

Pensford to Stanton Drew and Stanton Wick

- An 8 km (5 mile) circular walk starting at Pensford Post Office



Walk 2

One of a series of walks in and around Pensford



Pensford Local History Group

Walking Route (A-U)

A **START** from Pensford Post Office and walk along Church Street turning **RIGHT** up the lane (Culvery Lane) before The Rising Sun.



NOTE: The blue memorial plaque on the Pensford Post Office building commemorating Bernard Stanley "Acker" Bilk MBE (see Walks 1 and 3 for further details).

*NOTE: The height marker for the **Flood Level 1** on the building at the corner which commemorates the 10th-11th July 1968 flood which swept away the main bridge*

across the A37.

NOTE: If you have a drink later at The Rising Sun, you will see inside the pub that the waterline from the 1968 flood is still evident.

B Go **UNDER Pensford Viaduct 2** and through a kissing gate into **Culvery Wood 3**

NOTE: As you do so, look at the date of 2002 on the viaduct downpipe hopper when maintenance work was carried out.

NOTE: The sign at the entrance to Culvery Wood which was acquired by the Woodland Trust in 1997.



C **FOLLOW** the footpath **DOWNHILL** and through a kissing gate and **LEFT** into a field alongside the **River Chew 4**

NOTE: This is part of the Three Peaks Way, a circular walk of around 26 km (16 miles) including Pensford, Chew Magna and Clutton. The Three Peaks are Maes Knoll, Knowle Hill and Blackberry Hill.



D FOLLOW the footpath through another four fields to arrive at the small hamlet of **Bye Mills** **5** Opposite is Byemills Farm. Turn **LEFT** onto the tarmac road until you reach, and **CROSS**, the weir and the site of the old mill, the only remaining building now renovated as a private home.

NOTE: The old sluice gates to control the flow of water to the mill.



E CONTINUE along the footpath and after 20 m (22 yards), go through a kissing gate on the **RIGHT** and **CONTINUE** through four fields to arrive at a lane with the aptly named Brook Cottage on the left. Turn **RIGHT** into the lane and after 200 m (220 yards), turn **RIGHT** and go through the gate into a field. In the distance is the tower of the Church of St Mary the Virgin in Stanton Drew.

NOTE: This 1903 photograph shows the ford at Brook Cottage. The raised footpath used an arch which may have come from the Church of St Mary the Virgin during C19 renovations. The arch remains but the brook is diverted under the lane and the footpath is unused.



F CONTINUE heading towards the Church and, after the third field, go through the kissing gate and join and **FOLLOW** the tarmac farm track. As you walk along the farm track, to your right, you will get some of the best views of the **Stanton Drew Stone Circles** **6**

NOTE: Although you can enter the main field here, the official entry is further on.



G A little way off to the left is a gate into another small field where there are more stones, set in a rough circle. They formed part of the original three stone circles.

H CONTINUE down the tarred track and through the farmyard of Church Farm and turn **SHARP RIGHT** at the farm entrance, down a lane signposted "Stone Circles" which, after 100 m (110 yards), leads to a gate which is the official entrance to the Stone Circles.

NOTE: The stones are owned by English Heritage, but the landowner charges an entrance fee ("honesty box" on the gate).

I RETURN to the farm entrance.

NOTE: The little "Alice in Wonderland" gate in the C18 wall of the old Stanton Court garden wall.

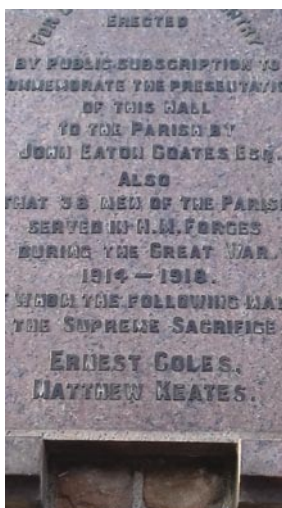


NOTE: Opposite the farm entrance, set into a garden wall, a stone with the carving of a cross, possibly from a religious building.



J **CONTINUE** straight on to the **Church of St Mary the Virgin** **7** which is worth a visit. **RETURN** to the farm entrance.

K From the farm gate, bear **LEFT** downhill and then **LEFT** again to arrive at **Stanton Drew** **8**. You will see the Village Hall on your right.
NOTE: The War Memorial opposite the Village Hall has three names of the fallen in WW1 whereas the plaque on the Village Hall lists only two names - a mystery still to be solved.



