

Worth Matravers to Corfe via Hill Bottom (and return)

Walk 7

Distance - 8 miles

A there-and-back walk that will facilitate two pleasant rambles. Suitably divided by a visit to Corfe with its castle, tea rooms, shops etc. A satisfying, leisurely day out. Not without hills to climb! Especially during the return leg. Make mental photographs, because the return route covers the same ground as the outward leg.

The walk commences from the carpark in the pretty village of Worth Matravers, reached by turning right at the junction beyond the Square and Compass public house.

The pub houses a museum and dates from around 1840. A local trade guild - Ancient Order of Purbeck Marblers and Stone Cutters used to dine there every February 2nd. This was known as "Kissing Day". Squares and compasses were stone cutters tool.

Start/car parking - Worth Matravers

Note: It would be a great help to future walkers if you could record any inaccuracies you come across during this walk and report them to reception so that appropriate amendments can be made. Thank you for your help. Happy walking!

WALK

Set out from the car-park, turn right and right again at the junction. Pass to the left of the duckpond, following the road between the shelter and the old water pump rising to reach a junction. Continue straight ahead to enter a field on the right (signpost - Hill Bottom) beyond a children's play area. Cross the field aiming for the exit point in the top left corner. Hop over a stile to walk along the left edge of the field, aiming for a telegraph pole. Descend the next field with evidence of open cast stone quarrying (Swanworth Quarry) revealed, and cross

a stile located near another telegraph pole. The path descends through a woodland canyon (rich in bird life) to reach Hill Bottom - a location marked with two stiles close together.

Cross both stiles and turn right (signpost - Afflington Barn) along a wide track. Pass through a gate and continue on, eventually peeling away from the quarry boundary, to reach a second gate.

Beyond the gate climb the banking, veer left towards an opening then right, to pass to the left side of the renovated Afflington Barn. Cross the main road to enter a wide track (signpost Corfe Castle) with the castle in view. Pass to the left of a telegraph pole and descend steadily, searching diligently for two sets of waymarkers on the left, roughly ½ mile away. Leave the track on the left at the second of these waymarkers. Another clue - the main track curves noticeably to the right where the waymarkers stand.

Cross a stile, turn left, then leave the track on the right after 25 yards to enter a field. Keep following the left hand boundary through several fields to reach a couple of stiles separated by a footbridge.

After these, swing right to pass through a smallholding (wooden house to right), cross a stile then the boardwalk. Beyond a footbridge, a signpost points the way to Corfe Castle. Cross Corfe Common to reach a white, foot-high marker, situated on the brow of the hill.

At the marker veer left, then 25 yards farther on veer right to cross the road. Keep close to the houses to exit the Common by a metal gate. Pass between the houses, cross straight over the road and enter a passageway. When confronted by a gable-end turn right, crossing the fields towards the castle. Enter the town by exiting the playground at the far left corner. For the return route locate the church and walk along West Street. Pass Marblers Tea Rooms, then turn left at a sign for East Street, picnic area and playground.

In the play area veer right then re-cross the fields towards the houses. Follow the narrow passageway, cross the road into a cul-de-sac to pass between the houses to reach Corfe Common again.

Keeping close to the houses, aim towards the adjacent gates. Rise and veer left towards the foot high marker, swing right to cross the Common aiming towards the signpost and footbridge.

After the bridge cross the boardwalk (a yard too short when I passed by!) and a stile to pass the smallholding. Cross the stiles and footbridge to walk along the right hand boundary through several fields to arrive on to a green swathe and turn left. Twenty-five yards farther on cross a stile on the right, then turn right again when reaching the main (uphill) track.

At the main road cross over (sign Chapman's Pool). Walk between the buildings then swing right along a wide track. Reaching a telegraph pole keep straight ahead, then soon after kink left and right to descend towards a gate.

Through the gate turn left and follow a clear path towards the quarry boundary. Pass through another gate and soon after this cross the two stiles on the left (signpost Worth). An obvious path leads uphill to a stile and continues the upwards route to reach a telegraph pole. Walk along the right-hand edge of the field to cross a stile then enter another field to reach the road - turn left and left again to visit the ancient church of St. Nicholas and the tea shops. Beyond the latter follow the road back to the car-park.

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- Walk
- A351
- B3069

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