

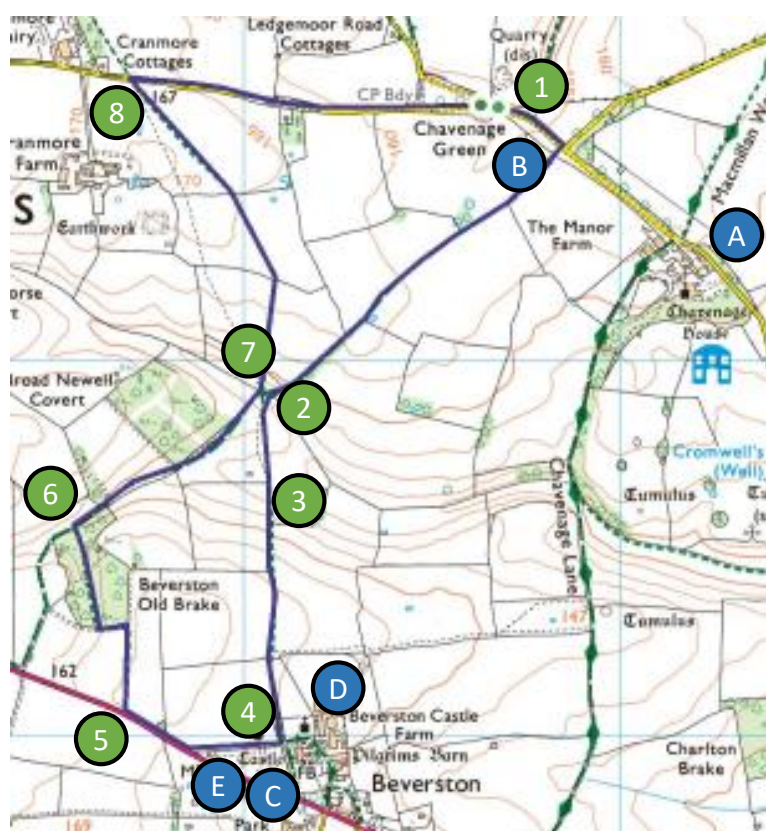
Poldark to Cromwell

A figure-of-eight walk taking in Chavenage (with its Poldark and Cromwell connections), Beverston (ancient village, Norman church and 13th century castle), and rolling Cotswold countryside.

Distance 6.5km (4.0 miles), Walking Time approx 1.5 hours(plus any time exploring Beverston) (Grade A on scale A = easy to D = hard)

Starts & finishes at Chavenage Green (GR 866956). Take B4014 (Avening) road out of Tetbury, after 300m branching left into Chavenage Lane. Continue for 3.3km/2 miles (passing Chavenage House) until the road divides at a triangle of grassland (Chavenage Green). Park under trees on the verge, leaving the road and tracks clear for farm traffic. (Alternatively, walk from Tetbury to start point.)

Refreshments: choice nearby in Tetbury, café near Chavenage House (check opening times)



A Chavenage House: built around 1400 as a monastic residence, the estate was taken by the Crown during the Dissolution of the Monasteries, then bought by the wealthy Stphens family in 1551. A major reconstruction made it into the classic 'E' shaped Elizabethan manor house. It has had a long and colourful history, being a base both for Parliamentary troops in the Civil War and Eisenhower in WW2. More recently, it has featured in film and tv productions such as Poirot, Lark Rise to Candleford, Wolf Hall and Poldark.

B Chavenage Green: meeting place (or Court) in Saxon times of the Longtree Hundred, on land owned by Princess Goda (sister of Edward the Confessor, wife of Earl Godwin; Godwin's son, Harold, died at the Battle of Hastings). Three secondary Roman roads passed through Chavenage Green, and later it was on an old direct road from Nailsworth to Tetbury.

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C Beverston Castle: dating from the 13 century and owned for centuries by the Berkeley family (of Berkeley Castle), the castle was initially held for Charles I in the Civil War but fell to the Parliamentarians in 1664. After being ravaged by fire, it was purchased in 1842 by RJ Holford of Westonbirt and the banqueting hall and other sections were remodelled to form a residence, but the remainder fell into decay. It is now a private residence but the ruined walls, crooked roofs and battlemented towers make an intriguing picture viewed through the opening of the Gate House..

D Beverston Church: largely Norman, though the much eroded sculpture of Christ set in the outside wall of the tower is Saxon from an earlier church. Inside the bright interior, particularly noteworthy are the decorated doorway, the pillars of the south arcade, and the very ancient rood screen of black oak.

E Ancient Barn: sometimes referred to as the Pilgrim's Barn, having supposedly offered shelter to travellers between the abbeys of Malmesbury and Gloucester.



Description

- 1 From Chavenage Green walk back along the lane for 250m, turning right at Chavenage Green Cottages onto the public bridleway, and passing the house on the right. Continue in the same direction for 1 km on a broad grass track with the field boundary to the right.
- 2 The path curves right and descends into a small valley. Just before the foot of the descent, the path curves to the right and goes through a small thicket. Pass through a wide metal gate and turn left across a field (ignore the path almost straight ahead).
- 3 After climbing a small rise, continue straight ahead to reach a hedge on the right and shortly afterwards a stile adjacent to a wide metal gate (overgrown). Cross the stile and keep straight on through the field, following the hedge to the right. At the end of this field, the path/track continues nearly straight ahead across the edge of a field towards Beverston church and castle, now with a stone wall on the left.
(At the end of the field, turn left over cattle grid to explore Beverston village, church and castle, returning to this point.)
- 4 Turn right and, with a high wall on the left, walk 250m along the edge of a field. Turn right just before a wide metal gate near a cottage, and with the main road to the left, walk 100m along the edge of the field. Cross a stile and pass through a small copse, crossing another stile. Walk along the edge of the field to reach a footpath sign pointing right.
- 5 Turn right and continue for 250m (field boundary to the left). Just before reaching a wooded area on the left, turn left by a wide metal gate down a farm track for 100m (with remains of a concrete track to the right). Then turn right through a wide metal gate into the woodland and walk through the wood for 300m, emerging through another gate and turning right onto a farm track.
- 6 Continue ahead through two more gates (100m apart). After the second gate, bear left and follow the path for 400m skirting the trees to the left, then across pasture down the slope to a wooden stile on your left. (This was Point 2 on the outward journey.) Cross the stile, and climb up the slope through the thicket.
- 7 At the top of the slope veer left across three cultivated fields. Cross the first field in a direction slightly left of straight on, aiming to the left of a large tree in the hedge 300m away. Pass through a wide gap in the hedge near the tree, then bear diagonally left across the second field towards a gap in the next hedge 200m away. Pass through this gap and walk diagonally left across the third field for 400m, aiming slightly to the right of the farm buildings. Pass through a gap in the hedge near a footpath sign onto Chavenage Lane.

(N.B. the route across one or more of these fields may not be visible or passable for varying reasons e.g. crop planting, recently ploughed ground, or farming operations. In this case it may be necessary to keep to the left edge of the fields, then a short farm access road, which will increase the length of the walk slightly.)

- 8 Turn right and walk 1km along the lane back to Chavenage Green and the start point.