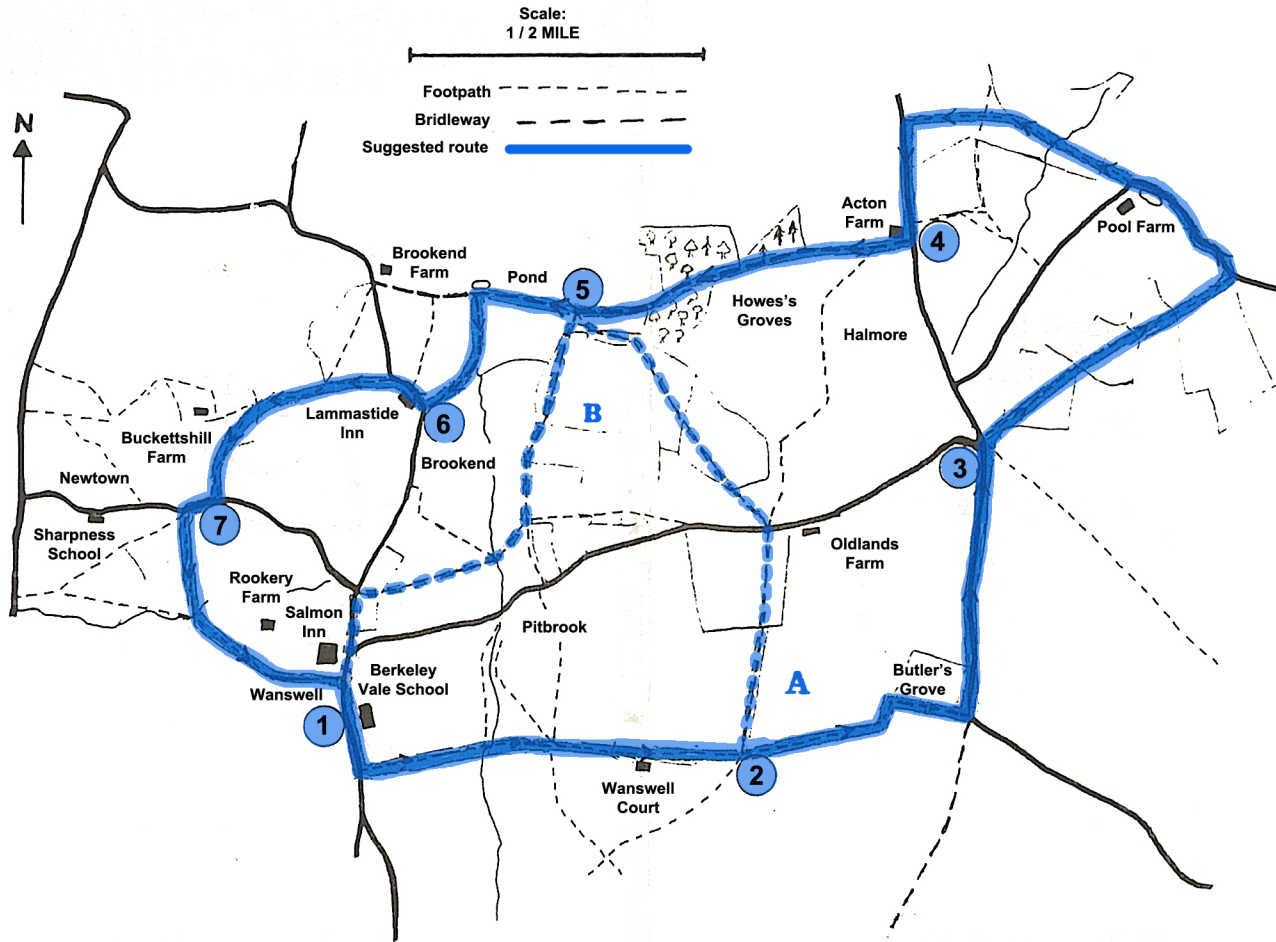


Circular walks in the parishes of Hamfallow Hinton and Berkeley Blue Route



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When walking these routes please remember that all the land you are walking over is working farmland from which local people earn their living. Please observe the Country Code.

1. FASTEN ALL GATES
2. KEEP DOGS UNDER CONTROL
3. TAKE YOUR LITTER HOME
4. GUARD AGAINST STARTING FIRES
5. KEEP TO THE FOOTPATHS
6. PROTECT WILDLIFE, PLANTS AND TREES
7. AVOID DAMAGING FENCES AND HEDGES

This circular route takes you through many spots of wildlife interest, a range of rural landscapes and also past some interesting ancient buildings. The total distance is 5.2 miles, but there are short-cut options A of 3.2 miles and B of 4.5 miles. The walking is easy and the surface is mostly firm but stout footwear is advised especially in wet weather. Start point is Wanswell (1), by the former Berkeley Vale School now known as the Focus School. Alternative start points are Halmore corner (3) and Lammaside Inn (6).

