

Walk 1.

The Teme Valley and Sapey Brook

Length: 7 miles

Ascent: 208 metres

Time: 3.5 – 4 hours

Terrain: Fields, woods, moderate, undulating.

Stout walking boots essential

This walk is best done in conjunction with Explorer Map 203 Ludlow

This 7-mile walk takes you through varying countryside passing the villages of Upper Sapey and Harpley before descending towards Sapey Brook and St Bartholomew's Church then passing two former water mills. There are two waterfalls and great views of the Teme Valley.

(1) From the Baiting House turn left and walk on the B4203 for 200 metres (beware of the traffic.) Turn left on a minor road, signposted Upper Sapey Church. Continue for 400m, then turn left at a fingerpost, passing Church House to the church.

The church of St Michael's dates back to pre-Norman times. It has a 13th century font and the pulpit, lectern and clergy's desk are very old.

With the church on your left go over a stile in the right-hand corner. Continue in the same direction past a telegraph pole in the distance and over a stile in the hedge on the left. Keep the hedge on your right and at the end of the hedge cross the field in the same direction towards a stile. Continue ahead going slightly left uphill to a stile at the top of the hill. Go over the stile and continue in the same direction across a field for 225 metres, through two metal gates. With the hedge on your left go through a small metal gate on your left and continue with the hedge on your left to the end of the field to go over a stile then immediately over another stile on your right. Keeping the hedge on your left by a golf course continue ahead going around a boggy area and near a fallen tree and over a stile on your left onto the golf course. Turn right keeping the hedge on your right to a stile on your right. Go over the stile and turn left keeping the hedge on your left. When you reach the first house go over a stile on your left and turn right on a track to a road.

(2) Turn left and continue for 500m to a crossroad with B4203, then continue straight across. Walk down Holly Bush Lane for another 500m, turning right at a fingerpost just past an Exhaust, Tyre and Battery sign to go through a wooden gate into a garden. Go over a stile in the left-hand corner walking slightly downhill keeping the hedge on the left, continue through a metal kissing gate and over a bridge. Continue ahead heading uphill to go over a stile in the hedge on your right. Turn left with the hedge on your left heading towards a house on the left and a metal gate in front leading to a track. When you reach a road continue ahead into the small village of Harpley or you can go left to take a look at the new St Bartholomew's Church which was built in 1877 to replace an older one that we will visit later. Retrace your footsteps and continue into the village.

(3) Go past The Old Rectory on your left and immediately after a sign on your right saying Harpley Green take a grassy track over a small brook on your left. Go down the track for 30m into a field bearing diagonally left heading uphill going through a metal gate. Continue in the same direction heading downhill towards some trees going through a metal gate [It can be very muddy here.] Keeping the trees on your left go through a wooden gate into another field then bearing diagonally right head uphill through a metal gate. Turn right keeping the hedge on your right go downhill towards some trees. Keeping the trees on your right follow these around going down to a ford and a bridge. Go through the ford and turn left along a track OR turn right into woods and go through metal gate and cross the bridge to join the track. Take a look at the waterfall on your left and then follow the track ahead with the brook on your left until you reach old St Bartholomew's Church.

St Bartholomew's Church is a redundant church. The church dates from the early part of the 12th century, then it became neglected and was used for a time as a farm building. On the walls inside there is some interesting graffiti from around the 1930's maybe from people who helped with fruit picking from Birmingham. This is a good place to have a break as the church is always open.

(4) With the church behind you turn left going down the road for 100m. Go through a metal gate on your left heading uphill towards a telegraph pole keeping the trees on your left to another metal gate. Go through the gate and turn right keeping the hedge on your right continue ahead for 300m. Look for a wooden gate which is down an embankment on your right and is easily missed. Go through the gate heading downhill keeping the hedge on the right, go through another wooden gate heading down to a bridge over Sapey Brook to Hope Mill.

Look out for a waterfall on your left. Go in between two buildings and follow the track around to the left first going uphill and then down until you meet a road in 400m.

(5) Turn right and take the footpath immediately on your left over a stile and a bridge. Continue ahead heading uphill to the right by a telegraph pole to meet a track. After 200m you will come to Holland's Mill. Go over bridge on your left in front of the house then over a stile keeping a fence on your left follow the footpath uphill until an open field [Can get overgrown here in the summer] Turn right and follow the field round with the trees on your right. Follow the line of the trees to the end then continue across the field to cross a broken stile. Turn right, keep the hedge on your right. Follow the path to the end of the field then bear left going into and through woodland to a metal gate. Go through the gate heading diagonally right downhill going over a bridge and through a metal gate [Sapey Brook.] Head uphill with ponds on your left and keep the hedge on your right heading towards Burton Court.

The round building on your right is an old dovecote.

(6) Go through a gate to meet a track, turn right and follow the track to the end of the farm buildings on your right. Then turn left through a metal gate heading north, passing two big trees on your left to cross a very big field heading uphill. After the trees bear slightly left looking for a metal gate in the distance and go through it. Keep the hedge on your left continue ahead going over 3 stiles to meet the driveway to Tippins Farm. Turn right here to meet the road. Turn left to return to The Baiting House [Beware of traffic] and enjoy a well-earned drink.

The Baiting House

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7 miles

208 metres ascent.

The Teme Valley + Sapey Brook

