

Downend & Bromley Heath Community Walks

Leap Valley to Winterbourne and back

Start/ Finish:

Leap Valley Conservation Area off Aintree Drive ①

Parking: on-street in Aintree Drive, Beverley Avenue and Badminton Road, or Fouracre Crescent.

Refreshments:

Shops at Flaxpits Lane; Cross Hands Pub on Down Road.

The Walk: 4.5 km (2½ miles) or 6.5km (4 miles); 1 to 2 hours.

A pleasant walk from Leap Valley along country lanes and footpaths. You will go through Moorend, past the 17th Century farmhouse, and the village of Winterbourne, skirting Winterbourne Down and passing by the site of an iron-age hill fort at Bury Hill. Mostly hard surfaces, but some of the route options can be muddy when wet and have a few steps.

1 Start at the Leap Valley children's play area, heading away from Badminton Road (with the bottom of the valley to your left) and follow the footpath through the wooden gate. Turn right and continue until you reach the junction with Church Lane.

2 Turn left into Church Lane and walk between the concrete bollards to cross the cycle path (signposted to Winterbourne). Cross the first bridge - which spans the A4174 Ring Road - and then the second bridge, the M4 motorway bridge. From here you will have good views of the surrounding countryside.

3 Keep walking along this road, passing Cottage Kennels on the right. To your left at a crossroads is Moorend Farmhouse, a fine 17th century building.

4 Head straight over the crossroads (signposted to Winterbourne) and carry on along the road until you reach the bridge over the River Frome. Here you have a choice of route - go to 5 below for the **shorter route** or 6 below for the **longer route**.





Duck Pond, Hicks Common Road

5 For the **shorter route** (parts of which can be quite muddy when wet): Before crossing the bridge turn right, signed Frome Valley Walkway. Walk through the gate and follow the path alongside the River Frome to a bridge over the river. Cross the bridge and continue along the walled path ignoring exits to the left until it exits onto a surfaced road (The Dingle). Follow this road to the right to Down Road and turn right. Then continue as in 11 below.

6 For the **longer route**: Cross the Frome bridge to reach Mill Road. Cross with care to the footway and head up the hill. You may prefer to take an alternative route via Mill Steps which climb up to the right; at the top turn left on to Church Road to return to Mill Road. Continue up Mill Road, crossing the road (take care) from time to time to use the footways, and passing under a railway bridge, until it joins Dragon Road. Bear left into Dragon Road and walk towards Winterbourne centre. Cross to the right side of the road before reaching the end of the road and turn right into Flaxpits Lane.

7 Here there is a range of local shops, including a newsagent, fish and chip shop and bakers; and also Public toilets. Walk to the end of Flaxpits Lane and turn right at duck pond into Hicks Common Road. There are benches at the duck pond and views extend across the river Frome and South Gloucestershire towards Wiltshire. As you continue ahead, to your left you will see Huckford Viaduct built in 1902

and rising 100 feet from the valley floor; this is part of the mainline railway from South Wales to London.

8 Continue along Hicks Common Road to a bridge over the railway. Just before the bridge you have a choice of routes: follow 9 below for the Frome Valley route or go to 10 below for the easier route along the roads.

9 Frome Valley Route: This route is best avoided after heavy rain because the path will be muddy and can be flooded. Turn left, following the signs for Frome Valley Walkway and Huckford Quarry. Follow the footpath to the bottom of the viaduct and cross the bridge to the footpath on the other side of the River Frome. Continue along the footpath until you reach Down Road at Damson's Bridge. Turn left. Then go to 12 below.

10 Road Route: Continue across the rail bridge and down the hill to the junction with Down Road. The Cross Hands pub is on your right here. Turn left into Down Road.

11 Continue along Down Road, crossing the River Frome at Damsons Bridge, which has no footway, so keep a sharp lookout for traffic here.

12 About 100 metres past the bridge turn right into Bury Hill and keep following signs for Cottage Kennels. Turn right at the next junction up Bury Hill and go as far as the bend to the left. Here there is an option to follow a footpath straight ahead over a stone stile and between fences across a field to a gate at the far end. Go through the gate, turn right into Bury Hill and continue as in 14 below.

13 Alternatively, continue along the road. Beyond the bend to the right there are extensive views across to Puckiechurch, Soundwell, Kingswood and Mangotsfield - you should be able to see the domed tower at Cossham Hospital.

14 Shortly before reaching the next junction there is a private drive to your right which has a public footpath which leads to Bury Hill Fort – an iron-age settlement.

15 At the crossroads take the left fork into Church Lane and retrace your steps past Cottage Kennels and across the two road bridges. Having crossed over the cycle path turn right immediately down the bridle path towards the Leap Valley. After around 200 metres you will reach the gate at the end of the valley. Turn left here to return to your start point.

Leap Valley Short Circular Walk

(Start/Finish, Buses and Parking as for main walk)

The Walk: 1.4 km (0.9 miles) around 25 minutes.

A pleasant short walk along the Leap Valley on both sides of Badminton Road on hard surfaces. Start at the Leap Valley play area, heading towards the Badminton Road (with the bottom of the valley to your right), and follow the footpath until you reach Badminton Road.

Cross the road with care diagonally to your right to the signed footpath opposite. Follow the footpath until you reach a small bridge crossing the stream (this will be your return route). Carry on straight ahead and keep walking for 200 metres until you reach another bridge over the stream. Cross here and double back in the direction you have come from. You can choose to walk along the grassy banks of the stream, or keep to the hard surface of Valley Gardens.

Cross the small bridge back over the stream, turn left, and walk back towards Badminton Road. Cross the road to retrace your steps to your start point in Leap Valley Conservation Area.

The publication of these walks was funded by the Downend & Bromley Heath Community Plan Group and the Parish Council. The aim is to encourage people to know their local parks and open spaces better. Download the walks from: www.downendbromleyheath.org or phone the Parish Clerk on 0117 956 7001 for further information.

A 3.4 mile walk around the footpaths of the Parish and walks starting from George V Playing Field can also be found on the website.

For regular, organised Walking to Health walks in this area, see www.southglos.gov.uk/walkingtohealth

