

Kemble Circular (via Thames Head and Cirencester)			Kemble Circular (Short Walks)		
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Kemble Circular (via Thames Head and Cirencester)

Start & Finish: Kemble Station, map reference ST 984 975, is 133 km west north west of London, 109m above sea level and in **Gloucestershire**.

Length: 27.8 km (17.3 mi).

Cumulative ascent/descent: 208m.

For a shorter or a longer walk, see below **Walk Options**.

Toughness: 5 out of 10

Time: 6 hours walking time.

For the whole outing, including trains, sights and meals, allow at least 9 ½ hours.

Transport: Kemble Station is on the Swindon to Gloucester and Cheltenham Spa Golden Valley line, with an hourly service from Paddington. Journey times are 71 to 75 minutes. On Sundays a change is required at Swindon.

Saturday Walkers' Club: Take the train no later than 09.30 hours for the full walk.

OS Landranger Map: 163 (Cheltenham & Cirencester)

OS Explorer Map: 168 (Stroud, Tetbury & Malmsbury) and 169 (Cirencester & Swindon)

Walk Notes:

This Gloucestershire walk at the southern edge of the Cotswolds AONB explores the springs and wells forming the source of the River Thames and a longer stretch of the upper river, as well as some of the woods of the large Bathurst Estate and Cirencester Park and Town, the 'Capital of the Cotswolds'.

After passing an assortment of springs and wells that constitute the start of the Thames and an Iron Age hillfort site right by the highest of the springs, you follow the disused Thames & Severn Canal to the Sapperton Canal Tunnel, before rising through Hailey Wood up to the watershed to the Severn Catchment Area and to Sapperton village, on the edge of the Golden Valley and with a splendid old church.

Climb over the highest point of the walk and enter the magnificent Cirencester Park, one of the greatest privately owned parks of the 18th century, with its splendid vistas, romantic follies, statues and woods. On into Cirencester for tea (or lunch on the short options of the route), once one of the most substantial cities of Roman-era Britain, now a bustling market town and considered the Capital of the Cotswolds, with its many independent shops, beautiful Georgian and Victorian buildings, alleyways and courtyards as well as some Roman ruins, most interestingly the Amphitheatre (at the time the second largest in Britain and now one of the best preserved). The short return to Kemble leads through quiet fields, along woods and through the picturesque village of Ewen, before another stretch along the Upper Thames.

Three principle shorter versions are described and buses add additional options to cut bits of the route.

Notes: The Upper Thames is a winterbourne river, only fed from aquifers and without tributaries in the area walked. In long dry periods it can be completely dry. Cirencester Park is open to the walking public daily 08.00-17.00 (sharp!), but may be closed on occasions. Check the estate's website before doing this walk.

Walk Options:

Dogs are not allowed in most of the Bathurst Estate, including most of Cirencester Park and the permissive path by College Farm, so only **a modified version of the Short Walk is possible**.

Several Bus Lines enable either shortcuts within the walk (to Cirencester, for example) or **early finishes** (from Cirencester or Ewen); the relevant bus stops are shown on the route map:

- **Buses 54/54A/54X** (Stroud - Cirencester) call at **Sapperton** (lunch stop on the main walk) and **Coates** (the Medium Walk routes through it). They run 6 buses Mon-Fri (3/4 of those through Coates) and 3 on Sat.
- **Buses 51/51X** (Cheltenham - Cirencester - Swindon) link **Cirencester to Swindon Bus Station**, close to the train station. They run about hourly Mon-Fri, hourly Sat and two-hourly Sun.
- **Bus 882** (Gloucester - Cirencester - Tetbury) calls at Kemble Station and **enables a finish in Cirencester or in Ewen**. It runs 3 buses on Mon-Fri afternoons to Kemble, but only 1 on Sat - and early afternoon at that.

A Taxi from Cirencester to Kemble costs about £15.00 (01/2023 price).

A Flood Diversion may be necessary at Trewsbury Mead by the Thames Head, as part of the route can be under water after prolonged wet weather, when the Upper Thames is in flow.

An Out-and-Back to a large piece of **Roman Town Wall** in Cirencester's Abbey Grounds adds 1.1 km.

A Medium Length Walk heads east at the Sapperton Canal Tunnel, cutting out Hailey Wood, Sapperton and about half of Cirencester Park (22.7 km/14.1 with 142m ascent/descent; **3/10** rating).

A Variation of the Medium Length Walk links to the Short and Ultra Short Walks.

A Short Walk heads east at the Trewsbury Camp Hillfort Site, cutting most of the area north of the Thames Head, i.e.: the Thames & Severn Canal, Hailey Wood, Sapperton and most of Cirencester Park (19.8 km/12.3 mi with 132 ascent/descent; **2/10** rating).

An Ultra Short Walk cuts out Cirencester Park and Town completely (12.4 km/7.7 mi with 59m ascent/descent; **0/10** rating). Picnic lunch as long as The Wild Duck Inn is closed!

Near the end, a more direct route into Kemble village cuts the stretch up along the Thames and also goes right past The Tavern Inn, the only tea stop in the village. It only cuts 350m to the platform, but a touch more if intending to go to the pub. In any case, this may make sense when the river bed is dry.

Lunch (details last updated 07/02/2023)

The Thames Head Inn Tetbury Road, Kemble, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 6NZ (01285 770 259, <https://www.arkells.com/pub/the-thames-head-inn-cirencester.htm>). Located 300m off route off the Trewsbury Mead Flood Diversion, very early into the walk. An Arkell's of Swindon pub. A looped route off the flood diversion to the pub is shown on the route map. [The dangerous road walking can be avoided by following the flood diversion further along and reversing the loop from the pub where those routes meet.]

Tunnel House Inn Tarlton Road, Coates, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 6PW (01285 770 702). The Tunnel House is located 5.2 km into the Main and Medium Walks. A favourite haunt of walkers due to it being passed by four long-distance footpaths, and of 'Royals' for being close to the Highgrove Estate, **it has been closed for a couple of years**. Rumours are though that the Bathurst Estate is planning the building of holiday chalets in the surrounding woods, which may prompt a re-opening.

The Bell at Sapperton, Sapperton, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 6LE (01285 760 298, <https://www.bellsapperton.co.uk/>). The Bell is located 9.1 km (5.7 mi) into the main walk. Open all day every day. Food served 12.00-14.30 & 17.30-20.30 Mon-Fri, 12.00-16.00 & 18.00-21.00 Sat, 12.00-18.00 Sun. Booking recommended at weekends!

On the Medium and Short Walks, all **Cirencester Tea Stops** become Lunch Stops, from 13.1 km and 10.2 km into the walk respectively.

Tea (details last updated 07/02/2023)

Beano in the Park Cecily Hill, Cirencester Park, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 2EF (01285 653 135). The Beano is a hot drinks and snack Airstream located near the town entrance in Cirencester Park, 17.5 km (10.9 mi) into the main walk. Open to 16.00 daily (16.30 in summer).

Numerous Options in Cirencester (from 18.2 km/11.3 mi into the main walk). See the walk directions for more details.

The Wild Duck Inn Drakes Island, Ewen, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 6BY (<https://www.thewildduckewen.com/>). Located 3.0 km from the end of the walk. **Currently closed for a major refurbishment**.

The Tavern Inn Kemble, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 6AX (01285 770 216, <https://www.arkells.com/pub/the-tavern-inn-kemble.htm>). Located just past the station. An Arkell's of Swindon pub.

