



Abbey Fields by Matthew Sugars Photography

Welcome to Kenilworth, a place most definitely worth your time.... Step into our monumental story amongst the noble ruins of Kenilworth Castle. Lose yourself in the rolling greenery of Abbey Fields, or venture just a little further into beautiful countryside alive with nature. Spend a day uncovering the rich threads of our history, browse intriguing shops or simply kick back over some fabulous food & drink.

But wait, there's more here than you'd think! So, slow down, savour each moment and...

Discover the story for yourself...



Kenilworth Common by Jonathan Corbett Photography

Want a deeper experience?

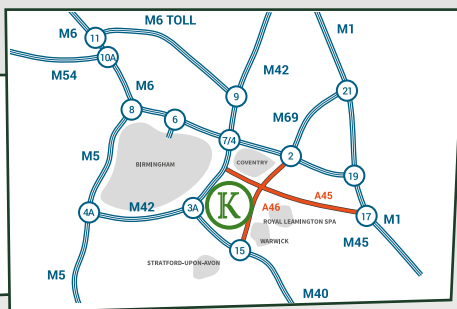
This leaflet is just the tip of the iceberg! We have also developed a companion mobile website which expands on each of our trails, with bags more information and interactive features.



Visit the website or scan the QR code:

visit.kenilworthweb.co.uk/discover/trails

Getting here:



By Car

Kenilworth is located on the A46 just 6 miles from both Coventry and Warwick.

There is plenty of parking in the town centre at Abbey End.

By Bus

Regular services connect Kenilworth with Warwick, Royal Leamington Spa and Coventry.

www.traveline.info

By Train

Trains run regularly from Kenilworth Station to Coventry and Royal Leamington Spa.

www.nationalrail.co.uk

By Foot or By Bike

The Kenilworth Greenway connects to Berkswell and the Centenary and Millennium Ways pass through the town.

www.warwickshire.gov.uk/pathsandtrails

Further Information:

Visit visit.kenilworthweb.co.uk for more information



Visit www.shakespeares-england.co.uk for information on the wider area



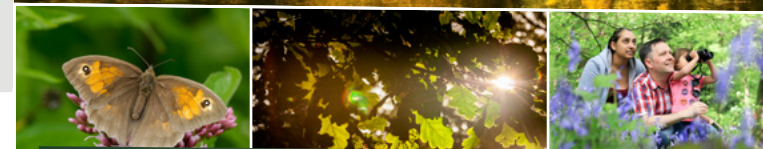
Kenilworth Town Council

These trails were produced by Kenilworth Town Council, and were funded by a grant from HS2's Business & Local Economy Fund (BLEF), adding benefit to communities demonstrably disrupted by the construction of Phase One of HS2 from London to West Midlands.

Design by: www.blackspiraldesign.co.uk

visit.kenilworthweb.co.uk

Visit Kenilworth Nature Trail



Discover Kenilworth's green and pleasant heart...

- 5 Miles
- Approx. 3.5 - 4 hours
- Easy route on footpaths (can be muddy)

Cover image by Benjamin Arnold. Inset images by John Bridges, Jonathan Corbett & Tom Marshall.

visit.kenilworthweb.co.uk

Kenilworth's Green Heart!

In just a few steps you'll leave the bustle behind and find yourself swept away in tranquillity, peace and fresh air. Discover the green legacy of our natural heritage, that's lovingly managed today, just the ticket for a memorable day together. It also offers lots of variety throughout the seasons, so there's no reason not to stretch your legs!

The walk is around **5 miles** and takes approximately **3 - 4 hours**, depending how much wildlife spotting you do! The route includes one stile and three gates. It is mostly on paths, although includes some off-road sections. Both can be muddy!

