



Walk on the WILD SIDE

JO VAUGHAN FOLLOWS A LONG BUT EASY, WATERSIDE ROUTE IN THE BEAUTIFUL GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTRYSIDE

INFORMATION | GENERAL

CLUB SITE: Tewkesbury Abbey, Gander Lane, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire GL20 5PG. Tel 01684 294035.

Open 3 April to 2 November 2009

DISTANCE: 8.4 miles/13.4km

TERRAIN: Easy paths, mostly grassy, some slightly overgrown

NUMBER OF STILES: 13

ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT: OS Explorer Map no 190 (Malvern Hills & Brendon Hill), long trousers (plenty of stinging nettles!)

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: Easy

REFRESHMENTS: In Tewkesbury and at Twynning

TOILETS: Close to the mill (see instruction 3 under 'Directions')

TEWKESBURY WAS a victim of the awful floods of July 2007 and its Caravan Club site was hit hard. But now it's as lush as it ever was – a firm favourite that's often fully booked.

The site couldn't be better situated, just behind Tewkesbury Abbey and within an easy five-minute walk of the town centre. It remains remarkably quiet, just the abbey's bells punctuating an otherwise peaceful stay.

The area is full of delightful rivers and canals, and our walk mostly follows these water courses. On this long but easy ramble, we travel through the town's outskirts before heading out into the Gloucestershire countryside. Make sure you wear long trousers as nettle stings to

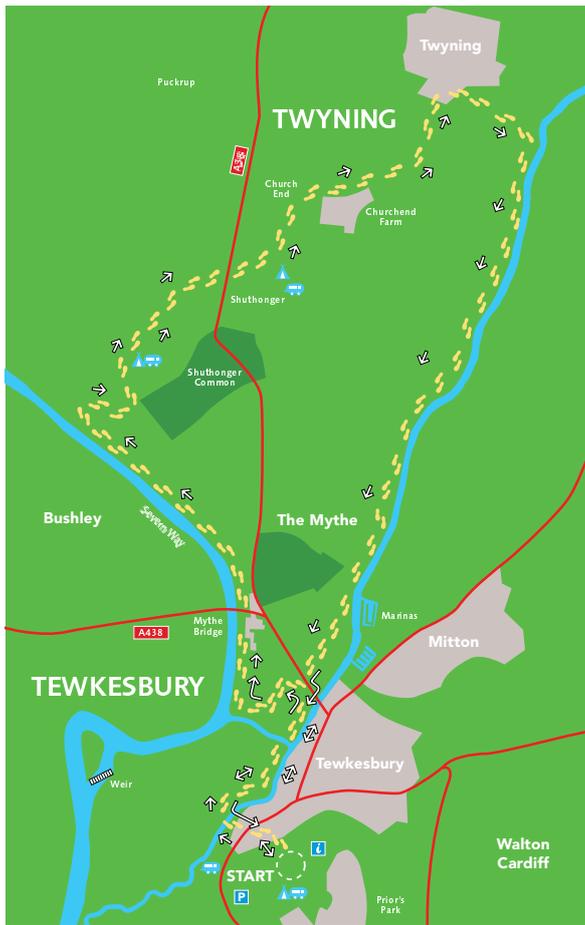
my naked legs made me look as though I had measles upon my return!

The Fleet Inn, beside the river, is a scenic place to pause for lunch and the nearby Village Inn can't be faulted for value for money and portion size.



Ordnance Survey Landranger Map 150

The Club currently offers a 30% discount on Ordnance Survey Landranger and Explorer Maps – see caravanclub.co.uk/ books for details



DIRECTIONS

1 Leave the campsite via its main entrance and continue ahead along the road, towards the town centre. When you get to the main junction, turn left and walk past a beautiful old timbered building before crossing the road at a zebra crossing next to The John Moore Countryside Museum. Continue along the road, heading towards the Bell Hotel.

2 Very soon, having passed Slatters Bistro, turn right along a side road. Keep left where the road splits and walk past the Friends Burial Ground. At the river turn left along the road.

