance: 6.95km/4.32 miles**  
[TVT Walk 5 Map](#)



*Follow in the footsteps of generations of agricultural labourers and the Cistercian monks who founded Forde Abbey in 1148. Until the dissolution of the monasteries under Henry VIII in 1539 the parish of Thorncombe which includes Hewood and Holditch was part of Forde Abbey's extensive landholdings. Knee high wellies are recommended as this walk crosses very boggy ground particularly around the approaches to Hewood.*

*Part of this walk follows The Liberty Trail, a long-distance footpath which commemorates the Monmouth Rebellion. It starts at Lyme Regis where the Duke of Monmouth landed in 1685 with the intention of overthrowing Charles II. As he progressed cross-county local men came forward to join him. Monmouth was defeated at Westonzoyland near Glastonbury and his supporters became fugitives. 48 men from Thorncombe found themselves on the wanted list of whom 32 went to ground. Being absent from home was sufficient grounds for inclusion. Six men were found guilty and sentenced to death by hanging by the notorious Judge Jefferies. The rest were transported to the West Indies as slaves.*

For more information go to: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liberty\\_Trail](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liberty_Trail)

1. With the church behind you turn left down Chard Street. Turn right on to High Street and walk up the hill past the 19<sup>th</sup> century flintstone terrace on your right. Thorncombe's 18<sup>th</sup> century market was on the plot of land occupied by numbers 1-4. This walk starts on the track next to Thomas's Place at the top end of The Terrace. The footpath runs in a straight line until it reaches the top of Gribb View which was built as public housing as part of welfare reforms following World War II during the late 1940s and early 1950s. Many of the houses are still tenanted and managed by the Magna Housing Association.
2. Ignore the kissing gate to your right above the bungalow and go through the gate angled across your left hand side. Having negotiated the gate and stile, keep the hedge to your right and head towards the wood. Climb over the stile into the wood and follow the path ahead until you reach the junction of a muddy track. Turn left and follow the track until you reach another junction. Turn left and head towards the wide opening in the hedge. Go through the opening and cross the middle of the field aiming for the opening in the hedge marked by an oak tree, which takes you on to Horseshoe Road. The path is often obscured by crops.
3. Turn right and walk along the road for a short distance. You will notice a stile and a footpath sign on the left. Climb over the stile and walk across the middle of the field towards the gate in the right hand corner. Again the line of the path is not always obvious. Go through the gate and walk up the track, past a wood on your left and another on your right until you reach a T-junction.
4. At the junction turn left on to Partway. Dating back to the Middle Ages, the road skirts Holditch Manor's medieval deer park and comes out at Headstock Cross. The names of many of Thorncombe's landmarks refer to the sheep which have been reared here for hundreds of years in the parish. Go through the gate on your left and follow the tarmac track crossing a cattle grid. Ahead is Wood Cottage.
5. The footpath runs to the left of the house. Follow it keeping the hedge to your left. Cross the footbridge and climb on to the bank on your left. The going tends to be very wet and muddy here, even in dry weather. Ahead of you is the idyllic hamlet of Hewood which is reached via the boggy footpath which follows the line of the hedge on your left. Artist Lucien Pissarro, son of the French Impressionist Emile Pissarro spent the war years in Hill Cottage, Hewood and died there in 1944 (See also [Lucien Pissarro \(1863-1944\)](#) ).
6. To return to Thorncombe from Hewood across the fields, retrace your footsteps past Hewood Farm on your left and go through the gate next to the last cottage on the right – 3 Hewood. Keeping the wall of Hewood Farm to your left, head for the gateway in the middle of the hedge. Go through it. Ignore the stile on you left and keeping the fence to your left head for the gap in the hedgebank. Notice the holly bush on you right. Holly, an ancient waymarker, often grows by stiles and gateways, marking the boundaries between fields and junctions of footpaths. Head towards the opening in the hedge ahead. Don't go through it, turn sharp left and keeping the hedge to your right head for the gate and follow the grassy path on the other side on to a track. Turn right and follow the track as it curves past the pond on your right until you reach a T-junction.

7. You are back on Partway. Holditch is to the left but you are going to turn right. Follow the track, cross the stream and continue past the ruined cottages, once the home of the Hawker family, whose descendents along with the Welches still live in Thorncombe. Its two oldest families, they can trace their descendants back through the parish records to the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Ahead of you when you reach the junction, are two gates. Take the left hand gate and keeping the hedge of your right follow the footpath skirting the edge of the field until you reach the gate ahead. Go through the gate and walk in a straight line until you reach Horseshoe Road. Forde Abbey is visible through the trees on your left.
8. Cross the road and climb over the stile in front of you. Make your way through two fields.
9. Turn right at the stile. Keeping the hedge on your left follow the path in a straight line until you reach another stile perched on a steep bank. Clamber over the stile and walk in a straight line towards the wood.
10. Shimmy over or through the open fence and follow the track in a straight line. Notice the distance between the hedgebanks, suggesting the survival of a fragment of an old road. Shortly you rejoin the path which leads back to the stile over which you climbed at the beginning of the walk to enter the wood. From when you can retrace your steps to High Street and back to the church.

*EVE HIGGS  
August 2012*