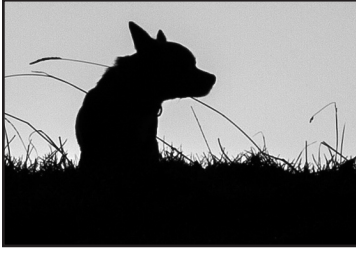


Ollie's walk of the week



Stonehouse to the Horse Pool

Distance: 6.4km (4 mls)
Time: 1hr 30m

Terrain: Pavements, singles track roads, farm tracks and fields. Can be muddy after wet weather at the foot of the farm track, which is a steep descent.

Walk Overview: This walk starts in the heart of Stonehouse and heads along Manse Road before dropping down to the River Avon. It passes many interesting Stonehouse features and has great views over the surrounding countryside. Starting point: Park in the car park opposite the Cooperative and walk along King Street to its junction with Argyle Street where you will turn left. Continue down Lawrie Street past Paterson Church and continue downhill. To the left, just before the underpass, there is the Stonehouse Community Woodland which is worth a short diversion. After passing under the bypass, look out for a gap between houses leading up to the football pitches.

Just before reaching a gate, look into the trees to your left. A few yards in you will spot the remains of the platform for the former Stonehouse Station. Once through the gate, turn immediately right and head over towards Alexander Hamilton Memorial Park. Once into the park there are great views over towards the pillars of the railway viaduct, which was the

longest of its kind in Scotland.

Keep to the path at the top of the park, passing a house on your left. Continue along the side of this property onto a path leading towards Manse Road. Once you reach Manse Road, turn right until you see a sign for Glebe Cemetery. Continue through the cemetery until you reach the left hand corner, where a path leads up to the remains of the old St Ninians Church. There are many interesting graves dating back centuries, including the 'blood stone', so named due to the stone used leaving a red residue on your finger if you rub it.

At the top left hand corner of the old cemetery go through the gate leading back onto Manse Road. Continue along the road, passing another cemetery on the left. All along this road there are great views over the Avon valley towards Glassford. About half a mile along, you will reach a sign directing walkers onto a farm track right of way down to the Horse Pool. Climb over the stile and follow the track downhill until you reach a field. Head to your left along the edge of the field until you reach the Horse Pool on the Avon.

There are two options for returning, firstly by retracing your steps back to the farm track, or alternatively following the course of the Avon all the way round the field back to the farm track. Return to Manse Road and follow it back uphill under the second underpass for the bypass. Follow the road round past St Ninians Church on Vicars Road, turning left onto Townhead Street before arriving back at the car park, where this walk ends.

Aerial photo courtesy of Bob Wellcoat.

