

The Crabmill Canal and Country Trail, Warwickshire



Moderate Terrain

3.5 miles
Circular
1.5 hours

280319



The Crabmill makes the perfect spot for refreshments before or after your walk.

A 3.5 mile circular pub walk from The Crabmill in Preston Bagot, Warwickshire. The walking route joins a stretch of the Stratford-upon-Avon Canal towpath with beautiful old narrow locks, canal boats and wildlife to enjoy. After crossing a small aqueduct, the route leads you through pastures and along tree-lined bridledways to reach a pretty old ford. The final stretch takes in the imposing hilltop Preston Bagot Church.

Getting there

The Crabmill is located on the A4189, about 1.5 miles west of Claverdon and 1.5 miles east of Henley-in-Arden. The pub has its own car park.

Approximate post code **B95 5EE**.

Walk Sections



Start to Canal Towpath



Standing in front of The Crabmill facing the road, turn left to join the pavement alongside the A4189. Ignore the first left-hand side road (signed to Preston Bagot), instead continue on the A4189 pavement and take the next left-hand side road.

This road leads you past Preston Bagot Manor on your left. Preston Bagot Manor House is thought to date from the 1550s and was once home to the Earl of Warwick. You will notice the building is constructed with a timber frame, with beautiful herringbone red-brick infilling.

Stay with the road as it leads you over the canal bridge and, just a few metres later, turn left through a kissing gate to reach the canal towpath at Preston Bagot Bottom Lock (Lock 38).

Access Notes



1. The route includes several steady gradients but there are no steep sections.
2. Whilst many of the paths are firm, some bridledways can be churned, a couple of fields can be boggy and the ford-side path can flood after periods of heavy rain. With this in mind, good boots are a must (or wellies in the winter months).
3. You will need to negotiate several gates and kissing gates plus one stile (this has a gap for small dogs but larger dogs will need to climb over or be lifted).
4. You are likely to encounter sheep in a few of the pastures.
5. There are a few short stretches of road walking along country lanes, but the traffic is normally very light.

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1 → 2 Canal Towpath to Bucket Lock



Follow the canal towpath with the canal running on your left. The Stratford-upon-Avon Canal was built between 1793 and 1816 and is about 25 miles long. You will soon pass Lock 37 and then reach a small footbridge (Bridge 46). At this point the towpath swaps sides of the canal, so turn left over the bridge and then turn right to continue on the towpath, passing Lock 36 and continuing with the canal on your right. Continue on this same towpath for about 800 metres, passing Bridge 45 and Lock 35 and continuing on to reach Bridge 44, which sits alongside Bucket Lock (Lock 34) and Bucket Lock Cottage.

2 → 3 Bucket Lock to North Rookery



Pass Bucket Lock on your right and immediately afterwards the towpath leads you over Kingswood Brook via the small Yarningdale Aqueduct. You will have the canal on your right (held within the aqueduct channel structure) and the brook visible below to your left. The aqueduct was originally built from timber for the canal opening in 1816. The current cast iron aqueduct was built in 1834 to replace the original wooden structure which was washed away when the stream flooded that year.

Immediately after this small aqueduct, turn left down a flight of steps. Ignore a stile to your left, instead keep ahead on the field-edge path with an overgrown fence on your left. This path can become boggy – but it doesn't last for long. Cross the stile ahead to enter a pasture (which may be holding sheep). Walk straight ahead following the left-hand boundary and climbing steadily. In the top left-hand corner exit via a small metal gate and turn right along a grass track to reach a farm gate ahead.

Pass through the small gate set within the farm gate to enter the next sheep pasture. With your back to the gate, cross the pasture at about 11 o'clock. Head for a point between an overgrown old brick shelter and a small timber and iron shelter. Exit the field via the small gate to reach the lane. Turn right along the lane, passing Middle Rookery on your right and then passing another large red brick property behind a hedge (North Rookery) on your left. Immediately after the house, turn left onto the entrance driveway for North Rookery (there is a grass triangle with a tree and waymarker post at this entrance drive).

