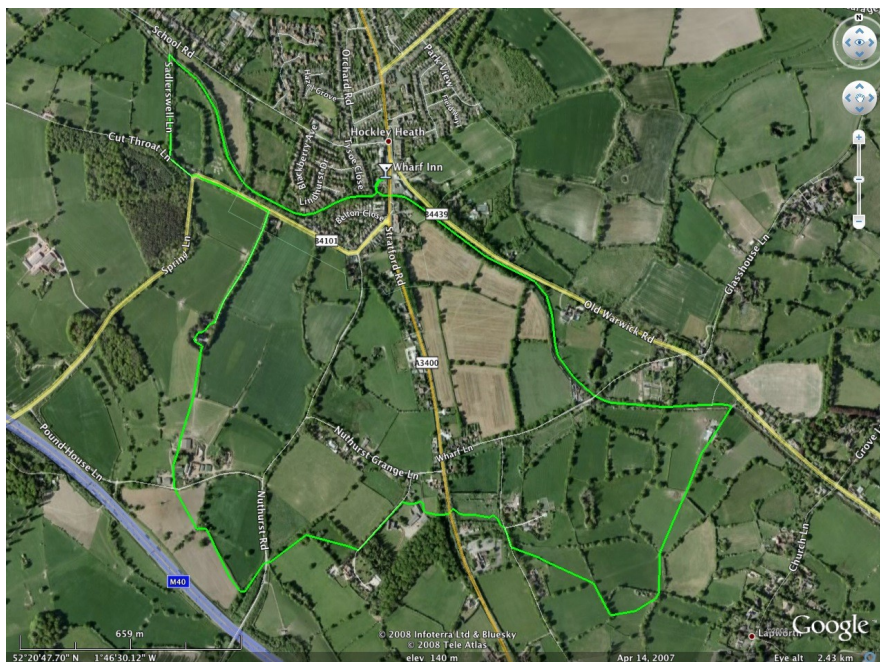


Dorridge & District Residents Association

Hockley Heath – Churches and Sights





This is a circular walk of around 3 miles that takes around 1½ hours. It starts from the car park behind the Wharf Inn (ask permission to park there) which is on the Stratford Road, just opposite the Old Warwick Road.

This walk is quite special as it passes several interesting sights: Umberslade Baptist Church, together with the original wooden chapel and the burial site of its founder, George Fredrick Muntz MP. The Church is owned by the Historic Churches Trust who spent £500,000 on repairs in 2008. Access can be arranged by appointment. Beyond this there is another chapel next to Obelisk Farm, in turn named after the 18th century obelisk which you pass, and may have seen from the M40. The walk then goes through fields, across the A34 and then back to the canal to return to the Wharf Inn.



The walk has a few stiles, which are not all dog-friendly and has a couple of muddy sections when wet, so boots not trainers would be best. The first section is a short walk along the canal which has a very boggy section of path, but in very wet weather you can avoid this by going down the Stratford Road to GBS Lighting and turning right, joining the walk at step 6. The walk does involve a section on the road to Earlswood and crosses the A34 so it requires road sense.

The pictures are from a grey day in October 2008.

	<p>1: Take tow path to the right</p> <p>Having found the car park at the rear of the Wharf Inn, go down to the bottom, by the beer garden, and turn right onto the tow path, away from the bridge.</p>	<p>2: Leave at next bridge</p>  <p>Walk along to the next bridge. Take the path up to the bridge at the right.</p>
	<p>3: Turn left and follow lane</p> <p>At the top, turn left over the bridge and follow the narrow lane to the end.</p>	<p>4: Turn left</p>  <p>Turn left at the end of the lane.</p>

5: Go ahead



At the junction, go ahead, back towards Hockley Heath. Take care as this is an unrestricted road, and there is no safe verge to walk on – best to cross to face oncoming

traffic.

6: Right at gate



At the end of the field on the right is a track with a gate and as you pass and look back you will see an old sign to Umberslade Baptist Church. Take this track.

