



The village of Lacock is situated on the A350 between Melksham and Chippenham. When you arrive in the village, park in the National Trust car park on Hither Way.

This walk is c7 miles and should take you about 2 hours. Ready? Let's go...

1. From the car park take the path towards Lacock Village, with Lacock Abbey on your right. The name Lacock is very old – do you know where the name comes from?
2. In the main street, peep into the old shop at 2 High Street. Its last resident, Miss Butler, set out the shop window to look like an old display. The building has had many uses – do you know what they were?
3. You may well feel you recognise Lacock even if you've not been here before. Both the village and the Abbey have often been used by film makers. Can you identify any films made here?
4. Return to the Red Lion and walk along East Street. Look into the 14th century listed tithe barn on your right – it was used to store the tithe or 'rent in kind' (mostly grain or wool fleeces) owed by the farm tenants to the nuns at the Abbey. There's a curious 18th century building next door: what was it for?
5. Turn right at the end to visit Grade 1 listed St Cyriac's Church. Its foundations are Norman but it has had many enhancements since then. What famous object was kept there until 1962?

6. Turn right out of the church to cross the brook. Go through the kissing gate at the top of the lane to Reybridge. You'll see the pack horse bridge: it was the only crossing of the Avon until the 17th century, but its origins are much older. Do you know why?
7. Cross the stile to your left, then the metal stile the other side of the field and go along the path to a double squeeze metal stile. Follow the left field edge round 2 sides to a stile, cross this and head right up a slight rise. This part of town was the 'industrial' quarter. What industries were here, do you think?
8. At the top, follow the path left until you reach the canal. The Wilts & Berks Canal used to link the Kennet & Avon Canal at Semington to the river Thames at Abingdon. Its construction began in 1796 and was completed in 1821. What was mainly carried on it?
9. Walk along the towpath, looking out for the many birds and butterflies that enjoy this natural habitat. In 2009 this section of the Canal was reopened by a famous name. Do you know who?
10. Cross the canal at the 2nd bridge and turn immediately left. Follow the track round two fields, turn right, then left before the farm entrance. Follow the track, crossing a tarmac drive, to a lane. Turn right up Naish Hill. Do you know what Naish Hill was famous for?
11. Turn right at the top of the hill (Ash Hill Farm on right), then left at the T junction. Just before the next house, cross a field on your right to a stile. Cross the next field and through Second Nursery wood, past Long Copse on your right. You are walking through the original estate belonging to the Abbey. How do we know this?

12. Just past the wood, cross a stile on your right into parkland. Enjoy the lovely views as you cross the field and look to your left to see the Grade I listed Bowden Park. The original house was built in the early 1600s, but the classical stone house you see today was designed and built by James Wyatt in 1796, the most fashionable architect of his day. One of the owners of the house was related to a British prime minister – which one?
13. Head downhill through the gate, follow the footpath to the bottom of the field, then bear right round a further field to reach the gate onto the lane - turn left towards Bewley Common. What is the name of the Grade 1 manor house hidden on your right?
14. At the T junction turn right opposite the Bell pub to return to Lacock. This side of the river you are walking along The Wharf, a major thoroughfare for Lacock at the time the canal was in use. The Lacock Brewery was also nearby (loading and unloading was thirsty work) – can you guess what beer cost in 1893?

Cross the bridge over the water meadows, admiring Lacock Abbey on your right, to return to the car park.

Congratulations - you've reached the end of this CPRE walk! If you enjoyed it – do check out more walks at:

<https://www.cprewiltshire.org.uk/category/days-out/>

Many thanks to the members and volunteers of CPRE Wiltshire who kindly contributed their expertise to this local walk.



~ ANSWERS ~

1. The Saxons were the first permanent settlers in Lacock. They lived by the Bide Brook and called their settlement *lacuc* or '*small stream*'.
2. No 2 High Street has been used as a coffee house, a stationery shop, and a post office.
3. Lacock has featured in *Pride and Prejudice*, *Downton Abbey*, the *White Princess* and *Cranford* on television, and in the *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* and *Wolfman* films.
4. The small building with the stone dome acted as the town lock-up, where drunk and riotous revellers would stay overnight until they sobered up!
5. A mediaeval chalice called *The Lacock Cup*, dating from the mid 15th century. In 2009 it was valued at £1.8m so would be worth a lot more now! It was lent to the British Museum in 1962.
6. The pack horse bridge at Reybridge is on the old Roman road from London to Bath.
7. In the 18th century Lacock's industries included spinning, weaving, chair-making, tanning and hurdle-making.



8. The canal boats on the Wilts & Berks Canal mainly carried coal. In 1837, 43,642 tons of coal were taken on it from Somerset to the West Midlands.
9. Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall and the patron of the Wilts & Berks Canal Trust, officially opened this rewatered stretch of canal in May 2009.
10. From the 13th century onwards, Naish Hill was a centre for pottery, with kilns making tiles, cooking pots, bowls, jugs, and pitchers as well as chimney pots. Many of these were made for the Abbey's use.
11. Details of the Abbey's estate and its surrounding farms were recorded in the 1225 *Magna Carta*. The original document lived in Lacock until 1946, when Matilda Talbot gave it to the British Museum.
12. In 1849 Bowden Park was bought by Captain John Gladstone, older brother of prime minister William Gladstone.
13. The hidden manor house is called Bewley Court. It was built in the 14th century and restored and extended in 1920. It was the home of interior designer Oliver Ford until his death in 1992.
14. In 1893 beer was sold at 1 shilling (5p) a gallon (8 pints)!

*Photo of Dummer's Bridge and Ford by Derek Harper, CC BY-SA 2.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=14074821>



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