

## THE AVONCLIFF WALK

by Nigel Vile

### FACT FILE

Distance: 4 miles.

Time: 2 hours.

Start: Hartley Farm Shop (GR 802618) or Church Farm.

Maps: OS Landrangers 172/173 or OS Explorers 155/156.

Terrain: One steep descent into, and ascent out of, the Avon Valley.

### THE AVONCLIFF WALK:

From Hartley Farm Shop, the walk initially follows quiet lanes around the eastern fringe of Winsley to Turleigh, a village described as ‘a delectable spot that sits peacefully embedded in a tree-rimmed hollow below which freshly grassed fields curve down to Avoncliff.

At Avoncliff there is the Cross Guns, a 16th-century riverside inn, as well as a sweet café (which changes names every couple of years!) that serves coffees, cakes and delicious cream teas. The highlight, however, is the dramatic aqueduct that carries the Kennet and Avon Canal over the River Avon. One guidebook describes ‘the spectacular leap of its stone balustrading across the Avon Valley’ whilst this majestic relic from the canal era is a ‘monument to engineer Rennie’s genius’.

A pleasant towpath stroll and a climb out of the valley brings the walk into the heart of Old Winsley. The Manor is very much a private residence, but all around is much fine architecture in the shape of grand houses and stone cottages.

Sure to catch the eye is St Nicholas’s Church, whose unusual Perpendicular tower boasts a rare saddleback roof. Quiet lanes and fieldpaths head back from Winsley – passing Church Farm – to the Farm Shop where the café provides a perfect resting place to rest weary legs after enjoying the network of footpaths and lanes in the surrounding countryside.

**THE WALK DETAILS: HARTLEY FARM SHOP – WINSLEY – TURLEIGH – AVONCLIFF –  
THE K&A CANAL – TURLEIGH – WINSLEY – CHURCH FARM - HARTLEY FARM**

**DIRECTIONS: Start at Hartley Farm Shop (1.)**

1. Leave the car park at the rear of **Hartley Farm Shop**. Turn right onto the lane and walk a few yards to reach a crossroads. Continue along the lane ahead waymarked to Bradford on Avon. In 500 yards, at a junction by the entrance to Bradford Rugby Club, turn right down to the Winsley Bypass. Cross to a gateway opposite and follow a lane down to the Winsley Road.

Follow Cottles Lane opposite – slightly to the right – for 350 yards to a junction in Turleigh. Turn right and, 150 yards, left into Green Lane. At a junction at the end of Green Lane, turn right along a track and walk along to a gateway and an open hillside field. Turn left and follow the left edge of the field downhill. Towards the bottom of the field, keep on the path as it bears right across to a hand-gate in the corner of the field. Continue down a stepped path that drops down to a parking area by the K&A Canal in Avoncliff.

2. Cross the aqueduct before turning left down towards the **Cross Guns Inn**. Immediately before the inn, turn left, pass under the aqueduct and climb some steps on the left back up to the canal. Follow the towpath to the left across the aqueduct and on for 600 yards to bridge number 174. Cross this bridge and follow a track that climbs the hillside back towards Turleigh.