Notes:

Kemble Station

Kemble Station is on the Swindon to Gloucester "Golden Valley" line. Despite its rural location, the station has a high number of passengers and two large car parks, due to the proximity of Cirencester and Tetbury. In 1882 it replaced Tetbury Road station, just north of the A433, when the local landowner finally allowed a station building in the village. Up until 1964, branch lines to Cirencester and Tetbury existed, but now only short sidings remain of the Cirencester branch. Charmingly, a small garden covers the space between sidings and platforms. The station, limestone overbridge and trackside water tank are all Grade II listed.

Wysis Way

The Wysis Way is a waymarked linear 88 km (55 mi) long-distance footpath between Monmouth, Wales and Kemble, Gloucestershire, forming a link between Offa's Dyke path and Thames Path and of the rivers Wye and Thames. 'Wysis' merges the names of those two rivers (the Upper Thames is also known as 'Isis').

Thames Path

The Thames Path (TP) is a waymarked linear 298 km (185 mi) National Trail (the only one following a major river) from its source at Thames Head to the Woolwich Foot Tunnel, south east London, where it links up with the England Coast Path. The TP uses towpaths where possible, but as most of the ferries that towpath traffic historically used do not exist anymore, some diversion from the towpath is necessary.

Thames & Severn Way

The Thames & Severn Way is a waymarked linear 70 km (43 mi) long-distance footpath following where possible the Stroudwater Navigation and the Thames & Severn Canal between Framilode and Lechlade-on-Thames and passing over the route of the Sapperton Canal Tunnel.

River Thames or Isis

The River Thames is known alternatively as the River Isis from its source in the Cotswolds to its confluence with the River Thame near Dorchester-on-Thames. Its name derives from *Tamesis*, which in the Middle Ages was believed to be a combination of "Thame" and "Isis", but is more likely a Roman derivation of the Brittonic *Tamesas*, with Thames and Isis being alternative truncations of that name.

At 346 km (215 mi), it is the longest river entirely in England, the second-longest in the UK (after the River Severn) and the third-longest in the British Isles (after the Rivers Shannon and Severn).

Its source is conventionally given as Thames Head in Gloucestershire (but see below under 'Thames Head') and it flows into the North Sea near Tilbury, Essex and Gravesend, Kent, via the Thames Estuary.

Thames Head

Thames Head is a group of seasonal springs that arise between the villages of Coates and Kemble in the Cotswolds. The spring water comes from the limestone aquifers of the Cotswolds. One or more of these springs are traditionally identified as the source of the River Thames, the one marked by a memorial stone and with a signpost indicating the start of the Thames Path, is at Grid Reference 980 995 at 110m above sea. A more reliable flow comes from Lyd Well, a little further south at Grid Reference 989 984. In very dry periods though, up to 10 km of the Upper Thames can be dry!

For a drone video of the Upper Thames in full flow in January 2023, click [here](#) (YouTube).

For many people, the true source of the Thames is at Seven Springs though, on the dip slope of the Cotswolds escarpment south of Cheltenham, further north and much higher up (200m above sea). It is the source of the River Churn, which flows through Cirencester and to the Thames at Cricklade. It flows all year, unlike the Upper Thames, which is a winterbourne. As it is 23 km further from the mouth of the Thames, the adoption of Seven Springs as its source would make the Thames the longest river in the British Isles. On top of this, the Churn also has a tributary that is further from its own source...

Thames & Severn Canal/Sapperton Canal Tunnel

The Thames and Severn Canal (T&SC) was completed in 1789 as part of a cargo route from Bristol and the Midlands to London, linking England's two largest rivers for better trade. The 46 km (29 mi) route climbs through the Golden Valley, tunnels through the Cotswold escarpment, and emerges near the source of the Thames. At its eastern end, it connects to the navigable Thames at Inglesham Lock near Lechlade, while at its western end, it connects to the Stroudwater Navigation at Wallbridge, and thence the River Severn. It had one short branch to Cirencester. Sapperton Canal Tunnel underneath the summit of the Cotswolds Edge was the longest canal tunnel in Britain when built at 3,490m and remains the second-longest complete tunnel. It was built by lowering 26 shafts along its course and tunnelling out from the base of those shafts until meeting another tunnel section. The spoil was left to the side of the shaft entrances above ground.

The T&SC had always had to deal with water supply problems as no supply reservoirs had been built. On top of that, the porous limestone ground around the higher parts of the canal led to high levels of leakage, and springs breaking into Sapperton Tunnel even enabled a reverse flow out of the canal during dry periods. Even before competition from the railways took much of any canal's traffic, most of the Bristol to London trade had used the Kennet and Avon Canal (opened in 1810) instead, as it provided a much shorter route than the T&SC. Consequently, most of it was abandoned in 1927, the remainder in 1941.

A partial restoration project is ongoing and being led by the Cotswolds Canals Trust.

Monarch's Way

The Monarch's Way is a waymarked linear 990 km (615 mi) long-distance footpath in England that approximates the escape route taken by King Charles II in 1651 after being defeated in the Battle of Worcester. It runs from Worcester via Bristol and Yeovil to Brighton. The waymark is yellow and shows a picture of the ship *The Surprise* above the Prince of Wales's three-point feathered crown which is superimposed on a Royal Oak tree (which is at Boscobel House) in black.

Macmillan Way

The Macmillan Way is a 470 km (290 mi) waymarked linear long-distance footpath linking Boston, Lincolnshire to Abbotsbury, Dorset. It is promoted to raise money for the Macmillan Cancer Relief.

Palladian Way

The Palladian Way is a 200 km (125 mi) waymarked linear long-distance walk through 'middle England'. It is named after the classical style of architecture established by Andrea Palladio in 17th century Italy and visits some of the greatest estates between Buckingham and Bath, both towns with Palladian Bridges still in existence (two out of four in England). It also passes Pulteney Bridge, one of two 'housed bridges' in England. The path was created by Guy Vowles: <https://guysrambles.co.uk/palladian-way/>.

Bathurst Estate/Cirencester Park/Cirencester Park House

The Bathurst family originally resided near Warbleton, East Sussex, but their castle was ruined in the Civil War and the estate lost. A farm and wood east of Warbleton are still carrying the name. The current 61 km² estate near Cirencester started with the purchase by Sir Benjamin Bathurst of what was then Oakley Grove in 1695, as a gift to his eldest son, who became the 1st Earl Bathurst. In 1716 the Sapperton Estate including Oakley Wood was added and with advice from his friend, the poet Alexander Pope, Cirencester Park was created out of parts of the estate as one of the greatest privately-owned parks of the 18th century and one of the finest forest landscapes with some of the most stunning vistas in England. It is defined by radiating avenues terminating in viewpoints, follies and statues and covers 12.1 km².

Bathurst was an early proponent of the Gothic Revival style and the many follies in the park reflect that. The park contains 13 buildings listed Grade II or II*. Additionally, Cirencester Park House is also Grade II* listed. It was built on the foundations of Oakley Grove, a Tudor-Jacobean house belonging to the Danvers family, which may have replaced the original Cirencester Castle (destroyed by King Stephen in 1142). Unusually for a stately home, the Park sits within the town of Cirencester, screened from it by a massive yew hedge, reputedly the tallest in the world (12m high, 10m wide and 140m long).

Subsequent Earls were patrons of the Arts and Crafts movement, when Ernest Gimson and the Barnsley brothers settled at Pinbury Park on the Cirencester estate in 1894.

The estate includes much of the villages of Sapperton and Coates, including Pinbury Park, and lays claim to containing the principal source of the River Thames.