3 → 4 North Rookery to Ford



Follow the driveway through the first gateway and then fork right to join a paved track which leads you towards a black gate. Do NOT go through the gate, instead fork right onto a grass path, staying directly alongside the hedge on your right. Stay with this bridleway path (which can be muddy in parts) as it leads you through a tunnel of trees. Pass through a gate ahead to enter a sheep pasture and walk ahead, still following a tree-lined path.

Exit via the next gate and continue on the enclosed tree-lined track. The track leads you ahead and then bends left, leading downhill and emerging to a junction with Henley Road. Turn left along the road for about 350 metres to reach a fork by a Ford sign, alongside Willowbrook Barn. Fork left to join the stone track (waymarked as an unclassified country road), passing the barn on your left. This pretty stone track leads you to a ford where a stream crosses your track.

4 → 5 Ford to Preston Bagot Church

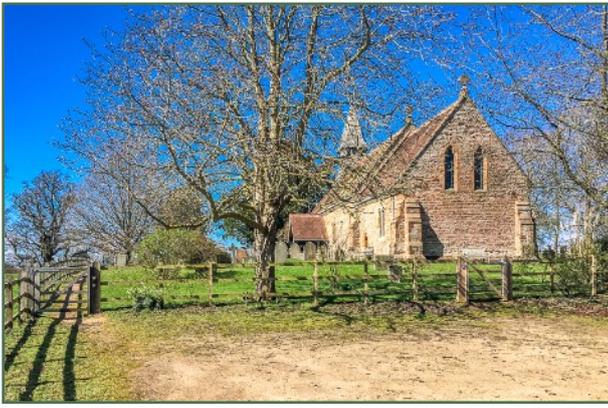


Cross the ford via the bridge and raised bank to your right. (When the water level is high, the final stretch of bank can be very muddy). Continue ahead on the main stone track, ignoring a stile on your left. Further along the stone track becomes a tarmac lane, passing Lilac Cottage on your left. Continue to the end of this access lane, to reach a T-junction with a country lane.

Bear right to join this lane and follow it as it bends right and then left. About 100 metres later, turn right onto the signed entrance drive for Preston Bagot Church. Ignore the kissing gate, instead cross the parking area (via two gates) to enter the churchyard.

5 → 6 Preston Bagot Church to End

Preston Bagot Church dates from the early 1100s. Before the bell turret was added in 1879, the bells were mounted on a pole in the yew tree at the west end. Walk ahead through the churchyard, passing the church on your right. As you draw level with the porch, turn left through the kissing gate to enter the adjacent pasture. Turn right across a short piece of the pasture and exit via



the kissing gate alongside a large oak tree.

Follow the pretty enclosed path leading you downhill and emerging via a kissing gate to a junction with a road. If you glance back to your right here you will be able to see the imposing red-brick Old Rectory, which today is a family home as well as a B&B. You can imagine that the path we just walked would once have been a pleasant route to work for the vicar. The barn within the grounds of the Old Rectory dates to the 1600s and is Grade II listed.

Turn left along the lane, which leads you between fields and through the village of Preston Bagot, for about 600 metres to reach the T-junction with the A4189. Turn right along the pavement to reach The Crabmill for some well-earned hospitality.

Disclaimer

This walking route was walked and checked at the time of writing. We have taken care to make sure all our walks are safe for walkers of a reasonable level of experience and fitness. However, like all outdoor activities, walking carries a degree of risk and we accept no responsibility for any loss or damage to personal effects, personal accident, injury or public liability whilst following this walk. We cannot be held responsible for any inaccuracies that result from changes to the routes that occur over time. Please let us know of any changes to the routes so that we can correct the information.

Walking Safety

For your safety and comfort we recommend that you take the following with you on your walk: bottled water, snacks, a waterproof jacket, waterproof/sturdy boots, a woolly hat and fleece (in winter and cold weather), a fully-charged mobile phone, a whistle, a compass and an Ordnance Survey map of the area. Check the weather forecast before you leave, carry appropriate clothing and do not set out in fog or mist as these conditions can seriously affect your ability to navigate the route. Take particular care on cliff/mountain paths where steep drops can present a particular hazard. Some routes include sections along roads – take care to avoid any traffic at these points. Around farmland take care with children and dogs, particularly around machinery and livestock. If you are walking on the coast make sure you check the tide times before you set out.