L **CONTINUE** past the Village Hall to The Druids Arms. In the garden at the back (behind the car park) is **The Cove** **9**



At this point in the walk, there is a choice of routes:-

ROAD ROUTE (M, N and O) - which is along country lanes. It is quicker than the **footpath route** and is advisable in wet conditions

FOOTPATH ROUTE (P, Q and R) - which takes you cross-country with the option of re-joining the **road route** at several points

Both routes intersect at intervals so it is possible to "mix and match". Both routes converge at **S** shortly before the former Pensford Colliery site.

To take the ROAD ROUTE (M, N and O)

M **CONTINUE** along the road for about 300 m (330 yards). Turn **LEFT** into Stanton and go past the primary school on your left. **CONTINUE** for another 300 m (330 yards).

NOTE: 50 m (55 yards) past the school on the right is The Old School House which served as the village school from about 1790 until 1875.

N Turn **RIGHT** into Stanton Wick Lane and it's approximately 1.6 km (1 mile) to Stanton Wick. *NOTE: Approximately 1.2 km (0.75 miles) along the country lane as you start approaching Stanton Wick, visible in a field on the right just by a fairly sharp left bend and slight embankment, are the remains of a bridge which carried the tramway from Bromley Pit to Pensford Colliery (see **Tramway 10**).*



NOTE: Excellent views over to Pensford as well as back over Stanton Drew towards Dundry are a further 150 m (165 yards) up the hill on the next right bend.

① In **Stanton Wick 11**, at the K6 telephone box "lending library", **CONTINUE** straight on past for about 60 m (66 yards) to a footpath on the right. The field in front of you is Sandground, the site of the Glassworks, although nothing now remains. **RETRACE** your steps back to the telephone box and then turn **RIGHT** and walk 150 m (165 yards) to The Carpenters Arms.



To take the FOOTPATH ROUTE (P, Q and R)



RETRACE your steps from The Cove back to the farmyard at Church Farm (see **H**) and go through the farmyard as far as two adjacent metal gates and a kissing gate.

P Bear **RIGHT** through the kissing gate away from the tarmac track. About 50 m (55 yards) in front are two kissing gates: take the **LEFT-HAND** gate, go down four stone steps, and head **DIAGONALLY UPHILL** across the field to the top corner. Go through a kissing gate, keeping the hedge on your right. Over on your left, you can see the Stone Circles. **CONTINUE** through two more kissing gates, finally passing alongside a house to arrive at Upper Stanton / Pensford Lane.

*NOTE: This is the first point where you could re-join the "**ROAD ROUTE**" by turning right for a short distance to meet Stanton Wick Lane (see map).*

Q Turn **LEFT** into Pensford Lane for 50 m (55 yards) and then **CROSS OVER** into Tarnwell. **FOLLOW** the road around to the **RIGHT** and, after another 50 m (55 yards), go **RIGHT** along a footpath between low stone walls into a field. Bear **LEFT DOWNHILL** past a small pond. Keeping the hedge to your left, **IGNORE** the kissing gate 50 m (55 yards) further on and **CONTINUE** a further 80 m (88 yards) through a kissing gate and then through two more kissing gates to arrive at Stanton Wick Lane.

*NOTE: This is the second point where you could re-join the "**ROAD ROUTE**" (see map).*

R Turn **LEFT** along the lane and almost immediately turn **RIGHT** and go through a metal gate. Keep the hedge to your left and go through another kissing gate. In front of you is a wood, the former site of Bromley Pit, now also used by a farm machinery contracting company. *NOTE: If you look closely, especially if the field has been recently ploughed, you can see lumps of coal in the soil.*



After 150 m (165 yards), go through a double kissing gate on your **LEFT** across the bridge over a stream. Carry **STRAIGHT** on, **UPHILL**, keeping the hedge on your right. **CONTINUE** through two more kissing gates. *NOTE: On the way, you cross the line of the tramway which linked Bromley Pit to Pensford Colliery (see **Tramway 10**) though nothing now remains on this route. Turn around as you reach the top of the slope for extensive views over Stanton Drew and beyond to the masts on Dundry Hill.*

In the last field, you see houses in front of you: head first for the corner of the hedge and then between the terrace of houses and the bungalows.

NOTE: This field is the site of the Glassworks of which nothing now remains. However, if you look closely around the entrance gate, you may be lucky enough to see bits of glass. The name of the nearest terraced house is Sandground - a reminder of the importance of sand in glassmaking.



