

CIRCULAR WALKS IN BROCKWORTH PARISH - WALK #4

These two circular walks take you away from the hustle and bustle of the village into the peace and tranquillity of the surrounding countryside, where once the Romans lived. Due to the many stiles, gates and muddy sections, these walks are not suitable for pushchairs or buggies.

The **short walk** is approximately 3.5 miles with a gentle climb up to the Cotswold Way, which may have muddy patches. The decent through the wood is fairly steep in places and may be muddy, but it is not strenuous.

The **longer walk** is approximately 5 miles and more strenuous, ascending to High Brotheridge and the top of Coopers Hill, overlooking the Cheese Rolling slope. Water from springs crosses the paths in places, therefore it may be muddy in these areas.

Both walks take the same route as far as Tile Well on the outward journey and the same homeward route from the Cotswold Way path beneath the Coopers Hill slope.

First section for both walks:

Starting from the Cross Hands Inn turn left onto the old A417 (Birdlip) road and continue to the Roman Village sign. Cross the road and enter the Roman Villa lane, walking past Droys Court farm, still following the lane. To your left, over two fields, are the Witcombe Reservoirs, now used for trout fishing. Well worth a detour (see map) for the variety of birds to be found there and the peaceful surroundings.

Continue along the lane, past the Villa car park, until you arrive at the Roman Village entrance on the left hand side of the lane. There is no charge for entering the site, which is of great archaeological interest and situated in a beautiful position. The Romans used a spring in the wall on the edge of the site as their water supply. A hut has been built over the hot plunge bath and the remains of a mosaic floor in order to preserve them. This is kept locked and only opened on special days. The site goes back to AD250-270, with further alterations in the period AD270-400. Further information can be obtained from Brockworth library.

Shorter walk (3.5 miles): At Tile Well turn right onto the Cotswold Way and follow this undulating track. From the edge of the wood on your right there are fine views of the reservoirs, Great and Little Witcombe, Barrow Wake and Crickley Hill. Continue along the lane to a finger post on the right indicating Cranham & Birdlip. A few yards beyond this is a stile in the fence on your right. Climb over the stile, walking down the field bearing slightly left, to a stile in the fence at the edge of a wood. Follow the path down through the wood eventually arriving in an open field. There may be slippery patches in the wood. Continue downhill, keeping the field boundary on your right, to a stile near the right hand corner of the bottom hedge, where the field is flat. Over the stile turn sharp left and follow the footpath along the hedge on your left to another stile, through land left in its natural state but with the footpath clearly designed, to come out into the Shell garage forecourt, opposite the Cross Hands Inn.

Longer walk (5 miles): At Tile Well continue on the Cotswold Way for a little distance until you come across a fairly well marked footpath on your right. Turn right and follow this path up until you near a road (Sanctuary

Please observe the Country Code:

- *Fasten all gates*
- *Keep dogs under proper control*
- *Take your litter home with you*
- *Guard against starting fires*
- *Keep to public footpaths*
- *Protect wildlife, plants and trees*
- *Avoid damaging fences, hedges or wall.*

Road). Turning right into the woods, follow the path with the road on your left, this path will bear to the right and the left; follow this through Coopers Hill local Nature Reserve. In the nature reserve you will see many unusual wild flowers, and there are remains of gun emplacements and the floors of the wooden huts in which the army personnel were housed during the last war.

Down the footpath you will come to a 'T' junction. This is the Cotswold Way again. Turn right and continue along it until you reach the next junction. Take the upward path to the right, to arrive at the Maypole at the top of Coopers Hill, directly above the Cheese Rolling slop. The view here is across the Severn Vale to May Hill, Forest of Dean, Malvern Hills with the Black Mountains and Clee Hills on a clear day. Nearby are Robinswood Hill and Chosen Hill.

Now take the downward path to the left, curving round to the right near the bottom, to arrive at the base of the cheese rolling slop where the footpath meets the lane and house. Turn right onto the lane. You will see a finger post on your left marked 'Cotswold Way' and 'Brockworth 1'. Walk past this along the lane, with a field on the left. From here are fine views in the Crickley Hill direction. At the end of the field is a stile in the field fence. Climb over this stile and turn sharp left and follow the footpath along the hedge on your left to another stile, through land left in its natural state but with the footpath clearly designed, to come out into the Shell garage forecourt, opposite the Cross Hands Inn.

