

## **PIRTON CASTLE – A CROOME COURT FOLLY**

Approximately 4.5 miles

**Start.** The walk commences on Kempsey Common at the parking area, Bestman's Lane, Kempsey. Proceed in an easterly direction, passing the two houses on the right and up the sloping track parallel to the fence and hedge, to a high point on the Common where the path divides (straight on or right).

1. Take the right fork (following the hedge line round) and then immediately left away from the hedge. Continue on this narrow path, with fence on your right and the main Common on your left. Go past a fenced off area of trees to a stile in the fence. The path goes left following the edge of the field to the corner where there is a stile.
2. Cross the stile into the field and head diagonally across the centre, to a gate on the far side. Cross the bridge across a ditch.
3. Continue straight on (path indicated) to the far end of a wood and out into a field. The path then continues diagonally right, uphill across a further field. Aim towards the large, single Cedar Tree visible from the top of the hill. Go through a wooded area and out onto the Pirton to Hatfield road. Turn right along the road, passing the junction on your left. On the right hand side, further on and opposite Pool House, you will see a gate into a wooded area.
4. Go through the gate and wooded area to another gate. After going through this gate, walk diagonally left up the slope. You will then have Pirton Pool on your right hand side. Skirt round the end of the pool and go diagonally left up the hill, to cross a large open area of The Old Park, towards a line of trees and a Folly.
5. Go through the gate at the top of the hill and walk along the side of the trees passing the Folly (Pirton Castle) and an area of planted woodland. At the edge of the woodland, the path turns right downhill (Rabbit Bank), with the edge of the woodland on your right, to a gateway into a field, which is usually arable land. Continue walking towards the motorway, along the edge of the field.
6. Turn right on reaching the hedge next to the motorway and continue on a path parallel to the motorway. Go through a field gate into pastureland and continue in the same direction (you will see a farm up the hill to your right). You will reach the farm track. Turn left down the track to a gateway and cattlegrid. Proceed over the cattle grid and in front of Marlbank Cottage onto a narrow road (the tunnel under the motorway will be on your left).
7. Cross over the road and take the bridleway straight ahead, along the side of the motorway, to the next gate. This takes you onto Kempsey Back Common. Bear slightly right across the Common. As you start to go uphill the gorse and brambles close in on both sides to create a pathway.
8. Just after this there is an opening on the left side and you will see a wooden footbridge crossing a ditch. This leads to a stile into a field. Cross the stile and walk straight ahead along the edge of the field, over another stile and along the edge of a small field. Back Common will be on your right on the other side of the fence. As you enter the next small field, notice that you are now walking between two small fields with no

- hedge, a visible reminder that this area was once allotment gardens.  
You will reach a kissing gate back onto Kempsey Common.
9. Turn left and walk down the Common back to the starting point.

**Start.** At this point there is a public parking area. Vehicular access to the Common is prohibited by the Byelaws.

- A. As this is the highest point of the Common the view is spectacular on a clear day. There are views over the village to Malvern in the distance. Abberley Clock Tower can be seen to the northwest. Worcester Cathedral and the city are visible to the north. Bredon Hill lies to the east.
- B. If you look to the south Pirton Pool can be seen. It is surrounded by many old established and magnificent Cedar trees.
- C. Pirton Pool can also be seen from this point. It is now only used for private fishing. Swans can usually be seen and some nest there. There are both resident and visiting duck, geese and other waterbirds.
- D. There are views of Malvern from this high point too. The area to the south of the path on the Pirton side of the ridge was part of the Old Park. Many famous racehorses from the racing stable at Kinnersley were exercised and trained here.
- E. This area is known as The Marlbanks. For many years marl was extracted here. It was used as a firm base for most of the County roads.
- F. This was part of the original village allotments before the motorway was built. The allotments ran east to west and into the area on the other side of the motorway, known as Green Lane.