



Leckhampton and Coberley

This moderate walk begins and ends with panoramic views; in between it visits tranquil countryside by way of good footpaths and quiet lanes

Essential Facts

- Route distance: 14.6 km (9.1 miles)
- Approximate time: 4 hours
- Approx. total ascent: 220 metres
- Start point Grid Ref: SO 950 179
- GPS Ref: SO 95062 17947
- Recommended O.S. Map: Explorer 179
- Toughness Rating: Cotswolds 1

Please see the notes on Toughness Ratings at the end of this report

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Full Info from the Great Walks web site

THE ROUTE

This walk starts from the signed car park at Leckhampton Hill, on a minor road south from Cheltenham. Go through the gate of the car park, **S**, and take the track to the right, towards Hill Farm. Follow the same track as it wends its way through the fields. Then head towards the trig point, **A**. From here take the path down into the quarried area below. The Devil's Chimney is just to the left here. Carry on in this direction, ascending back to join the Cotswold Way.

Follow the Cotswold Way to a minor road, where turn left, uphill. At the top of the hill turn right at **B**, still on the Cotswold Way. The path initially runs close to the trees on the right.

On meeting another minor road go left, past the golf club. Carefully cross the main road and take the track (not the road) ahead. The track climbs through the Woodland Trust property of Barber Wood. What was a largely open area is being planted with mixed broadleaved trees to create a new woodland.

Turn left down the track to Rushwood Kennels **C** and descend the valley. Turn left onto a grassy track immediately before a gate and stile. The path now contours above the pleasant small valley of Coldwell Bottom. The track meets the road at a fork, **D** – take the right-hand option and at the next bend carry on straight ahead on a track then swiftly left, on the Gloucestershire Way. The path now descends into a delightful small valley, with ducks dabbling in the stream, before arriving in Coberley.

Just to the right is the village cross. Continue down this road. The church is signed off to the right, through an archway and a farmyard, but our route goes off to the right **E** just a little further on, still on the Gloucestershire Way. Past a pool, bear half left to an obscure stile in the hedge. Carefully cross the busy road.

The path now crosses a field and passes through a wood to bring you to Upper Coberley. Turn left along the road. Turn left at a junction, **F**. Part company with the Gloucestershire Way when it departs to the right, instead continue on the road until a track signed as a "Restricted Byway" angles off to the right at **G**.

Cross the main road at a pelican crossing and take the minor road that goes off just to the right **H**, signed for the Cotswold Way. Follow the signs for the Way onto a path straight ahead when the road bends left, and again to turn sharp left, uphill. The path now becomes a high level promenade on the edge of the scarp, with panoramic views of Cheltenham and beyond.

Follow the path until you come to a pedestrian gate on the left **I**. The path leads off to the left of an infilled quarry, to go back to your starting point at the car park, **S**.



The Devil's Chimney



Coberley Cross

Refreshment

Seven Springs Public House Seven Springs Tel: 01242 870219 Family-oriented pub with restaurant and duck pond	The Air Balloon Public House & Restaurant Crickley Hill, Birdlip Tel: 01452 862541 Restaurant-oriented pub with garden and play area
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LOCAL INFO

Leckhampton Hill has been designated a site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) because of its calcareous grassland. It provides spectacular views over Cheltenham, the Vale of Evesham and Severn Vale. There is much evidence of quarrying and it was the quarrymen who left us the Devil's Chimney. Climbing on the Chimney is now strictly forbidden, and it is such a landmark that a considerable sum has been spent on repairs.

St Giles' church in **Coberley** is the church in a farmyard. Approached through large doors in an archway, this alone makes it intriguing. There are some interesting effigies of Sir Thomas Berkeley, who fought at Crecy and his wife Joan who later remarried and became Dick Whittington's mother. There is a rare heart burial memorial to Sir Giles de Berkeley, whose horse is buried in the churchyard.

LECKHAMPTON AND COBERLEY G.P.S. WAYPOINTS

WAYPOINT NAME	MAP REF	CO-ORDINATES	ELEVATION: Metres
LEK S	S	SO 95062 17947	284
LEK A	A	SO 94771 18443	266
LEK B	B	SO 94946 17767	277
LEK C	C	SO 93970 15576	277
LEK D	D	SO 95870 15614	222
LEK E	E	SO 96551 15948	192
LEK F	F	SO 98097 16016	269
LEK G	G	SO 97466 16565	258
LEK H	H	SO 96817 17112	219
LEK I	I	SO 95207 18507	289

MAP LEGEND					
	Great Walks route		Church with tower		Spot height - metres
	M6 Motorway		Church with spire		Information centre
	A23 Main road		Other place of worship		Parking
	B2116 Secondary road		Cathedral / Abbey		Public convenience
	Minor road		Building		Public house
	Other road		Built up area		Picnic site
	Track		Woodland		Camp site
	Footpath		Sand, shingle or mud		Major tourist feature
	Bridleway		Water feature		Other tourist feature
	National trail				
	Railway				

Safety First

Safety should always be your first priority in planning and undertaking a walk, whether on your own or leading a group. Please read these Safety First and Walking Our Routes notes.

