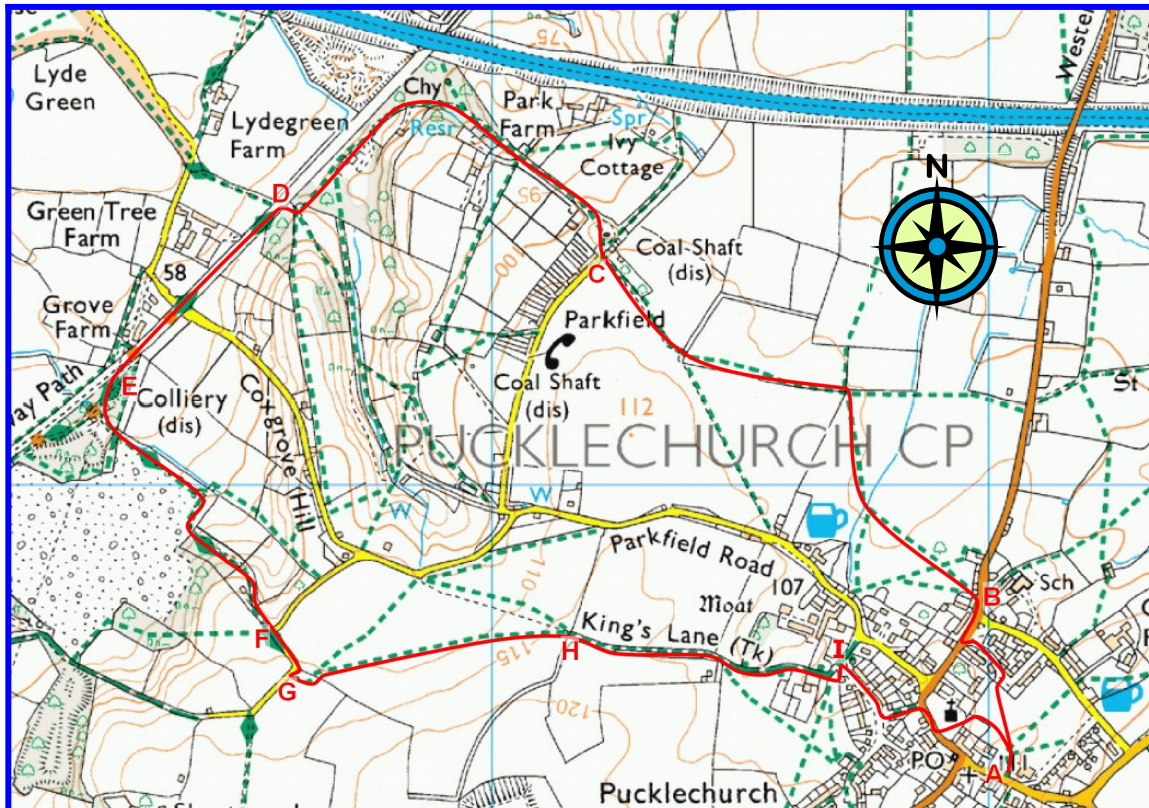




Walk #9: Brandy Bottom and the Dramway

5.3 km (3.3 miles), about 1½ hours, a circular route that includes multiple stiles and small stretches walking on lanes

This walk takes you straight into the heart of our area's industrial past. You'll pass abandoned collieries, walk on a bit of the historic Dramway, and see what's become of the clay pit once owned by the Cattybrook Brick Company.



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Starting from the Community Centre car park (A), enter the recreation ground on the left side of the Community Centre and head left toward the huge, solitary oak tree. Continue past the tree and take the path that comes out onto Lansdown Road, turning left into the road. Walk to the end of the road and take the path between the houses and out to Westerleigh Road. Cross the road and turn right, passing in front of the Court Farm barn conversion and past a row of stone cottages. At the end of this row (B), turn left on the footpath next to number 69 and cross the stile into the field beyond. Follow the path that leads straight ahead to a plank bridge across a drainage ditch. From this point, go diagonally right towards a kissing gate in the far corner. Go through the gate and follow the

footpath, staying close to the hedge on your left. At far end of the field, go through the gate into the next field and continue on, keeping the hedge to your right. You will come out of the field at the top end of the row of cottages know as Parkfield Rank. These tiny cottages were built in the mid-19th century for the mineworkers of the nearby Parkfield Colliery.

Climb over the stile (C), and cross Parkfield Rank to the play area at the end of the row of cottages. Cross the play area diagonally and take the steps down to the footpath that runs parallel to the lane. After about 200 metres, the path comes out onto the lane at a crossroad. Carry on straight down the lane, which will start to curve around to the left and go over a stile to the right of a gate and drive.

Countryside Access Walks

Walk #9: Community Centre to the Dramway (continued)



The footpath leads through a private garden and down to a kissing gate, where several paths come together. Turn right and go down the hill to another kissing gate that leads out onto the cycle path (D), which is part of the historic Dramway.



The Dramway is what locals called the Avon and Gloucestershire Railway, which carried coal from mines at Coalpit Heath to the River Avon from 1830 to 1866. Coal was loaded into horse-drawn carts or “drams” and rolled downhill to the river. Horses pulled the empty carts back up the track to the coal mines.

Turn left on the cycle path, and follow it down to the bridge over Coxgrove Hill. Cross the bridge and go out through the horse barrier, continuing straight on the cycle path. Look up to your left on this next section to see the old chimney of Brandy Bottom Colliery. Near the information boards for “Tropical Shortwood” and “Coal Mining”, there is a kissing gate on the left of the cycle path (E). Through this gate the path takes you past the old colliery workings and then out into a clearing on the edge of the landfill, which once was a clay pit owned by the Cattybrook Brick Company Ltd. Here you can appreciate why plastic bags are not a good thing for the environment. Carry on around the edge of the landfill, following the path to a stile near a house. Follow the drive out to a tarmac road. The path comes out at a bend in the road (F). Take the road straight ahead (not the left turn), until it turns right. At this bend, go through the kissing gate (G) and into an arable field.

In the field, walk straight ahead, keeping the hedge on your left until you come to a gap in the hedge. Cross through the gap and take that path that runs diagonally across this large field at about two o'clock to the corner of hedges that sticks out into the field. At this corner (H) is a stile that leads into a rough track between rows of

trees. After about 500 metres, the track becomes Kings Lane. Kings Lane reputedly got its name when the body of King Edmund was carried along this route on its way to his final resting place at Glastonbury in 946AD. When you reach the main gates of Grey House, a fine 17th-century manor, Kings Lane turns left and joins Homefield Road (I).

Brandy Bottom Colliery

This steam-powered colliery was opened in the early 1800s and closed in 1936. A number of buildings and the boiler chimney remain standing. A , English Heritage-listed archaeological site, it is being preserved by the Avon Industrial Buildings Trust (AIBT). Learn more at:

<http://aibt.org/brandy-bottom.html>

Turn right onto Homefield Road, cross the road, and take the footpath between the houses that comes out next to the Coach House Café's car park. Cross Westerleigh Road and go through the gates into the churchyard. Follow the path past the church and turn right on the path that leads through the newest burial area, then out the gate on the far side and into the Rec. Walk straight ahead back to the Community Centre (A).