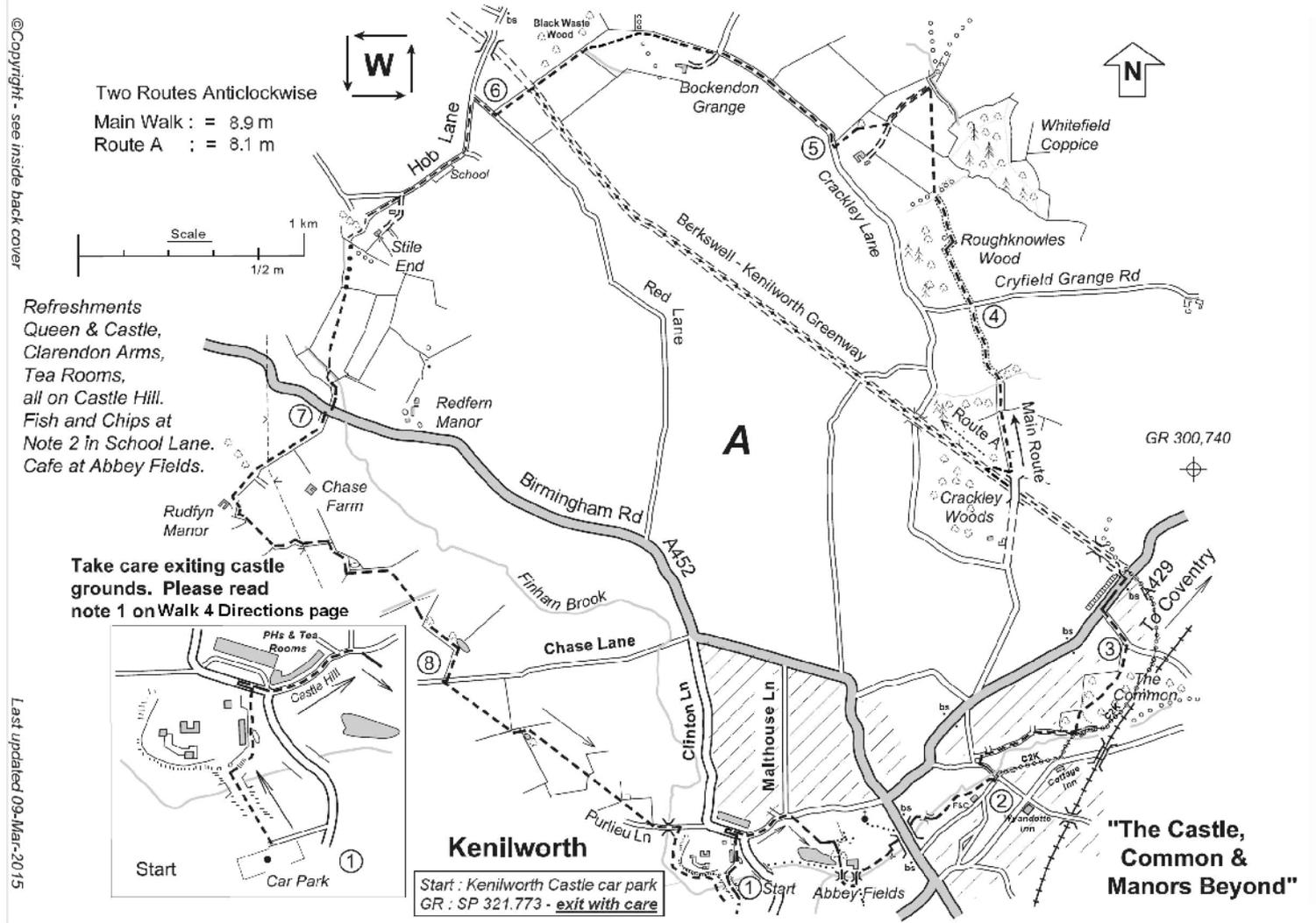


Main Walk (Take care exiting from Castle and car park area)