<https://www.bathurstestate.co.uk/>

Cirencester/Corinium Dobunorum

Cirencester lies on the River Churn, a tributary of the River Thames, on the lower dip slopes of the Cotswold Hills, and is the largest town in the Cotswolds at about 20,000 population. It is a commuter town for larger centres such as Cheltenham, Gloucester, Swindon and Stroud and the home of the Royal Agricultural University, the oldest agricultural college in the English-speaking world.

The Roman name for the town was Corinium Dobunorum, with Corinium a reference to the river Churn and Dobunorum one to the British tribe of the *Dobunni* who ruled the area at the time. It was an important early Roman area, on the frontier of the Empire, and The Romans built a fort around AD 49 where the Fosse Way crossed the Churn, to help to defend it. When the frontier moved to the north after the conquest of Wales, this fort was closed and its fortifications levelled (around the year 70), but the town flourished under the name Corinium as the tribal capital of the Dobunni. Later, two other main Roman roads led through Corinium: Akeman Street, and Ermin Street. When a wall was built around the Roman city in the late 2nd century, it enclosed 1 km², making Corinium the second-largest city by area in Britain and it is now generally thought to have been the capital of Britannia Prima, one of the provinces of Roman Britain. Today, only a short section of Roman Town Wall and the remnants of the Amphitheatre (the second largest in Britain at the time) remain in view, and the road network only partly reflects the Roman street grid. Under the West Saxons, the town was fortified in the 5th or 6th centuries and then the stage for The Battle of Cirencester in 628AD.

An Augustinian Abbey was demolished after the Dissolution and the dominant church building now is St. John the Baptist, one of the largest parish churches in the country. It is often referred to as 'The Cathedral of the Cotswolds' and a fine example of a 'Wool Church'.

The heated open air swimming pool is one of the oldest in England and its water is sourced from springs. For a further exploration of the town, try the Town Walk brochure published by Cirencester Civic Society.

WALK DIRECTIONS

Alight from the train at **Kemble Station** on platform 2 and walk over the well-hidden overbridge to platform 1, with its sheltered garden, wedged between the London bound and the Cirencester bound platform (all that is left is short sidings), and then passing its (morning only) café **Off The Rails** off to the right beside the waiting room, and *turn right* out of the station building into a large car park. Walk past the **bus stop for services from and to Cirencester** and continue ahead between parked cars (there is no pavement along the three lanes of parked cars). This is the unmarked start of the **Wysis Way** (WW). In 220m *turn left* along **Windmill Road** with WW and NCN Route 45 markers on an electricity pole. In 70m *turn right* with a public footpath signpost ('to Thames Path') over a stile to the right of a metal field gate and follow a right-hand pasture boundary. You have a ditch away to the left (often dry).

In 300m cross a stile to the right of a metal field gate, with **Thames Path** (TP) and **Thames & Severn Way** (T&SW) markers, and continue in the same direction with a wooded belt on the right, flanking the line of the **dismantled railway to Cirencester** up a high bank. In 90m you reach an unrailed wooden bridge over the ditch on the left by a three-way signpost, just before the path bears to the right and with a river bed just ahead. The return route comes up the path from the road ahead. The 'river' is the **River Thames**. *Turn left* across the wooden bridge over the ditch with a **WW** marker. The Thames in its upper stretch is a **winterbourne river**, fed solely by springs from the underground limestone aquifers. After prolonged dry periods, the river bed here **can be entirely dry!** Stay close to the river on the right and in 100m follow it curving to the right along a **deemed permissive path** (judged by signs of usage), where the marked right of way on the OS map veers left to converge with the left-hand field boundary.

In 270m continue in the same direction where the river loops briefly to the right and in 150m you reach the far-right corner of this field by a Cotswold **stone wall with some drainage holes** stretching across the river. The last more or less reliable water supply to the Thames is away to the right of the field corner just inside the wood: follow a path to the left of the river and the right of a wooden fence and *curve to the right* with it, crossing the often dry culverted inflow from the springs higher up the Thames and in 70m you get to **Lyd Well**. Return into the field and **either** continue along the deemed permissive path by *turning hard right* through a set of metal field gates either side of a concrete farm track and then for 430m along the riverbed to the Thames Head, where a clear path joins from the left behind from the field boundary (see next para) **or** take the public footpath by *turning right* in the field for 60m and *turn right* through a set of wooden gates either side of a concrete farm track and follow a left-hand field boundary. In 350m *bear right* (335°) across the field with a marker post, aiming for a gate between two electricity poles at the upper field corner by a busy road.

[But for the **Flood Diversion** and **The Thames Head Inn**, continue ahead and follow the route as shown on the route map.] In 120m you pass what is (incorrectly) named on the OS map as the **Thames Head**: the upper end of a narrow channel of water into which the springs higher up the course disgorge their flow (when there is one, which is not very often). The trees above the right-hand side of the field conceal the disused **Thames & Severn Canal**. This lower part of the meadow can be soggy or even flooded after heavy rain from the flow from the springs higher up. In 210m you reach the wooden gate by a road to the left of the culvert through which water from the springs higher up flows when there is a flow. [**Note:** '**King Athelstan's Mounting Block**' can be found 100m away on the right at the foot of the road embankment; it is almost a metre high and believed to be a **Saxon boundary stone or Roman milestone**.]

The road (the **A433**) runs on the course of the **Fosse Way**, a Roman Road that initially formed **the western frontier of Roman rule** here. It ran from Exeter/Isca Dumnonio-

rum to Lincoln/Lindum Colonia via Cirencester/ Corinium Dobunorum. Go up some steps and cross the road a little to the right. In 15m *turn right* through a couple of metal field gates and *turn left* in another river meadow to follow a car wide track along its left-hand boundary. The field has a pronounced if shallow bottom; after heavy rain this will be flooded and may even have some flowing water from the springs further along. This is **Trewsbury Mead** and the railway runs away to the left at a higher level (site of the former Tetbury Road Station, preceding Kemble Station), and the disused canal away to the right also at a higher level. [**Note:** the onwards path may be impassable at the far end of the field, in which case return back across the road and pick up the **Flood Diversion** as shown on the route map.]

In 330m go through a metal gate-within-a-field-gate in a drystone wall and *bear right* with the TP along an intermittent line of trees, ignoring a footpath turning left. [**The Flood Diversion** joins from the left.] In 270m go through a redundant metal gate with markers and *veer to the right* to a **monument stone** 110m away, marking the official **Source of the River Thames**, a mostly rather sad looking dry hole in the ground, framed by a ring of rocks (but a bubbling spout after prolonged rain). [For a link to a video showing this meadow and **the whole stretch of the Thames just walked in full flow**, check the notes on page 3.] There is a signpost marking the start of the **Thames Path**, it being '**185.2 miles 298 km to Woolwich, London**' (the Foot Tunnel being the current end of the Thames Path) and '**232 miles 374 km Source to Sea**'.

You are **at 110m above sea**. The highest point of the Main Walk, just after lunch, will be at 199m above sea. There will be no more rivers, streams or streamlets higher up though, as all rainfall seeps away quickly into the limestone ground to resurge at springs like this one here. *Bear left* from the previous direction further up the field and in 50m you pass a disused quarry on the left. In 80m go over a stile to the right of a metal field gate at the corner of the **Trewsbury Camp Iron Age Hillfort Site** (multivallate, 6 hectares in size) rising on the right beyond the disused canal's embankment and continue along a car wide right-hand field boundary. In 140m go over a ladder stile over a drystone wall and continue in the same direction and in another 180m over another one and continue along a rising car wide track. In 60m you come to a **Monarch's Way** (MW) signpost with a **Macmillan Way** (MMW) sticker by a bridge over the overgrown canal (**Trewsbury** or **Coatesfield Bridge** on the OS map).

