

Walk Thirty-Eight: Long Ashton

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The North Somerset commuter village of Long Ashton lies close to Bristol, but is determinedly separate from it. Bypassed decades ago by the Long Ashton Bypass, it's the sort of place that few Bristolians would ever have a reason to go to. However, the village has a long history, and several interesting built and natural features.

This simple, all-year-round circuit is a straightforward stroll along the length of the older part of the village. The walk starts with a visit to the peaceful All Saints' Church, then follows the Festival Way cycle route alongside the quiet Ashton Brook. After a visit to the village centre, the walk returns directly via the main village street, which is where most of the interesting historic buildings and features can be found.

Useful Information

Terrain: Largely flat, very slightly undulating.

Ground: Paved for the most part, with a short unpaved section below the church that can be soft underfoot in winter.

Key Attractions: All Saints' Church, Ashton Brook, Village centre, Emily Smyth Almshouses, Long Ashton War Memorial.

Refreshments: One pub near the start of the route. The village centre has a café, a pub and a major food store.

Starting point: Glebe Road, Long Ashton

Getting there: Buses to the Nailsea area stop on Long Ashton Road close to the Glebe Road turning. On-street car parking is available on Glebe Road itself.

Approx. Time: 1 hour 30 minutes

Approx. Distance: 2.8 miles

The Route

Our route starts at **Glebe Road** in Long Ashton, a pleasant residential street with a semi-rural, semi-suburban feel. There is an interesting view up to Dundry village above the rooftops.



View to Dundry from Glebe Road

Begin the walk by approaching the main Long Ashton Road and turning right along it. I recommend crossing to the north side of the road for the safer pavement.

The junction of Glebe Road and **Long Ashton Road** is marked by a magnificent cedar tree (1).

You will pass some fine old buildings including a former chapel and an old red-brick lodge before leaving the main built-up area of the village. As you approach the historic Angel Inn, you can also see one of the entrance lodges to Ashton Court Estate in the distance.

Take the next right, Church Lane, next to the Angel Inn.

▲ The Angel Inn is an historic pub that also offers food and bed & breakfast accommodation.



Former schoolhouse at Church Lane

Church Lane is a charming backwater that is home to several historic buildings including

the tiny schoolhouse of the former Long Ashton Parochial School.

At the corner, go through the gate ahead of you (2) to enter All Saints' Churchyard, following a public footpath.



All Saints' Church

All Saints' Church sits slightly apart from the rest of the village, commanding an attractive position surrounded by fields. The extensive churchyard contains several tall, impressive specimen trees.



All Saints' churchyard

Make your way all the way down the right hand edge of the churchyard. Exit the churchyard via a gate onto a short section of unsurfaced path next to a farm track (3). Reaching a crossroads, turn right onto the Festival Way cycle path.

The **Festival Way** cycle route runs the full length of Long Ashton village. This first section is a pleasant, shared use cycle path bounded by fields. Despite the noise from the main road off left, it retains a feeling of openness and tranquillity.



The Festival Way on the approach to Long Ashton

As the path begins to veer away from the main road, the **Ashton Brook** makes its appearance from the left (4). We will be following this local waterway for some time as we skirt the lower edge of the village. You will also pass the first of many other footpaths leading off to the sides; there are clearly lots of other walking options for local people, but we will be sticking to the better paths.

When you reach Yanley Lane, cross over and pick up the cycle path again just to the left, passing Northleaze Primary School.

The path follows the brook for a few more metres before splitting into two routes (5).

Alternative route

If you don't mind getting your feet muddy, you can continue along the unsurfaced footpath next to the brook, rejoining the main route at Gardeners Walk Play Area (6).

To continue following the main, all-weather route, turn right along the cycle path, coming out in the quiet surroundings of **Brook Close**.

Climb Brook Close and turn left into Copford Lane.

Copford Lane is a comfortable example of quiet late-20th Century suburbia. *Harry Potter* fans might be reminded of Privet Drive.



Suburbia: Copford Lane

At the far end of Copford Lane, pick up the cycle path again.

You will arrive in **Gardeners Walk Play Area (6)**, where the **alternative route** rejoins from the left. It's a reasonably pleasant streamside space with good children's play equipment.



Alongside the brook at Gardners Walk Play Area

Continue following the cycle path alongside the brook.

After a short while, the path meanders round an undulating open space below the modern houses of **Theyne's Croft (7)**. It then passes next to a belt of swampy woodland that is good for wild birds.



A robin sings next to the cycle path below Theyne's Croft

Continue following the main cycle path until it crosses the brook, passing below Birdwell Primary School (8).

The path will bring you out at the end of **Lampton Road**, a wholesome but very ordinary suburban street dating from the late post-war period.

Follow Lampton Road as it curves round to the right. When it turns left again, turn right into Lovelinch Gardens (9).



Spring flowers at Lovelinch Gardens, approaching the village centre

Lovelinch Gardens leads you into the centre of the village, where you can find a few shops and places you can pause for refreshments.

▲ *The Old Library café in Lovelinch Gardens advertises coffee, pastries and pizzas.*

Approach the main street, here called Weston Road (10), and turn right. When you reach the Bird in Hand, I recommend crossing to the north side to access the safer pavement.

▲ The Bird in Hand is the final pub stop on our route.

Now simply follow the main road back through the village to return to Glebe Road.



Older cottages on Weston Road

Weston Road, later **Long Ashton Road**, is home to several points of interest.

There is a great variety of residential buildings, featuring every architectural era.

Shortly after passing Providence Lane you will reach a set of charming **almshouses** endowed by Lady Emily Frances Smyth of Ashton Court.



The Emily Smyth almshouses

As you move further east, several Georgian properties added to the mix.



The quirky approach to a Georgian property on Long Ashton Road

At the corner of Theyne's Croft you will find Long Ashton's new **war memorial**, built in a modern style with a pretty little garden in front. It commemorates lives lost from the village during the first two world wars and tells the story of a cottage that was bombed nearby.



Long Ashton war memorial

Shortly after passing the war memorial, you will see the great big cedar tree that denotes the turning for Glebe Road (1).

Simply return to Glebe Road to complete the walk.

Map: Walk Thirty-Eight: Long Ashton