3 At the old mill turn right (beside the floodwater depth gauge) to walk in front of the building, crossing the white painted bridge. Go through the metal gate and turn right to walk along the riverside.

4 At the path junction turn right over a bridge, passing through a green metal gate. Turn left and then, very soon after, turn left again over another bridge. Turn right following the Severn Way Public Footpath sign. Walk over the lock gate and continue ahead to the next bridge.

5 Walk up the steps onto the bridge and turn left. Cross the entrance to King John's Court and continue over another bridge. Immediately after, at the torch, turn left to cross a stile. Immediately turn left again to follow the river (signposted 'Severn Way').

6 Continue following the water over a small wooden bridge with a yellow footpath arrow. Follow the field around to the right towards the brick waterworks. Pass through a kissing gate just in front of the brick building, go up the steps, along the walkway and two more sets of steps. Go under the bridge and continue ahead, following the white arrow through someone's back garden. Keep left, passing an unpaved turning circle.

7 At the next clearing keep left again to continue by the riverside along a wider track. Go over a stile following a yellow arrow, past a 'Birmingham AA Private Fishing' sign. Go over a stile next to a wooden gate and then follow the yellow

arrow around to the right, which heads away from the river.

8 Follow the track through a metal gate and over a wooden bridge, but when faced with two more metal gates ignore both and veer around to the right, towards the campsite. Go through a metal gate and continue ahead. At the campsite's entrance keep left up the tarmac lane. The track soon turns to gravel.

9 Cross the main road and continue down the lane (signposted 'Church End ½ mile and Sunset View Caravan Park'). Continue up the lane, ignoring the various public footpath signs. At Church End, beside the thatched Tudor Cottage, turn right along the road (signposted 'Church End, No Through Road').

10 Walk past the church. Just past the house named 'Corbiere' there's a metal gate with a yellow arrow beside it – follow this down the grassy path. Where the path meets a muddy track, just past a pond on your left, keep left and then right, passing through some fence posts marked with a yellow arrow. Walk along the track, and at the end of the field, having passed some more fishing ponds, turn left following a red arrow along a now tarmac lane.

11 Just before the road bends to the left, veer right over a stile with a yellow arrow (a signpost reads 'Warning – High Voltage Cables Overhead'). Keep to the right of the field. Cross another stile and continue along the lane. At the main road turn right to walk past the school, the village green and then the Village Inn pub (keeping the pub to your left). At the Fleet Inn and the river veer right, following the public footpath sign, and cross a wooden bridge that ends in a kissing gate. Continue up the track that follows a fence and the river.

12 Go through the kissing gate and continue. Cross two stiles either side of a wooden bridge, and continue across another five stiles along the route. Go under the disused railway bridge and continue ahead, taking the left path at the fork. Cross a stile just before the road bridge. Go up the steps and cross the road. Turn left to cross the bridge, past the entrance to King John's Court, and very soon turn right (signposted 'Public Footpath – Severn Way'), and go down some steps. Go across the lock towards the mill. Re-cross the bridge and turn right.

13 You can either cross the next bridge and retrace your steps, past the old mill, or you can continue down the high street, using the abbey as a landmark to find your way back to the site.



INFORMATION | ATTRACTIONS

■ **The John Moore Countryside Museum**, 41 to 42 Church Street, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire GL20 5SN. Tel 01684 297174 or see johnmooremuseum.org. Open Tuesday to Saturday, 1 April to the end of October, from 10am to 5pm. Adults £1.50, seniors £1.25, children £1. Contains a large natural history collection, featuring specimens of many of

the UK's native animals. Tickets also provide access to the nearby Merchant's House

■ **Tewkesbury Abbey**, Church Street, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire GL20 5RZ. Tel 01684 850959 or see tewkesburyabbey.org.uk. Open every day from 7.30am to 6pm (7pm on Sundays). Free. Disabled access. This is reputed to be the second largest parish

church in England and larger than 14 cathedrals. It certainly has the highest Norman tower in the country



INFORMATION | TOURISM

Tewkesbury Visitor Centre, 103-105 Church Street, Tewkesbury GL20 5AB. Tel 01684 855040