

THE BRITWELL LOOP

The Britwell Loop is a one hour, 4Km walking route that circuits the Britwell and Northborough areas of Slough. Considering these are dense housing estates, the Britwell Loop incorporates two major nature reserves and several large open spaces with a viewing point and refreshment stops. The route can obviously be walked in either direction but the description that follows is the anti-clockwise loop.

Starting point

The most convenient starting point for people from outside the immediate area is the new shops at the junction of Long Furlong Drive and Wentworth Avenue (set SATNAV to postcode **SL2 2LX**). This has car parking, and is served by bus route No. 1 from Slough bus and train stations. The route also passes within walking distance of Burnham (Bucks) train station

Northern section

From the starting point at the Britwell shops, head north up Wentworth Avenue. *The historically-important line of cedar trees, which is a great feature of Wentworth Avenue, was planted by Cecil Twist in the 1930s. His son Michael Twist is commemorated by the road named Twist Way near the shops.*

On the left of the route is the new Britwell Centre, opened by HM The Queen in 2013. Here there is a library and public toilets. Further on, on the left, is Sam's Local convenience store and opposite on the right is a chemist's shop.

At the north end of Wentworth Avenue, where it meets Farnham Lane, turn left and follow the wide green verge known as the Greenwalk, with houses on your left and Farnham Lane on your right.

At the western end of the Greenwalk is a green palisade fence with a kissing gate. Go through this gate and into Cocksherd Bluebell Wood. *Cocksherd Wood is a valuable ancient woodland with rare species of fungus and beetle, as well as magnificent English bluebells in May.*

Go straight ahead along the main gravel path and you will arrive at a green metal bench and a bit later a descending flight of steps. Descend the steps and continue straight on.

The steps were installed by Evergreen 2000 Trust who act as friends and guardians of Cocksherd Wood and Lynch Hill valley. Before the steps were installed in the year 2000 this was a very steep and difficult bank, being the former bank of Two Mile Brook when it was a glacier in the Ice Age. As you start to emerge from the wood you will see a residential road ahead (Dove House Crescent) that leads towards Burnham village.

However, before you emerge from the wood you have a choice of routes.

Option 1 : Lynch Hill Valley option

For this option, stay in the wood and turn left, so that the large gas utility installation is on your right and follow this path to reach Lynch Hill Lane. Cross Lynch Hill Lane and go through a gap in the grass mound opposite and into Lynch Hill Valley. Now walk straight ahead through the valley, keeping towards the right-hand side until you reach a short flight of wooden steps in the right hand corner up the grass bank to Long Furlong Drive.

Option 2 : Cocksherd Green option

For this option, leave the wood and enter Dove House Crescent which has a very wide strip of green space called Cocksherd Green. Walk the entire length of this green until you find a sign post showing 'Five Points & Taplow'. Follow this sign into a wood called Bangles Spinney and take the right hand gravel path through the wood. Lower Britwell Road will be just about visible on your right. About three-quarters of the way through Bangles Spinney you will find a grey granite chip path off to the left, Take this grey path. It winds down hill, eventually emerging at Lynch Hill Lane. Now bear right, cross the road and go into the valley behind the wide iron gate. Turn right once in the valley and follow the valley and up a short flight of wooden steps in the right hand corner up to Long Furlong Drive.

Either way you are now at Long Furlong Drive. If you wish to cut short the walk you can turn left (east) and the starting point is about half a mile away along this road. Otherwise continue on the Southern section.

Southern section

From the top of the wooden steps, cross over Long Furlong Drive and enter Lammas Meadow. This is not marked with a name board, but is a large sloping meadow featuring a rather dilapidated basketball pitch. At the far side of Lammas Meadow, cross straight over Whittaker Road and through the small kissing gate into the Haymill Nature Reserve, known as

the Millie. *The Millie is managed by Berks, Bucks and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust.*

If you go straight ahead (south) through the Millie you will follow an enjoyable walk that will take you towards Burnham Railway Station, past reed beds and two iron statues of Kingfishers at the bottom end.

Burnham Railway Station was originally called Burnham Beeches Station. At weekends shuttle buses once carried Londoners from the station up to Burnham Beeches

However for the Britwell Loop you should take an immediate left turn after going through the kissing gate, and climb over the culvert of the Two Mile Brook with its scaffolding pole handrail.

Two Mile Brook is a recognised river, though much of it runs underground. It starts in the high-lying chalk hills near Burnham Beeches Hotel and the Swilley Pond in Burnham Beeches. It seeps underground before entering an underground culvert under Lynch Hill Valley and Lammas Meadow before seeing daylight in the Millie. It then goes under Cippenham and eventually drains into the Thames. There was once a watermill at the very bottom of the Millie where there is now a Shell filling station near to Burnham Railway Station.

The ideal route would now be to find the path south down by the Millie, keeping houses on your left and woodland/watercourse on your right. **However, this path is frequently overgrown and impassable**, so instead emerge from the wood at the childrens playground and turn right along a residential road (Marescroft Road) which turns left. Turn right into Amberley Road and take the second cul de sac on the right at house number 38 and go to the far corner at house number 24. Here there are three white concrete bollards. Past the bollards, don't re-enter the woods through the gap in the palisade fence but instead take the narrow overgrown alleyway with the green palisade fence on your right and a house on your left. You should now emerge into the wide buffer zone between the housing estate on your left and the trading estate on your right. This is part of what used to be called Cop Field.

