

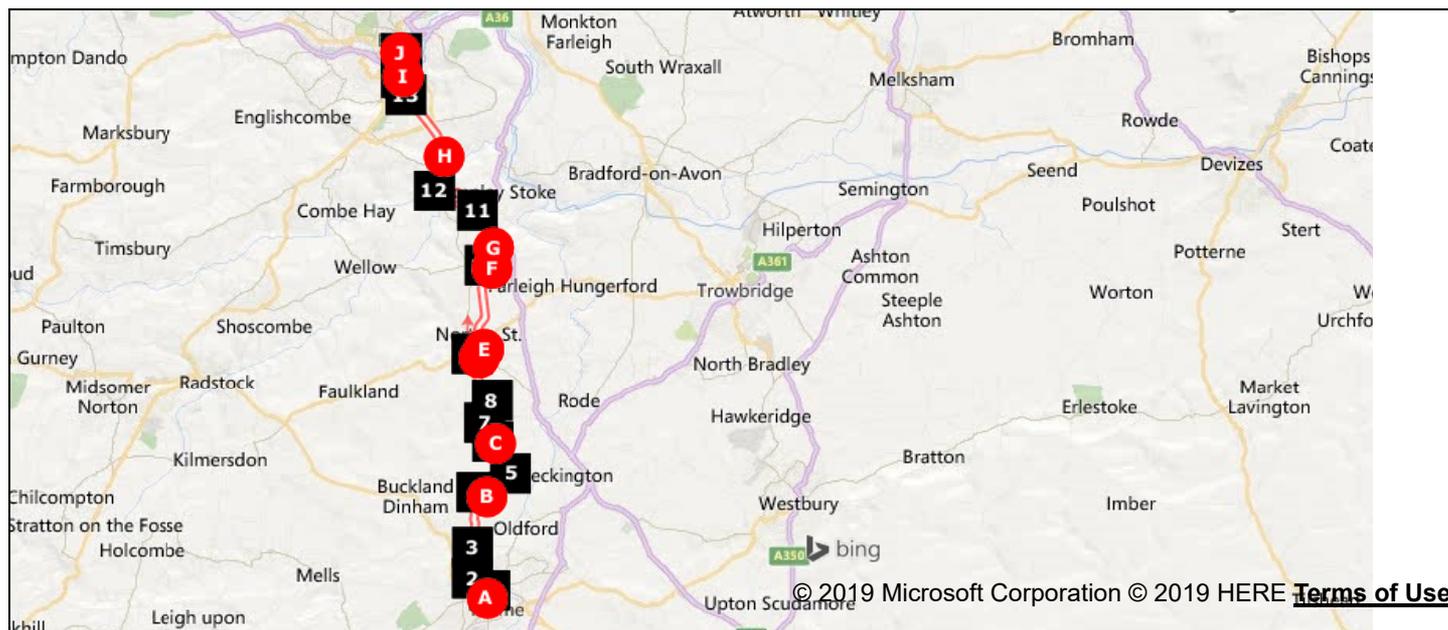
Print route

The Saxon Kings Way

7 hours 22.0km / 13.6mi Strenuous

Route developer: Leslie Stather

Route checker: Michael Plaskitt



Route Summary:

Linear walk links 2 Anglo-Saxon kings; King Eadred, King of England (AD 946-955) died in Frome in 955 AD; and his nephew King Edgar, King of England (AD 959-975) crowned in Bath Abbey in 973 AD. The route links Mendip Way East with the Cotswold Way

Start location:

The Cheese and Grain Hall, Frome BA11 1BE

Getting there:

Frome can be reached by both Bus and Train. The route Starts at the Cheese and Grain in the Market Yard BA11 1BE. Bath has a train station a local bus station and National Coaches run from Bath

Description:

[1] Walk north-west from the Cheese and Grain in Frome (A), at the end of the MENDIP WAY EAST, towards the canoe club on the river Frome. Take the footpath that follows the river under the railway bridge keeping the river on your left. Walk past the pump track and children's play park on your right. When you come to Welshmill Lane, turn left over the bridge and immediately right following the footpath sign directing you along the "Riverside Path to Low Water". The river is now on your right. The tarmac path takes you through a meadow towards houses. Go along the front of the houses, the path turns left and then right signposted "Spring Gardens".

