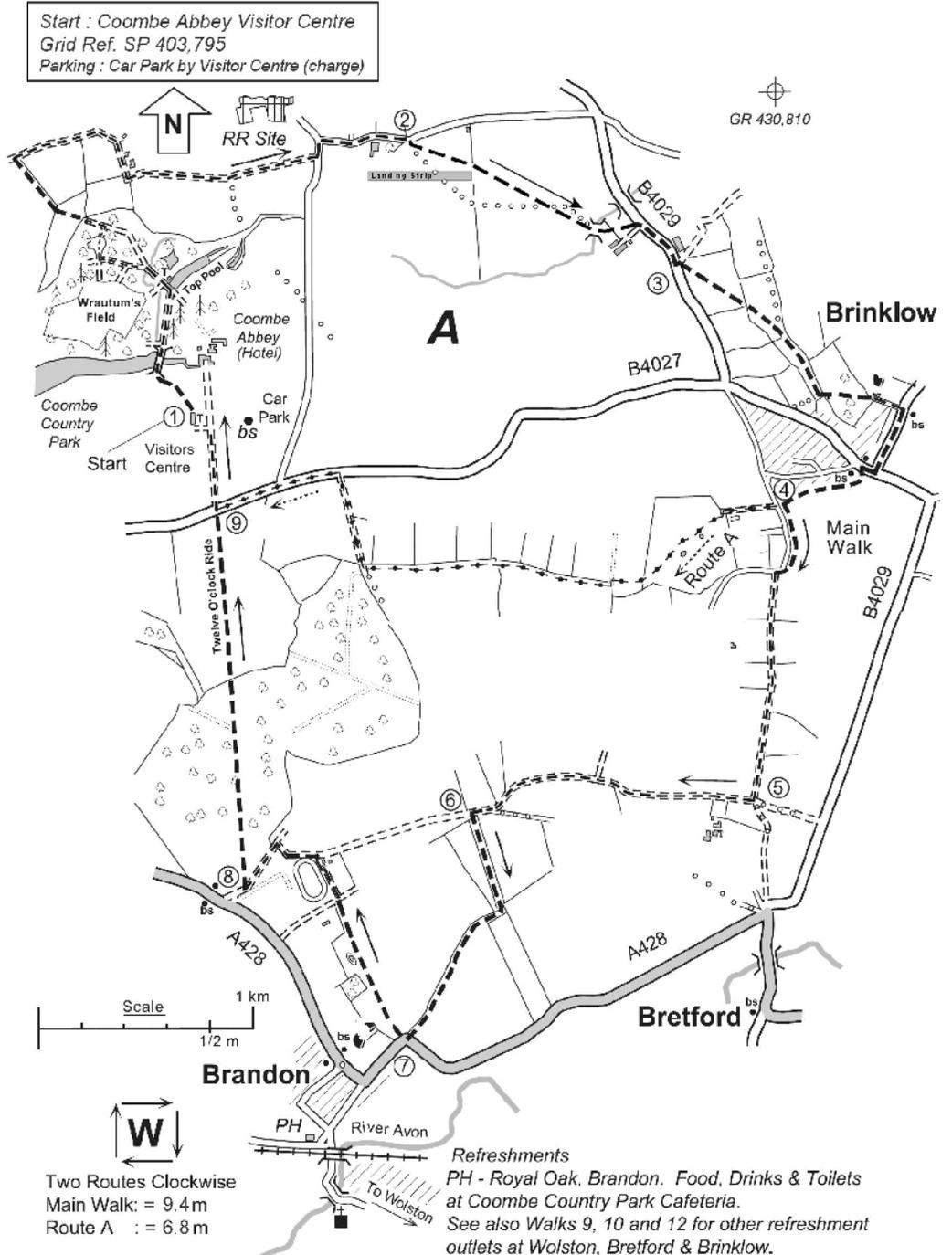
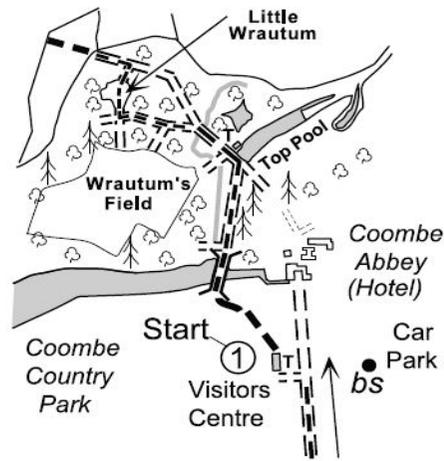