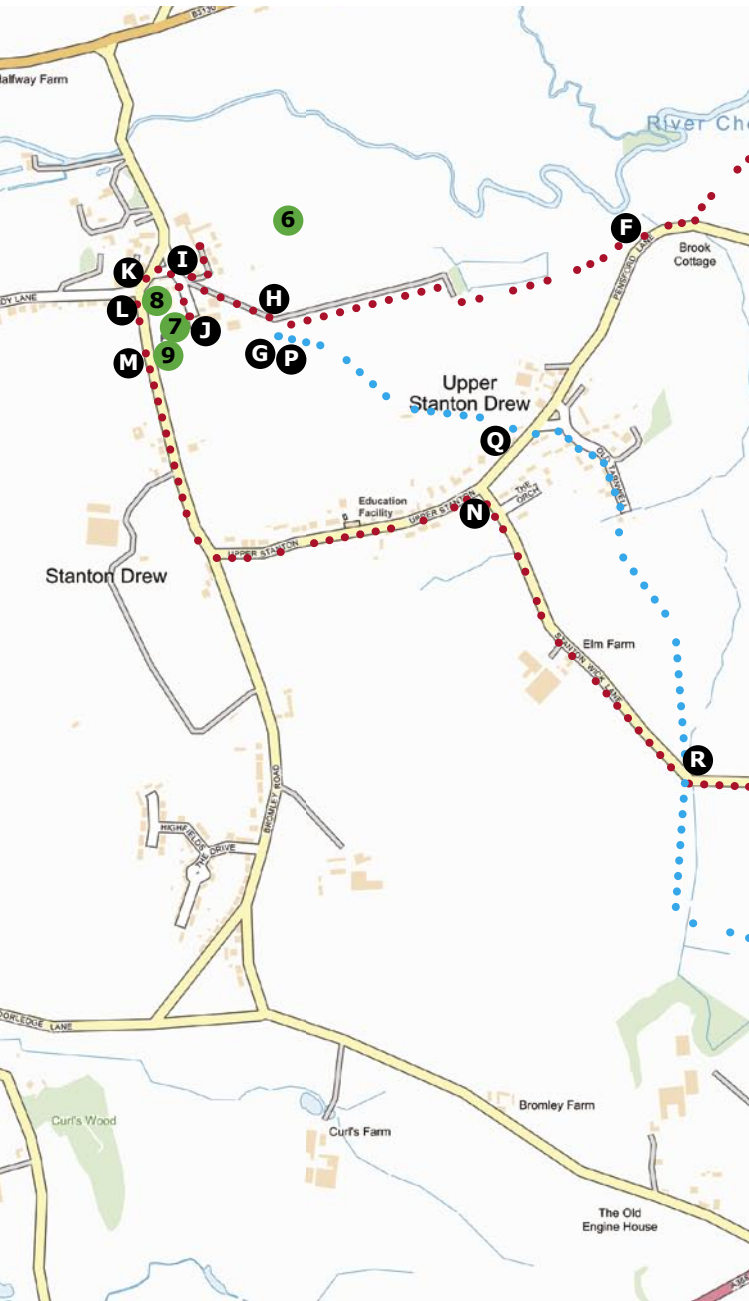
Go along a short track to reach the road, turn **LEFT** and onto the road and then turn **RIGHT** onto Wick Lane at Stanton Wick's "lending library" (former K6 telephone box). **CONTINUE** 150 m (165 yards) to The Carpenters Arms.

*NOTE: This is the point where you re-join the "**ROAD ROUTE**" (see map) at The Carpenters Arms.*



Walking Map

- Walking Route (A-U)
- Points of Interest (1-14)
- Ⓢ Defibrillator
- Plotted Route (A-O then S-U)
- Optional Footpath Route (P, Q, R)





Walking Route (A-U) / continued

S From The Carpenters Arms, **CONTINUE** along the road for a further 600 m (660 yards) to reach the site of the former **Pensford Colliery 12**.

NOTE: The Winding House on the right and opposite the former pithead baths (both buildings now converted to private homes).



T **CONTINUE** for another 500 m (550 yards) to reach a bend in the road with an old railway bridge (structure number FNS3/16m 69ch) where the road passed over the former **Bristol and North Somerset Railway 13**.

CONTINUE DOWNHILL to Pensford following in the footsteps of hundreds of miners on their way home after their shifts at Pensford Colliery.

NOTE: The views on the right over Pensford, the old High Street and the A37 ("New Road" - well over 150 years old!).

NOTE: The sign on the house on your right at the bottom of the hill just before you reach Church Street, formerly

The (Old) Railway Tavern 14.



U Turn **LEFT** into Church Street crossing the medieval bridge to return to Pensford Post Office.