This section of the walk is wheelchair friendly

[2] Go through the gate, and through Whatcombe fields. When entering the third field the footpath leaves the tarmac path. Go straight on, head for the telegraph pole and kissing gate straight ahead. Go through the kissing gate, with a view of Selwood Manor in the distance. Cross the field, and go through the imitation stone stile. Follow the path straight ahead with trees to your left followed by a wall and Whatcombe Farm on your left. Go through a kissing gate. Pass the Whatcombe Wall canal embankment (part of the Dorset and Somerset canal that was never completed) on your left and poplar glade to your right. Go through a kissing gate, being aware of trains, before crossing the railway track. Go through a kissing gate, cross the pasture, go through a further kissing gate onto Coalash Lane.

STOP LOOK AND LISTEN BEFORE CROSSING THE RAILWAY LINE

[3] Cross the road and take the footpath straight ahead and cross the field over the stile. Go over another stile into Jeffries Lane. Turn right, passing Jefferies Mill on your left. At the end of Jeffries Lane, follow the footpath sign at the gate, go over a stile and go straight ahead. After 100m take the right fork up the slope, go over a stile, following the hedge on the right hand side. At the corner of the field go over the stile continuing straight ahead and following the hedge on the right hand side.

Go through the gate. Continue going straight up the hill heading towards the woodland. Go over the stile at the entrance to the woodland. Continue up to the top of the hill, there is a wire fencing on the right, follow the path clearly identified. Orchardleigh House is soon in view to the right. There are two gates to cross the active airfield runway. The footpath becomes the track, keep straight on down a slope. There are stables straight ahead, Orchardleigh church (B) is on an island off to the right with a lake behind it. It is well worth a visit as it is one of the most popular wedding venues in the area. If visiting the church then retrace your steps. The track becomes tarmac. This is all part of the ORCHARDLEIGH Estate.

keep a look out for aircraft, dogs need to be on leads please.

[4] From the stables, the track bends left and then right uphill through the golf course. Stay on the tarmac road. When you reach a T junction, turn right and just after a sign to the right marked " The Village ", is a footpath sign to the left through the golf course. You are now joining The Macmillan Way. Walk straight, as pointed by the finger post, to the right of green 2 and the left of the lake, to the stile in the boundary fence. Cross the stile and bear right across the field aiming for 2 o'clock. Keeping the wood on the right, cross the field and go through the gate. LULLINGTON Church is now in view. Follow the farm track which joins a tarmac road right into Lullington Village. After quarter of a mile you reach the village pump and green and old school. Turn left to pass the church on your left.

There is a bar and restaurant open to the public at Orchardleigh Golf Course Club House.

Watch out for flying golf balls and please keep dogs on leads

[5] Follow the footpath sign through Court Farm farmyard. The footpath has been diverted slightly here and your OS map may be out of date. Do not go through the gates in front into the field but turn left and after the long building and then right into the field. Walk to the stile and little footbridge and another stile. You are now back on the original path. Having crossed the bridge, go over the stile, walk over the middle of the field and cross another stile. Walk around the right edge of the field. Halfway around this large field, just after a 90 degree right hand corner, go through the gap in the hedge to enter into the next field on the right and follow the same hedge but keeping the hedge on the left. When you start to enter the wood look out for the footpath sign, signposting you left. Within 3m turn right and follow the footpath through the woods. Go over the stile, through the field keeping Park Woods on your right.

After 200m go over the stile on the left, across the stream, then quickly over another stile, Go straight across the farm track passing beside the farm gate.

[6] Go straight ahead and take the gate on your left into the farm yard. Take the track to the left of the stone building and towards the brick building. Bear right. You can now see Laverton Church, (C), in front of you. cross the track to a two bar wooden structure in a gap in the church yard wall in front. The top bar can be pulled to one side to allow easy passage into the church yard. Walk through the churchyard to the church front gate.

