






These new routes were introduced to mark Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee in 2022. Sadly, Her Majesty has now passed away, so please remember her as you enjoy these walks.

KEY

-  Meadows and Woodlands Walk (Sloping paths, steep in places)
-  Common and Orchard Walk (Fairly flat)
-  Common and Orchard Walk Extension (Steep slopes)
-  Start Point - Shire Way
-  Start Point - Besom Lane
-  Interpretation Boards
-  Viewpoint
-  Other pathways



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Meadows and Woodland Walk

This walk is steep in places and can be slippery after rain. Please wear suitable footwear. The route is shown by orange arrows on the marker posts.

The walk starts at Interpretation Board 1 on Shire Way, which tells you about the many species of plants and insects in the sloping grassland. Cross the railway via the footbridge. Then turn left into the Lower Meadow and follow the diagonal path uphill. How many different species of plant and insect can you spot in this exceptionally rich meadow?

At the top of the slope cross the small bridge, looking down to see the very different plants in one of the deep ditches that drain the meadows. The path then takes you into the Upper Meadow, which is damper than the Lower Meadow and not quite as species rich.

Follow the hedgeline up to the far corner, where you will find Interpretation Board 2 near a seasonal pond. Read about the plants and insects, the Rookery and the different woodland areas.

Now cross the meadow diagonally and walk through the gateway to discover a splendid viewpoint where on a good day you can see:

1) The Black Mountains	2) The Severn Bridge	3) The Forest of Dean
4) Abbotswood	5) The Malvern Hills	6) St Marys Church, Yate
7) The Cotswold Hills	8) Stanshawes Court and Kingsgate Park	
9) Ridge Woods		

Turn back into the Centenary Wood, where work is going on to replant native tree species after Ash Dieback Disease and to establish a Community Wellbeing Area using natural materials and traditional techniques.

Follow the markers through the Wellbeing Area and the rest of the Centenary Wood and bear right through the hedge line. Turn left on to the Upper Path of the Ancient Woodland. This part of the Nature Reserve has been the same shape for hundreds of years.

Turn right at the junction and follow the Lower Path down to the bottom of the wood, where you will emerge onto Wapley Common. From there you can follow the path back over the railway bridge to your starting point on Shire Way.

The Viewpoint



Common and Orchard Walk

This walk is fairly flat, but the grass can be slippery after rain. Please wear suitable footwear. There are seats to rest on along the way. The route is shown by purple arrows on marker posts.



The walk starts at the Besom Lane gate at the “country” end of Wapley Common. Walk through the main gateway and take a look at Interpretation Board 4, which explains the way that the Orchard for the Future is being managed to play host to a range of plants, insects, birds and animals.

Follow the grass path round the Orchard, looking at the Bug Hotels - can you see any insects going in and out? If you are lucky you may see small mammals there too, such as field mice.



Feel free to sample any ripe fruit on the trees, but please just take enough for a snack. The bordering hedge - often full of birdsong - is good for blackberrying.

At the end of the orchard strip, turn right and follow the outside of the Ancient Woodland. Keep a close lookout for bird life - rooks and buzzards (sometimes arguing over territory), magpies and robins.



Interpretation Board 3 tells you more about the woodland birds and plants. Turn right at the Interpretation Board and head into the Picnic Area (There is an optional extension to the walk that takes you round the Western Wood, but there are steeply sloping paths).



From the right hand corner of the Picnic Area you can follow a short but level woodland path that will bring you out onto Wapley Common again. Follow the edge of the Common back to the Besom Lane gate.