Route Details:

From the Focus School (1) start in the direction of Berkeley and take the tarmac drive with a public footpath sign to the left, just past the School. Follow this drive for about half a mile to Wanswell Court Farm. This drive takes you over a stream down by Penny Grove, a nice piece of woodland bordering the stream, and passes a long line of lime trees on your right, planted in recent years. Where the drive turns to the right at the farm, go straight ahead and through a gate into the remains of an old orchard. To your right is the 16th century moated building of Wanswell Court which has historical connections with Berkeley Castle. The remains of the moat can be seen to the west and south of the building. Proceed to the side of the orchard field, climb over the stile and follow the hedge on your left until you come to a pedestrian gate (2).

(From here the short-cut route A goes across fields to point 5. For this short-cut turn left through the gate and follow the hedge on your right. On the other side of this hedge is a plantation consisting of a fine mix of conifers and broadleaved trees and berry-bearing shrubs, a good site for birds. Go through the next gate and straight ahead to the Wanswell and Halmore road. Cross over the road, go through the gate and diagonally left across the field to a metal field gate. Go through this and bear left over the brow of the hill to a gap in the hedge where there is a gate and a stile. Beyond this gate, go diagonally to the right, aiming for the corner of the far hedge. Over this side of the field you are fairly close to Howe's Grove on the right. This area of ancient woodland has a good variety of species of trees and ground flora and some magnificent specimens of oak trees whose shape is seen to advantage in the winter. Where the field narrows aim for the metal gate in the far right hand corner. Through this gate the path goes over to the Lip Lane, now a bridleway).

For the main route go straight ahead through a field gate at (2) and follow the hedge on your left up to a track which goes left then right past Butler's Grove wood and onto the road. Turn left and follow the road until you come to the road junction near Halmore (3). At this point two footpaths go off to the right across the fields. Take the left one of these two paths, in a north-easterly direction. This path goes in a straight line across the fields at the back of Halmore Farm with its interesting old orchards of cider apples, which are still used locally for brewing scrumpy. The footpath crosses field boundaries by stiles and footbridges and leads out onto Slimbridge. At the road, turn left along to Pool Farm. Where the road turns left, just past the farm, the footpath goes straight ahead through a field gate to the right of a cottage. Cross the field to a squeeze stile and down over the next field to a footbridge crossing the stream over to a narrow field.

Follow up the left side of this field to a gap in the hedge. Go through the gap and straight across the field to the Halmore road. On the road, go left for about 300m to the start of the bridleway on the right by Acton Farm (4).

Follow this bridleway all the way to point (5) at the top of the hill. Lip Lane, as this bridleway is called, runs along the boundary between Hinton and Halmore parishes. The variety of species in the hedge indicates that it is indeed an ancient hedge, as is often the case with boundary lines. On your way you pass a conifer wood on your right and then through to the pleasant mixed woodlands of Oxenbrook and Howe's Grove.

(For short-cut B turn left to point (5) through a metal field gate. Two paths cross this short stretch of field. Take the right hand fork over to a stile in the opposite hedge. The path then continues along the length of the next long narrow field to a field gate. After the gate, aim for a stile near the right hand corner of the field.

Over the stile follow the hedge on your left until you reach a stile on your left. At this point the path goes diagonally to the right, down to a stream. Cross the bridge and carry straight on up the hill and out through two metal field gates to the road near Wanswell.

Turn left onto the road and walk along the pavement back to the Focus School). For the main route continue from (5) down towards Brookend to a pond on your right. Go through the bridle gate by the pond and take the left-hand bridleway which goes in a southerly direction and comes out to the road near the Lammaside Inn, a good place for some refreshment, and turn onto the footpath between the two bungalows. Follow this path downhill through a hand gate to a kissing gate in the right hand corner of the field. Go through the kissing gate and turn left and you come almost immediately to a rather narrow stile. Cross the stile and follow the left hand field edge up towards Bucketts Hill Farm. Over the stile at the top of the hill turn out to the road (7).

Cross the road and turn right on the pavement towards Sharpness for about 90m. At the footpath sign on your left take the left hand footpath through the gate, keeping the hedge on your right until it goes right. At this point continue straight ahead down the hill to a bridge over a stream. Cross over the stream, through a gate and go up the hill, keeping close to the farm track on your left. This track passes close to Rookery Farm, another interesting looking building.

The footpath comes out via a stile onto the road which runs beside the grounds of the Salmon Inn, another good spot for refreshment, and so back to the starting point.