S Start: Abbey End

Postcode (for Sat Nav): CV8 1QJ

Coordinates (for GPS): 52.344, -1.579

Plentiful parking is available in Abbey End or Square West

www.warwickdc.gov.uk/info/20548/kenilworth_car_parks

Start your walk at the pedestrian area in **Abbey End**. You'll find options for refreshments nearby as well as public toilets. **Cross the road to the Holiday Inn and head right along Abbey End to the War Memorial.**

1 Abbey Fields

For more info: www.friendsofabbeyfields.org.uk/

All you can see before you was originally farmland supporting the medieval abbey of St Mary, which today, 500 years after dissolution is now the glorious green space of **Abbey Fields**. The 27 hectares rolls across two sandstone ridges, meeting at the low point of the Finham Brook and includes managed and wild spaces, as well as sheltering a myriad of species (including 54 varieties of tree!). **Take the path ahead downhill towards the brook.**



Wildflower Meadow in Abbey Fields by Paul Fitzpatrick



Brown Trout by Jack Perks

2 Abbey Meadows

On your left, as you descend, is an area of rare acid grassland (known locally for tobogganing!) which although low in nutrients provides a home for species like the wonderfully named **Pignut** and **Cats-Ear!** To your right is a cultivated wildflower meadow, carefully managed, this blooms in spring and is harvested for hay in the summer.

On reaching the bridge keep an eye out for **Brown Trout** in the brook! **Turn left at the iron bridge, bear right to cross the second bridge, then left on the path alongside the brook.**

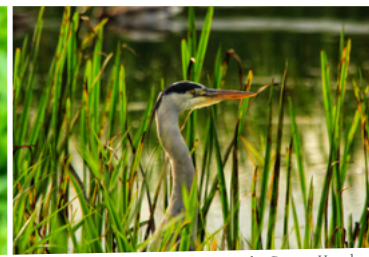
3 Finham Brook & Marsh

Finham Brook is a vital wildlife corridor, its tree-cloaked banks the place to see concentrations of moths on summer evenings and spot birds all year round. To the west the brook crosses the road at the Ford (which still floods to this day!).

Beyond the lake is an area of marshland, filled with **Bulrushes** and alive with **White Meadowsweet** in late summer and a magical purple haze of **Snake-Head Fritillaries** in spring. You are also quite likely to spot **Heron**s at the water's edge. **Turn right and continue around the lake on the lower path.**



Snake Head Fritillary by William Farrara



Grey Heron by George Howden

4 The Abbey Lake

The lake is the site of the Abbey fish pond, drained in 1650 but restored fully in the 1990s after years of annual flooding of the meadow. The lake has its own population of **Carp** and is a magnet for insects including **Dragonflies**. Summer evenings see three species of **Bats** arriving to drink (in turn!) and birds flock to the waters all year round including **Ducks** and **Mute Swans**. North of the lake are two mature **Oaks**, the larger being around 300 years old and the oldest in Abbey Fields. **Continue through the gap in the old wall. Turn left on the path by the museum and then continue ahead through the arch of the gatehouse. This path will take you to the Church.**



Pipistrelle Bat in flight by creativenature.nl



Tawny Owl by James Armes

5 St Nicholas Churchyard

The churchyard of **St Nicholas** sits upon the ruins of the Abbey and is a wildlife haven even within Abbey Fields. The path is lined with **Lime trees** and numerous **Conifers** reside elsewhere in the churchyard. Between the trees it's a peaceful place to spot **Squirrels**, insects, wildflowers and if you are lucky hear the calls of **Tawny Owls** at dusk.

If the wildlife eludes you seek out the church's unusual wildlife window with its own menagerie! **Take the path to the left of the church door to High Street and turn right. Continue ahead at lights and follow New Street onto the Coventry Road, pass footpath on left and then turn left through gate.**

Continue the trail overleaf...



Kestrel by Bob Brewer



Cattle on Parliament Piece cc-by-sa/2.0 - © John Brightley

8 Kenilworth Greenway

www.countryparks.warwickshire.gov.uk/kenilworthgreenway

Breaking cover you'll find yourself on the former Kenilworth to Berkswell railway, which opened in 1884 and carried passengers, freight and munitions during the war. The track was closed in the 1960s and it's an interesting place to spot wildlife amongst the old railway remnants. Look out for bluebells (in spring) fungi, grass snakes, Muntjac Deer, and even a bat roost in an old railwayman's hut on your left. **Continue southeast, over the Coventry Road and follow the path under the bridge at Common Lane until the Greenway dog-legs to the right. Turn right and pass through the fence.**



