The Kenn Hedge Walk

Summary

A country walk with nice views that crosses some farmland outside of the park. Starting and ending in Chelvey Rise by the Old Farm House public house. Can be muddy in wet weather. **Not suitable for pushchairs or wheelchair users.**

Walk Information

Distance: 2.4 km (1.5 miles). Gradients: flat. Surfaces: Unsurfaced, hard surfaces, metalled.

How To Get There

By Car: Park in Chelvey Rise, or any nearby street. Always be considerate of residents, do not obstruct their access.

By Bus: Use the X7 or X7A bus and alight at the Bibury Close or Winchcombe Bus Stops.

By Train: Walk northwards from Nailsea and Backwell Train Station along Station Road passing Backwell Lake, up the hill and turn right into Trendlewood Way. Chelvey Rise is second turning on the right. Distance from the station 1 km.

Safety

We want you to enjoy your walk in Trendlewood Community Park and the surrounding area. The park is very safe. However, you should be aware of the potential hazards you may encounter on your journey.

Trip and Fall Hazards

Many of the paths on this route are unsurfaced and can become muddy and slippery during and after damp weather.

There are several bridges and styles to cross with steps.

Livestock

You may encounter livestock in some of the fields.

Do not disturb the animals and if you have a dog with you keep it on a lead.

Make sure you close all gates behind you – follow the countryside code.

Water Hazards

Do not enter the water.

The River Kenn, the stream and Rhynes are shallow and narrow but can flood in wet weather.

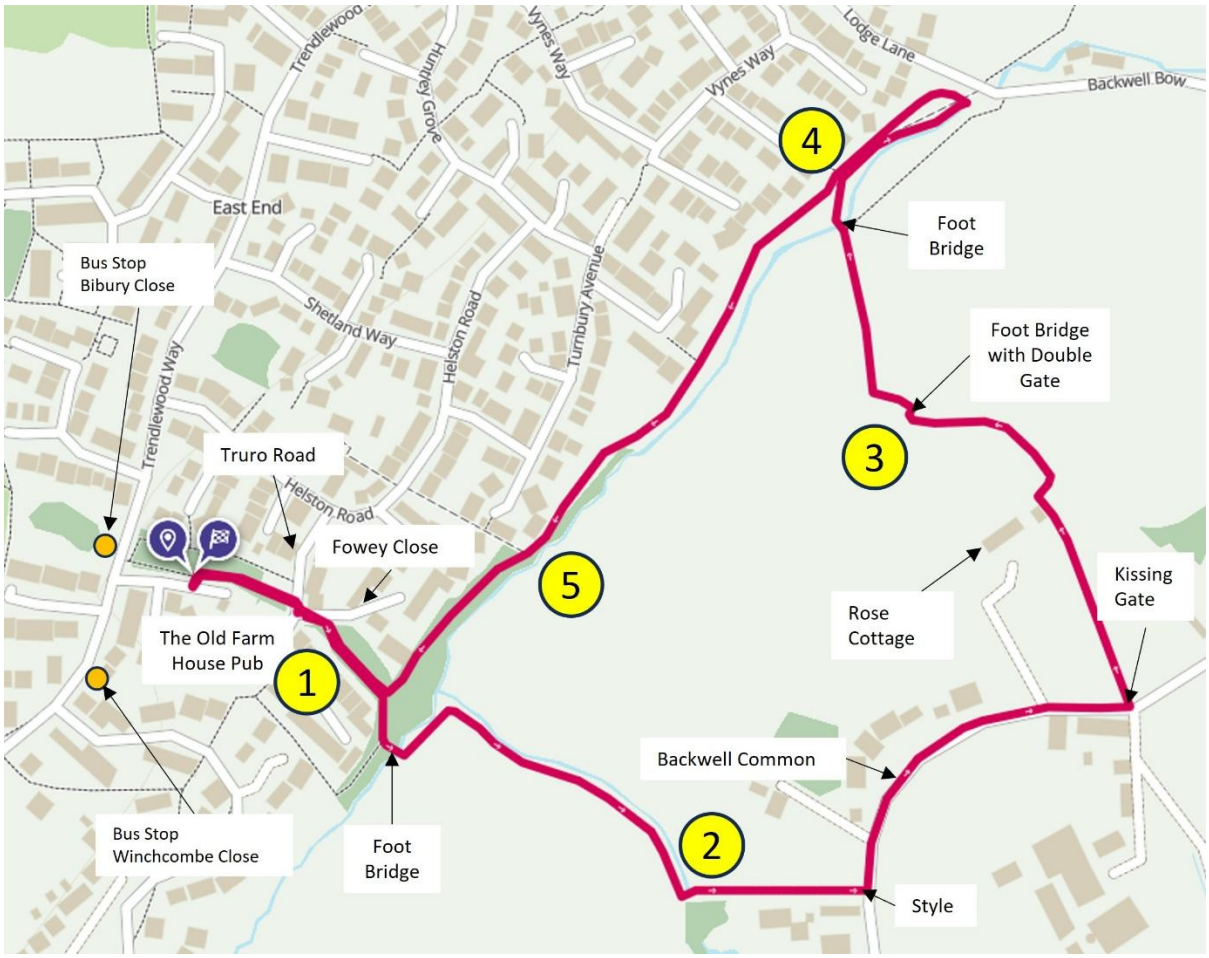
The water quality is unknown and should not be ingested.