Ahead of you are several tall industrial chimneys, so head towards them. Halfway you will cross straight over a well-used and paved footpath.

Ahead of you is a grass mound and in dry weather it is easy to climb to the top and walk along the top of the mounds as far as you can. In wet

weather you may find it easier to keep to the low ground to the right of the mound through a narrow gap between the mound and the industrial site. Either way you emerge into Scafell Road with a general store (McCull's) and you will see a children's playground and an enclosed basketball pitch.

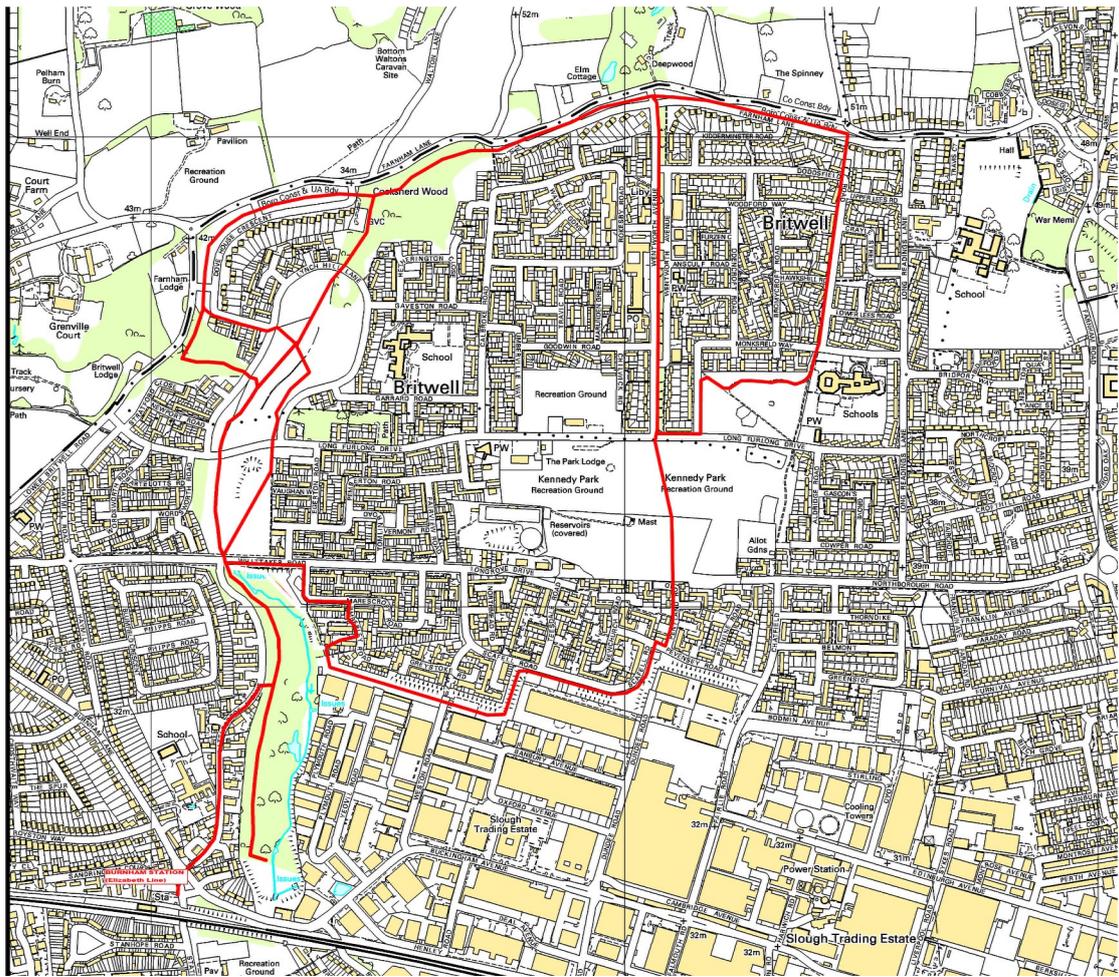
Turn right and follow Scafell Road as it winds left and then across the road at the red brick SSE electricity sub-station and into Pentland Road. At the end of Pentland Road there is a new and rather grand flight of steps with a long ramp as an alternative. Climb these steps and go straight ahead. *The first field is the site of one of the original places where old First World War vehicles were dismantled after the war. It is reckoned to be too contaminated for building, but is perfectly safe to walk on.*

On your left some distance away is a radio mast and the low dome of a reservoir. On the right is the mound known now as Britwell Summit. If you wish you can climb the mound to get better views. *This was a man-made mound built from spoil when the surrounding land was levelled for the housing estate in 1960. There is a nice monument at the top to commemorate sixty years of Britwell, A fine view all around, and possibly you can see Windsor castle.*

As you return to the Britwell shops, and the end of the Loop, be sure to try the open-air gym by the car park where you can gently wind down before your journey home.

THANK YOU FOR WALKING THE BRITWELL LOOP

Please dispose of your litter thoughtfully.



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