

Stoke Park Walk

Hilly, with extensive views over and beyond the park landscape, mainly on open land



Time: 1.5 – 2 hours

Distance: Approx. 3 miles

Route difficulty:

Difficult. Paths are mainly unsurfaced and can be boggy in places with some steep hills

Parking: Along Romney Avenue, near the Cameron Centre



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Modern yet historic features at Stoke Park – ▲ Purdown Camp and Anti-Aircraft Battery – a Scheduled Ancient Monument and fantastic viewpoint near ▼ the 1970 BT Tower.



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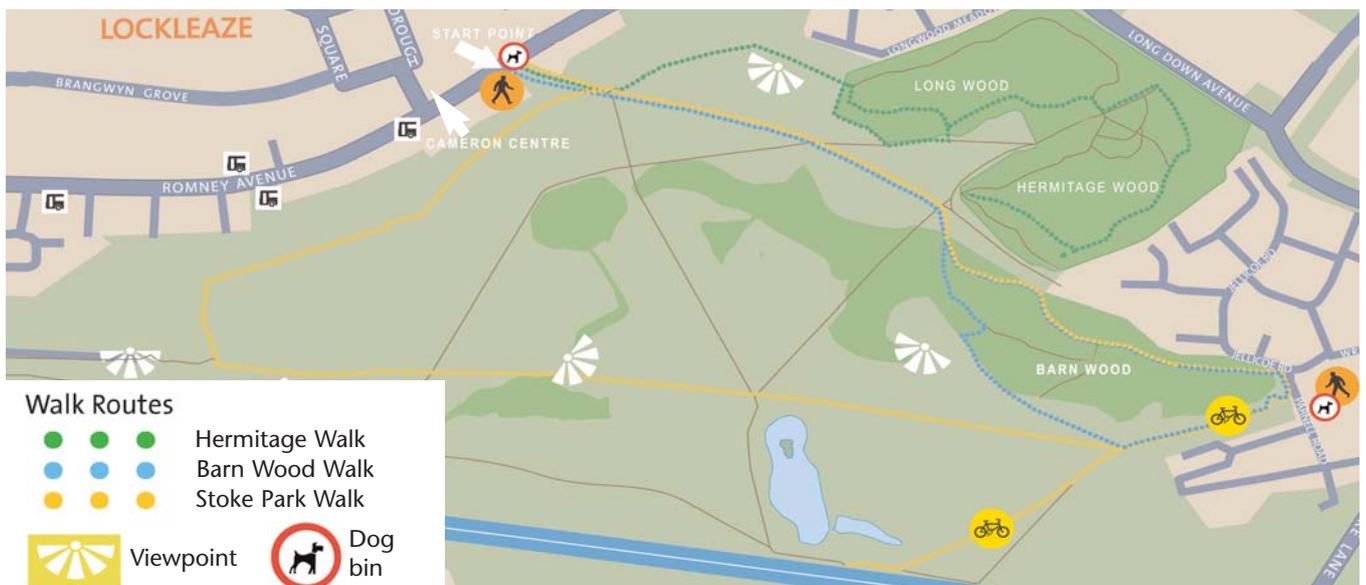
Route description

- 1** Enter the Estate at the entrance leading from the triangle of grass across the road, just north of the Cameron Centre. Keep the group of five fir trees to your right as you bear left. Walk towards the marker post on the left of the gap at the entrance into the open area at the top of the Estate.
- 2** Bear right a few paces to meet the medieval cart track that is slightly raised in places and then bear left towards the woodlands. When you reach the edge of both Hermitage and Barn Wood, look for a marker post on your right next to a disused stile. Enter Barn Wood here.
- 3** Bear left, passing the first post on your right. Continue downhill. On your right you will come across the flat, circular site of the rotunda – formerly an enclosed performance space and garden feature.
- 4** Continue along the main winding path, initially downhill. Soon you will reach a concentration of historic features.

First you will see the site and ruins of some old cottage buildings. Just beyond (right) is an ornamental bridge with a tunnel beneath which carried a stream from the 'Horse' Pond that is a few paces ahead of you (left). The Dower House is on your right through the trees. Note the mature trees in this part of the Estate.

- 5** At the marker on your left, cross the path and continue straight on. Very soon you will come to the Beaufort monument on its pedestal. You can make a short detour from the path to see it. It dates from 1755 – a memorial to the 4th Duke of Beaufort. The path soon joins the Parnell Road entrance through a kissing gate at the end.

- 6 Bear right down the surfaced zig-zag path into Barn Wood Valley. The Dower House is on your left. Continue until you reach a marker post on your left.
- 7 Bear right on the wider of the paths (unsurfaced) and continue parallel with the M32, towards the northern end of the Duchess Pond. The Telecommunications Tower will be ahead of you in the distance. You will pass by the base of the obelisk high up on your right.
- 8 When you reach the dip near the Duchess Pond you will see a marker on your left beside a gap between two large logs. Go straight ahead up the steep hill.
- 9 When the marker post is just ahead of you to the right, stop and look behind you to admire the best view over the Dower House and the planned Park landscape.
- 10 Go through the two logs and straight on uphill towards the tower until you see the next marker (left). Pond Field Wood will be on your left. You are now on Purdown.
- 11 Continue straight ahead, towards the tower. See spectacular views. At the marker, head right and downhill with the Anti-Aircraft battery on your left. Bear right at the next marker and continue a short distance to another marker that takes you through a gap in the hedge.
- 12 Bear right. Continue parallel with Romney Avenue until back at start point.



Ruth Coleman

Enjoyed this walk? Try another Stoke Park circular walk. There is also an Estate leaflet with a guide to the many fascinating historic features to be discovered at Stoke Park. Download from:

www.bristol.gov.uk/stokepark

