

Walk 2 – Best of Widcombe Views

Please read the general introductory notes before walking.

Total distance – 6km. 3.7miles. Duration- approx. 2 hours at a moderate pace.

Starting with your back to the front of Bath Spa railway station turn L, pass the bus station and L at the end of the Bus Station. Cross the entrance road to the bus station then turn L and follow the pedestrian route across the bridge over the River Avon.

At the end of the bridge keep straight – under the railway arch – and into the subway. Enjoy the community mural commissioned in August 2021. At the end of the subway turn R. At the top of the slope go straight on and follow the pavement round to the L. Where the path divides fork R and then L up the slope to Holloway until you reach a small chapel (Magdalen Chapel) on the R. Opposite the chapel note the horse trough and read the inscription.

Magdalen Chapel was built in about 1100. At the end of the 12th century a small hospital for lepers was founded close by. The chapel was rebuilt in 1495 followed by further work in the 18th century. The leper hospital became an asylum in the 13th century and was rebuilt in 1761. It is now a private house.

There are two options here:

A) Take the flight of steps 4 metres to the R of the horse trough and follow the path to the R (signposted Alexandra Park Viewpoint). At the top of the steps turn L and walk along the top of Beechen Cliff which gives fine views across the city. Continue along the lower edge of Alexandra Park to where a path joins from the R (approx 20 metres after the third viewpoint above on the R) – ignore this path, it is where option B joins *.

B) Continue up Holloway (which becomes Hayes Place). Where a road joins from the L, cross over towards a flight of steps and turn R (Wellsway will be on the R). This area is known as Bear Flat where there is a selection of shops and places to eat and drink.

Take the second L (Shakespeare Avenue) which leads to Alexandra Park. Once in the park turn L and follow the park road round to the R. At the next R turn go straight ahead. After a few metres you will join the main path along the top of Beechen Cliff at * in option A.

Alexandra Park was opened in 1902 to commemorate the coronation of Edward VII and was named after his wife. This is a lovely spot for a picnic with extensive views across the city. There is a children's play area and toilets (20p coin required).

After approx 100 metres, just past the Lyncombe Hill allotments, turn R through a KG and follow the path on the L downhill across Lyncombe Hill fields.

Lyncombe Hill Fields are managed under licence from the council by the Friends of Lyncombe Hill Fields. Volunteers are working to improve the biodiversity and maintain the wild nature of the fields whilst ensuring there is still public access.

At the end of this path go through the gate and turn L into Greenway Lane to the junction with Lyncombe Hill. Go straight over into Rosemount Lane. At the bottom of Rosemount Lane turn L into Lyncombe Vale, then R onto Prior Park Road. Cross the road and then fork L into Church Street.

In about 100 metres turn R onto a footpath and when it reaches Church Lane, turn R and continue along the lane. At a fork keep L (ignoring the entrance to NT Prior Park Landscape gardens). At the end of Church Lane (by Fishponds Cottage) turn L onto a footpath. Immediately go through a KG on the L. Continue uphill, through another KG and straight through the field with anthills towards a KG in the fence at the top of the slope (beside a small pond on the R). Go through the KG and bear L up a flight of steps. At the top of the steps bear L, stay on the RH path, and continue to a gap in the stone wall – note the Lyncombe and Widcombe Parish stone dated 1894.

Go through the gap and continue along the path with the line of trees on the LH side.

At the next junction of paths turn L through a KG and continue down this path until it joins Widcombe Hill.

Turn L down the hill until you reach Prospect Road. Cross over and take the footpath immediately opposite. Turn L after a KG and follow the path through a second KG on the L. Follow the path downhill and through another KG (with a horse trough close by). Continue down a stepped path to reach a tarmac lane.

On the L – just before the tarmac lane is the Nuttery, a community woodland planted in 2009. On reaching the lane it is well worth a detour to visit Smallcombe Cemetery to the R.

Turn L along this lane and L where it meets Horseshoe Walk. Follow this road down to the canal and turn L along the towpath.

On the left is Widcombe Deep Lock, the second deepest lock in the UK at 5.92 metres deep. This is the lowest stretch of the 57-mile-long Kennet and Avon Canal, designed by John Rennie in 1793.

At the end of the towpath the options are:

A) Turn L and cross over towards the Baptist Church, turn L then R into Widcombe Parade with its selection of independent shops and places to eat or drink. At the end of the Parade turn R and cross the road at the traffic lights. Turn L and then R over the footbridge to the back of the railway station.

B) Turn L over the canal and L to go down a flight of steps to re-join the towpath which passes under the road. Where the canal ends bear L to the main road and continue R along the pavement to the footbridge across the river to the back of the railway station.

Map of the walk

