

WALK – SEVERN WAY and NAPLETON

Approximately 5 miles

Start. At the side of the Church main entrance, the walk turns south.

1. The first gate is within easy site of the Church. The path then continues parallel with the Churchyard railings down a slope across the bridge over the Hatfield Brook. Turn to the right to follow the edge of the river. Go through a kissing gate and continue along the Severn Way path, which follows the edge of the river. At the far corner of the Lower Ham go through the kissing gate. Continue following the Severn Way which here veers slightly right towards the river.
2. Continue along the path until a set of steps up onto the field edge. The Severn Way continues parallel with the river but we go along a path between two fields towards the white house, which is Old Oak Farm.
3. The path runs to the south side of the farmhouse, into Old Road South. Almost immediately opposite this, slightly left, the path continues over a further track passing a house and out onto the main A38. Crossing the A38 the footpath is slightly left. Go straight ahead with the hedge on your right into Draycott Lane. Turn left along the lane. Ignore the first footpath on your right, then turn right at the next sign onto turfed land. Go straight ahead with the hedge on your left and then head towards a large oak tree in the hedge line in front of you. There are mud steps up the bank by the tree. Continue straight on towards an area of small trees and scrub. Keep just to the left of this area and then bear slightly right towards an area of rough grassland and a single ash tree at the top of the hill. From the ash tree bear slightly right towards the end of a hedge line. You will be walking towards the motorway.
4. There is a gap in the fence leading onto a path. Turn left, following the motorway edge. This emerges into a wooded area known as Green Lane, which is part of the Roman Road, and then continues out into Bestman's Lane.
5. Turn left, then right, to continue along the tarmacked Roman Road, passing the junction with Napleton Lane (on your left). Just after Napleton Farm (on your right), the footpath is on the left over a plank bridge and along a fenced path to the side of Napleton House. Continue slightly left down the driveway and into Napleton Lane. Turn right. After a short distance the path bears right along a track at Foxes Hill, between properties and into the Blossom Fields estate. Follow the path keeping the houses on your left, over into Post Office Lane.
6. Go left for about 15 yards and then right, again between properties. The walk follows a headland path, down a slope then left through a gap in the trees, over the Hatfield Brook through a small orchard to a stile. Turn left and then along a banked path to the side of a property. This emerges onto a driveway. Go ahead towards the Surgery and Old Road North. Turn right and continue up Old Road North.
7. The alleyway is opposite the Manor House and leads to the main A38. There is a similar alleyway on the opposite side of the main road, which continues over the main alleyway and out into Rookery Road.
8. Walk down Rookery Road, along Lyf's Lane, over the crossroads into Church Street. You will then reach the starting point again.

Start. The walk starts near the Church where there is some space to park.

- A.** The first gate passes the area which was once used as the Village Pound. This was for impounding straying animals. They were retained and fed, and only returned to the owners after the payment of the appropriate fine. The Bishop's Palace was on the higher part of the field and part of the Churchyard. It was a very important residence in its time. It was occupied by many nobles taking part in local conflicts and also by Royalty on their journeys too.
- B.** The Pixham Ferry was much used to cross the river. There used to be a ferry raft propelled by chains. The Coventry family (Croome Court), as well as owning land on this side of the river, owned much at Callow End and the Old Hills too. This route was used for workers carrying out maintenance and farm workers tending hop yards. Local people used it to visit friends, relatives, patients at Powick Hospital, and on days out such as open day at Madresfield Court. From this point in the walk, the whole range of the Malvern Hills is seen in the west, with the Old Hills in the foreground and Clevelode to the south.
- C.** Where the path turns towards the Old Oak Farm at the riverside there used to be a public house named 'The Oak'. It gave its name to this area of the village. The Oak was used mainly by the people engaged in the river trade, as goods could be loaded and unloaded from the horse-drawn barges here.
- D.** The path crosses Draycott Lane (formerly Sandpits Lane). Sand was dug from the area between the Lane and the main A38. This has now been infilled with soil.
- E.** If you look behind you as you climb the hill you will see the full spread of the Malvern Hills from end to end. The Elizabethan house (through the trees on the right) is The Nash. It is now a wedding venue and there is a Topiary garden. In the 1920's the house boasted its own zoo. At the top of the hill you again have a splendid view of the Malvern Hills and also to the right in the distance the Abberley Hills and clock tower.
- F.** This is part of the Roman Road. Some plum and apple trees can be seen at the end of the wooded area. These and others over the motorway on the back common were all part of the old village allotment area, before the motorway was built.
- G.** On leaving the Roman Road, you are in Napleton, one of the hamlets of the village. Sir Edward Elgar lived for a short time at Napleton Grange. It is thought that he obtained much of the inspiration for his work from that property, and the walks to the river meadows with the Malvern Hills in the background.
- H.** The Hatfield Brook grows larger at this point. Though it is not now as large as it used to be when the old Mill Ponds were situated here. The Mill Cottage and Mill House survive from the Old Mill.
- I.** There is a small track to the side where Rookery Road joins Lyf's Lane. This was part of the Old Salt Road, which went through the village over the river at Pixham Ferry Lane and on to Malvern. The old sewage works was also situated in this area. Until the late 1960s Rookery Road was only an alleyway. Lyf's Lane was named after a Saxon chief. Aston Close was the site of the Aston coach company's depot.

