

Winchcombe Walkers are Welcome



## Walk Number 3

# Wood carving walk

A circular walk from Winchcombe to the Millennium wood carving on Langley Hill. Ever changing good views of all the surrounding hills, interesting wildlife if you are lucky and the wood carving.

Distance: 4.5 miles /6.5kms

Duration: 2 - 2.5 hours

Difficulty: Steep sections up and down, rough pasture and muddy sections.

Start/finish: Back Lane car park - £1.00 all day Toilets 20p in car park.

Refreshments: none on route

Ascent: 500 feet/150 metres



Millennium Carving

uphill, as views to the Vale of Evesham open up to your right.

When you reach a track, continue straight on through a short muddy section. Ignore the track and gate going down to the right and go through the farm gate ahead. You will soon pass a kissing gate on your right with views to Alderton Hill, but keep straight on along a level path, passing two more marker posts. You are now in rabbit country, and if you are lucky you may also see a fox or a deer if you keep quiet.

Go through a muddy gap, head for a marker post and keep the wooded hillside on your left. Bredon Hill comes in to view and you will pass a marshy patch on your right.

When you reach the next marker post the path splits. Take the left hand path (Gloucestershire Way) to a farm gate, then head towards the next marker post where you take the right hand path and follow the contours past a water tank. The path here is unclear and the field can get very muddy and rutted, so choose the best path up to the top right hand corner of the field where you will find a ladder stile over a stone wall and a small gate with the sign 'Stanley Farm Please keep gate closed'.

Once through the gate you will see a large beech tree on the left with a long, low branch. If you have children with you they will be tempted to sit on it and bounce up and down. With the woods on your left, carry straight on through a narrow rough field, keeping an eye out for

buzzards that often fly out of the woods as you pass. You will soon see the Malvern Hills in the distance, then in front of them, Woolstone Hill and its tiny neighbour Dixon Hill. In the Severn Vale you may be able to pick out Tewkesbury Abbey.

Eventually you come out of the trees and meet a track. Bear slightly right down the track towards a barn. Go through the metal gate to the left of double gates, where you will see another 'Stanley Farm' sign. Follow the wire fence on your left until you reach the wood carving of a shepherd and his dog. The placard on the right hand side reads 'This chainsaw tree carving was commissioned by Stanley Farm on a fallen ash beside the Old Drovers Way to mark the new millennium'.

Retrace your steps, through the gate then up the hill. On your right you will see across to Cleeve Hill, the highest point of the Cotswolds. When you get back to where the tracks meet, take the narrow sunken path uphill between bushes. Keep walking straight on, with a drystone wall on your right. Pass through a gate then keep to the right hand edge of the field until it turns into a clear track. There are very good views of Cleeve Hill from here.

Follow this track straight on through several field boundaries. Eventually you will see a barn ahead, then other tracks crossing. Carry on straight down, past barns on the right. Ignore the bridleway going off to the right and follow the concrete road past the farmhouse. This short section is a private road with public access but it soon meets the tarmac of Harveys Lane. Unfortunately it is all tarmac from here, but the views ahead of Winchcombe and the surrounding hills will take your mind off it!

You will pass Enfield Farm on your left with its pretty cottage garden, before arriving back in the town. Ignore Abbots Leys Road on the left and continue downhill until you reach Langley Road. Turn left, then at the junction carry straight on along Back Lane to the car park.

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Leave Back Lane car park by the road entrance, turn left then right into Barnmeadow Road. At the end of the road turn left into Orchard Road. Go straight on then turn right into Knottes Close. In a few yards you will see a metal kissing gate off to the left, leading into a field. Go through the gate and follow the path straight ahead across two small fields until you reach a stile to the right of some poplar trees.

Climb over the stile, cross the farm track and take the path slightly to your right. This will take you over a ditch and then climb a stile into a pasture. Head straight up the hill to a gate in the hedge. Go through the gate and head straight up again, keeping just to the left of the highest point, to a metal gate in a wire fence. This is a good spot to catch your breath and admire the view behind you.

Continue straight uphill until you meet a good path coming in from the left. This is the Gloucestershire Way and Wychavon Way. Follow this path uphill to a wooden marker post and a metal kissing gate in the top right hand corner of the field. The path takes you diagonally across this rough field. You will see a ruined barn with the sign 'Abbots Leys Farm' then another marker post and a wall. Follow the wall