Here you have a choice:

For the Short and Ultra Short Walks, cross the bridge and in 20m *turn right* through a metal field gate. Pick up the directions below under **Short and Ultra Short Walks**.

For the Medium and Main Walks, *turn left* through a wooden gate with the MW, signposted 'Tunnel House 1 m, Sapperton 3 ½ m'). You follow the former towpath of the canal with a wall on the left and greenery to the right, slowly taking over the canal bed. In 480m pass an embankment across the canal, supposedly built by a farmer for livestock movements (although it's not leading anywhere useful on this side). In 200m the path has not only risen above the level of the canal but also of that of the field on the right-hand side beyond the canal. You can now see the church tower in the village of **Coates**, passed through on the Medium Walk. In 100m you go under the picturesque **Skew Railway Bridge** and continue along the canal. In 120m, just before a stop lock on the right, you pass the derelict **Coates Round House** on the left. This is one of five former **lengthsman's cottages** built 1791-2 along the canal. Originally rendered, it had an inverted conical roof for collecting rainwater, ground floor stabling (later converted to living accommodation), an outshut (lean to) addition to the rear, walled gardens and a composting outside toilet, all still evident if ruined.

From here, the canal is regularly cleared of vegetation by volunteers of the **Cotswold Canal Trust**. You continue along the elevated towpath and in 250m *fork right* to in 50m go under the **Tarlton (road) Bridge**. There are **Stop Planks** (or Stanking Planks) in place here (used to wedge into slots at pinch points of the canal to create temporary dams (stanks) and enable dewatering of a canal stretch either for repairs or in case of an existing breach to control water loss), damming water from springs within the 3,490m long **Sapperton Canal Tunnel** as well as any rain water. [Notes: after prolonged wet weather the planks can be overflowing into the lower parts of the canal. The stretch of the canal to the tunnel is called the **King's Reach**: it is wider than normal to allow barges to moor up to await their turn through the tunnel.]

In 350m you reach the grand **Coates Portal** of the tunnel with its doric columns and rusticated masonry and an info panel ('Sapperton Canal Tunnel') and *fork up to the left* to the level of the bridge over the tunnel by another info panel ('The Cotswolds Canals'), with the currently closed **Tunnel House Inn** a little to the left. The **Palladian Way** joins from the left. *Turn right* to cross the tunnel and in 40m the tarmac lane turns right and an earthen path turns left by a wooden gate into a higher pasture ahead.

Here you have a choice:

For the Medium Walk, continue in the same direction through the wooden gate into the pasture and pick up the directions below under **Medium Walk**.

For the Main Walk, *turn left* along the track with MMW, WW and T&SW markers on a fence plank. In 125m you enter **Hailey Wood**, part of the **Bathurst Estate**, through a wooden gate to the left of a wooden field gate and follow a wide forest track. The track gently ascends into the wood and in 250m, at a four-way track junction, you *turn right* with a marker post under a railway bridge and *turn left* on the far side with the track and a marker post. You have higher ground on both sides and in 250m ignore a right turning track by a marker post (leading to **Hailey Wood Sawmill**). The track curves to the left and in 150m you ignore a left turning track, and in 50m ascend gently. In 90m by a marker post you cross a car wide track on the brow of this rise (you can see a railway bridge away on the left). In 50m ignore a right fork and continue uphill with a marker post. In 70m the gradient eases and in 60m you cross a track and *veer to the right* by a marker post. The track is now at a higher level than the railway line, which is briefly visible on the left.

In 40m you can see **a fenced uncapped tunnel air shaft** some distance away to the left as the track curves to the right and in 100m runs parallel to the tunnel (now much below the ground). In 30m you pass **a fenced uncapped tunnel air shaft** some 30m away to the left and in 50m a marker post by a four-way junction (with another railway bridge visible to the left) and continue in the same direction. In 40m you pass **a fenced uncapped tunnel air shaft with its spoil heaps** some 30m away to the left and in 75m cross a track by a marker post. The end of the wood is now visible and in 60m you pass **a fenced uncapped air shaft with its spoil heaps** on the left. The track veers to the right away from the line of the canal and in 100m you leave the wood through a wooden gate and *veer right* (due N) along a clear grass path between arable fields. You have an audible road ahead and **Sapperton Plantation** above it and beyond.

In 200m go through a double metal field gate, cross the **A419 Stroud Road** and continue in the same direction with a two-way MMW signpost through another double metal field gate and uphill along a grassy strip between fields. In 240m go through a drystone wall gap onto a tarmac lane and *turn left* along it with a footpath signpost. The lane is ascending gently and you have fine views on the left into the valley below. In about 200m the terrain levels out (at spot height 184m on the OS map) and then bears to the right before going through a shallow dip and in 320m from bearing right, a

signposted public footpath joins from the left. In the field on the left, there is a beech-topped **spoil heap from some of the shafts used to build the canal tunnel** (here some 65m below ground), and in 50m and another 130m there are some more. In 70m you reach a four-way road junction.

[!] *Turn right*, signed 'Sapperton ½, Daglingworth 3 ½, Historic Church'). The lane rises gently and in 150m a signposted bridleway joins from the left along the westerly end of the **Broad Ride** through **Cirencester Park**. Continue along the road and in 50m you pass an unusual small **OS height point** in a metal fenced area ('594.88 ft above Datum'). In 40m *turn left* ('Sapperton ¼, Historic Church') along an unnamed road. In 50m there is a walkable grassy strip amongst trees on the right and in another 220m you pass the first houses in **Sapperton**. You reach **The Bell at Sapperton** in 140m.

Continue along the lane, in 50m passing **Sapperton Village Hall**, and in another 70m you reach a three-way lane junction, with a dropping churchyard ahead and with fine views from a point a little to the left into the valley of the **River Frome/Stroudwater**, the **Golden Valley** and a signposted bridleway turning right uphill. Enter the churchyard of **St. Kenelm's Church, Sapperton** 60m away, passing some very old yew trees. **Even better views into the valley** can be had by following a public footpath to the left of the church for 30m into a steep pasture. Return up the hill along the footpath and *turn left* along the bridleway with a MMW signpost through a wooden kissing gate to the right of a wooden field gate, ignoring the lane turning hard left downhill. In 80m, by a (padlocked) wooden gate on the right, *turn left* with the path between hedges.

[!] In 230m *turn right* through a wooden field gate on the right with a 'Private Property – Bathurst Estate' sign. You go gently uphill **Sapperton Hill** along a broad grassy area between hedges, the '**Bishop's Walk (Horse Ride)**' as per the OS map, with deemed Permissive Access (judged by obvious signs of public usage), same as in the upcoming larger parts of the **Bathurst Estate**. In the back, you have increasingly fine views of the tight valley below, as you walk up to the highest point of the walk. The gradient eases and in 600m from the gate you pass a trigpoint on the left in the hedge, **at 199m above sea**. In 130m go through a double wooden field gate to cross a road and go through a wooden gate to the right of a double wooden field gate opposite into **Sapperton Park**, with a **Bathurst Estate Permissive Access Notice**.

