



Snipe Walk 7

The Hatton Rock and Avon Walk

7.5 miles (12km)

Descending from Snitterfield through fields to cross the Warwick Road, this rewarding walk takes you beside and above the river Avon, with glorious views, before heading back across the Welcombe Hills. There are a couple of stretches on quiet lanes and you will need to cross the A46 on the return leg, unless you choose to return to the village along King's Lane at point 10. In summer it is a good idea to wear long trousers as some of the paths are narrow and nettles abound - the path is quite overgrown in parts. There are sheep in the fields leading to Warwick Road so please keep dogs on leads here. To shorten the walk a car could be dropped off at point 7, allowing you to terminate the walk before the Welcombe Hills stretch. The bridge on The Monarch's Way has now been repaired so the detour shown on the map below is no longer necessary - follow the black dotted line.

Start at telephone box near the crossroads of The Green, Smith's Lane, Bearley Road and School Road. Walk gently uphill on Smith's Lane, passing the village shop on your right and continuing to the top of the road. At the war memorial turn right and walk on the pavement to cross above the A46.

1 Immediately after the bridge, cross the road and turn left down a waymarked track into a field, traditionally

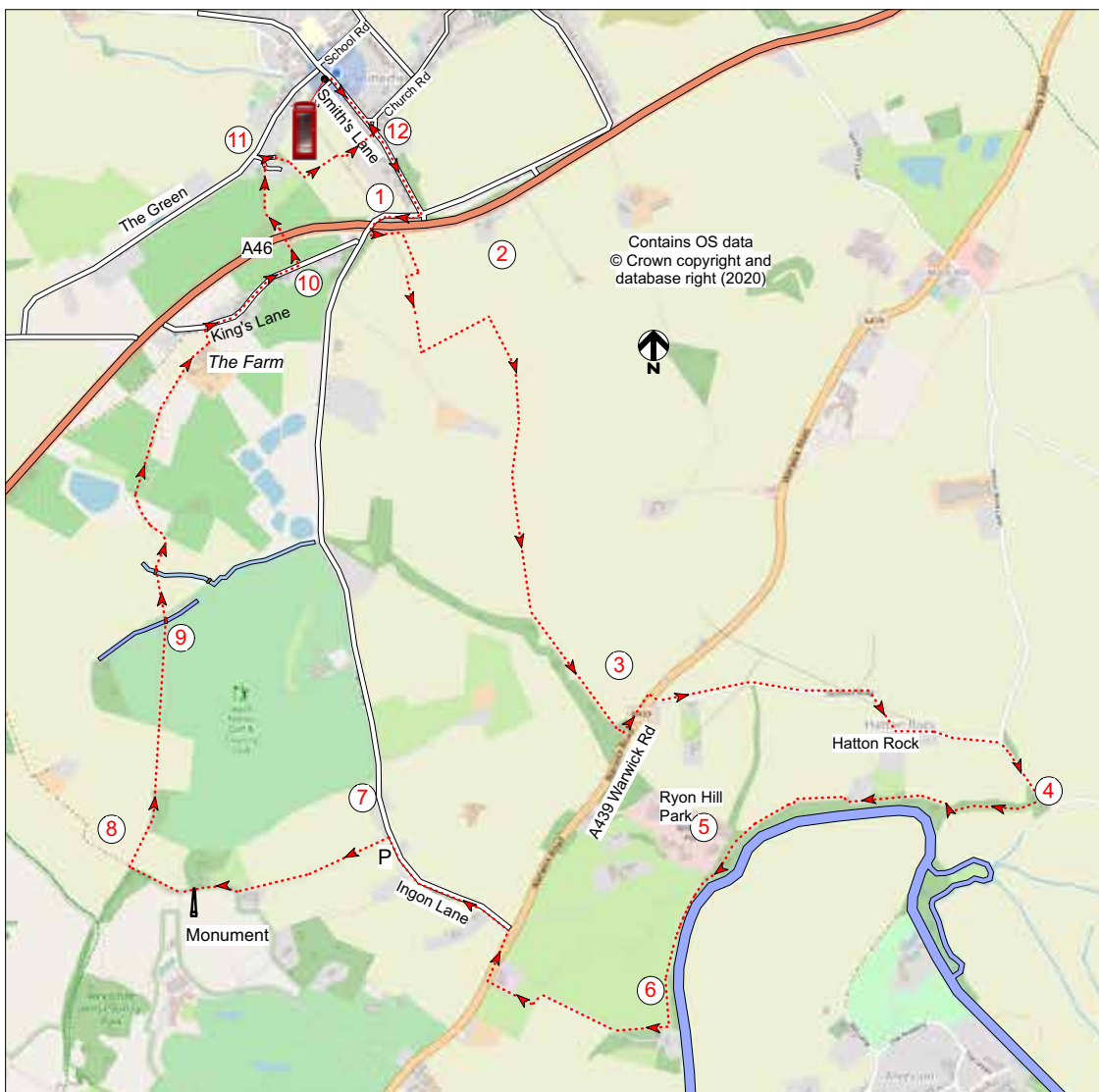
used by the village children for sledging on the rare occasions it snows! Walk along the top of the field, parallel to the A46, with lovely views across to the Welcombe Monument. Go through a wooden kissing gate ahead and turn right to follow the field edge with the hedge on your right. After 150 yards, follow the field edge right, then left, leaving the noise of the A46 behind. At the end of the field turn left, with the hedge still on your right. Immediately before the hedge turns right, almost opposite a large red brick house (Clydesdale) back up the hill, look out for a hidden wooden bridge on your right. Cross it and go through a kissing gate into a narrow field.

