



Fairford to Lechlade by Northern route.

Distance 5.5 miles, 9.5 Km

- 1) Leaving the car park turn L into Park Street, walk down to junction where road veers slightly L to become Leafield Rd. Keep to footpath on L side of road and before school playing field cross road and continue towards school, until just past last house on R. Turn R onto paved track – Lovers Lane. Follow this path until it meets Hatherop Lane.
- 2) Turn L here and L at junction (grass triangle). Follow minor road into open country until, after approx. 400m, you see a PROW sign on R and stile in hedge. Take this path and follow through field for approx. 1m, keeping close to wall and hedge on L until you meet bridge over a small stream. Cross bridge and follow through field (up slight slope) with hedge on L until path turns R and exits at gate into road. Turn L and follow road until PROW on R (approx. 250m).
- 3) Take this path and follow it straight across field in easterly direction for approx. 600m, straight across farm track and across field below Stanford Hall (30) towards a stream and ford. Do not cross but turn R and follow path through trees and disused quarry area until a L turn brings you to a wooden footbridge. Cross this bridge and continue through wood, over stile and across field in E direction until exit into Bryworth Lane at Poultry Farm.
- 4) Straight across here, through gap in hedge with vertical stones and across field, crossing another footbridge where path turns R and then L (after approx. 10m) through gap in hedge over stiles and continue heading SE until approaching houses (Lechlade Church spire in distance). Cross stile near electricity enclosure and follow footpath behind houses until kissing gate into Cemetery grounds.
- 5) Walk through cemetery (31), following path down drive, through iron gates and out to road (A417). Turn L and walk along road to traffic lights and Lechlade centre.

NB The middle portion of this walk (from 3) is not much walked and the path is indistinct around the old quarry area.

If walking from Lechlade, there is a footpath from the back of the car park at the Memorial Hall, through play area, which joins the path omitting Cemetery.

COTSWOLD WATER PARK EAST
LECHLADE TO FAIRFORD 'SOUTHERN' ROUTE

Total distance covered is approximately 6-7miles on flat terrain and depending on levels of fitness takes 2-2 1/2hrs, mostly on good tracks but which can be muddy in places after heavy rain and is not suitable for disabled people or parents with a buggy or pram. *Care should be taken on the section of the walk around Lakes by Yoo and the gravel extraction areas as work may be ongoing on the paths and heavy vehicles may also be operating in these areas.*

There are three alternative starts to the walk (either using public transport from Fairford or by car):

At the first bus stop after the roundabout East of Wyevale's Garden Centre, track back 20m, cross to S of road and take the narrow tarred road due S for 1/2m towards the River Thames. Swing R at the corner and head Westerly past two properties with dog kennels.

From the centre of Lechlade cross over the Thames via 'Halfpenny Bridge' (32) (main road to Highworth and Swindon), drop down to the river bank on West of road (uneven steps) and walk West along the river bank for 1/2m to wooden bridge across to the N bank of the Thames (good view of Inglesham Round House – 33). Turn L and follow narrow path to vehicle track accessing the Round house, veer R here until you come to a 4-way junction where you turn L to meet up with the path leading to the dog kennels.

From the centre of Lechlade and walk back West past the Christmas Shop (now on the North side of the A417) up to the lay-by (S side of road) and footpath crossing the fields to join the other (above) two paths.

Once past the dog kennels and now on a gravel track (can be muddy) head South-Westerly. On your right will be the round lake and the Round House Bird Hide Cabin (34) – good bird watching, especially in winter, including red crested pochard, widgeon, teal, grebe etc. Now continue on the main track for approx. 1/2m until you come to a sign on the right indicating a PROW through the Lakes by Yoo holiday home development (X). Here you have the choice to take the PROW which joins the longer path at point 'Y' (see map and below), or continuing on the track until you eventually come onto a quiet road heading North-Westerly towards Whelford. Turn R onto the road and after 1/2m leave the road and turn sharp R (stile and footpath sign) onto a narrow track heading North-East along the Western edge of the 'Lakes by Yoo' development towards the gravel extraction plant. After 20m bear L (Y) and follow the track through the woods to cross often muddy road/track used by extraction lorries and continue on the grassy path along the Southern side of lake 126, towards the Whelford Pools Nature Reserve (35). Here you can often see an excellent range of water and tree birds, including green woodpecker, yellowhammers, buzzards, many types of duck, arctic and common tern and even bittern on infrequent occasions. Also wild orchids.

Exit the small carpark and head North (turn R) onto the road leading towards the A417 – Fairford road. There is no footpath but good visibility (*take care of passing traffic*). After 1.2m, just before the road bears right) carefully cross to a gate on L which heads towards Fairford (not signposted) and lakes 102 and 104. Cross meadow with prefab house and chalets on your R (North) side (beware unsightly rubbish tipped near pathway) and walk along the South edge of boating lake 105 before following round to the right, watching for a track, half left, through wooden swing gate. Go R, then L along narrow path and brambles. This brings you into a wide open area beside a large lake (Lake 104). Bear L and continue with the lake on your R and stream on L, until you come to a wooden footbridge on L over the stream (Court Brook). Cross the bridge, turn R and follow the river back to Fairford. Alternatively, turn R at Lake 104 and walk around the lake anti-clockwise to signboard and take path back to Fairford along Fieldway (cinder track). Please try and observe path markers but many of these have been removed and the anti-clockwise path may also be subject to closures.