Opposite the church gate, cross the road and there is a footpath sign. Go over the stile, and cross the field diagonally at 1 o'clock to the gate in the corner of the field down the slope. Go through the gate, over the stone footbridge and across the corner of the field. Go through the kissing gate onto the road. Turn right past the terrace of houses on the right. passing "The Olde House" turn left, go over the stile into the field.

[7] Go straight on across the middle of the field, down the slope to the gate in the left corner of the field.

Go over the stile. Continue straight on aiming for the left-hand corner of the field.

Go over the stile onto the road. Go straight across the road and straight through the zig zag gate onto the stud farm. You are requested by the owners to keep dogs on leads, not to feed the horses, or enter the paddocks.

Turn left. After 200m, turn right up wide green fenced path. Keep farmhouse on your right.

Cross 2 drives. Keep straight on aiming for a wooden boundary fence. Turn left at boundary fence following MENDIP RING signs. After 200m, at the end, go through a gate, turn right along path around the edge of a field. Go through a zigzag, and over a footbridge. The footpath goes straight through the middle of a large field. You will find a stile onto the road.

The route meets the Mendip Way here.

[8] Turn right along the road. 50 yards after Southfield Farm, there is a gap in the hedge with a stile on the left. Go through the stile, keeping the hedge on your right. After 100 m turn right and go over a stile on the right. Turn left and keep the hedge on your left. Go through a gap in the hedge at the left corner of the field. Go diagonally

left across the next field past a pond on your right to a gate at the bottom left corner. Go through the gate onto a gravel track. Turn right, passing the Old Vicarage on your right, the school on your left and NORTON ST PHILIP Church (D) on your right.

The George Public House (E)

[9] Walk down Vicarage Lane, cross the A366 road (Church Street) and turn right, and walk along the raised pavement.

After 250m, turn left down The Barton, passing near to the Tudor Dovecote on the left. Bear right after the sign to the Dovecote along Lyde Green and up Chevers Lane.

Cross straight across the B3110, over the stile, aim at ten o'clock, to a stile to the right of a house across the field.

Walk, keeping the fence on your left, after 50 m cross the stile onto the road. Turn right and follow the road for quarter of a mile. Just after the farm track on the left, turn left through a metal kissing gate.

Go diagonally across the field to a gate. Go through the gate, over a footbridge, and through another gate. Walk straight through the middle of the field, through the gate opposite keeping the hedge on your right. After 50 m walk through a large gap in the hedge on your right into the next field. Go diagonally across the field to a kissing gate. Go through the wood.

As you come out of the wood there is a road under construction, turn left. Go straight on when the construction road goes round to the right after 200 m. The footpath then goes through a copse. Go over a stile, keep walking straight ahead, go through a kissing gate onto Green Lane.

You can catch the D2 or X67 bus back to Frome from Hinton Charterhouse village if you want to at this point. Turn left along Green Lane into the Village. And restart the walk from this point on another day. Or you can continue the walk to Bath.....

[10] Walk across Green Lane. There are cottages on the right. Take the lane straight ahead, passing the church (F) on the left. Take the second gate into the churchyard marked "footpath". Continue in the same direction through the churchyard in an easterly direction. Leave the churchyard via a kissing gate across the field, with Hinton House on the left.

Walk across parkland down the slope to Branch Road. Go through the kissing gate, cross this very busy 60 mph road with care, and through another kissing gate. Walk over the field at 10 o'clock. Go through the kissing gate and through the next field at 1 o'clock.

Go through another kissing gate and through that field at 1 o'clock. Through a kissing gate, Hinton Priory (G) is on your right (private). Go across the field to stile, cross the stile and walk straight over the field towards some farm buildings. Go through kissing gate keeping the copse on your left. Go over two stiles which are very close to each other, through a kissing gate, follow the path to a quiet road. Turn left, and walk through PIPEHOUSE hamlet.

[11] When the tarmac road becomes a rough track take the "Byway" sign straight ahead along the track, through a tunnel of trees. There are countryside views to the left and a sharp 90° bend after approximately 1 mile. There are views of Midford Castle to the right. The track eventually goes steeply downhill to the B3110, cross it and turn left and after 100m turn right along a footpath, taking a footbridge over the Wellow Brook.