2 Walk down the field, veering right (with the hedge on your right). At the end, where the field narrows, go through a metal farm gate (often open). Pass under the telegraph wire and continue through the next long, narrow field and through another (often open) metal gate. Turn immediately left at a waymark on an old wooden fence post and then immediately right into another long field. When you are almost at the end look out for a waymarked metal kissing gate in the left-hand hedge and go through into a field. Turn right, keeping the treeline on your right. At the end of this field go through a gap in the hedge in the corner (waymarked) and continue in the same direction (you can now hear the traffic on the Warwick Road) until you can see ahead

that the treeline veers left. Immediately before the bend, look for a slightly hidden path on the right. The path goes downhill through woodland before rising to emerge on the Warwick Road (A439).

3 Turn left on the footpath alongside the road. After 200 yards cross the A439 with care and go up a lane on the right signed Hatton Rock and Hampton Lucy.

Continue on this quiet lane for about a mile in total. You will proceed gently uphill, passing Hatton Rock Business Park on your right before continuing downhill to reach a T junction. Continue on the lane, keeping right, signed Hampton Lucy and Charlecote until you see a wide track on your right just before the lane forks sharp left.



4 Go down the track and turn right in front of a metal farm gate to go down a grassy lane. Go through a waymarked gap to the side of a rusty metal gate and continue down this pretty track. At a chained-off entrance marked PRIVATE, go right onto steps up a steep bank and continue with a field to the right and a treeline on your left. Eventually, beautiful views across the Avon below come into view. Stratford's Holy Trinity church spire and RSC tower are visible on the horizon.

Continue, passing a large cream-painted house on your right. Shortly after this, heading downhill, ignore a private path through a gate on your left and continue over a bridge across a pretty ravine (*photo below*), up steps and take the path ahead, ignoring paths to right and left. Go uphill, keeping in the same direction along the left edge of a field, with views through the trees to



the left. Soon the Welcombe Monument and Ryon Hill Park are visible ahead. Walk gently downhill, with views to the left. At the end of the field continue straight ahead downhill through scrubland towards Ryon Hill Park. Cross a bridge and walk along a track through scrubland below the buildings (can be quite overgrown, but still passable, in summer).

