





The trail starts at The Methodist Church, on the Badminton Road (The A432) but can be joined from Downend village and at other places along the way. The route is mainly across livestock free flat surfaced paths, and is easy to walk in all weather conditions. The total length is 5.4Km (3.4 miles)

Please note the Methodist Church car park is private property and closed to the public.

On the street parking can be found nearby.

Downend & Bromley Heath

Downend and Bromley Heath is a new parish formed in 2003. The name Downend was first recorded in 1573 as a hamlet in the parish of Mangotsfield. The parish of Christchurch, Downend was not formed until 1874. Bromley Heath is made up of housing, which grew up following the sale of the Cleeve Hill Estate in 1920, with most of the building taking place from the 1950s to the present day.

Please note the Methodist Church car park is private property and closed to the public.

On the street parking can be found nearby.

*Cleeve Hill House
published in
'Delineations of
Gloucestershire'
by James and
Henry Sargon
Stoner (1825)*

Directions

1. From the church car park, or nearby, turn left, first looking to the right to see the house at 255 Badminton Road, the former lodge to Baugh Farm. After 100m take the footpath on the left into Leap Valley.

2. The Friends of Leap Valley look after this open space for the benefit of wildlife and the local residents. Their regular bird survey reports over 50 species each year. In the spring the wetland looks lovely with marsh marigolds and the woodland is full of bluebells. On a sunny summer day the valley is alive with butterflies.





Take your time walking through here; listen to the birds singing and enjoy the woodland, stream, pond and wetland hidden away in this lovely urban open space.

3. When you reach the gate turn left onto the old bridleway to pass Baugh Farm on your right with the converted barn on your left.

Baugh Farm formerly called Bath Farm, was never part of the Cleeve Hill Estate. Originally a late 16th century longhouse, it was enlarged in the 18th and 19th centuries. Its last 65 acres were sold off to property developers in 1944. The farmhouse became the birthplace of Badminton Road Methodist Church in the 1950s.

4. Bear right and follow the path across the road past the new houses at Bury Hill View. As you meet a tarmac path turn right and immediately left through the horse barrier gate into Bromley Heath Playing Fields. (An easier alternative is to follow the tarmac path and then turn left onto the cycle track).

5. Enjoy this open space that has play and sports facilities, including a Skate Park. Head for the opening in the hedge to the right of the pavilion and climb the steep steps onto the cycle track.

6. Turn left along the cycle track and cross Bromley Heath Road by the traffic lights at Bromley Farm. Formerly Bromley Heath Farm, in the 1650s it ran to 60 acres with 2 houses, one of which was 'ruinous'. Owned by Joseph Beck and his descendants from 1788-1833 and by the Cave family from 1833-1920. In 1944 the Scudamore brothers moved in and ran a market garden there for over 50 years.

7. Walk 100m left along the main road and enter a footpath to the right. At the end of the path take the narrow path to the left and pick up the tarmac path on your left and turn right. Follow the path past a children's play area on your left through to Cleeve Wood Road. Turn right down the hill past Cleeve Wood Lodge to Cleeve Wood Bridge, Cleeve Mill and the River Frome. The river marks the western boundary of the parish.



8. Cleeve Wood Bridge was built about 1880 above a lower level bridge still visible below. Note the iron post, marked 'Turnpike Trust 1823'. John Wallis, who died in 1867, manned the turnpike here for many years. Cleeve Mill, now hidden behind the trees, operated as a mill from at least 1300, originally as a corn mill and then making iron agricultural implements. It ceased operating in 1885 and became a tea garden with boating on the river.

Retrace your steps back up Cleeve Wood Road passing Cleeve Wood House and Clevedale.



9. Cleeve Wood House once had eight acres of woodland skirting the River Frome. Opened to the public in the 1920s, here they could walk, play tennis and visit the refreshment house. Cleeve Wood Lodge became the gardener's cottage. Cleve Dale Court flats further up the road on the left are built on the site of an old house, Clevedale, formerly known as Foyster's Court, which dates back to the 16th Century.

10. Walk in front of the shops, turn left and cross carefully at the traffic lights to turn left onto Bromley Heath Road. Turn right into Heath Walk, left into Heath Road and then right into Heath Court. Follow the narrow path between the walls at the end of the cul de sac, casting a glance back to see Frenchay church spire.

11. At the end of the path walk a few metres to the right to look at the garden wall and roof of the Orangery, remaining from the large mansion called Cleeve Hill, which stood in this area.

Cleve Hill was a mansion house standing between Cleeve Lawns and Cleeve Park Road, with over 40 acres of land attached. Owned by the Player family and their descendants, the Bragges, from 1618-1790. It belonged to the Caves from 1804-1920 and was demolished circa 1930.

Continue straight across the yard of Cleeve Hill Farm and follow the towering boundary wall of Cleeve Hill House until you reach Badminton Road.

From 1731 for over 100 years Cleeve Hill Farm was glebe land for the vicars of Marshfield. The Bridgman family where the Caves' tenants here and bought the farm, with 107 acres, in 1920. Reduced to 75 acres by 1954, a further 56 acres were sold off for development.

12. Turn right until No 75, cross the road and take the pathway in front of Cave Cottages. Cave Cottages were designed by Walter Cave and built in 1875 as tied cottages for Cleeve Hill Estate workers.

13. At the end of Cave Cottages turn right and then immediately left taking the path into George V Playing Fields.



14. Alternatively, you may wish to take an excursion into Downend Village. W G Grace was born here in 1848 and is celebrated in a 'mosaic' on the wall of the Willow Shopping Centre, near the roundabout.

15. Once in the playing fields look right to see Cleeve Lodge, a large three-storey house. Cleeve Lodge was home to Rev Alfred Peache, Downend's first vicar, when its sixteen acres skirted the Westerleigh Road towards the cemetery.

Follow the path left, left again then sharp right to the back of the Cemetery, opened in the 1880s. This path takes you to Westerleigh Road with Downend School, formerly known as Stockwell School, on your left. (Stockwell means 'a spring marked by a stake'.)

16. Turn left past the school, glancing over to the right to see the spire of Mangotsfield church, whose history dates back to the 13th Century, and then take the path to the left which follows the boundary of the school field and playing field through to Sutherland Avenue. Turn right then left into Boscombe Crescent, then left into Westbourne Road, cross over Badminton Road and follow to the right to take you back to the Methodist Church.