Lead a group of other walkers only if you have leadership and navigational experience adequate for the 'worst case' conditions which may be encountered on the particular walk, bearing in mind the terrain, possible weather and navigational demands.

Weigh up the capabilities of your party, in terms of fitness and walking speed. Adjust your time expectations accordingly.

Ensure all your party are adequately clothed for the weather and conditions. Footwear is particularly important. Clothing must protect against cold, wet or strong sun according to the time of year.

Emergencies are quite rare, but it is essential to think ahead about what to do if someone in your party sustains an injury. Will you have a First Aid kit? Is there a qualified First Aider in the party? How could help be summoned in a serious eventuality?

Refreshment, particularly water, can be vital. Dehydration in hot summer conditions can be rapid, and frequent intake of fluids is essential.

On tougher walks it is a good idea to tell someone where you are planning to go – and when you expect to be back. Remember - mobile phones often lose reception in mountainous or isolated areas.

All our walks use legitimate routes: Public Rights of Way, Public Footpaths, Bridleways, Permissive Paths, Access Land, Byways and Roads.

Road walking calls for particular care. When there is no defined footpath or verge wide enough for safe walking it is usually best to walk on the right – facing oncoming traffic. An exception may be a tight bend, where walkers would be more visible on the left.

Occasionally you may find a public footpath blocked or unuseable. It is perfectly in order to take the shortest available diversion without damaging crops, perhaps around a field margin.

It is courteous to close gates after passing through, sometimes even if the gate was open when you arrived – particularly if it is obvious livestock may escape.

Mutual respect for farm animals is to be encouraged! Don't frighten or annoy them, but equally don't put your party members in danger or discomfort. You certainly wouldn't be the first walkers to go round the outside of a field of frisky bullocks.

Dogs should always be kept on a lead anywhere near farm animals, and under close supervision elsewhere in the countryside.

Walking Our Routes

Our walks are designed to be negotiated using the route directions in conjunction with the map section provided. We suggest walkers also take the Ordnance Survey Explorer or Outdoor Leisure map recommended for each walk.

On mountain, moorland and open heathland walks it is **ESSENTIAL** to have navigational expertise and tools, including the recommended Ordnance Survey map(s).

Take care to observe any cautions in the route description; exposed paths, areas liable to flooding etc.

Consider conditions before setting off. Will heavy rain have made a water meadow impassable? Will frost or snow make a path slippery?

When navigating the route look for clues to confirm you are in the right place. Are map features where you would expect on the ground? Are features mentioned in the text where expected? If you suspect you may have taken a wrong turn, take action sooner rather than later. It is better to re-trace to a known point rather than carry on regardless with the possibility of becoming increasingly confused.

All our routes are carefully checked before publication, but features can change on the ground – sometimes surprisingly quickly. Footpaths may be re-routed, buildings can appear or change significantly and these days pub names seem to change frequently.

The approximate time given for each walk is based on an average walking speed of 2.5 miles per hour (4 km/hour), plus an allowance for ascent, descent and any difficult terrain.

Total ascent is the approximate total ascent over the whole walk.

GPS users can enter in the waypoints provided in each of our walk reports. It is important to read our guide **Introducing GPS for Walkers**, available as a PDF file from the Great Walks in Britain web site.

Remember that GPS is a great navigational tool, but only one of those available to the navigator. Never dispense with conventional map and compass – and the training and skills to use them, especially on mountain, moorland or open heathland walks.

TOUGHNESS RATINGS

All our **Cotswolds** routes can be undertaken by reasonably fit walkers able to utilise our map segments, together with the route guidance notes. Always consider recent and forecast weather.

Each walk has been allocated a **Toughness Rating**:

1. Easier walks with modest ascent and generally on well defined paths. There may be stiles or narrow gateways to negotiate.
2. Routes which are more demanding. They may include more ascent and possibly paths which are looser or more difficult underfoot.
3. More strenuous walks with some steep sections, higher paths or places which may be wet and boggy.
4. The most demanding walks in this edition. There may be prolonged steep ascents. Conditions may be challenging underfoot.

Toughness Ratings are allocated in the context of the terrain in the edition area. For example a walk rated as demanding in Cambridgeshire may be equivalent to an easier or moderate route on Dartmoor,