Falling Trees

Do not enter wooded areas during high winds.

There is a potential risk from falling branches and trees. Many trees have Ash Die Back and the history of mining can result in poor root holding.

The Route



©Crown copyright 2024 Ordnance Survey. Media 041/24.

The Route

The route to be followed is shown in red on the maps. The numbers on the route refer to the sketch maps in the text.



The Old Farm House Public House

Stand in Chelvey Rise and look towards the pub car park. The pub was the farm house for East End Farm until the land was sold for the development of the Trendlewood estate in the 1980s.

The shallow valley on your left was created by stream that is now buried in a culvert. The course of the stream that ran off the farmland, some of which is now part of Trendlewood Community Park, is marked by the line of mature trees. The shallow valley is part of Trendlewood Community Park and connects parkland on Nailsea's eastern boundary with the rest of the park.



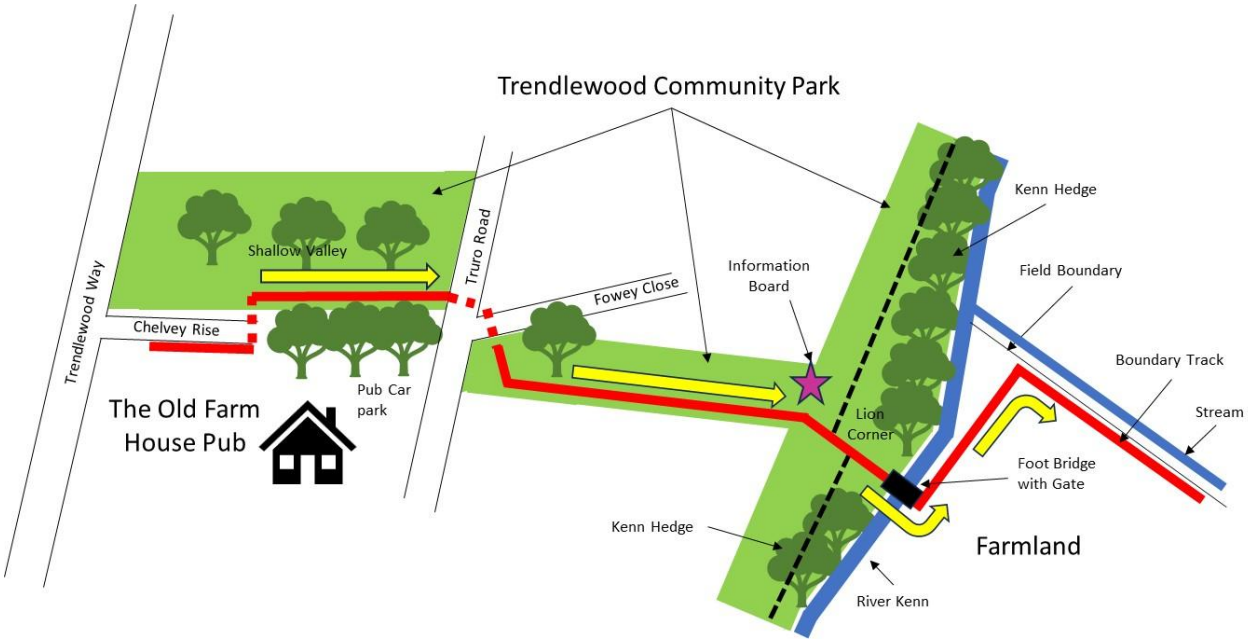
The Park Alongside Chelvey Rise

The shallow valley is managed to allow wildlife to move between the open farmland to the east and the central park areas. There are Ash, Oak and Elm trees in this area. The Elm trees are small and due to Dutch Elm Disease are unlikely to survive to maturity.

Near the entrance to the pub car park, looking into the shallow valley, enter the valley taking the track to the right, being careful in damp weather as the track can be slippery.