7: At the end pass the chapel



The track emerges by an old wooden chapel – boarded up. Ahead is the elegant Baptist church, though you cannot get access to this without prior

arrangement. Go up to the main church and follow path around to the right (noting unusual War Memorial as you pass).

8: Continue around the church



As you go around the church you will see a large grave ahead which is the grave of George Fredrick Muntz and his second wife, with a memorial to his

first. We carry on left to the end of the grave yard and take the feint path to the far left corner.

9: Cross stile and go ahead



In the corner is a stile which we cross and continue ahead, along the hedge to a gateway.

10: Pass to the right of the large barn



As you approach the gate look ahead and to the right and you will see the obelisk. This also gives you the line of the footpath – from the gate bear half right to the side

of the large barn (very "muddy" – lots of cows here).

11: Cross stile ahead



As you pass the barn, look ahead for a stile in the fence ahead.

12: Cross stile



Cross the stile, and take the narrow path by the graveyard and old chapel on the right (being converted to a house it seems). At the road, cross to the kissing

gate opposite.

13: Go ahead across the field



At the gate, pause to look at the obelisk on the right. (The path does not go to it – at the time of writing it would have damaged crops to approach).

From the gate, strike out slightly left across the field, aiming for a gate that is just to the right of the brick barn ahead.

14: Follow the left side of next field



Going ahead through the gate, turn left around the edge of the field, then follow the hedge on the left to the far left corner of this field.

15: Cross bridge and left



In the corner is a foot bridge, cross this and follow way mark to the left down a narrow overgrown path. This soon emerges at a road.

16: Cross road left to path



Crossing the road towards the left, a stile appears, hidden from view between two gates. Cross the stile.

17: Go to top of field



Staying to the left, walk up the field to another stile at the top which we cross.

18: Cross to the opposite right corner



Bear right at 45 degrees across the field to the far corner where there is a stile crossing into a driveway.

19: Turn left up drive



Turn left up the drive.

20: Take gate to the right



After a while, look out on the right for a small gate in the hedge, a few metres before a brick and wooden panel garden wall.

21: Walk left across lawn



Cross to the drive ahead and go left past the white stables.

22: Turn right to gate and cross field



In front of the stables, take the path to the right, then go through the gate into the field and on to a silver gate in the far right corner. This narrow path leads to the A34.

23: Cross road to stile on left.



Taking great care at the road, cross and walk down to the left a few metres, where you will find a stile into the field opposite.

24: Follow the path



The path meanders through the field, to end up at the far right corner.

25: Leave the field



In the corner is a stile. Follow the path beyond to the end of a rickety fence on the right.

26: Go to road, and turn right



The path then tumbles onto the road on the left. At the road, turn right and walk up a few metres towards some houses on the left.

27: Take gate into field



Soon on the left, after 20 metres or so, is a gate into the field. Go through this, bearing right along the path that skims past the gardens at the rear of the houses. Continue on to the hedge at the far side.

28: Follow hedge to bottom corner



Bear right at the hedge, keeping the hedge to your left, down to the corner where there is a gate.

29: Go to the far corner



Going through the gate, ignore the way mark to the far right, and head instead for the corner of the field ahead and to the right.

30: Ahead past the pool



As you approach the corner, a pool will appear. Go to the right of this and through the gate, following the way marks.

31: Continue ahead across a narrow field



The path continues in more or less a straight line through a number of fields.

32: Continue up hill



Continue up the hill, heading to the left of the tree ahead.

33: Continue ahead



...on through the next field, staying to the right.

34: Through the farm



The path arrives at Drawbridge Farm, which we walk through to reach the canal.

35: Across the bridge and left



At the bridge, cross it, then turn left. Follow the tow path for half a mile and you will arrive back at the Wharf Inn where you started.

If you have any comments or corrections on these walks, please contact us on DorridgeResidents@gmail.com