Go through a kissing gate, through a field at 2 o'clock to the right of the ridge. Go through a kissing gate with the Wellow Brook on your right. Go straight across under the viaduct onto Dunkerton Road. Turn right along the road towards MIDFORD

[12] After 200m hit the B3110 again and turn left and immediately right up Old Midford Road for 10m. Then immediately right into the Hope and Anchor pub car park. In the car park follow blue signs to NATIONAL CYCLE ROUTE 24 towards Bath, passing old Midford Station on the left and in time the Tucking Mill Viaduct.

The Combe Down Tunnel (H) is 1672m long and plays you classical music as you walk/cycle through it! At the end of the tunnel continue on Route 24. Do not enter the second tunnel. After 300m and before a bridge and the start of houses on the right take a small track off the cycle track at 11 o'clock downwards, with a wire fence on the left through a wood.

After 100 m turn right through the gate under the viaduct. Turn right before a house called The Pines and continue along the lane keeping houses to your left. Keep on this tarmac lane until you reach LYNCOMBE VALE.

[13] Go past The Paragon School on your right. At the T-junction take the road up leftwards which is Lyncombe Vale Road. At the next T-junction with Greenway Lane, turn left along Greenway Lane.

After 50m turn right through the gate, and go straight across Lyncombe Hill Common. At the far edge of the common, go through the kissing gate onto a path, turn left going up the hill, passing Lyncombe Hill Farm Allotments on your left.

Enter Alexandra Park (I) with magnificent views of BATH to your right and make your way to the viewpoint where there are seats and one of the most beautiful views of Bath.

[14] Keep the view/railings to your right and keep walking down a slope. At the end of the railings, turn right down the steep steps through the wood. Turn right as you come out of the wood, continue down the last few steps.

Turn right along Calton Walk. After 200m through the houses, turn left down steps to the road. Cross the road and take the pavement footpath bearing left down the slope, continue straight on.

At the bottom of the hill, bear right, keeping the railings and the busy road on your left. After 50m, go through the subway to Bath city centre (J), turn left.

As you come out of the subway go under the railway bridge, go right over the footbridge over the River Avon, keeping the Bus Station on your right, go straight ahead, up pedestrianised Southgate Street. This becomes Stall Street. Walk past the Pump Rooms on your right, walk under the colonnade and Bath Abbey and its amazing West front is straight ahead of you. This is where King Edgar the Peaceful, King of England was crowned in 973AD.

[15] Bath Abbey is the start of the COTSWOLD WAY, where you can begin to walk to Chipping Camden. Or you can catch the D2 or X67 bus, or the train back to Frome

POI information:

KING EADRED AD 946-955

King Eadred was the grandson of King Alfred the Great, and came to the throne following the assassination of his older brother King Edmund 1. He was born in Wessex in 923. During his reign he brought the Kingdom of Northumbria under English control from the Vikings. He was to be the last of the great Warrior kings of Wessex. He helped to move the monastic reform movement forward and did much to encourage learning.

King Eadred suffered from some sort of digestive disorder and died in Frome aged 32 probably in the Saxon palace or monastery. He was buried in Winchester Old Minster and his bones are purported to be in Winchester Cathedral. He was succeeded to the throne by his nephew King Eadwig.

KING EDGAR AD 959-975

King Edgar was the nephew of King Eadred and succeeded his father King Eadwig. His mother was Aelfgifu of Shaftesbury. He became King aged 16 years although he wasn't crowned until 973 In a ceremony probably on the site of Bath Abbey that forms the basis of our present day British coronation ceremony.

King Edgar was known as Edgar the Peaceful because his reign was peaceful, England stayed united during his reign. He believed in monastic reform, he divided England into shires and hundreds, greatly encouraged trade and protected the currency.

King Edgar died at Winchester and was buried at Glastonbury Abbey.

He was succeeded by King Edward. <http://www.englishmonarchs.co.uk/>

(A) Frome - Highlighted as one of the Times "Best Places to Live in Britain", Frome is also a welcoming, charming and vibrant place to visit, with a wealth of history, culture and natural beauty. Packed to the rafters with historic buildings, beautiful independent shops and creative people, Frome is a wonderfully eventful town. It is the perfect destination for discerning tourists looking for something just a little bit different on visits to Somerset.