Glow Worm by Vaughan Matthews



Kenilworth Common by Jonathan Corbett photography

6 Parliament Piece

www.warwickshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/ParliamentPiece

Whilst Henry III did not hold parliament here during the siege of 1266, this 6-hectare oasis of calm grassland is still venerable with hedges thought to be up to 400 years old. Today it is managed by volunteers as a traditional meadow with hay cut in late July and grazed by cattle afterwards. Butterflies are particularly attracted to the grassland in the summer months, the pond ahead provides a shady shelter for frogs and newts as well as **Coots** and **Moorhens** and the tall trees makes this the perfect nesting spot for **Kestrels**. **Leave via Upper Spring Lane back onto Coventry Road and turn immediately left into Crackley Lane. Follow the pavement as far as the Tennis Club and then carefully continue along the lane for 300m to Crackley Woods.**

Take a Short Cut...

For a shorter walk... Cross the Coventry Road and then continue past Tainters Common onto Tainters Hill. At Manor Road turn left, cross the bridge and rejoin the main route at point 11.



Muntjac Deer by Bernard Dupont

10 Upper Common

You might have noticed all the lumps and bumps? The large depressions were historic gravel quarries, and you are now standing on an ancient trackway that once connected Kenilworth with Coventry. The woodland here is marvellous in its autumn colours, but most impressive in summer when **Glow-worms** flit between the trees after dark. **Take the path downhill to reach Finham brook, once the site of the Kenilworth Woodmill. Continue over ford into Forge Road, turning right at the main road onto the footpath alongside the allotments. Cross Manor Road and onto the path on your right by the Brook.**

* Detour: Lower Common

For a flavour of the past head under the railway and bear left along the red trail to visit the Lower (or Little) Common, a scarce remnant of the original heathland and a refuge for rare reptiles like the **Adder** and **Common Lizard**. Retrace your steps to point 9 and continue.



Common European Adder by AS Begbie

7 Crackley Wood

www.warwickshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/reserves/CrackleyWood

You are standing in a remnant of the ancient Forest of Arden, which today is a semi-natural wood managed using traditional coppicing. This ensures a wealth of variety of trees and bird-life as well as a network of shady paths and grassy glades – perfect for wildlife spotting! May-time sees a carpet of **Bluebells**, whilst fungi flourish in the autumn, and throughout the year the **brass rubbing trail** is a great family diversion! **Follow the trail clockwise around the wood, exiting onto the Greenway at the halfway point, turn right towards the bridge.**

Bluebells by Steven Falk



Kingfisher by David Edwards



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Stinkhorn Fungus by Chris Lawrence

9 Kenilworth Common

www.warwickshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/reserves/KenilworthCommon

Amazingly this was all grass and heathland back in 1756 when the common was set aside for grazing! However, with grazing banned in the 1800's the **Oaks** and **Birches** have claimed the spot and created 12 hectares of wonderful leafy woodland. Today the common is abundant in bird-life and also particularly rich in fungi in autumn. Take your time and seek out the brass rubbing trail for some extra fun and games! **Walk ahead, bearing left uphill for 100m to join the sunken lane and turn left onto the blue trail.**

11 Finham Brook

Home-stretch now as we follow the leafy path upstream along the Brook. This section of the Brook was channelled in previous times to create a separate mill race for the now demolished Mill at the Common (the sluice south of the bridge can still be seen) Nowadays it's been restored to a babbling stream with resident brown trout and a tranquil spot to catch a glimpse of Kingfishers darting over the water. **Follow the Brook to reach Bridge Street, turn left and cross into Abbey Fields. Take the path uphill to the War Memorial and back to Abbey End.**

Finish!

You've certainly earned a reward so why not grab a tasty treat or tippie before you call it a day?

Check out the directory: visit.kenilworthweb.co.uk/food-drink

If you enjoyed this trail then why not try another next time you visit?

Find more trails at: visit.kenilworthweb.co.uk/discover/trails

Brass Rubbing in Crackley Wood by Rob Marsh