You have **Sapperton Plantation** on the right and **Hanover Firs** on the left and *fork left* along a track. In 70m leave the trees behind and continue in the same direction along a car wide track through arable fields (75°). In 370m go through a lightly wooded area and *bear right* with the track (95°) to enter **Cirencester Park** through a gap to the left of a wooden field gate. You now continue in a straight line for 1.2 km to Alfred's Hall. **In more detail:** in 250m ignore a clear right turn and in 120m cross the **Park Corner Ride**. In 130m ignore a left turn and in 160m you cross the broad **Overley Ride**. In 270m ignore a left bearing track, leading to **The Wood House**, which in 170m you pass, somewhat away to the left. You then pass the crumbling (and currently protected by scaffolding) folly of a ruin that is **Alfred's Hall** (1721, Grade II* listed, "probably the first Gothick sham ruin to be built in England").

Ignore a right turning wide grassy ride and 40m from the end of the ruin, *fork right* along a forest track, which in another 40m curves further to the right (155°). In 150m continue in the same direction along a car wide track joining from the left behind. In 80m you cross the **Barnsley Ride** and in 300m curve to the left with the track, now with the **Broad Ride** just to the right. [Note: The Broad Ride runs for 8.0 km from its westerly end at Sapperton overlooking the Golden Valley to the Cirencester entrance, with the Parish Church dominating the view in that direction. It is worth stepping onto it and walking along it for the vistas, but a large part of the length is through rough grass, so you may prefer walking on what tracks are available to the side of the Broad Ride.]

In 180m you pass two **Horse Guards** shelters (Grade II* listed) and ignore a broad ride on the right. In 140m ignore a left turning track and in 260m *bear right* with the track across the Broad Ride and continue to its right. In 130m, where the track bears right into a wood and another one joins from the left, *veer to the left* across grass and in 30m go through a fence gap and continue in the previous direction uphill a grassy slope and then down through a steep dry valley (**Rough Hills** on the OS map).

[!] But see below note *) [!] [In 440m at the bottom of the grassy slope, you go over a stepless stile in a fence line and re-ascend steeply, on a grassy ride between trees. In 80m cross a tarmac lane and continue steeply up the grassy ride. The Medium Walk has joined from the right along the lane from **Two Mile Lodge**.]

***)** At time of writing the route ahead is closed 'For Grassland Management'. **So, take this alternative route:** *veer right* through the trees along a clear footpath, some 30m to the left of the car wide track. Both descend gently through **Rough Hills Plantation** and in 430m you emerge from the trees at a bend in a tarmac lane. *Turn left* uphill along the lane (signed on the right for 'Ewe Pens Farm, Leisure Area, Polo'), rising out of the valley. The Medium Walk has joined from the right along the lane from **Two Mile Lodge**. In 280m, still rising and where a grassy track joins from the left below out of a fenced grassy slope (the 'Rough Hills'), you *turn right* up the grassy ride.

****) In 40m** you are on top of the rise and have fine views along the Broad Ride of the church spire in Cirencester and of the Horse Guards shelters in the back. In 60m the trees on the left discontinue and you can see the **Ivy Lodge** (Grade II listed) and **one of the Polo Grounds** in the park. A car wide gravel track joins from the left behind and is easier to walk on than the grass. In 280m you pass a toilet block on the left. In 80m you can see the **Round Tower** (Grade II* listed) on the left ahead and in 220m cross a tarmac drive leading to it. In 280m you reach **Seven Rides**, a junction of seven rides, with the **Pope's Seat** on the left (Grade II* listed, named after Alexander Pope).

Here you have a choice:

For the direct route into Cirencester, continue in the same direction along the grassy Broad Ride. In 280m you cross a concrete drive with some gate posts away to either side and in 400m continue in the same direction at a three-way tarmac path junction. **Dogs are allowed in this part of the park.** In 700m you cross a gravel track leading to a hexagonal building on the left, **The Hexagon** (Grade II* listed), and in 50m reach a four-way junction of tarmac drives and paths by an info panel ('Conserving the Broad Avenue'). All other Walk Options join from the right. Pick up the directions at the quintuple asterisk below *********).

For the recommended route, *bear right* (i.e.: do not *turn right*) on a bearing of 130° along a ride slightly narrower than the Broad Ride and the right turning ride, towards a tall monument visible in the distance. In 140m you cross a gravel forest track and continue along gravel and in 80m pass a crumbling stone wall in the trees on the right, after which a couple of tracks from the right. In 160m where the track curves to the left to stay to the left of a triangular wooded area, you continue in the same direction across grass towards the monument and in 50m emerge from **12 Acre Copse** and continue in the same direction towards **The Queen Anne Monument** (Grade II* listed). You pass a couple of clumps of trees on either side and in 230m cross a circular gravel path.

In another 170m, at the monument, *turn left* along the broad ride heading towards **Cirencester Park House**, which has come into view (75°). In 170m you cross the circular gravel path and commence in the direction of the house and the Parish Church. In 260m go through a wooden field gate and continue in the same direction downhill and in 200m cross a tarmac drive from the right up to the Tennis and Cricket Clubs on the left. The Short Walk has joined from the right along the tarmac drive.

***)) In 130m you go over a stepless stile to the right of a (padlocked) wooden field gate and in 40m reach a tree-lined tarmac drive this side of the private area of the park. **Dogs are allowed in this part of the park.** The Dog Walkers variant of the Short Walk joins from the right. *Turn left* along the drive, gently uphill.

****)) You have some fenced tennis courts away on the left and in 100m from the end of them meet the **Broad Ride** through the park at a four-way junction of tarmac drives and paths by an info panel ('Conserving the Broad Avenue') and with a hexagonal building on the left, **The Hexagon** (Grade II* listed). There are fine last views to the left through the park towards Sapperton. *Turn right* towards Cirencester.

*****)) En route you pass the **Beano in the Park** tea stop and a last info panel and in 450m leave the park through the elaborate iron **Cecily Hill Gates**. Follow Cecily Hill (road) gently downhill, passing first **The Barracks** on the left (former HQ of the Royal North Gloucestershire Militia), then a row of houses, including **The Old Dolphin** (the last pint was pulled in 1930), and finally the **Tontine Building** (tontine = a type of investment scheme popular in the 17th and 18th centuries).

At the bottom of the road at a T-junction with Park Street/Thomas Street in a bend, *turn left* along **Thomas Street**. Ignore a left turning signposted footpath along a millstream, the **Gumstool Brook** ('Riverside Walk, Swimming Pool') and in 50m *turn right* across the road to continue along **Coxwell Street**. You pass the **Woolgatherers' Courtyard** on the right, as well as several other noteworthy buildings (**wool merchants' houses and weaver's cottages**) along this quiet side street and in 130m **The Old Baptist Church** on the right (one of the oldest in England, but a private residence for a few years now). In another 80m at a T-junction with **Dollar Street/Gosditch Street**, *turn right* along Gosditch Street. In 80m you pass a **Market Place West** marker post and a MW sign on a street signpost and *veer left* towards the entrance of **St. John the Baptist**, the parish church, passing **Henry's Steakhouse** on the right.

