

U P H I L L W A L K S

One of a Series of Healthy Walks Around and About Uphill

Walk Nine

BOATYARD, CANADA COMBE, HUTTON HILL, BLEADON

9 miles / 4.5 hours

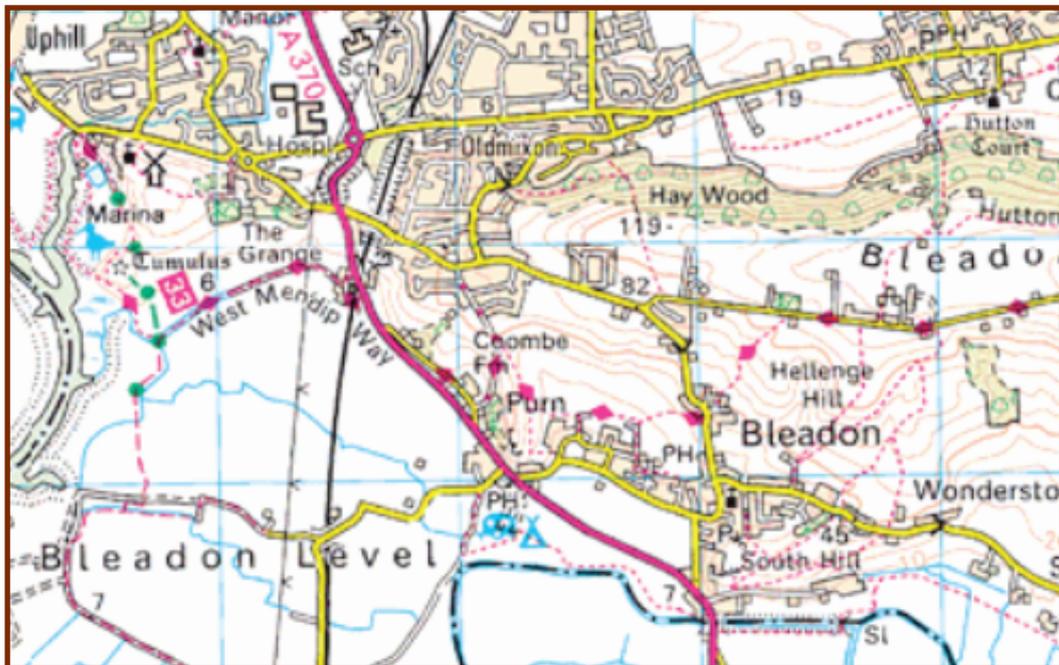
This is the longest of this set of walks and requires full walking apparel and liquid refreshment.

Start this walk in the familiar surroundings of Uphill Boatyard. Proceed on the Tidal Trail past the Marina, the 18th century Lime Kiln, and the Explosive Store (used in the 19th century in conjunction with the quarry) and follow this trail all the way to a tarmac road, through a total of five gates, followed by a long stone path. Now part of the private road to the Water Authority pumping station it was originally part of Accommodation Road, Bleadon. Cross the road into the field opposite follow the path to the right, around this field, and then left, over a drainage channel.

Once over the drainage channel, turn left, follow this path along side the drainage channel, until you reach a hard surface track, turn left. At a junction of tracks, turn right, and follow this track all the way to Accommodation Road. Here turn left and follow the road over the railway bridge, we suggest you keep on the right hand side to face the traffic. Keep following the road, you will pass Mendip Model Car Racing circuit on your left, and in 250 yards take the farm track on the right.

This is a public footpath at the end of which follow the footpath on the left, along the bank of the River Axe. In fifty yards the path turns left and heads for the boundary of the Purn Caravan Site. Cross the substantial wooden bridge and bear right back towards the river.

Follow the river to the A370 trunk road at Bleadon Bridge, cross the A370 to the other side of the bridge and pick up the path on the right hand bank when you are actually in Sedgemoor District, for merely 600 meters as far as an iron bridge. Cross the bridge, turn right to an awkward stile after which turn sharp left towards South Hill farm buildings.