Follow the track for a short distance and then cross Truro Road, re-entering the park at the junction with Fowey Close which is in front of you.

Proceed along the path turning half right near the information board onto the surfaced path. The surfaced path leads to a foot bridge with a gate. The ground to your left is managed to encourage wild flowers. The purchase of wild flower seed was funded by the Nailsea Lions, as a result this area is now known as 'Lion Corner'.



Map 1 - Chelvey Rise to Farmland Boundary Track

The stream under the bridge is the infant River Kenn. The hedge row along the river bank is known as the 'Kenn Hedge' and it is a very important wildlife habitat.

Birds and animals need corridors of hedging to link their feeding areas. Most farmland hedge rows have been cut back so much that these wildlife highways have largely been lost. The Kenn Hedge is particularly important as it is well developed, tall and thick.

It contains lots of fruiting hawthorn and blackthorn which are important for foraging birds in the summer and later in the autumn when seeds become scarce.

The height also makes it particularly important for bat navigation and as a source of invertebrates to feed upon.

There is a thriving bat population in the area for which the Kenn Hedge is an essential resource. North Somerset is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for Horseshoe bats. About 12 % of the UK's Greater Horseshoe bat population live in the North Somerset, Mendip and Mells in Somerset areas.

The Friends of Trendelwood park have recorded fourteen different species of bat in the park.

Due to its biodiversity and significance to bats the Kenn Hedge is an 'Important' hedge under the hedgerow regulations 1997. The hedgerow is managed by North Somerset Council and the Friend of Trendlewood Park for the benefit of wildlife.

Cross the bridge and turn left. If you have a 1:50k or 1:25k Ordnance Survey Map with you it will show a public footpath going across the field from the bridge. There is no sign of this path on the ground as the accepted route to follow is the field boundary.

You have, for now, left Trendlewood Community Park. The route you are taking follows the River Kenn and then turns to the right to run alongside the field boundary that has a stream on the far side of the boundary hedge.

At certain times of the year live stock are kept in these fields. Do not disturb the animals and if you have a dog with you keep it on a lead. Make sure you close all gates behind you.

Nailsea was once a coal mining town, but much of the evidence of the mines is now lost. The mines on higher ground in Nailsea suffered from flooding and had to be pumped to manage the water levels. Counter-intuitively the coal mines on the lower levels were less prone to flooding due to the presence of clay soils. Looking across the fields to your left and right there are two clumps of trees that are slightly higher than the other trees in the area. These trees are growing on old mining spoil heaps and are all that remain above ground of two mines nearby.



©Peter Speight 2024.

Map 2 - Route to Backwell Common, Note the Wooded Spoil Heaps

There are views here across the valley to Backwell church and the hills beyond. Some evenings the church bells can be heard tolling from here.

As you follow the field boundary the second field on the left is known as the Brick Field. This is reference to more historical industrial activity. In the 18th Century the clay soils were excavated to produce bricks. It is thought that bricks were stored in this field.

Take the path to the left crossing over the stream with the little waterfall and pass through the gate into the Brick Field. Follow the path straight on with the field boundary on your right.

At the end of the path use the metal gate to access the road which is called Backwell Common.

Until 2023 the access to the road was by a style. The style was one of the traditional stone styles that were once common in the area. Unfortunately, the wall supporting the style was removed after being damaged, the stone style being replaced by the metal gate. Use the smaller inset pedestrian gate to leave the field.