At the church entrance you have a choice:

For an Out-and-Back into the Abbey Grounds to a 50m long remnant of the **Roman Town Wall**, *turn hard left* along a tarmac path (i.e.: further left than into the churchyard, which is also worth exploring though) and in 70m, at a three-way junction of tarmac paths, *turn left* ('Norman Arch') for 30m to the former terrace of **Abbey House** (away to the left behind a wall) and some wooden sculptures of monks and an info panel of the demolished **Augustinian Abbey of St. Mary** whose ground plan is marked in the grassy area in front of the panel. Return to the three-way junction and *turn left* ('Roman Wall') downhill into the valley of the **River Churn**. You pass a toilet block, a memorial bench from 1887, the **Gumstool Brook** on the right and several right turns into residential areas and in 350m cross the outflow of a lake fed by the Churn (the former abbey fish ponds) on a footbridge and cross a tarmac path. In 40m *turn right* with the path with **The Churn** now on your left behind trees and the audible Ring Road beyond that, and in 80m you reach an info panel close to **The Roman Town Wall and one of the bastions**. Return the way you came, back to the Parish Church.

Else, *turn right* in front of the church past a **Market Cross** and stay to the right of a free standing building by the church to continue ahead along **Black Jack Street**, to the right of **The Crown** pub. You pass **Keith's Coffee Shop** and **Cote Brasserie** on the right. In 20m, in a courtyard on the right (Templar Mews), you find **He Says She Waffles** and on the left in another alleyway (and after a left turn in 25m) **Luxe Café Bar**. In another 20m on the right in another courtyard (The Stableyard), there are **La Robina** tapas bar and restaurant and **Heather's Café**. Continue past **The Golden Cross** to **Jack's Tearoom & Kitchen** at a junction with Silver Street/Park Street.

Continue ahead along **Park Street** for 40m past the award-winning **Corinium Museum** on the right, to a point where you get views of the high wall around Cirencester Park and the **tallest yew hedge** in the world, at 12 metres! Turn around to go back towards Black Jack Street [!] but *fork right* along **Silver Street**. In 70m you reach **Castle Street** at a T-junction. There are three Italian restaurants down on the right along Castle Street: **La Passione**, **Pizza Express** and **Amore Mio** (down an alleyway off to the left, in the Old Brewery Grounds) as well as two more coffee shops: **Pretty & Pip Coffee Shop** and **Fora Coffee**. But *turn left* past **Coffee #1** and the **Black Horse** pub opposite and then **Malt & Anchor** fish & chips on the left. At a four-way road junction, with the Market Place ahead, dominated by the **Medieval Town Hall** built above the church's South Porch, continue in the same direction along **Market Place**.

You pass **Lynwood & Co Café** and the **King's Head Hotel**, then **MBB** brasserie and **Diversitea** tearoom in the **Corn Hall** on the right. **The Fleece at Cirencester** hotel, pub and restaurant is opposite and then you have **The Bear Inn** on the right at the corner of **North Way**. There is a **bus stop for services to Swindon** ahead on the left, as well as, down **The Woolmarket** (courtyard) on the left, **Café Mosaic** and **The Hop Kettle** taproom. [!] *Turn right* at the Bear Inn along **North Way**. In 50m *bear left* with the road and in 40m *bear right* with it, with a large car park on the left. In 60m *turn left* with the road (**South Way**), passing the **bus stop for services to Kemble Station**. In 120m *turn right* at a four-way junction along **Lewis Lane** (the central NE to SW road in the Roman Town, linking the **Verulamium and Bath Gates; The Forum and Basilica** were located across the junction to the left as you approach it). In 60m pass **The Twelve Bells** pub and in 70m cross a road at a set of lights. Now along **Querns Lane**, in 270m you ignore Querns Road on the left just before meeting **Sheep Street/Querns Hill** at a T-junction (the site of the **West Gate in the Roman Town Wall**). **Tierra y Mar** Spanish restaurant is a couple of hundred metres away to the right.

Turn left along **Sheep Street**, gently rising with the road and curving to the right with it and in 230m cross the **A419**, part of the dual carriageway Ring Road, which runs in a cutting. On the far side of the crossing, *turn right* along **Somerford Road**, leading in 50m to **Cotswold Avenue**. Ignore the left forking Mount Street and in 35m *turn right* into a car park and *turn left* along a gravel path towards an obelisk, signed 'Amphitheatre via Obelisk and Viewing Platform'. In 20m walk up some steps on the right to the obelisk and an info panel on the **Cirencester Obelisk** (19th century) on its far side. Continue along the gravel path and cross a deep ditch on a two-railed footbridge. You *turn left* up some steps up an earth bank and follow the path around to the right to the **Viewing Platform** 30m away with a map of the **Roman Road Network in Britain**. Go down some steps and *turn right* along the gravel path through this former limestone quarry towards the remnants of the **Roman Amphitheatre**.

In 50m, where the gravel path bears to the left, you *veer right* to in 25m walk up the slope of the earth bank bowl of the amphitheatre. In 40m *turn right* along its top and in 70m you reach the town side entrance by an info panel (about the archaeological digs of the 20th century), with the Ring Road just beyond. *Turn hard left* from the previous direction through the bowl of the amphitheatre to another info panel on the far side, 100m away. Continue in the same direction away from the amphitheatre with **Querns Wood** to the right and in 20m *turn right* along a matted path through the grass. In 50m you enter this Community Woodland through the **Oak Entrance** by an info panel and map and immediately ignore a left turning stepped path to continue ahead ('Hospital').

In 75m, by a car park away to the right, you *turn left* ('Four Acres') and follow the path to the right in 30m and in 25m you *bear left* at a three-way signpost ('Four Acres') up some steps and in 35m leave the wood through the **Yew Entrance** into **Four Acres Field**, a grass meadow. Follow the right-hand edge to a road in 180m and leave the field through a metal gate onto **Chesterton Lane** and *turn left* along its opposite

pavement. In 20m *turn right* along a tarmac cul-de-sac with a bridleway signpost and immediately ignore a left forking path through a bike barrier. The car wide lane runs between the backs of house gardens and in 470m you go through bike barriers and cross a road and continue in the same direction with a two-way signpost, still on tarmac. In 110m you leave the last house behind and the lane continues between arable fields, shielded by hedges. In 330m, by **Chesterton Farm**, you continue in the same direction to the right of a double wooden field gate along a gravel farm track.

In 270m *turn right* at a T-junction of bridleways and in 40m *turn left* with a footpath marker post along a grassy field boundary, ignoring the bridleway ahead. You have a part-collapsed drystone wall on the left. In 290m continue in the same direction through a hedge gap into the next field, now with **Chesterton Plantation** on the left, behind the drystone wall. In 300m at the far end of the wood, go through another hedge gap with a marker post and *turn left* along the wood's boundary. In 80m go through a metal field gate onto a gravel farm track and *turn right* along it, with **Ewen Copse** now on your left. In 120m continue in the same direction where the wood ends (ignore a footbridge on the left) and in 260m *turn left* at a T-junction of farm tracks (a Public Road as per the OS map), with **Field Farm Barn** visible away to the right. The Ultra Short Walk has joined from the right.

*****) In 300m you pass the first outbuildings of **Field Farm** on the left, just before the track curves to the left and in 100m pass the farmhouse on the right. In 80m you pass a couple of houses on the right and gently ascend with the now tarmac lane to in 90m cross the **dismantled railway line to Cirencester**. In 90m pass **Parkleaze Farm** on the left and in 160m cross the disused but here part water-filled **Thames & Severn Canal** on **Parkleaze Bridge** and in 50m continue in the same direction along a country lane at a bend (there is only a narrow bumpy grass margin on the right but also only little traffic). The T&SW runs along this road. In 400m, by the thatched **Blackbird Cottage** on the left, *turn left* with a bridleway signpost and in 10m *turn right* through a fence gap and follow an earth path, veering away from the road. Near the end of this 400m stretch you can spot a **miniature railway** in the garden of the large house on the right, just before emerging on the main road through **Ewen** village by a signpost, opposite **The Wild Duck Inn** (currently closed for a total refurbishment).

