

### Walk 3: Circular walk with various access points

4.5 miles, 7.3 km (6.5 miles, 10.3 km if you begin your walk at Worcester Parkway station).



W.P. = Worcester Parkway station

### **If you are starting from Worcester Parkway station:**

Cross the B4084 from Worcester Parkway station and turn left, towards Worcester. Turn right down the lane that leads away from the road just before the railway bridge. Walk along the lane towards Mucknell Abbey, (marked Mucknell Farm on the map). At its end, bypass or cross the cattle grid and follow the bridle way signs that skirt below the Abbey, to its left. Ignore all crossing paths (which belong to the Abbey) and continue gently uphill till you reach a five-barred gate leading into the corner of a large field. **You have now arrived at access point A on the map**, ready to start the circular walk. It is approximately one mile from the station to access point A

1. Go through the gate and continue walking in the same direction, heading down the field, (which at times can be quite muddy and overgrown) keeping the hedge on your left-hand side. At the bottom, take the footbridge over the stream.
2. After the bridge keep walking for a few more yards, until you reach a broad, grassy path. Ignore the path continuing diagonally up the hill and turn left onto the track that crosses your path.
3. Follow this clear, wide track as it sweeps round the field, passing by some trees and up the hill. Eventually, you will have the hedge on your left and a mound on your right.
4. Veer to the left as you leave this field, and keep going. You will see a blue bridle way waymark on a post ahead of you. Keep going in the same direction, with the hedge on your right, along a track which becomes a narrower path in the corner of the field (in summer when the grass is high it's hard to see), passing between some trees, and then some buildings on your left, until you meet the busy A44.
5. Cross the road, turn right, and walk along the grass verge beside the road. After about 100 yards, you could take the option to go through the gate on your left and follow the footpath across a field, turning right as it meets another footpath. However, there are often cattle grazing in these fields, and you might prefer to continue along the side of the road for this short distance.
6. When you pass (or meet) the turning from White Ladies Aston, cross back to the other side of the A44, as this part of the verge becomes much wider and makes easier walking.

7. Take the footpath just past the last cottage, Jasmine Cottage, on your right, going through the gate and keeping walking straight ahead, with the paddock fence on your left.
8. Go through the gate at the far side and cross the footbridge. Keep going in the same direction, following the path that leads across the field ahead of you.
9. At the far side of this field, go through the gap in the hedge ahead of you and immediately turn left, and walk up the side of the field, keeping the hedge on your left, as the path sweeps round to the right.
10. Keep as far towards the right as you can, and head towards the buildings, coming out into a lane by Kit's Kitchen. Turn left here. At the T junction take the bridle way directly ahead of you. Follow the track around the edge of the orchard, round a right-hand bend and continue to follow the path as it turns left when it meets the field, known locally as 'Stoney Furlong'. Here the track becomes grass-covered. Follow this path, alongside the field, keeping the hedge on your left and the field to your right. If you are walking in springtime, you should be able to hear skylarks singing above this field. This path also gives you excellent views of the countryside around.
11. Continue along this path, and at the edge of the hedge on your left, past a large ash tree, head slightly right, on a narrower path, across an open field, until it takes you back over the railway at the far side of the field.
12. Go through the gate on the other side of the bridge, and immediately turn right. Walk down here, parallel with the railway, and step over the low fence at the bottom.
13. When you are level with the footpath that crosses the railway from your right, turn left and cross the field diagonally to your right. This path, not clearly marked, leads from the oak tree to the gap in the hedge on the other side of the field. (If walking across here is too difficult, depending on time of year and crops, it is quite possible to walk around the edge of the field here).
14. Cross the next field between the double row of horse fences and cross the footbridge on the far side.
15. Immediately turn left and follow the edge of the field, keeping the ditch on your left-hand side.
16. After a short distance, at the corner of the field you will see a gate which leads into a newly-planted woodland. **You have now reached access**

**point B on the map.** Don't go into the woodland, but turn right here and head up the hill towards the village of Stoulton.

17. Ignore the field entrance to your left at the top of the hill, but take the next left, along a broad path, known as Parker's Lane.
18. Follow this green lane all the way to the end, to where it meets Church Lane. Turn right here. **This is access point C on your map.** Turn right here. Do take time to walk along Church Lane and view the historic houses. Take time, too, to visit St. Edmund's Church, which contains information about the history of the church and village.
19. After visiting the church, keep going down Church Lane, with the Old Vicarage on your left, continuing along the rough road leading to a gateway and footpath which then leads into a field. Carry on in the same direction straight across the field to the other side. From this path, you will be able to have a good view of Bredon Hill to your right. At the far side of the field, turn left, and walk up towards a waymarked post (which may be invisible at first if the crop has grown up high).
20. At the post, turn to your right and follow the path diagonally down the hill towards the railway bridge. This railway is the mainline from London to Hereford. Pass under the bridge, through the gate, and across the next field. A wooden footbridge (previously a traditional stone, hump-backed, pack-horse bridge) will now take you across the stream. If you look under the wooden bridge, you should be able to see the old stone supports for the previous bridge.



21. Carry straight on, following the indistinct grassy track up the side of the field, keeping the hedge on your right, heading towards a line of poplars at the top, (which you will only be able to see when you have gone round the first right-handed bend). From this path, if you look to your left, you can see Mucknell Abbey, and, behind it a wind turbine, which belongs to the owner of the land beyond the Abbey. When you reach the top of the field, you should be able to have a lovely view across the countryside

towards the Malvern Hills. Looking back, you can also see Stoulton Church from this vantage point.

22. At the top of this field is a way mark pointing straight ahead. Follow this rather indistinct way, between rows of trees, to the opposite side of the apple orchard, where you will meet a gravelly (and sometimes muddy) track.
23. Turn left here, and left again after about 30 yards. Walk along this lane, with a farm on your left-hand side. Don't be put off if the gate is closed across the lane; it is there to put off motorists, not walkers, and you are on a public right of way. As you follow the track through the field ahead of you, look out for the path that leads diagonally to your left across the field between the crops. Take this path and cross this field as the path leads down to the far side.
24. At the far side, you will meet a broad, grassy track. Turn left here and continue walking down the side of the field to the bottom.
25. Look out for the track that leaves the field in the bottom corner. Turn right here.
26. After about 50 yards, turn left over a foot bridge and along a very narrow path that leads through vegetation into the next field. Keep walking in the same direction, keeping the hedge to your right-hand side, and following the edge of the field as it turns a sharp right-angled bend to the right. Keep walking up the side of the field. Ahead of you is Mucknell Abbey. It is also possible to spot hares in this field.
27. Go through the gap on your right at the far end, and continue walking in the same direction, this time with the hedge on your left-hand side. When you arrive at the corner of the field, you have reached **access point A**. If you began the circular route here, go through the gate to your left, and follow the bridle way, and beyond that the lane that leads back to the B4084 and Worcester Parkway station.