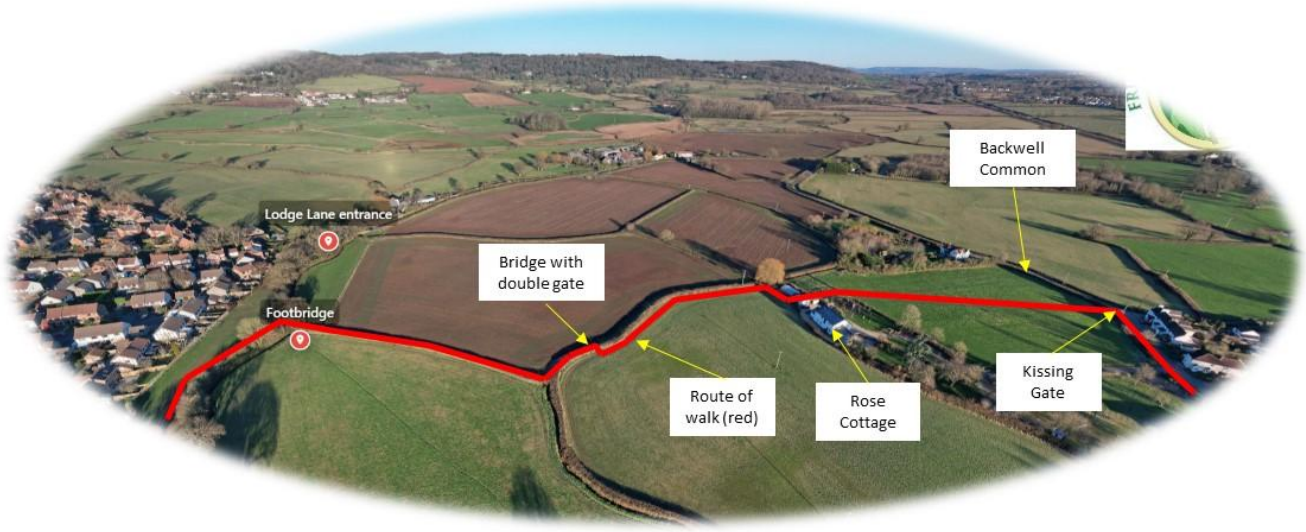
Turn left and walk along Backwell Common. The houses either side are mostly modernised miner cottages; some have their dates of construction on them.

Pass the large entrance to Rose Cottage on your left.

Shortly afterwards leave the road by going through the kissing gate on the left and follow the path towards Rose Cottage. This path is a public footpath and it passes through the rear garden of Rose Cottage behind their garage. The path is fenced off from the gardens on either side of it.

There are two gates on the path near the garage building. After passing through the second gate, you are back in the Brick Field. Once again Ordnance Survey maps will show a public footpath crossing the field, but do not use that route. Instead follow the field boundary initially to the right and then around to the left.

In good weather there are fine views across the valley to hills beyond, Wraxall church and the Tyntesfield Estate.



©Peter Speight 2024.

Map 3 - Backwell Common to Trendlewood Community Park

Taking care cross over the small footbridge that has two gates, one at each end of the bridge. There is a big step down off this bridge that can be slippery in damp weather.

Turn left and follow the field boundary.

The Kenn Hedge and the River Kenn are in front of you. Go through the kissing gate and then cross the footbridge in front of you. Once over the footbridge you have re-entered Trendlewood Community Park.

Go up the steps and turn right. Keeping the Kenn Hedge to your right, follow the track which goes between the trees with the River Kenn to your right. If you are in need of a rest there is bench near the top of the steps.

Just before the gate to Lodge Lane turn left and go up the steps. Do not leave Trendlewood Community Park.



Map 4 – Foot Bridge to the Bench near Bude Close

The open area you have entered was established as a tall grass meadow in 2013. This previously largely unused section of amenity grassland now provides an area of tall grass with wild flowers which has huge biodiversity benefits. The Friends of Trendlewood Park in conjunction with contractors cut this grass annually and remove the arising's.

Walk alongside the tall grass meadow bearing left to pass parallel with the property boundaries.

Continue straight on, leaving the tall grass meadow behind you and staying within Trendlewood Community Park. Go past the steps down to the footbridge on your left.

This section of the park is long and thin. It was formerly farmland and orchards. Developers wanted to build housing down to the River Kenn but local campaigners successfully ensured that a strip of land was allocated as a bridleway from St. Austell Close to Lodge Lane. Some of the local orchards that were on this part of the park would have been used to produce cider apples and mostly likely sold to the Coates Cider factory in Nailsea.

The area you are walking through is mostly maintained as amenity grass for the local community, being cut regularly during the growing season. Some areas, particularly in the early summer, are left uncut to encourage wild flowers and insects.

Other areas are managed as tall grass meadow; these have been seeded with Yellow Rattle to reduce the amount of grass that needs composting when cut. These measures aim to create a diversity of grass lengths to provide a more varied habitat for species; this is a critical feature to offset the environmental damage from the large-scale monocultures of modern farming methods.

Go straight on. After about 200 metres you will pass under a hedge row, to your left is another bench where you can rest and take in the view across the fields beyond the River Kenn. This wider area of the park follows an old field boundary and was once an orchard.

Continuing straight on the path and pass through the gate. The tarmac path leading off to the right goes to Helston Road and is part of Nowhere Lane. If you explore up this path after crossing Helston Road you will come across East End House and another wooded spoil heap from mining. Our route does not go that way.



Map 5 – Gate to Chelvey Rise

Continue straight on until you return to the information board at Lion Corner.

Turn right at the information board and retrace the route back across Truro Road to the Old Farm House public house and Chelvey Rise.

If your boots are clean and it is not a Monday you can eat and drink in the pub.