

Around Rodborough Common

Approx 5 miles

This walk is almost entirely on roads. However, it has wonderful views, beautiful flowers in spring and can be done at any time of the year. The roads are quiet.

Leave Church Green by Southbank turning left onto Southfield Road. At the junction, turn right onto Selsley Road and continue down the hill (the best pavement is on the right hand side until you are over the bridge) to the A46. Turn left here and cross the road at Scott's crossing to the Old Fleece. Take the road to the left of the Old Fleece (Rooksmoor Hill). Continue past the houses up the steep hill. This isn't a race, stop as many times as you need to. Unfortunately, there aren't any open views to provide a good excuse to stop. Ignore the first turning on the right leading to the King's Head it's too early for a drink! Take the next turning right and follow it round to the left. The gradient eases here to start with but gets serious again as you continue up Bowl Hill to the cattle grid.

Turn left at the top and get your breath back. The worst of the climbing is now over and you can start to enjoy the views across the Nailsworth valley to Selsley Common. Follow this road along the edge of Rodborough Common. Rodborough Fort is on the hill above you. As you approach the junction keep to the right hand fork. You are heading for the cattle grid across the road leading on to Dark Lane.

Go down Dark Lane and turn right onto Rodborough Lane. As you continue along here, you have views over Stroud and beyond. You are now heading towards Golden Valley at the other side of Rodborough Common. At the end of this road, look out for the old toll booth on the right hand corner. Take care crossing the road (Butterow Hill). You are heading for Butterow Lane on the opposite side. Follow this road along Golden Valley as it becomes Montserrat, Bagpath Lane and then Swells Hill. After passing Hillside Farm, look out for a road on the right turning sharply up hill. This is a much shorter climb than that tackled earlier in the walk and leads higher onto Rodborough Common.

Turn right at the junction. The flowers on this stretch are beautiful in spring. As you approach the end of this road (Winstone's ice cream is on your right) look out for a path through a car park on your left. This will lead you across the common to the road. Cross this carefully to the corner of the building opposite. The Bear Hotel is across to the left.

The next part of the walk is on a path across the common and the views are of the Nailsworth valley again. Keep with the top path alongside the wall. To start with, the path stays roughly with the wall but very shortly there is one point where you need to keep further left on the main path. It curves round and rejoins the wall. Follow the wall along a relatively narrow stretch and across the back edge of an outcrop to where it narrows at the head of a side valley. At the other side of the valley, there are three paths. The left hand one follows the edge of the valley. Turn left on this and follow it round. Pass a bench and after two large bushes, turn left onto another path towards a group of gorse bushes. The path goes straight through the middle but if preferred you can go round to the right. Follow the path downhill to the speed limit sign.

On reaching the road, you need to take the lower of the two roads to the right. This leads through the village of Kingscourt and surprisingly has better views than the higher road. Round about this junction, there is a path that leads past the end of a cottage, through the fields and down to Rooksmoor. It is difficult to follow and is often very muddy at the bottom. However, it is a short cut should you wish to take it.

For those sticking with the road (The Street) follow this round the hillside, eventually passing the King's Head and emerging onto Rooksmoor Hill. Go downhill to the main road. Turn left, cross the A46 at Scott's Crossing, outside the Old Fleece and continue in the same direction back to Woodchester. Turn right up Selsley Road and take the second left onto Southfield Road. Turn right at Church Road to return to Church Green.