

The Henham Bridge Walk

Approximately 9 km. or 5.5 miles long.

This is a very attractive walk taking in sections of the Frome Valley, the pretty village of Lullington, the valley of the Henhambridge Brook and the lovely stone arch of Henham Bridge itself.

Leave the front door of the Woolpack and turn left into Frome Road. At the stone roundhouse opposite Springmead School, turn right into Stubbs Lane. The first fine view of the Frome Valley occurs as you approach the Beckington Loop sign on your right. At the other side of the lane you are invited by a Polite Notice to join a path to the left. However, the public right of way continues down the drive. Just past the metal clad building on the left take the path on the left between two



gnomes. The path now runs behind a high hedge of Leylandii. At the first field gate climb the stile alongside and then walk diagonally downhill to a gate in the far right-hand field corner. Continue over a stile in the same direction to the gate and stile at the bottom of the slope. Here, walk across the next field to the stile in the far left-hand corner which leads to a fine footbridge over the River Frome. Cross the river and then turn half right to reach a stile at the side of Lullington Lane.

Cross Lullington Lane and the stile on the far side to enter Orchardleigh Park. Here follow the path to the right following the side of a stream. You soon cross the main drive coming down from the gatehouse; continue to follow the stream. In a short distance the path climbs a bank where you turn right to follow a fence on your left-hand side. As the path approaches Lullington it crosses the stream between two gates, to reach the lane into Lullington.

Turn left and walk up a slight hill to join the road from Oldford by a telephone box. Here turn left to the centre of the village. Turn right by the pump, passing the old school on the right and the church on the left. The path now continues through Lullington Court



Farm. Go through a gate then over a metal stile and turn left to walk down a track. Take the gate on your right and follow the hedge line on your left to a plank bridge across a stream with a stile at both ends. Turn right at about 2 o'clock and head across the field to a stile. Follow the hedge on your right all the way around the field until you come to a large gap. Cross into the next field through the gap but keep walking in the same direction, with the hedge now on your left, towards Park Wood

Keeping the stream on your left continue on the path to a fence where you will see a stile on the left. Once over the stile continue to follow the stream on your left and after 50 yards or so you will find a fine stone slab footbridge reached by stiles at either end. Cross the bridge and turn right to follow the field boundary and the stream on your right. You can now see Manor Farm at Laverton in front of you. At the end of the field cross a stile and a farm track, and then go through or squeeze through the right hand side of a metal gate. Walk through this grassy area with a large mound on your left until you see a gate on your left just after the mound. Go into the farmyard and cross the yard going around the left-hand end of the barn immediately in front of you to join a farm track. Go to the right down this track and when you reach the church on

your left enter the churchyard by sliding the top rail of the fence to one side. Walk through the churchyard and leave it by the gate. Do not turn immediately right, but instead join the road from Wolverton and follow it to the right past a stone barn. Enter the yard just after the stone barn and go through the gate on your left. Bear right to another gap and turn left to go through a gate and cross over a stone bridge. You now walk along the track keeping Henhambridge Brook on your right. You do not cross over this brook at any point. Further down the track, you pass through a metal kissing gate. You will eventually come to a bridge over the Henhambridge Brook. This is an extremely attractive stone arch with a fine keystone at the top. It is partly overgrown and the Henhambridge Way, which used to cross it, has now completely disappeared.



Continue to follow the stream still on your right. There are some very attractive places to stop along this stretch, including at the bridge itself, and the whole of this section of the walk is very pleasant. Go over the stile, walk between the fence on your left and the brook on your right until you reach the road between Wolverton and Orchardleigh. Go over the stile and cross the road to go through the kissing gate into a field. Follow the path down into the field to a marker post and then left to another marker post and then left uphill. You are now overlooking the now quite extensive floodplain of the Henhambridge Brook. You will soon see the line of the River Frome ahead of you with the Henhambridge Brook winding across the valley floor towards it.

Go through a gap into a wooded area. The path now follows the top of the river cliff with fine views of the River Frome to the right. Further along the path there is a bench with an impressive view of the weir. Continue along the path to a fence and go over

a stile and head down into the paddock. Walk towards the A36 and at the end of the fence go over the stile to the main gate of the toll-house.

At the A36 turn right and cross Wolverton Bridge with care, using the narrow footpath. On the far side, in the gateway of Shawford Mill, wait for a break in the traffic, and then cross the road. On the far side, walk ahead up Shawford Lane and take the footpath on the left through a kissing gate.

You are now following the other bank of the River Frome, passing an old war-time pillbox. You soon go through a kissing gate into a field where you follow the left-hand hedge which separates you from the river. A second kissing gate leads you to the field below Merfield House. Through the next kissing gate the river begins to diverge, and the path gradually climbs the slope towards a white house to reach yet another kissing gate stile at the side of The Mead. Turn right and follow the road to its junction with the one linking the village of Rode with the A36. Here you can turn left into the village to find refreshment at the Cross Keys. Otherwise turn right and then left into Crooked Lane where you once again follow the Macmillan Way towards Beckington.

Follow the road around to the right and then walk on for some distance until you reach the junction with Parkgate Lane. Across Parkgate Lane is a trackway between hedges with a waymark on the right-hand side. Follow this track until you reach an open field. Follow the left-hand field boundary to another stile and steps leading up to the side of the A36. Turn right and follow the crash barrier to where it terminates. Here you can cross the road with care. On the far side follow the crash barrier back to the left until you reach a finger post where you can descend the embankment again to another stile leading into a field.

Follow the left-hand field boundary to a stile leading to a second field. Ahead and slightly to the right is a third stile in the fence leading to the village sports field. Walk around the playing field

towards the village hall and then along the side of the hall to the car park. Go through the car park and turn right at the entrance. Now follow the road around to the left and walk down Bath Road to arrive back at the Woolpack in the centre of Beckington.

