

9. Walks with Wheels

King's Stanley is not blessed with "wheeley walks" in circuits, but there are pleasant "there & back" routes. In order of increasing difficulty, consider the following:

There are pleasant strolls along level **country lanes** like Gipsy Lane, Woodside Lane and much steeper Water Lane. At the end of Woodside lane are steps up to the Cotswold Way. A right turn gives a stile-free walk to Coaley Peak and Woodchester Park. A left turn takes you to Selsley Common, but there is just one step-over stile to negotiate above Woodside Farm. This may be replaced by a kissing gate one day.

The **cycle track** by the A419 has the noise of traffic, but is level tarmac. It is rather like a woodland walk with the added interest of the "community orchard". The track follows the old route of the "Dudbridge Donkey" railway line to Nailsworth and a mobile kebab seller is on the site of the old Ryeford station. A sawmill stood on the site of the Ryeford industrial estate.

The **towpath** by the canal is level, but unsurfaced, narrow and has the risk of water and locks. However, there is much of interest along it. Reference has been made to the points in other walks. It is worth exploring it to see what laudable work the Canal Trust has completed, and to see the new developments around Ebley Wharf and Snow Mill, including sculptures.

Bridlepaths are by nature free of stiles, although there may be gates. It is worth considering the permissive bridleway from the Penn Wood Scout Centre's drive towards the Coaley Peak Picnic Site. This has undulations and in wet weather there are patches of mud in the bottoms. However, most of it has a stony surface, which is uneven, but dry. The stretch from Alliss' Gate to the drive to Penn Wood Scout Centre is often very muddy. The last lap to Selsley Common passes Selsley Gully, which is of interest to geologists. There are several points of access eg. Alliss' Gate, the Scouts' drive, and land opposite the Gliding Club. However, great care must be taken of danger from the road.

Woodchester Park & Coaley Peak Picnic Site

Not far away along the B4066 are **Woodchester Park & Coaley Peak Picnic Site**. Woodchester Park, created by the Ducie and Leigh families, is best entered from the Inchbrook end as there are no steps and slopes are gentler. From Inchbrook, a gravel track goes gently uphill to the mansion, after which it is much steeper. At the Nymphsfield end there is a ramp by the steps up to the car park.

The **Coaley Peak Picnic Site** has stunning views, a car park and the added interest of wild flowers, gliders, and an opened tumulus.

Selsley Common may be accessible. The ground is fairly level, but is rough pasture with no hard tracks across it from the road. It is claimed that you can see 10 counties from here.