Cross the main road and continue to the left of the inn and in 80m *turn right* at a T-junction, with the inn on the right and some holiday accommodation on the left. In 120m continue in the same direction along the main road through Ewen and in 170m continue in the same direction along a right-hand pavement, where a road joins from the right ('Kemble 1'). In 80m the Thames Path joins from the left along another road and in 110m you pass a **bus shelter for services to Kemble**. In 130m the pavement discontinues and you walk on the grassy verge. In 300m, just beyond the last houses in Ewen, *turn left* across the road to a bench and a two-way TP signpost to continue along a footpath to the left of the road, shielded by a hedge. In 25m you have the **Thames River** on your left, a fast-flowing chalk stream after a wet period, but a trickle or even completely dry after long dry periods. In 20m the path re-joins the road and in 20m you cross it to *turn right* with a TP signpost, just before **Parker's Bridge** (on the OS map).

Here you have a choice:

For the direct route into Kemble, immediately *turn left* across a two-railed footbridge and pick up the directions lower down the page under **Direct Route into Kemble**.

For the Main Walk, ignore the footbridge and continue upstream to the right of the river with fields to the right. At times the river is hidden from view by trees or bushes but mostly it is visible. In 240m go through a boundary gap into the next field and

follow the river. In 60m enter a narrow woodland through a wooden gate and pick one of several paths through it (some areas can be muddy) and in 260m from the woodland's far end you go through a metal gate up to the **A429**. Cross it a little to the right (the dismantled railway line used to cross here over a bridge dismantled in 1964) and go through a wooden gate by a TP signpost and follow a clear path for 25m to the bridge over a tributary which you crossed in the morning.

Now re-trace your steps **to Kemble Station**: You have a wooded belt on the left (along the bottom of the bank carrying the dismantled railway line) and in 80m go over a stile to the left of a metal field gate and continue in the same direction along a grassy field boundary. In 320m in the far field corner, go over stile and *turn left* along **Windmill Road**. In 140m *turn right* along the second of two lanes into the station car park. The station is 260m away. London bound trains depart from the near platform 1. For **The Tavern Inn**, go over the overbridge to platform 2 and *turn left* out of the station through a small car park for 70m to **Station Road**, with the pub just opposite.

Direct Route into Kemble

You follow a made gravel path (a permissive path) along a left-hand field boundary with a wall and then the road on the left. In 100m ignore a wooden gate on the left and in 110m – by a footpath signpost by the road – ignore a metal field gate on the left but then *turn left* across a stile into a narrow pasture corner and *turn right* through it along a clear grass path, towards some distant houses. In 220m you go through a set of metal gates either side of a ditch and follow a rough grass path through a mildly overgrown field strip, with paddocks away to the left. In 100m *curve to the left* with the path and ascend gently towards a church spire ahead. In 90m go through a wooden kissing gate to the right of a metal field gate and *turn right* along the pavement of **School Road**. In 30m you pass a bus stop on the left and in 40m **Kemble Village Hall**. In 120m cross **West Lane** to continue ahead and in 90m cross the **A429** to continue ahead along **Windmill Road**. In 70m *turn left* along **Station Road** and in 230m cross the railway line, with the station visible away to the right and a large car park ahead. *Turn right* at a T-junction and in 35m, by **The Tavern Inn** on the left, *turn right* for 70m through another smaller car park to the station building and platform 2. The staircase of the bridge across to the London bound platform 1 is well-hidden.

Short and Ultra Short Walks

You now follow the **MW all the way to the fringes of Cirencester** (or a little less far in case of the Ultra Short Walk). In 40m emerge into the open with the outer ditch and rampart of **Trewsbury Camp** away on the right and gently ascend. In 150m, at the far end of the Camp, go over a stile and in 15m *veer left* a little through a (missing) gate to continue in the previous direction between fences. In 90m go over a stile by a concrete trough and in another 150m go over a stile and cross a tarmac lane. You continue in the same direction through a metal field gate with a two-way footpath signpost along a right-hand field boundary, in 110m continuing between trees. In 230m *turn left* through a wooden gate to the left of a metal field gate into a large pasture and *turn right* along a wide grassy fenced corridor within the field, with paddocks away to the left.

In 100m at the top of the very gentle rise you pass **Ashwell Pool** (on the OS map) on the right and now have fine views on the left across fields to **Bledisloe House** in Coates village. You continue with trees on the right along a field boundary and in 200m enter a belt of trees through a wooden gate to the left of a wooden field gate. In 30m continue in the same direction along the right-hand field boundaries of two subsequent fields and in 340m in the far-right corner of the second field, *turn left* with the boundary, ignoring a wide gap on the right (the right-of-way used to lead through that gap, but has been diverted). In 100m you reach a four-way public footpath junction where a car wide gravel track crosses by a couple of redundant stiles. One footpath joins along the field boundary ahead, another one from the left along the track, as does the **Palladian Way**. This is the Link Route from the Medium Walk. *Turn right* along the track.

*) You can see a large building complex ahead on the left, the **Royal Agricultural University**, passed soon enough on the Short Walk. In 150m you have the garden fence corner of **Field Barn Farm** on the right and in 40m, just past the farmhouse, *bear left* with the track to stay to the left of all farm buildings. In 30m continue in the same direction along the bridleway, a grassy track, ignoring the gravel track's right turn into the farmyard. You have an arable field on the left and a collapsing wall on the right and descend towards a copse in a shallow valley. In 300m continue along a path to the right of the copse (hiding a disused quarry), with trees on the right. In 150m you continue between lines of trees and in another 130m along a grass path between arable fields. In 130m at the bottom of the drop, continue ahead along a car wide farm track down from the left, gently ascending. In 180m at the top of the rise, the farm track turns right (not a right-of-way, but with permissive access for walkers but not dogs), while the public footpath continues ahead along a grassy path between hedges.

Here you have a choice:

For the Ultra Short Walk, *turn right* along the car wide track. In 90m go through a wooden gate to the right of a double wooden field gate with a 'Private Property – No Dogs beyond this point without Permission' sign on the reverse. In 30m the track continues on tarmac by **College Farm's** buildings on the right and in 90m you go through a wooden gate to the left of a double wooden field gate. In 90m cross the **A429**, i.e.: **The Fosse Way**. You continue along a car wide farm track (a signposted public bridleway) and in 270m ignore another public bridleway joining from the left, and *bear right* with the track. In 450m a byway joins from the right and you continue in the same direction along the farm track, now a restricted byway. In 430m you pass **Field Barn Farm** and the track continues as a Public Road. In 140m a public footpath joins from the left along a car wide farm track. This is the Main Walk. Continue ahead and pick up the directions in the main walk text at the sextuple asterisk *********).

For the Short Walk, continue in the same direction along the enclosed grass path and in 100m go through a squeeze stile to the left of a wooden field gate into the grounds of the **Royal Agricultural University** and continue in the same direction along a grass path to the left of a minor ditch, past an info panel and map of the 'Wild Campus Cirencester' project with sports fields either side and the imposing university buildings away to the left. In 120m you pass a MW info panel on a stone on the right and cross the tree-lined avenue leading to the university from the A429 a little to the left, to continue along tarmac with more sports fields to the sides. In 50m you pass some changing rooms on the left and follow a tarmac path. In another 150m continue across grass through an area with some trees and benches, to the left of a fenced sports field.