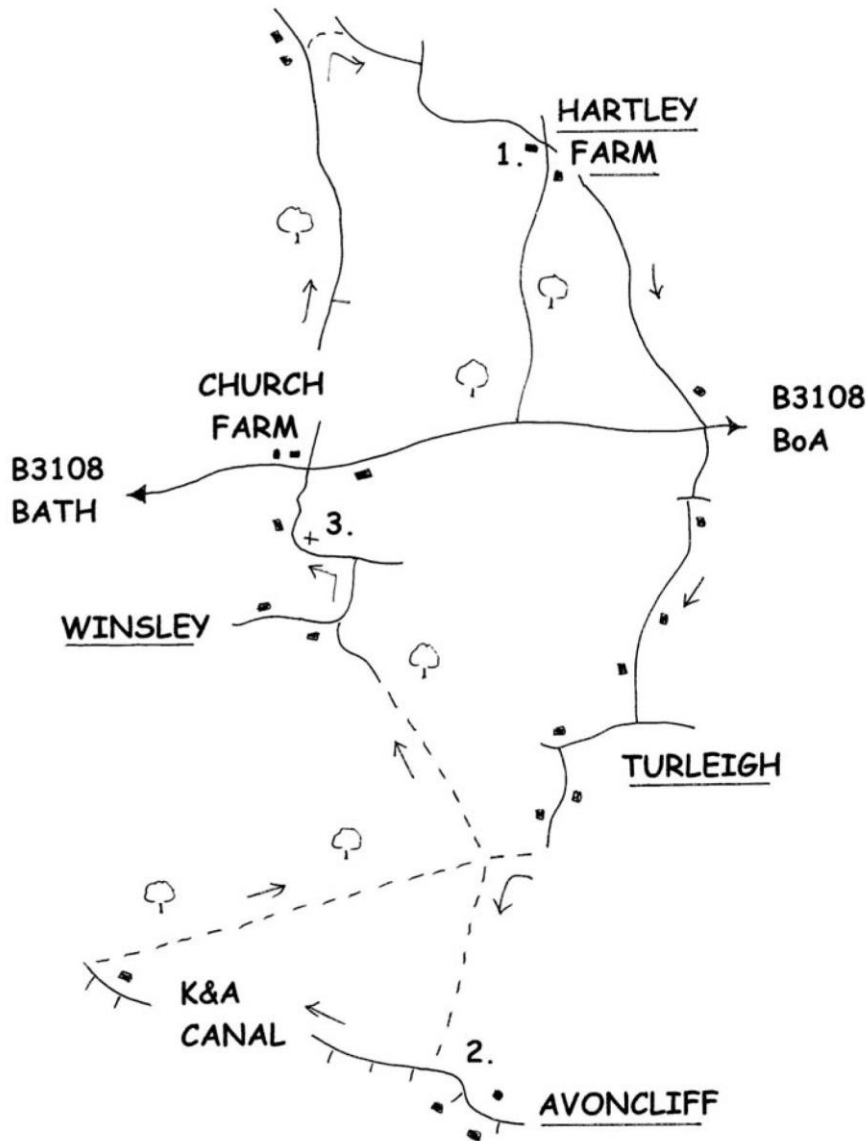
In 600 yards, pass through a gateway and follow the track ahead towards a second gate. Just before this gate, turn left through a hand-gate and follow an enclosed path uphill to a stile on the edge of Winsley. Beyond this stile, continue along a back lane to a junction by The Manor. Turn left and follow a road along past the local bowling club to the Winsley Road. Turn right, walk past the **Seven Stars Inn** to a righthand bend. Turn left towards St Nicholas and, immediately past the church, turn right along a back lane that borders the churchyard.

3. Beyond some bollards, continue to a junction with Millbourn Close, an estate road. Turn left to a junction before turning right up to the Winsley Bypass and **Church Farm**. Follow the lane opposite, slightly to the right (running behind the cottages), waymarked to Conkwell. In just under  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile, on a sharp left-hand bend by Parsonage Farm, turn right through a gap in the hedgerow into a field.

Walk directly ahead across this field to an almost invisible gap in the hedgerow opposite. Walk through this gap to a stile on the right before following the right edge of the field ahead to a stile in the end field boundary, almost in the right-hand corner. Join a lane and turn right, reaching a road junction in 350 yards. Turn right and follow this lane to the right for  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile to a gate on the right and an entrance into the Hartley Farm Shop complex.



# HARTLEY



Thanks to **Nigel Vile**, Tom's old Business teacher at KES Bath, for his effort on creating this route. He regularly writes recommended walks for the Bath Chronicle as well as having a few of his own very popular walking books published.

*To the best of our knowledge, these directions are accurate and up-to-date. All routes follow rights of way or permitted paths, but diversion orders can be made, and permissions withdrawn. Be sure to take care, and keep dogs on leads, in fields with livestock. All walks are undertaken at the walker's own risk. Neither Hartley Farm nor James Vile will be held responsible for any accident, injury or loss that occurs during this walk.*