Walk 8 is best explored using OS Explorer Map sheet 153 (1:25 000 scale)



At the stream just beyond the farm turn right. Keeping the stream on the left cross a stile, then a footbridge as the well marked path leads to the right of Lake Farm.

There are now several small bridges as the path crosses water courses and the land is below sea level. You will know when you are in the last field with a farm and other buildings to the right and a fishing lake adjacent to them. The path here veers left to the road at Shiplate. Cross the Bleadon to Loxton Road into the lane opposite. This soon turns sharp right, then left before becoming a track rising steeply uphill. Climbing over 120 metres pass a formidable house on the left, climb a stile to walk by a small wooded area before another stile by a cattle trough takes you into an open field. As you are completing this part of the walk do not miss the glorious views all around.

Go straight across the field to a stile into an enclosed path, ignore the West Mendip Way to the right but go on to a T-junction of paths. Turn right onto Christon Hill, there is a distant view of Glastonbury Tor at about one o'clock. As the rough wide path goes downhill it meets a substantial path, now turn left to pass Keeper's Cottage on the right.

As the path bears left take time out to enjoy a view of Crook Peak from the field gate on the right standing high on the Mendip Hills in front of you. As you continue it is now that you need those proper walking boots as the path becomes rather muddy! At the junction turn left to walk uphill in the shade to the next junction of paths. The track in front of you is the top of Windmill Hill, Hutton, but ignore this to take the left turn, which leads to a cottage at the beginning of Canada Coombe. This private road, but public footpath, has a tarmac surface so the going is good. At the road turn left for only a few yards when you come to a well signed path on the right leading into Hutton Woods.

Although the track is uneven the woods are a delight, look out for the bird life, you may even see a Gold-crest. The old machinery on the left was a road laying machine abandoned at the end of the Second World War. Now cross the stile and proceed ahead on a well worn path which in spring time is abundant with primroses and violets as well as green orchids. The path leads to another stile and into a large pasture meadow, keep near to the woods on the right, then cross the third stile before making diagonally left across a vehicle track and on to where the path drops steeply down to a stile at another footpath junction.

Go ahead up the bank opposite to come into what, at time of writing, is an unfinished golf course. Again the direction is left diagonal, head for some conifer trees. Here find a field gate into an enclosed track taking you down to Roman Road, next to a lay-by with an information panel and seat!

Enjoy the view of the meandering River Axe below and Bridgwater Bay and Brent Knoll ahead, then when rested turn right on the road for only 60 metres to a well marked foot path on the left, through a kissing gate. Follow the visible path in the grass to come to a small copse, enter by way of the gate then down the steps to a pretty walk through the trees to a meadow. Cross in the same direction but at the far side watch out for the gate hidden on the right.

This path then leads onto Celtic Way, Bleadon. Cross to the ladder stile opposite and follow the path round by the hedge on your right. Through the next gate turn sharp left to another gate in the fence, then diagonal left to the hedge. Now turn left to the field gate on the right. Keep on the path through several gates until you come to a storage silo. The path is now diverted round the silo so turn right and follow the path around it to a gate. Through the gate turn right to make your way uphill to a gate, where you enter Avon Wildlife Trust's Purn Hill Nature Reserve.

Here turn left and follow the road for its whole length when it comes to the A370, cross to the footpath opposite and continue in the same northerly direction to cross the railway bridge and immediately turn left onto a short road.

After about 20 metres, turn right onto a track and through a metal gate, follow this drove around to the left, and all the way to the end where you turn right onto a stone track. This is the Tidal Trail, follow the trail through four gates. Once through the fourth gate go through the metal gate on the left and follow the path to the bank of the marina, and turn right through a gate. This gives close up views of the marina and boat repair yards.

The path is well marked as it meanders its way to the exit, but here take care not to enter the private part of the yard. The path exits next to the car park at Uphill boatyard.