The path converges with a hedge on the left and in 30m from the sports field you ignore a right forking grassy track. In 100m *turn right* with the path and in 80m go through a fence gap to the right of a double wooden field gate to the **A429** (i.e.: the **Fosse Way**). *Turn left* along its pavement. You pass a **bus stop for services into Cirencester** and

then in 90m a **milestone** (on the OS map) on this **Roman Road**, showing distances in Roman numerals: Cirencester I, Tetbury IX, Bath XXXII. In 220m you reach a large roundabout, where the **A419 Stroud Road** joins from the left. In 30m turn right to cross two arms of the A419 and then continue to the right of a couple of houses. In 120m, just before another **bus stop for services into Cirencester**, *turn left* along a tarmac path for 20m, staying to the left of the entrance to a subway crossing.

At a shared cycle and footpath, you have a choice:

For the Dog Walker's Option, *turn right* along the tarmac path, between a new car park behind a stone wall on the left and the subway entrance and the A road to the right. The road on this stretch is a dual carriageway and very busy at all times. In 170m a path joins on the left through a metal gate out of the car park and you continue in the same direction. In 90m, by the **Windsor Walk Gate**, *turn left* through a metal gate to the right of a metal car gate into **Cirencester Park**. In 30m you join a tarmac lane at a bend and continue ahead along the **Windsor Walk** to the right of **The Old Kennels** buildings, currently being converted to a visitor centre and café. The complex also contains **Corinium Ales' Micro-Brewery and Taproom**. You descend into a very shallow valley, soon with a wood on the right, containing '**The Lake**', and open pastures on the left. In 380m and 40m past the far end of the wood on the right, by a wooden field gate some 40m away to the left, you are level with the wide grassy ride from **Cirencester Park House** on the right to the **Queen Anne Monument** (Grade II* listed) up on the left. All Walk Options join from the gate on the left. Continue up ahead and pick up the directions in the main text at the quadruple asterisk ****).

For the Normal Short Walk, *turn left* for 20m to a bend in a tarmac lane and *turn right* across the car park approach to follow the lane, signed for the **Caravan and Motorhome Club**. In 40m ignore a pedestrian crossing leading on the left to Cirencester Sixth Form College and pass a 5 mile speed limit sign with a 'Shared Space – Drive With Care' notice. Follow the lane for 530m into **Cirencester Park**, ignoring another left turn to the college as well as the entrance to the Caravan Club. [Halfway along, a wooden gate on the right and a gravel path lead to The Old Kennels on the tree-lined Windsor Walk visible on the Dog Walkers Option.] You enter the park over a cattle grid or through a wooden gate to the left of it, at the bottom of a shallow grassy valley and in another 20m are on the wide grassy ride from **Cirencester Park House** on the right to the **Queen Anne Monument** (Grade II* listed) up on the left. The Main and Medium Walks join from the left. *Turn right* towards Cirencester Park House and pick up the directions in the main text at the triple asterisk ***).

Medium Walk

In 40m go through a wooden kissing gate and *veer down to the right* to a level railway crossing and on the other side *veer up to the left* to a corresponding wooden kissing gate and go into a large arable field. Follow a usually well-cleared path through the field (50°) to a gap in a drystone wall on the far side 200m away. Nearby, on the right on 150°, you can see the church spire in **Kemble**, and to the left of that and faraway (145°): two, then three wooded clumps on a ridge 30 km away. That is the north westerly part of the **Marlborough Downs** around **Barbury Castle**, not far from Avebury; The Ridgeway runs along it. You go through the wall gap into another large arable field and *veer a little to the right* to follow a grassy track between parts of it.

In 280m in the far corner of the field, go through a wide hedge gap with a marker post and continue along a wall along a right-hand field boundary. You pass **Church Farm** on the right and in 150m leave the field through another wide gap onto a track junction.

Another public footpath joins from the left and you continue in the previous direction and in 50m *turn right* into the churchyard of **St. Matthew's, Coates**. Follow a tarmac path to the left of the church and in 60m (the church entrance is 40m away to the right) leave the churchyard and descend into the village along an enclosed tarmac path. In 110m you meet **Trewsbury Road** at a bend, by the entrance to the rather grand **Old Rectory** on the left. *Bear right* along the pavement on the right. You pass some more grand houses on the left, with views across paddocks into the valley on the right.

In 230m you pass an unsigned **bus stop for services to Cirencester** on the left just before a road turns right ('Tarlton 1, Rodmarton 2') and the pavement switches to the left side of the road. *Turn left* across the road and immediately **[!]** *turn left* through a drystone wall stile with a footpath signpost into a lightly wooded meadow and follow the left-hand boundary hedge. The boundary curves a little to the right and in 180m you go through a wooden kissing gate to reach a four-way footpath junction by a wooden kissing gate on the left and pastures in three directions. *Turn right* through the gate and cross the field to the far side. In 80m go through a wooden gate and continue to the main road through Coates 40m away, opposite an unsigned **bus stop for services to Stroud**. *Turn left* through the village past a war memorial. In 50m an unnamed road turns right, signed for '**Rural Skills Centre**'.

Here you have a choice:

For the Link Route to the Short Walk, *turn right* along the road. In 100m you have open fields on the left. In 230m, with the grand entrance gate to **Bledisloe House** 50m ahead, you *turn left* along a signposted footpath along **Manor Farm Road**. In 75m continue in the same direction along a concrete farm track, where the tarmac lane turns right into the farmyard, and in 230m *turn right* with the concrete track, with trees on the right. On the left you have views to the wooded **Cirencester Park**, beyond a shallow valley harbouring the **A419 Stroud Road**. In 100m you get fine (side) views of Bledisloe House by a metal field gate on the right and in 40m *bear left* with the track. You pass a fenced wood, a mobile phone transmission mast and the **Milking Parlour Farm** and go through a double metal field gate to *bear right* along a car wide track through arable fields. In 400m, at a four-way public footpath junction by a couple of redundant stiles, two footpaths join along field boundaries on the left and right. The Short and Ultra Short Walks join from the right. Continue ahead and pick up the directions in the Short and Ultra Short Walks text at the asterisk *).

For the Medium Walk, continue ahead through the village and in 400m leave it by a sewage treatment plant and continue along the quiet lane downhill into a shallow valley this side of the wooded **Cirencester Park**. In 750m, just before the **A419 Stroud Road**, *turn right* along a car wide farm track this side of a small plantation. The track veers left towards the road and in 170m you cross the A road towards a tarmac drive to the right of **Two Mile Lodge** (on the OS map) on the other side (signed '**Cirencester Park Polo Club**'). In 25m, with a double metal car gate and a **Bathurst Estate Permissive Access Notice** ahead, **[!]** *fork right* downhill another tarmac lane with a 'Pedestrian and Horse Access' sign a little ahead towards another double metal car gate and in 35m *turn left* through a metal gate and *turn up to the left* along a gravel path.

In 40m *turn right* along the tarmac drive into **Cirencester Park**. You have wooded slopes on either side of this dry grassy valley and in 350m the drive turns right by a sign ('Ewe Pens Farm, Leisure Area & Polo') where a couple of tracks and then a path join from the left out of **Rough Hills Plantation**. Continue uphill along the lane out of the valley. In 300m, still rising and by a low pipeline marker on the left, and where a grassy track joins from the left below out of a fenced grassy slope (the 'Rough Hills'), you *turn right* up the grassy ride. The Main Walk has joined from the left. Pick up the directions in the main walk text at the double asterisk **).