Points of Interest (1-14)

1 Pensford Flood:

Over 125 mm (5 inches) of rain fell in the Chew Valley in 24 hours on 10th-11th July 1968 causing serious flooding along the **River Chew** 4 The modern Pensford road bridge on the A37 was swept away, but the older bridge in Church Street survived. The flood level in Church Street reached over 1.8 m (6 feet). No one died in Pensford but people were marooned in their houses. The facade of Bridge House collapsed. Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, visited and had a pint in an upstairs room of The Rising Sun as the bar was damaged by the flood.

2 Pensford Viaduct:

Built in 1874 to carry the **Bristol and North Somerset Railway** 13 over the valley of the River Chew, Pensford Viaduct is 29 m (95 feet) high at its highest point, 303 m (331 yards) long and has 16 arches of different sizes. In 1984, the viaduct was offered for sale for £1, but there were no takers!

3 Culvery Wood:

Culvery Wood is owned by the Woodland Trust and is part of the Forest of Avon. Extensions to the woodland were planted in 1998, 2001 and more recently in 2016. It is an important habitat for nesting birds, invertebrates and plants. It is maintained largely by a dedicated group of local volunteers.

4 River Chew:

The 27 km (17 mile) long River Chew rises in Chewton Mendip and flows into the Avon in Keynsham. Before the construction of Chew Valley Lake in 1957, the Chew was fast-flowing and navigable from Chew Magna to Keynsham with horse-drawn coal barges. In its heyday, there were around 40 water mills on its banks, though not all were active at the same time - iron, copper, paper, corn and fulling mills - including Pensford, Publow and Woollard.



5 Bye Mills:

The weir and sluice at Bye Mills are evidence of an iron and copper battery mill on the site from 1600s to 1860 when it became a paper mill for a time before being bought by Bristol water in 1880. This map of 1884 shows the extent of the paper mill buildings. All were demolished, except for the manager's house which was derelict for many years before being restored as a residential property. Nearby, Byemills farmhouse is a Grade II listed building originally from the mid-C17.



6 Stanton Drew Stone Circles:

These are the third largest stone circles in England. There are three stone circles at Stanton Drew. The Great Circle, at 113 m (124 yards) in diameter, is one of the largest in the country. It has 26 surviving upright stones, although there may once have been up to 30. The other two circles, to the south-west and north-east, are smaller. Both the Great Circle and the north-east circle were approached from the north-east by short "avenues" of standing stones, most of which have fallen. Stone circles like these are known to date broadly to the late-Neolithic and early-Bronze Age (around 3000-2000 BC) and many examples are known. Such circles are believed to have played an important part in contemporary social and religious life, and there is evidence that some were aligned with major events of the solar and lunar calendars.



7 Church of St Mary the Virgin, Stanton Drew:

Stanton Drew Parish Church is possibly C13 in origin, with the nave rebuilt 1848 and much re-modelled 1889 and 1897, particularly the interior. The rainwater head, dated 1880, also has what appears to be the Star of David or hexagram on it, perhaps indicating that the Victorian builder belonged to a Masonic lodge.



8 Stanton Drew:

Stanton Drew was listed in the Domesday Book of 1086 as *Stantone*, meaning "the stone enclosure with an oak tree" from the Old English *stan* and *tun* and from the Celtic *deru*. After the Norman Conquest, the Lords of the Manor took their name from the village. One of the family Drogo or Drew gave his name to the place to distinguish it from Stanton Prior and Stanton Wick. It was commemorated by Adge Cutler in his song "When the Common Market comes to Stanton Drew...".

9 The Cove:

In the garden of The Druids Arms is a group of three large stones called The Cove. To the north, across the River Chew, is the site of a standing stone known as Hautville's Quoit (although on private land and not visible on our walk). Their closeness to each other, and the alignments between some of them, indicate that together these stones formed part of the complex of Neolithic stones around Stanton Drew.

10. Tramway:

A 610 mm (24 inch) gauge railway ran on a raised embankment from Bromley Pit to Broadoak Colliery to transport coal to Pensford where it was loaded onto the railway. It crossed Stanton Wick Lane on a raised embankment and bridge (now demolished) which can still be seen in the field and roadside.



11. Stanton Wick:

The small hamlet of Stanton Wick ("wick" means trading place or farm) is at an old crossroads. The curved house wall of Orange Tree Cottage may indicate its origin as a toll house on what was then the main Bristol Road. It was an important mining area with many small "bell pits" and later Bromley Pit which closed in 1957. The Carpenters Arms was probably originally a row of miners' cottages. In addition, it was the site of a major Glassworks which had been established since the middle of C17 and finally closed in 1815 when production (and 20 local glassworkers and families) moved to Nailsea. It specialised in bottle-making and crown glass for windows. Stanton Wick was a good site because of the proximity of coal, lime and sand. Evidence can be seen in the names of Glasshouse Farm, Glass House Cottages and Sandground Cottage and in small pieces of the blue glass still found in the fields and streams. The cone-shaped furnace in Sandground stood 46 m (150 feet) high and, in 1853, was blown up with gunpowder before a crowd of over 200.



