

Walk 7 (one and a half hours)

Tony Slater

This is an easy walk, mainly around quiet lanes, but it takes you through some magnificent countryside.

Start at the playing field (36) in Rectory Lane (34-39), and from the left hand gate proceed across the field to the top left corner. Go along the wooded path and enter Steps Lane. Follow this to the top and join the main road, turning left, then right and right again to Hampton Fields. Go through the hamlet and down the lane through the two golf courses. You will drop down through a wooded area and on the left is a small lake at an entrance to Aston Farm. You may be lucky to see the resident Heron, and maybe even a Kingfisher.

Further along the valley, past some large Willows on the right (originally planted to provide new bats for Avening & Cherington cricket team) there are two stiles. The rounded iron one on the left takes you to the top of Cherington (and is a favourite of ours for taking family portraits), while the right* takes you through the woods close to the lake. Along this path, take a left turn and drop down to the weir, cross the stepping stones and join the lane (right) towards Nags Head (44-45) and Avening.

*An alternative route keeping to the lanes, takes you above the lake, across the stream (you can turn right here and go around the lake edge to avoid the hill) and up a steep hill into Cherington. Double back right at the junction, and follow the hill down through the woods to re-join the route above. Through late January and February, the woods surrounding the lake provide a stunning display of Snowdrops.