Main Walk Thro' the park a permissive path is followed, look for white arrows on green background

1. With your back to the rear of Visitor Centre, (north end), **V/L** along path to cross main bridge, over Coombe Lake. **Fwd** with Smite Brook left to Top Pool and Toilets on right. **Fwd** over bridge with metal railings. **H/L** & after 200m **T/R** into and **fwd** cross open space (Little Wrautum). **Fwd** to path junction, **T/L** to park boundary. Exit over s/b and thro' fence gap, cross-field to gap in hedge ahead. **Fwd** hg-right to go to farm track. **T/R** & follow track round right and left (thro' farmyard) to road. **T/L** up road and shortly **T/R** into Peter Hall Lane, after farm (WMP) thro' gap by f/g on right.
2. **H/L** on "Safer, Straighter, Shorter" route, cross-field, take sighting from waymark to left end of gap between fence and end of Landing Strip. **Fwd** aiming cross-field towards farm buildings to go over bridge. Thro' p/g (or open f/g), **V/L** then thro' p/g & cross field to corner at junction of farm drive and road, thro' k/g onto road. **T/R** along road to the end of houses on left, at the top of 'no thro' road, thro' k/g on right.
3. **V/L** cross-field to go thro' k/g in opposite corner. **H/R**, close to hg-right to k/g in opposite corner (path junction). **Fwd** hg-left, thro' k/g on left just before field boundary. **H/R** cross-field to far right hand corner to go thro' k/g onto track, **fwd** up track & then lane (past surgery/Barr Lane) to main road. **T/R** to junction, **T/R** & shortly enter walkway (WMP) on opposite side. **Fwd** along walkway behind houses to stile (do not cross). (**Route A** see below).
4. **T/L**, hg-right to go thro' gateway on right at end of field. **T/L** (WMP) & go thro' gate along hedged bridleway for approx 1km to bridleway crossroads.
5. **T/R** & follow this bridleway for approx. 750m, straight ahead at path junction, keep **fwd** for a further 500m, ignoring track on left that turns sharply back.
6. **T/L** at gap with waymark on fence post & go down hedge/fenced bridleway, continue as it bends right, thro' p/g hg-right to road.
7. At this point do not enter road, **T/R** thro' large gates & aim up cross-field for right of house far ahead. Pick up hg-left, 60m right of house. (WMP) **Fwd** hg-left to x-stile onto track. **Fwd** over track to go thro' gates & up drive, corrugated fence on left. Pass pond on left, do not enter properties ahead. At start of drive to house on left **T/L** alongside concrete garage to large oak tree. **T/R**, corrugated fence left to go over s/b to track. **T/L** along track to junction. **T/L** along drive (ignore p/g into paddock). After 240 metres enter Twelve O'clock Ride thro' p/g on right.
8. **Fwd** along ride thro' wood, gate & then fields. Thro' gate to cross over busy main road.
9. Enter park, **fwd** up drive & finish at car park

Route A (Note quarrying in this area so follow waymark directions) At the end of Note 3, x-stile & go over road into gravel drive (WMP). At the end of the drive with bungalow on left, **fwd** over green path for a short distance to its end. Thro' gap on left, **H/R** to cross field, aim for oak tree in opposite corner, 40m before corner go over s/b & thro' hedge gap. Continue ahead to join quarry road. Cross road and continue, hg-right, go thro' 2 f/g's. Continue ahead on enclosed path and cross conveyor belt at field corner. **Fwd** between fences to track at wood boundary. **T/R** up track to road, **T/L** along busy main road for approx. 600m to park entrance. Continue with Note 9.