12. Pensford Colliery:

The Somerset Coalfield has been worked since C15 and possibly in Roman times. Early diggings were shallow adits and bell pits. The Bromley Pit at Stanton Wick opened in 1893 and closed in 1957. The modern Broadoak Colliery at Pensford opened in 1909 and the first shaft was begun in 1911. Production did not start until 1917 and then continued until the late 1950s. Pensford is the only Somerset colliery to retain an almost-complete set of buildings, some now converted to residential use (the Winding House and the Bath House). The Bath House opened in 1931 at Broadoak Colliery (Pensford). This colliery was the first in the area to have a bath house and miners from Bromley Pit were transported there in coal wagons. The commemorative plaque is now in Pensford Memorial Hall. The Colliery employed over 400 people, comprising miners, carpenters, electricians, blacksmiths, general labourers and canteen workers. All travelled to work by foot, bike or bus. The mine extended towards Stanton Drew and Bye Mills, through to the Station Approach area of Pensford, to Publow, out to Lord's Wood and included a drift mine at Common Wood, Hunstrete.



13. Bristol and North Somerset Railway:

Opened in 1873 to carry passengers and goods (mainly coal) between Bristol and Radstock and further south. The last scheduled passenger train to cross Pensford Viaduct was the 9:25 am from Frome to Bristol on 31st October 1959. After that, there were only goods trains (mainly bringing coal) which ceased in 1964 and very occasional excursion trains. It officially closed days after the Great Flood of 1968.



14. The (Old) Railway Tavern:

This small pub or ale house served the workers from Pensford Colliery who passed it on their way home. It was also known as the "Dirty Duck". Anecdotally, this may have been because a landlord kept ducks who went down to Salter's Brook but returned often along the road and through the bar into the garden at the back. The real reason for the nickname is because the miners – before the advent of the pithead baths in 1931 – called in on their way home still covered in coal dust. The pub closed around 1966.

NOTE: The images below are from The Old Railway Tavern sign on the back of the building which is playfully adorned with "dirty ducks"!



Sponsorship and Acknowledgements

The Pensford, Publow and the Stantons Community Trust (PPSCT)

<http://www.ppsct.org.uk>

Publow with Pensford Parish Council

<http://www.publow-with-pensford-pc.gov.uk/pc/>

BOHIL (business occupational health)

Tel: 01761 231327

Dustin' Time (cleaning contractors)

Tel: 07711 160544

The Hollies (bed & breakfast accommodation)

Tel: 01761 490456

KC Printing (lithographic and digital printers)

Tel: 01761 490361

Langford Farm Organic (a family-run farm producing organic beef)

Tel: 07568 540970

Leigh Farm (B&B and self-catering accommodation)

Tel: 01761 490281

Mill Corner Garage (servicing, repairs, MOTs arranged)

Tel: 01761 490652

The Miners' Coffee Shop (breakfast, lunch and delicious homemade cakes)

Tel: 01761 490640

Pensford Post Office (including a convenience store)

Tel: 01761 490217

The Pig near Bath (rooms and kitchen garden food)

Tel: 01761 490490

The Rising Sun (public house)

Tel: 01761 490006

TrueSpeed Communications Ltd (data communications)

Tel: 01225 300370

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Walk 2

A circular walk from Pensford to Stanton Drew and Stanton Wick

Map	Map not to scale as re-sized for print
Distance	8 km (5 miles)
Time	Allow a minimum of 3 hours
Terrain	Medium. Along footpaths and country lanes
Start	Pensford Post Office, BS39 4AF

Getting to Pensford:

Road	Pensford is on the A37, approx 11 km (7 miles) south of Bristol and 18 km (11 miles) west of Bath
Bus	All buses through Pensford stop at Pensford Bridge
Parking	There is no public car park in Pensford and on-road parking in the village centre is very limited. Please consider using public transport, car-sharing or parking outside the village centre. Please park considerately
Refreshments	There is a coffee shop, a convenience store and several pubs

- This booklet is free but if you wish to make a donation towards its costs, or to a local charity, please use the appropriate donation box
- If you don't wish to keep this booklet, please pass it on

More Information:

A downloadable version of this booklet and links to more information about Pensford and surrounding areas are available on the Publow with Pensford Parish Council website

<http://www.publow-with-pensford-pc.gov.uk/pc/>