- Walk along the causeway towards the castle, **T/R** down steps just before metal gates. Follow round with castle walls on left to the k/g that leads to main road. **For safety T/L for 50m or so away from corner, before crossing busy road.** **T/R** along pavement, passing Queen & Castle, and left up Castle Hill. Shortly past Malthouse Lane **T/R** to cross over road & go down surfaced footpath into Abbey Fields. Leave surfaced path when wall corner comes in on right, **T/R**, wall left, down, thro' edge of small copse to the bottom with buildings on your left, lake on your right. **Fwd** over bridge, immediately **T/L**, **fwd** stream left to **T/L** over metal bridge. **T/R**, leave path, **fwd** fence left & stream right to pass under road (if flooded go over road). Shortly over another f/b to follow cycle path to junction with School Lane.
- T/L** & then shortly **T/L** again (over road bridge) after 100m **T/R** up narrow passage between gardens (care on exit), **T/R** along road to enter The Common. After 70m, at information board, **T/L** to take uphill bridle path that soon curves right, keep **fwd** on bridle path where footpath crosses & continue to Common Lane.
- T/L** & then at Coventry Road **T/R**, down road & at bridge, **T/L** up slope to the Berkswell-Kenilworth Greenway. (**Route A** see below). Continue **fwd** to go under the first bridge & after 50 metres, turn sharp right up ramp, thro' bridle gate at top, **T/L** along track, thro' bridle gate and along left side of field (hedge left) to go thro' bridle gate into enclosed path, **fwd** to f/b over stream & up path to road.
- Over road, down enclosed bridle path opposite to go thro' p/g into enclosed area. **Fwd** over culvert to go thro' k/g, just past bridle gate on right. **V/L** cross-field to go thro' p/g & **V/L** cross-field to junction with farm track at f/g. **Do not go thro' k/g.** With back to k/g, **fwd** up farm track to first hedge coming in on right. Thro' k/g on right, **H/L** cross-field to hedge line, keep hedge on right, & follow thro' bridle gate, p/g & s/b to road.
- T/R** along road until it turns sharp right. Thro' k/g on left, right of gate, **T/R**, hg-right to k/g on right (**do not go thro'**), **V/L** towards WMP, cross s/b, then aim for far left corner by wood crossing second s/b & thro' k/g. Hg-right to go **fwd** over Greenway via k/g & steps, continue **fwd**, hg-right to road.
- T/R** along road & then **T/L** into Hob Lane. Along pavement, (passing school) until it ends approx. 500m. **T/L** & enter drive, immediately **T/R** down narrow walkway. Keeping boundary on left follow through copse, turning right into enclosed path to go thro' k/g into field. **Fwd** hedge right. Continue to top corner & go thro' gap, **V/L** until you see the opposite hedge line. Aim for p/g left of centre & go over stream & p/g. **H/L** cross-field corner to go through gap, **T/R**, with hg-right thro' k/g onto main road.
- Over **busy** road, **fwd** up drive towards Rudfyn Manor. Top of drive, just before Manor, **T/L** (WMP), **fwd** to go thro' copse and hedge gap. **T/R**, hg-right, follow round left to outward hedge corner. **Fwd** cross-field to hedge ahead, **T/L**, hg-right, under OPL, at field corner **T/R**, hg-left, pass pool on left, continue around hedge, hg-left. At WMP at bend in hedge **T/R**, cross-field to gap in hedge. **Fwd** cross-field to top RH corner of small copse. Thro' copse, hg-right to another small copse, pool left, cross s/b, **T/R**, hg-right thro' k/g into Chase Lane.
- T/R** & shortly thro' k/g on left, **H/L**, cross-field thro' k/g in field corner. **T/L**, hg-left to field corner. Thro' k/g, thro' small copse, pool right, **H/R** cross-field towards castle. Thro' k/g, keep on same line to gate gap on right of ruin. **H/L** leading to track (Purlieu Lane), **T/L** & then after 130m thro' gap on right just before thatched cottage. Keep castle wall on left to go thro' defunct k/g, **T/R** along lower path to car park.

Route A The route can be shortened by using the Greenway. After joining it during direction 3 continue on it for nearly 3km (look out for Black Waste Wood on right, & park bench) to **T/L**, hg-right to road. Continue with Note 6.