"The Abbey"

WALK 11 "THE ABBEY"

Start: Coombe Abbey Visitor Centre
Grid Ref: SP 403,795
Direction: Clockwise
Main Walk: 9 miles
Route A: 6.5 miles
OS Maps: Landranger 140
Pathfinder 956
Explorer 222

Parking: Car park near Visitor Centre (charge)

Brief Information and Outline of the Route

This walk starts at Coombe Abbey visitor centre. The Abbey (*Abbey of Cumbe* as it was known in the 12th century) was founded by Cistercian monks, then it was acquired by John Harrington who built a new house around the abbey. The Craven family bought the Abbey in the 17th century and it remained in their care for the next 300 years. In the 18th century Lancelot "Capability" Brown redesigned the gardens and the surrounding land. In 1922 the estate was divided into 166 lots and sold by the family. Through the first part of the 20th century Coventry City Council gradually acquired land and then in 1964 the Abbey itself. Coombe Abbey Regional Park was opened to the public in 1966. In 1993 the new visitor centre, events field and playground were opened.

Past the Rolls Royce plant and up the lane to Peter Hall where it is said that the remains of St Peter's Church can be found.

Over Smite Brook and across the fields to **Brinklow**.

From Brinklow southward to **Brandon** (*Brandune* in DB, hill where broom grows) with its important 12th century Motte and Bailey castle of the Verdens surrounded by Moat and Pools which would have been controlled by sluices. The remains of Brandon and Wolston station (LMS line) are still easily visible opposite the Royal Oak and would have served Brandon House (now Brandon Hall). A 19th century house with a large ruined kitchen garden some distance away.

Nearby and towards Coventry is Brandon Wood, with an impressive medieval double ditch, given by the Forestry Commission to be managed by local friends as a community woodland.

Past the speedway stadium and down the Twelve O'Clock Ride (named by its position to the noonday sun) and back to Coombe Abbey for a well-deserved cuppa.

Possible Short Cut

If you do not want to continue towards Brandon there is a diversion on the Main Walk. You will miss the good

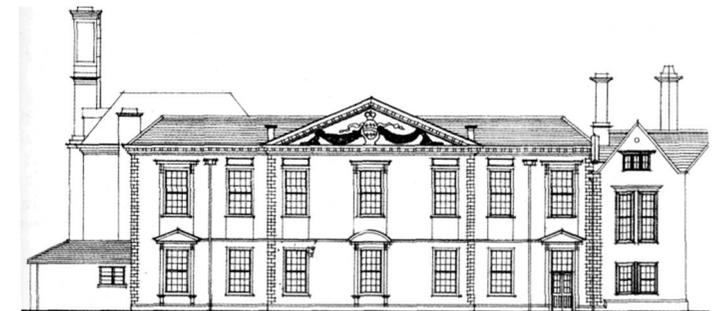
views as you descend but also the bridleway that can be muddy! At the end of Note 5 continue forward on bridleway to junction in Note 7 line 6. Continue with rest of note 7.

Wildlife

The Twelve O'Clock Ride is the name of the track that runs in a straight line from the eastern edge of Brandon Village following magnetic north all the way to Coombe Abbey. The path passes through the heart of New Close Wood, which is predominately oak woodland with ash and frequent silver birch. Other woody species to look out for include hazel, holly, rowan, aspen, field maple and elm. Honeysuckle is generally quite frequent with its tangle of fraying stems creating a lacework of twisted branches between closely growing trees and shrubs. The ground flora is equally interesting with bluebell, wood anemone, wood sorrel, foxglove, lords and ladies, greater stitchwort, herb robert, wood avens, skull cap, enchanter's nightshade, red campion and an array of fern tussocks.

Access to Coombe Park is free and, with its large ribbon lake and semi-natural woodland fringe, courtesy of Capability Brown, is definitely worth a visit. The park is a Site of Special Scientific Interest on account of its impressive bird populations, which includes the largest heronry in the country.

On approaching the B4029 you'd be forgiven for thinking that you were nearing an extensive area of woodland. However, what you have encountered is a wooded fringe of approximately 100 metres in width that runs along the edge of the B4029 and B4027. It is assumed that the wood was planted as a shelterbelt to keep stock safe from stormy weather but that land is now used for arable production.



Coombe Abbey West Side

A New Discovery Centre was opened at Coombe Country Park in 2002. It is totally interactive with spy holes to peep through, things to feel and hear, games to play and information to read. For further details contact Coombe Country Park.

In 1603 Elizabeth, the daughter of James I, came to live and be educated at Coombe Abbey. In 1605, Guy Fawkes's Gunpowder Plot failed. His plan had been to kidnap Elizabeth from Coombe Abbey and put her on the throne. Later she married King Frederick V and became known as the "Winter Queen of Bohemia". She had 13 children, 8 boys and 5 girls.