

Winchcombe Walkers are Welcome



Walk Number 2

Farmcote - Hailes circular walk

A walk with some ascent near the beginning of the walk, from Winchcombe towards the Salt Way. Visiting Farmcote and Hailes Abbey before following the Cotswold Way to Winchcombe. Lovely views of the town, orchards, Vale of Evesham and the countryside.

Distance: 7.5 miles

Duration : 4 hours

Difficulty: Short sections of ascent, rough pasture with some cultivated fields and a fairly level return to Winchcombe.

Start/finish: Back Lane car park, Winchcombe (Grid Ref: 023284)
£1 all day. Toilets 20p in car park.

Refreshments: Hayles Fruit Farm and Winchcombe

Ascent: 580 feet/177 metres



Go through the kissing gate and turn right along a lane for approximately 120 yards, turn left at the finger post opposite a cottage. Go through the gate into the field and bear right towards a tree in the field, keeping the telegraph post on your left, head towards a bridge on the right hand side hedge. Cross the bridge and bear left to a way marker by a large oak tree. Climb the stile and proceed straight ahead to a gap in the field boundary on your right. Go through the gap in the hedge and bear left towards the corner of the fence. Follow the fence to a stile, climb the stile and head uphill keeping to the left of the knoll of the hill. Look for a way marked post on the skyline and upon reaching, look back at the lovely view of Winchcombe and Sudeley valley.

Continue on to a stile, climb stile and follow the fence line on your left uphill towards a gate. Go through the gate and continue straight on keeping the field boundary on your left to a stile. (At this point there is a tendency to follow the farm track towards a gate and leave the path). Climb the

stile and follow the path along the top of the enclosure to another stile. Climb the stile and turn left following the fence to a gate in a drystone wall (044283). Go through gate and continue straight ahead along the field boundary with a wall on your right. Note the landscape now changes from a pastoral valley to a more exposed upland agricultural setting.

After 200 yards a track appears from the left, ignore and continue straight on to a lane. At the lane turn left and follow until you reach a gate/cattle grid next to a sign, Little Farmcote Farm. Turn right along a track towards the farm, here there are lovely views of Hayles Fruit farm and beyond to Evesham. Go through gate and follow the way marked signs between the farm buildings towards a large barn. Before the barn turn left and climb the stile before turning right and following the fence. Views of Farmcote valley start to appear.

Follow the way mark signed path and head slightly uphill to a gate. Go through the gate and continue

Leave Back Lane car park via the far corner access into Cowl Lane. Turn right and follow the road to the High Street. Turn left and carefully cross the main street to the other side. Continue along to Castle Street on your right. Turn right into Castle Street and continue down the narrow footpath to the bridge. This has had engineering work carried out to alleviate any repetition of the 2007 flooding. Continue along the road to a finger post situated on your left between some houses. Follow the footpath to a kissing gate. Go through the kissing gate and bear right diagonally across the field to another kissing gate.

along the path following the contours of the land with a drystone wall on your right.

Eventually you meet a gate, go through the gate and follow the footpath through a wooded area to another gate. Go through the gate into a field and follow the right hand boundary to a stile. Climb the stile and head straight on past a barn and follow the path to a stile by the road. Climb stile and turn left along the road for 25 yards to a finger post. Turn left and climb the stile back into the same field! The road section can be avoided (061278).

Diagonally cross the field towards a clump of trees, aiming for the left of the trees and over a small knoll down to a stile. Climb the stile, past an ancient oak tree and head straight across the field to a stile. Climb the stile and continue straight on towards a house. Here you will see the Malvern Hills coming into view on your left. Climb the stile and bear right uphill towards another stile, climb the stile and up to a gate leading onto a lane. Go through the gate and turn left along the lane past St Faith's Church and Farmcote Herb Garden on your left. Leave the metalled road and follow the track descending slightly with lovely views ahead.

Eventually you will meet the Cotswold Way joining from your right via a stile. From here follow the Cotswold Way way markers. Continue straight on down the track until you reach a metalled road. (Here the road to your left leads to Hayles Fruit Farm approx 200 yards with a farm shop and tearooms for refreshments). Continue straight ahead along the road to Hailes Abbey (ruins) on your left with Hailes Church opposite, which has medieval wall paintings.



Hailes Parish Church

On your left is a finger post, turn left through the gate and head across the field to another gate. Go through the gate along a track to a metalled lane. Turn right and follow the road for approximately 100 yards to a finger post, turn left along a track signposted the Cotswold Way. Continue along the track (ignoring the first footpath on your right after 200 yards) until the track begins to climb. Here there is a junction of footpaths, turn right along a grassy track signposted the Cotswold Way (045298).

After approximately 150 yards bear left by a way marked post, across a field to a stile. Climb the stile and turn left following the field boundary to a kissing gate. Go through the gate and bear right across the field to another kissing gate. Go through the gate and views of Winchcombe start to appear ahead of you. Go straight across the field and over a small bridge, bear right downhill towards a gate. Climb the stile and continue along the track until you reach the main road B4632. Carefully cross the road and turn left along the footpath into Winchcombe.

As you enter the centre of Winchcombe you pass two tearooms displaying "Walkers are Welcome" signs.

Past these you meet North Street and you can either turn right into

North Street or continue ahead into High Street. If you enter North Street, after approximately 250 yards turn left at the cross-roads and Back Lane car park is 100 yards on your left. If you continue along the High Street turn right after Cats Whiskers (hairdressers) into Cowl Lane and follow this to Back Lane car park.

Points of interest.

St. Faith's Church: The nave is early Norman. The pulpit is Late 17th C.

Farmcote Herb Garden: Specialist herb garden growing a wide variety of herbs and chilli peppers.

Hailes Abbey: The Cistercian abbey founded in 1246. The abbey was one of the last religious institutions to acquiesce following the Dissolution Act of 1536.

Hailes Church: Church with medieval wall-paintings.

Hayles Fruit Farm: Commercial orchard, farm shop and tea rooms.

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