

Walk K – Fininstall and Stoke Prior (6¾ miles)

Although the walk starts at Bromsgrove Station it quickly runs into the lovely countryside of Fininstall and Stoke Prior parishes. The Queens Head Pub further along the circuit is a good alternative place to start if you wish to avoid the station. The walk can also link up with Walk E to make a longer 12 mile circuit. Boots are advisable except in driest weather.

Parking is available at the start of the walk in the station car park (pay and display). The Queens Head pub may allow walkers to park but please check. Roadside parking is also possible in Woodgate Road at the southern end of the circuit. There are six Geocaches on this walk.

The walk should take around 2½-3 hours.

1. Bromsgrove Station – Turn right by the Ladybird Inn and Lodge into Fininstall Road and right again into St Godwalds Road by the Fish and Chip shop. Cross the railway at the start of the Lickey Incline – at 1 in 37 the steepest on the mainline in Britain. For many years trains were banked from Bromsgrove by engines such as “Big Bertha”. The housing estate on the right occupies the site of the Wagon Works – once one of Bromsgrove’s largest employers. Rutherford and Scaife were two engineers killed in a boiler explosion. (Their monuments are in Bromsgrove churchyard) Captain Moorsome was the Chief Engineer and advocate of locomotive rather than rope haulage up the bank. McConnel was the Locomotive Superintendent from 1841. Clayton was associated with the Institute which was sited close to the bridge.

2. Bromsgrove Sports Club – Turn right just before the Club entrance along the enclosed track. Continue straight through the remains of kissing gate and housing estate. Note the railway related theme to the road names. Go through another gate onto a path running at the side of playing fields. Cross a footbridge just behind the all-weather pitch and follow path to reach lane.

3. Lower Gambolds Lane – Turn right past Maidsmere Cottage, go through gate and keep straight on to kissing gate. Turn left onto path coming up from Aston Fields and the railway. Go uphill alongside hedge to kissing gate and go diagonally left uphill to gate by field junction. Look back for the views. Cross farm track to second gate onto an enclosed path, with covered reservoir to the right. Go through gate in corner of field and go slightly right to another gate to reach canal and footbridge across the lock.

4. Worcester and Birmingham Canal – Lock 33 (for more information see Walk F). Turn right along the tow path, past the Tardebigge flight bottom lock and the Queens Head canal side pub.

5. Thompsons Bridge - (Bridge 47) turn left through the gap in hedge immediately under the bridge. Bear right along track and through kissing gate. Turn left and aim for the gate at the far left hand corner of the field. Continue straight on keeping the hedge line to your left and go over the ditch crossing with double kissing gate.

6. Footpath Junction – Turn right and keep alongside hedge. Go through left hand of two field gates just before farm buildings. Keep alongside farmhouse fence to gate in corner of field by electricity pole. (F/P sign).

Note: the area around the two field gates gets very muddy in winter/early spring.

7. Whitford Bridge Road – Turn left and keep left at Moorgate Road junction.

8. Orchard Cottage – Turn right at F/P sign; go through gate into garden and cross brick and wooden bridges to exit garden. Cross field slightly left to reach stile by bungalow. Go through Willows garden and continue through driveway gate and turn left across footbridge. Follow enclosed path to Steppingly Cottage.

Note: you can join Walk F to extend the route by continuing along the driveway from Willows to reach Woodgate Road. Turn left onto road, then right over a ditch crossing. Follow Walk E instructions from here.

9. Woodgate – Turn left into Whitford Bridge Road for a second time, then over a stile on right (F/P sign). Follow enclosed path parallel with road to footbridge in hedge.

10. Orchard Farm – Go through kissing gate in field corner and turn right across stone slab ditch crossing. Keep alongside hedge and through two gates. Continue in straight line across next field to footbridge and gate almost at end of opposite hedge. Continue straight along the hedge line on your right to reach roadside kissing gate and ditch crossing.

11. Coalash Lane (F/P sign) – Turn left along lane.

12. Springfields (F/P sign) – Turn left onto enclosed path to stile. Bear left across field to stile in opposite fence close to copse. Still bear slightly left to stile in opposite corner then follow field edge straight on. Turn left to kissing gate in top corner and then half right to tractor track down to metal gate. (F/P sign)

13. Copyholt Lane – Turn right past Oakdene and Yew Tree Farm.

14. Upper Gambolds Junction – Keep straight on past black and white house. Just past Coalash Lane junction turn left through gate (F/P sign) along track through copse. Cross footbridge and go down small bank to ditch crossing virtually opposite.

15. Ditch crossing – Turn right alongside ditch for a few yards then straight to stile in opposite hedge. Keep straight on to another stile in opposite hedge. Continue uphill across next field until gate by cattle trough in hedge is visible. Turn left alongside hedge to barns.

16 Patchett's Farm – Go straight on at the left hand side of barn and towards electricity pole until gate at bottom end of field becomes visible. Go down wooded bank to footbridge and left through gate. Head to kissing gate in top left corner of field. Go through gate up to towpath.

17. Worcester and Birmingham Canal – Cross Bridge 52 and turn left after gate. Turn right after next gate along field edge. Go through gate and down field keeping hedge on right to gate in corner. Fine views of Bromsgrove. Continue straight on past electricity pole to kissing gate. Keep straight on down farm track to reach Upper Gambolds Lane (F/P sign).

18 Finch End House– Turn left into Dusthouse Lane, then right into St Godwalds Road past Primrose Hospice.

19. Bromsgrove Sports Club – Continue as before to the start point.

Further Information:

Bus Routes

Bus No	Route	Points Served
145 145A	Bromsgrove – Stoke Prior - Droitwich (Mon-Sat)	1 – Bromsgrove Station
147	Halesowen - Bromsgrove	1 – Bromsgrove Station
318	Stourbridge - Bromsgrove	1 – Bromsgrove Station
43	Redditch – Finstall – Bromsgrove	1 – Bromsgrove Station
42	Redditch - Bromsgrove - Kidderminster	1 – Bromsgrove Station

For times contact Traveline: 0871 200 22 33 www.traveline.info

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

Redditch Tourist Information Centre 01527 60806

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