The town was founded by St Aldhelm in 685 AD when a monastery was built there near the river Frome. St John's Church was built on a Saxon site and there are some Saxon fragments in the church. In the later Saxon period the town was a place of some importance. It became a royal manor at an early date. The Saxon kings had a palace in Frome and hunted in Selwood forest nearby. In 934 a meeting of the Witan (King's Council) was held at Frome. It is likely that Frome was a borough in Saxon days as it had a flourishing market and paid tax to the Crown. It may also have had a mint.

Discover more at <https://www.discoverfrome.co.uk/kings-in-Frome> and in " The Book of Frome" by Michael McGarvie

Frome Museum is worth a visit and Frome Library has free internet access.

FROME LIBRARY BA11 1BE has free internet access.

(B) The Church of St Mary sits on an island in the 11.23-hectare (27.7-acre) artificial Orchardleigh Lake in the grounds of the Orchardleigh Estate within the parish of Lullington, Somerset, England. It was built in the 13th century, and underwent extensive restoration by Sir George Gilbert Scott, for the Rev. W. A. Duckworth, in 1878. It has been designated as a Grade I listed building. The church has the grave of the poet Henry Newbolt and his wife, who was a member of the Duckworth family. Famous for the following lines "There's a breathless hush in the Close tonight Ten to make and the match to win A bumping pitch and a blinding light An hour to play and the last man in."

(C) Laverton Church - The earliest parts of Laverton church date from Saxon times.

(D) St. Philip & St. James church at Norton St Philip contains the renowned twin heads of the Fair Maids of Foscott. Samuel Pepys, who visited the church in 1668, was impressed by "a very fine ring of bells, and they mighty tuneable", and intrigued by "the tombstone whereon there were only two heads cut, which the story goes and creditably, were two sisters called the fair maids of Foscott, that had two bodies joined at the stomach and there lie buried". Foscott is the neighbouring hamlet of Foxcote

(E) The George Inn - Britains Oldest Pub

(F) Hinton Charterhouse Church - Some Saxon stonework is visible from outside the church.

(G) Hinton Priory was a Carthusian monastery in northeast Somerset, England, from 1232 until 1539. The priory was one of the ten medieval Carthusian houses (charterhouses) in England.

(H) The Two Tunnels at Midford - Combe Down Tunnel is on the now-closed Somerset and Dorset Joint Railway main line, between Midford and Bath Green Park railway station, below high ground and the southern suburbs of Bath, England, emerging below the southern slopes of Combe Down village.

Opened in 1874, this 1,829-yard (1,672 m) long disused railway tunnel was once the UK's longest without intermediate ventilation.[2] The tunnel now forms part of the £1.8 million Two Tunnels Greenway walking and cycling path opened on 6 April 2013 and is the longest cycling tunnel in Britain.

(I) Alexandra Park View Point - One of the best ariel views of Bath

(J) Bath - In 577AD the Saxons captured Bath, in the seventh century a convent was founded there and in the eighth century there was an abbey church, part of a Benedictine monastery. In the late ninth century King Alfred the Great created a fortified town or burgh at Bath. By the tenth century it had its own mint and it was flourishing. During the tenth century a Witan was held in Bath and in 973 King Edgar, the first King of all England was crowned there. By the end of the tenth century it had been rebuilt as a Christian and political centre.

The city of Bath is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and as such has a wealth of museums.

Bath Central Library BA1 5AN has free internet access.

Notes:

Refreshment area available along the route:

The Cheese and Grain in Frome is a Walkers are Welcome friendly café with toilets

The Hope and Anchor pub at Midford serves food and drinks.

There is a bar and restaurant open to the public at Orchardleigh Golf Course Club House.

Norton St Philip has the historic George Public House (E)

Churchmead Village Green has Picnic Tables and Benches and a supermarket and pubs in the village

Hinton Charterhouse has a Post Office in the village selling ice creams etc and 2 pubs that sell food and drink.)

Acknowledgements:

This walk was created by Miriam and Chris Hare of Frome