5 You will emerge onto a pretty but narrow and somewhat unkempt path alongside the Avon, so take care. Cross a stile into a small field: this a nice spot for a picnic. Veer left to go through a metal kissing gate into a field, keeping the river on your left. Follow the field edge until the end where you cross a stile and continue in the same direction in the next field.

6 At the end of the field, with buildings and a conifer hedge ahead, turn right along the field edge with the treeline on your left. After a few hundred yards, at the end of a small section of panel fence, turn left over a stile and then right onto a tarmacked drive. Continue, with the Welcombe Monument ahead and the chimneys of the Welcombe Hotel just visible in the trees behind a farm.

Follow the drive left then right and at the end go through a pedestrian gate to the side of large drive gates onto the Warwick Road. Cross the road with care and turn right to walk up the footpath alongside the road for 150 yards. Turn left into Ingon Lane. Walk uphill, passing Four Gables on your left. Shortly after this you will reach a pull-in on the left (opposite a post box). Parking is available here.

7 Turn left by an information board about the Welcombe Hills (signed Welcombe Bank Farm) and follow a tarmacked track gently uphill towards the Monument. Pass houses to your left, and continue ahead on a gravel drive to go through a farm gate in front of you. Go right and follow the track with the hedgerow on

your right (you can detour here to visit the Monument). Veer right on the track, away from the Monument, with views of the Welcombe Hotel to your left. Go through a waymarked gate and follow the field uphill with a hedge on your left, ignoring a gate on the left and grassy tracks to the right.

8 At the top of the hill turn right along the field edge, with hedge on your left. You are now on The Monarch's Way. Go through a waymarked wooden gate ahead and take a track through woodland, with a golf course visible on your right. At the end of the wood go over a stile (at the time of writing non-agile dogs needed lifting over this) and enter a field. Follow the waymark across the middle of the field, passing old timber posts with lovely views right and left. Go over another stile (also not dog friendly) and walk down a track with the golf course on your right. Continue in the same direction onto the golf course, walking between a copse of trees and a hedge. Head for a small brick bridge straight ahead between signs for the 5th and 7th holes, ignoring another bridge to the left. Cross the brick bridge.

9 After crossing the bridge head straight on towards a gap in the hedge line and enter a field. Go straight across it to go over another bridge. Keep on in the same direction down a track, with a hedge on your right and wire fence on your left.

At the end of the track go through a gate, turn left and in a few paces go right through a metal kissing gate. Bear left and walk down a farm track. Follow the track with the treeline on your left, passing old orchards on your right. Continue uphill, through large black metal gates (usually open) to reach some rustic benches on your right from where you can enjoy lovely views across the Avon valley. As the track bears left go straight on through a metal kissing gate and follow a farm track to reach The Farm. Here you can replenish supplies or get refreshments.

Continue down a gravel pedestrian path in front of the buildings, with The Farm to your right. Go through gate posts and turn left onto a tarmac track. At the end go right down King's Lane. Pass Welcombe Hills Vineyard on your right and Green Gates Campsite entrance on your left. 100 yards after this keep your eyes peeled for a hidden wooden kissing gate in the hedge on your left. This is easy to miss!

10 Go through it and cross straight across the campsite to a gate in the opposite fence. Go down steps and cross the A46, again with great care. Head straight ahead, up steps and through a gap in the hedge. Go through a kissing gate and straight on. At a wooden fence bear left, with a telegraph pole on your right. Turn right to follow a path with a wooden fence to your right. At the end go through a gate to reach Duffin's Piece. Turn left then right towards a bungalow.

11 Follow a waymark to turn right behind a conifer hedge onto a narrow path. At the end of the path veer left into a field, with the hedge line on your right and a telegraph pole visible to the left. When you reach the corner go right down a bank and through a metal gate (usually open). Continue on a gravel track down the side of the village shop to meet Smith's Lane.

12 To complete the walk, turn left down Smith's Lane to reach the start point.