WALK 4 "THE CASTLE, COMMON & MANORS BEYOND"

Start: Kenilworth Castle car park off Castle Road
Grid Ref: SP 280,720
Direction: Anticlockwise
Main Walk: 9.0 miles
Route A: 8 miles
OS Maps: Landranger 140
Pathfinder 955
Explorer 221

Parking: See above

In the Autumn as you ascend through the Common this walk is spectacular. The beech tree colours are superb.

It is well worth the visit just to see this part of Kenilworth at this time of the year.

One walker who checked this route was surprised that, after passing over the bridge in Bridge Street twice every Sunday for 37 years or more and being a keen and investigative local walker, he didn't know you could walk under it.

A leaflet is available for the Kenilworth Castle Millennium Trail (1.5 miles) from WCC.

Brief Information and Outline of the Route

This walk starts from the castle car park, "The Brays" in **Kenilworth** (*Chinewrde* in the DB, an enclosure of a woman called Cynehild). Cross the tilt yard bridge to what was the original entrance. The castle was probably founded by Geoffrey de Clinton in the 12th century. A mere once surrounded the castle with "The Pleasance" constructed for picnics (by Henry V) away from the castle. The castle was famously visited by Elizabeth I and written about by Sir Walter Scott. The castle was dismantled by Cromwell with only a few domestic buildings being left standing. It is now looked after by English Heritage. We now pass "Little Virginia", a community of thatched cottages, so called because potatoes are thought to have been first grown in this area.

Then onto Abbey Fields, sixty eight acres of them. The remains of St Mary's Abbey are here, built by Geoffrey de Clinton in the 12th century and demolished during the reign of Henry VIII. The church of St Nicholas close by, where Elizabeth I is said to have worshipped, is still in use. Follow Finham Brook and just before going under Townpool Bridge, look on its left side for an inscription carved above head height,

"A LARGE FLOOD 29 JULY 1834"

Follow the brook beside the new houses and over the bridge to Lower Lady's Hills to Kenilworth Common. Once quarried for sand and gravel, it became a local Nature Reserve on the 12th December 1991 (nature notes on board near entrance). At the path junction at Mill End are the old Water Works buildings, still supplying water to Kenilworth.

Up through the magnificent beech trees to join Common Lane and via the Kenilworth Road to the Kenilworth -Berkswell Greenway to Crackley. Walk north and then west to Burton Green pass the school in Hob Lane turn south (view of Redfern Manor) to cross Birmingham Road and up to Rudfyn Manor, its Tudor framework restored and still visible. The outbuildings are amongst

the oldest in the district. The Manor was once the property of the Abbey of Kenilworth. The walk is now at one of the highest points in Kenilworth. Cross fields to enjoy splendid views of the Castle and finally skirt the castle walls to the car park.

Wildlife

Abbey Fields holds considerable wildlife interest and includes a lake pool containing an array of wetland birds associated with this duck pond type feature. However, the pool also contains a deep wetland fringe, which attracts birds and insects to the area. Although Abbey Fields includes rough grassland the area needs time to develop a rich flora.

The other reserve is Kenilworth Common and this is probably a recently naturalised woodland. Up until the 19th century the area would have been used for grazing and therefore tree cover would have been limited. It is possible that species such as heather were present, which are now confined to the railway cutting. An area noted for its reptile population, it is the only local site known to contain all reptile species found in Warwickshire.

This walk passes through two woodland sites managed by Warwickshire Wildlife Trust. Crackley Wood is an ancient woodland which has been designated as a Local Nature Reserve and effort has been made to re-introduce ancient woodland management techniques such as coppicing. With its carpets of bluebells the subtle scent permeates the air during flowering.

Despite the seeming abundance of woodland on this walk, this is an area where recent woodland loss has been extensive. This includes the north of Crackley Wood, the felling and partial replanting of Rough Knowles Wood and the eradication of Long Meadows Wood, which used to extend almost up to Hob Lane.

The string of ponds that run from Rudfyn Manor to Kenilworth Castle all appear to be drying out. It is possible that this is partly due to the over abstraction of water from the area.

Around Kenilworth Castle grassland are species such as lesser knapweed, harebell, lady's bedstraw and bird's foot trefoil. Tall yellow spikes of great mullein can be found on the disturbed banks of the Finham Brook in this area.