

The high spot and focus of this short walk is the beautifully located Church of St Mary the Virgin and its peaceful setting below the steep sided and historic Knoll.

Turn right out of the car park following the road out of the village, past Farm Pool towards Hawkesbury Monument. If wished, after crossing Starveall Lane, you can take the permissive path to the Monument through the kissing gate in the right hand hedge.

On reaching the lane by the monument [1], turn right along the track (Cotswold Way) for about half a mile (963m)(there is one gateway to go through half way along). At the Cotswold Way sign turn left and walk downhill a short distance through two fields to reach a wooden kissing gate [2]. ***



“Go through this and bear left following the blue public bridleway sign”

Go through this and bear left following the blue public bridleway sign keeping the fence on your left (This path can be muddy in the winter). Continue through the next gate, again following the blue way marked signs, across the fields towards the barn in the distance. Go through gate to rejoin road [3].

Turn right along road keeping on the right hand side and crossing over with care to the

left hand side just before the sharp right hand bend to reach the clearly visible public footpath signpost [4]. Go through the gate. From here you have superb views across to the River Severn and the two bridges with the Welsh mountains in the distance.

Follow the left hand hedge for a few metres (ignoring the first small gate) and go through a gate hidden in the undergrowth. Bear right following the right hand hedge downhill for 325 yards (300m) until you come to a stile in the hedge. Go over the stile, down a steep bank and over a second stile (both these stiles are quite tricky) following the yellow waymark sign across the field to a stile in the far hedge on the Hillesley Road [5].

Turn left along the road to the T junction. Cross over and through the gate onto a partially tarmaced track know as ‘the Sands’. To your left you will see the terraced ‘lynchets’ and above them Hawkesbury Knoll. This track takes you to Hawkesbury Church. At the end, go through the gate with a yellow waymark and onto the road by the church [6].

The Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin is tranquilly located beneath the historic Knoll and was first built at Hawkesbury around 700AD on the site of a Saxon minster church with possible Roman origins. When originally built it would have probably had a thatched roof and consisted of a single stone built hall with outbuildings to house the clergy. One of its illustrious incumbents was Wulfstan who was born around 1008 and who eventually became prior of Worcester Cathedral. He was canonized in 1203 and his remains were

reinterred in Worcester Cathedral in the presence of King Henry III. He allegedly became a vegetarian after over indulging on a well fattened goose and is noted for his attempts to stop the slave trade between Britain and Ireland. Most of the more elaborate memorial tablets in the church are to members of the Jenkinson family who are still Lords Of the Manor to this day.

The present church consists of a chancel with a south chapel, a nave with south aisle, a tower to the west, north and south porches with chambers over both porches. From east to west the length is 120 feet (36.5m) with a width of 70 feet (21.3m) including the two porches.

It was described by Arthur Mee in his book on Gloucestershire as “The churchyard filled with hoary altar tombs, the fine topiary hedge of clipped yews, which encompassed them on three sides and is shaped into 34 arches, the old vicarage with its many gables, and the farm buildings about it, make a memorable group”.

After visiting the church an interesting diversion for the energetic is to climb the



old farm building next to the church

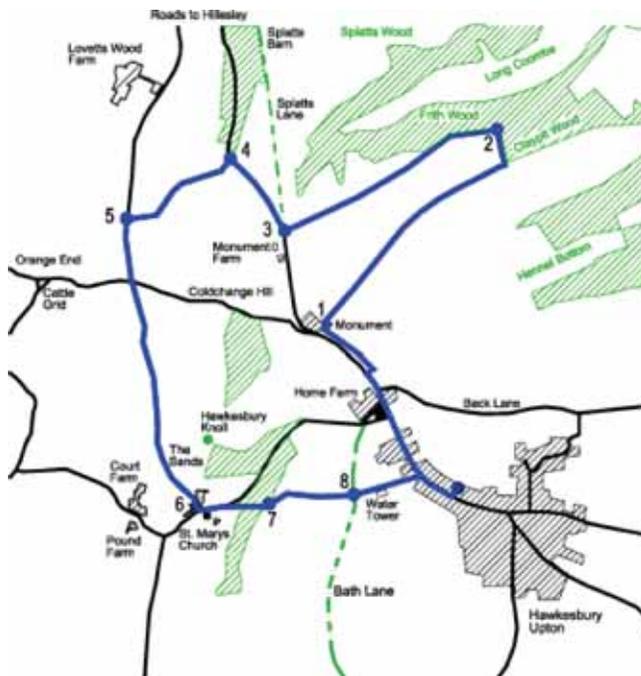
steep sided Knoll which has been used since pre-historic times for ritual and celebratory occasions. Retrace your steps to the permissive path leading up to the Knoll marked by a signpost just inside the gate on the Sands. After seeing the extensive views from the top, descend and return to the road by the church.

Turn left up the road, past the church and entrance to the old vicarage. At the end of the laurel hedge take the waymarked path up the grassy bank on the right side of the road. This takes you uphill (steeply) through the woods to a stile and gate at the top [7].



Go through the gate following the direction on the yellow waymark diagonally left across the field to a stile in the right hand hedge. Go over this stile and follow left hand hedge through two fields and over another stile to reach a gate on Bath Lane (Cotswold Way) [8]. At Bath Lane cross straight over taking the path with the hedge on the left to reach Hawkesbury High Street. Turn right back to the car park.

*** This marks the joining point from walk 2



NB: The Village Hall car park has an honesty box for donations for car park use

Produced by the Walking In Hawkesbury Group of Hawkesbury Vision Parish Plan

http://www.hawkesburyupton.com/rights_of_way.html

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WALKS AROUND HAWKESBURY

No: 06

OS Explorer Map167
Thornbury, Dursley & Yate

Grid ref: ST 777 870

Distance: 3.75 miles (6 km)

Time: 1.5 - 2 hours

Difficulty: Moderate (one steep climb and 5 stiles)

Start: Hawkesbury Upton
Village Hall car park



**Short Walk to
Hawkesbury Church**