

Walk B - Avoncroft Museum and St Michael's Church (4¼ miles full walk / 3¼ miles shorter walk)

This walk provides several unusual angles and it is worth bringing a camera. In summer shoes are adequate but boots are better in winter. There are now no stiles on the main path and just two stiles on the shorter alternative.

Parking is available at the start of the walk and in Shaw Lane (points 6-7). The Navigation and Ewe & Lamb will probably allow walkers to park but please check. There are two Geocaches on this walk.

1. Avoncroft Buildings Museum – From car park turn right along Buntsford Hill. In order to stay off the road you can take the short footpath on the left hand side of the road by the security fence.

2. West Croft Farm – Turn right at footpath sign. Go across yard to gate. Keep to main track through a second gate and then keep to right of hedge/fence. Go through a third gate into a field and then diagonally left to a kissing gate in hedge by edge of museum grounds below the windmill. Follow fenced path and around the perimeter of Wildflower Meadow, conserved by the Museum. Follow the chain link fence on your right as bears right, away from the meadow. Continue to footpath sign on Hanbury Road.

3. Ewe and Lamb – Turn left and left again on signposted and made-up bridleway. Continue straight ahead where it becomes unmade. Cross River Salwarpe and go up drive to Fish House Lane (Bridleway sign). Turn right and right again through gate in brick wall. (Footpath sign)

4. St Michael's Church – The present building dates back to the 12th century with a mixture of Gothic features, Early English, Decorated, Perpendicular and Victorian. Go through the churchyard past the War Memorial and through the lych-gate. Turn left into Hanbury Road.

5. Navigation Inn, Stoke Wharf - Continue to the canal bridge and picnic site on the left hand side over the bridge. Turn right along towpath (downstream). The towpath is not a public right-of-way but walkers are permitted to use it. There are refreshments at the café on the Metal Ores Ind. Estate, open weekdays and Saturday morning).

For shorter walk turn left – see below.

6. Stoke Works, Boat and Railway– For more details of the history see the guide on Walk A and Walk H (John Corbett Way). Plaques outside Corbett Business Park also tell the story of the Works. At this point you can pick up the route for Walk A to Upton Warren for a longer walk. Otherwise cross bridge and turn right along Shaw Lane, passing under two railway bridges (for a shop turn right into Ryefields Road).

7. Shaw Lane – As the road bends to the right continue straight on by footpath sign. Cross the footbridge over the River Salwarpe. The path runs into Brickhouse Lane.

8. Ewe and Lamb – Cross Hanbury Road and go through gate opposite. Take left hand footpath through second gate towards cricket pavilion. Go round pitch and across school driveway. Follow enclosed path to the Redditch Road.

9. Redditch Road – Cross road and turn right. Cross the road again to turn right into Buntsford Hill by the cottage to return to Avoncroft Museum.

AVONCROFT MUSEUM OF BUILDINGS

Avoncroft Museum started in 1963 as an emergency home for just one threatened Fifteenth century building from the town (the Merchants House). It now houses a windmill, chain making works, pre-fab and numerous other buildings. There are often working demonstrations and special events. Open Tuesday to Sunday and weekends only in winter. Check www.avoncroft.org.uk for more information. There is also an Edwardian tearoom, picnic site and shop. Allow 2-3 hours for a visit.

SHORTER WALK FROM AVONCROFT (3¼ miles)

Follow walk to Point 5 – then turn left along towpath (upstream) to Stoke Top Lock (number 28)

10. Thompson’s Bridge – Cross over the canal, either using the bridge or the lock gate. Note one of the now redundant Ordnance Survey Bench marks mounted into the bridge on the opposite bank. These were used as reference points for elevation above sea level. Follow signposted path through four gates, alongside a paddock and into fenced path. Cross the railway into Fish House Lane. (F/P sign)

11. Fish House Lane – Turn right and then left up Buntsford Hill to return to the museum.

Walk B will take about 1½ hours (if combined with A about 2½ hours). Allow 1 hour for the shorter circuit.

Bus Routes

Bus No	Route	Points Served
145 145A	Bromsgrove – Stoke Prior - Droitwich (Mon-Sat)	1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9.

If you encounter any problems please ring Worcestershire County Council-Public Rights of Way Section 01905 768289 or visit http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20237/public_rights_of_way

For Tourist Information ring:

Droitwich Tourist Information Centre 01905 774312

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