

Walks With Stiles

Little Solsbury Hill and Chilcombe Bottom Nature Reserve



Climb to the summit of the hill to see views of Bath, the Avon valley and the St Catherine's valley. The route winds down through a wild wood and then up through the Nature Reserve.

Distance: 5.6 km/3½ miles with ups and downs of 168m/552ft. Stiles & steps.

Time: 2½ hours

Start: Lay-by on slip road for Swainswick, off the A46 on the east side. ST762682 approx 5.5kms/3¼ miles from the Cold Ashton roundabout at A46/A420 junction or 1.8kms/1 mile from A4/A46 junction.

Refreshments: The Toll House tea room on the A46 Dyrham or in Batheaston.

Route:

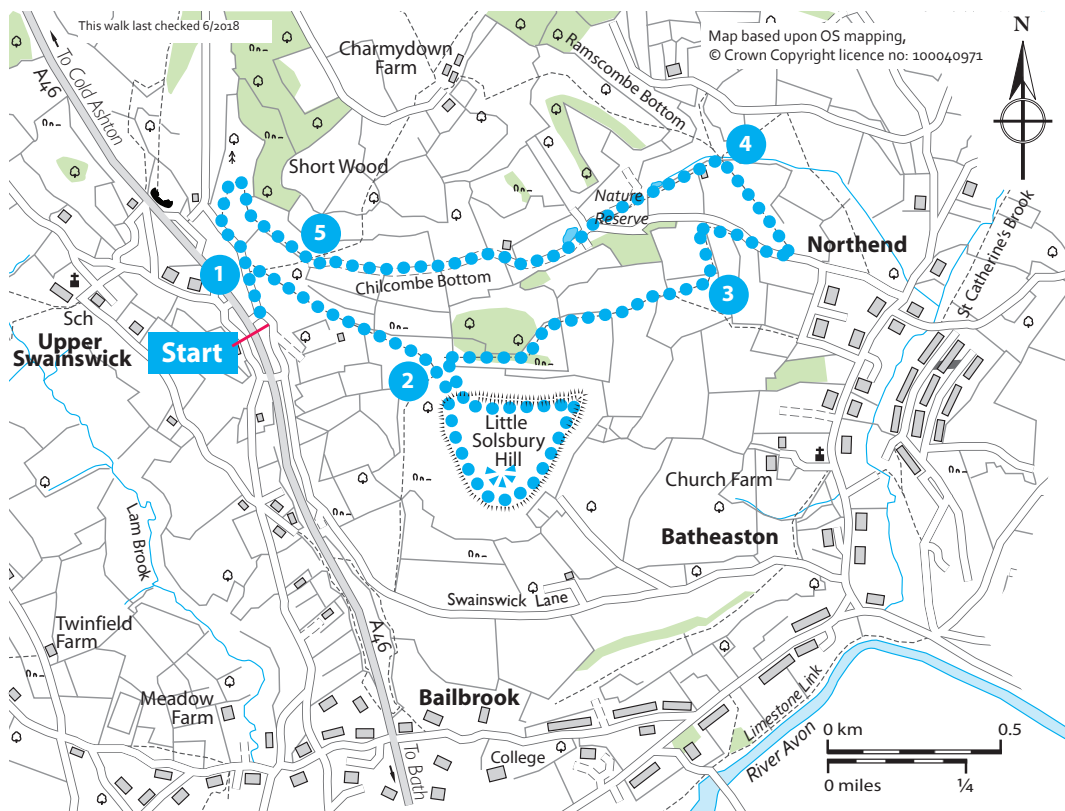
Walk uphill, cross the road with care and proceed up what appears a private road. After about 50m turn R through a gate **1**.

Walk diagonally up the hill to another gate beside the hedge on the L of the field. Follow the path up through blackthorn to the next gate and enter the common **2**.

Continue to climb uphill to meet a level ledge below the summit. In the grass you may be able to make out a small maze which was created by the opponents of the Batheaston Bypass a few years ago. Climb to the summit and now walk round on the level to see views of Bath, the Avon valley and the St Catherine's valley.

There is an OS trig pillar on the summit and a memorial stone marking the gift of the field to the National Trust.

On completing the circuit



drop back down to the R of the gate where you entered and there is a flight of steps down to a stile which takes you into a wood. (If very wet the steps and path may be muddy).

Leave the wood at a stile and follow the edge of the field to a gate leading to a brideway, which ends abruptly.

Head across the field downhill to meet a waymark on your L pointing L **3**. Turn L and follow the path down as it turns sharp R until you reach a gate leading to a road.

Turn R and follow the road for approx 400m and turn L through a gate. The path

undulates before reaching a stream where there is a waymarked pole with 5 metal arrows on it! **4**

Do not cross the footbridge but turn L, the path now follows old settling tanks on your R, go through a tree plantation until you reach the dome shaped valve house at the entrance to the Nature reserve.

Walk through the nature reserve to a gate by a house. Join the opposite brideway and head up the valley towards the A46. At the end of the brideway, go through the gate on the L and you have a choice **5**.

Turn R and follow the brideway up before it turns

back on itself to the L as you climb to the gate to the access road. Turn L and return to the start of the walk and lay-by.

For a short cut go straight ahead and up the steps to a stile and enter the field you started in. Go to the gate by the access road. Turn L and return to the start of the walk and lay-by.