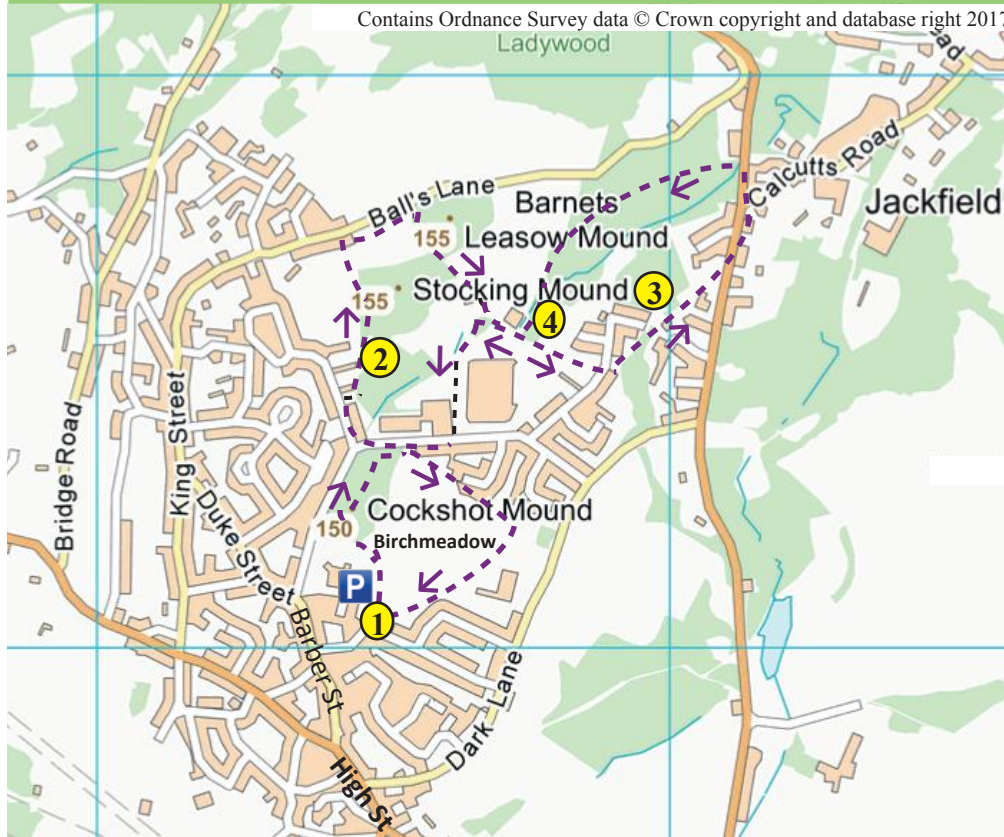


MAP The Fish House Woods Walk

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4 Fish House to the Birchmeadow 0.85km 0.5 miles

You exit the woods via a small gate by Fish House Farm on your right, and then when you rejoin the track ahead turn right and then follow the track around to the left walking past the Syspal factory and passing two small ponds. Once back on Cockshot Lane turn right, cross the road and enter Birchmeadow Park on your left. You can either continue on the footpath, past the football pitch and at the end turn right and go uphill through a small wooded area and past the bmx bike track to the main park entrance or simply cross the Birchmeadow up to the car park. Check out the Birchmeadow Community Centre next to the car park for details of its events, if open you may be able to use its facilities. The whole of this walk is a delight in spring and summer. A range of seasonal wild flowers can be seen, first celandines then violets, archangel, ransons, foxgloves plus many other species of woodland plants, butterflies, birds and wildlife; this short walk can make you feel you are out in the countryside!



Red Church and Fish House Woods



A 2.1 miles / 3.4 km walk, mostly gentle and downhill for the first half, some short uphill sections, vertical gain 282ft / 86 m.

This walk is almost all on green, lesser known footpaths, yet entirely within the town of Broseley. It takes you over historic pit mounds, past a ruined church, through pretty woods and there are sometimes extensive views across fields and distant hills. It is surprisingly good for seeing woodland wildflowers and birds. The picturesque Fish House Wood has a stream named 'Birch Batch' running through the middle, so it can be muddy in places at times but mostly this walk is on good paths, tracks and some pavements. There are no stiles, no fields with livestock (though there may be goats in the wood) and only three kissing gates. The Ironbridge Road must be crossed twice.

1 Birchmeadow Park to Stocking Mound 0.8km 0.5miles

This circular walk starts from the free public Birchmeadow Park car park, just behind the Birchmeadow Community Centre in Birchmeadow Rd. Start the walk at the park entrance with magnificent views across the wooded Severn valley. Take a path on the left, keep the children's play area on your right, after about 100m you will see a path leading into the woodland area of Cockshot Mound near the top left corner of the park by an 'artistic' bench sculpture. Small children will of course want to run straight to the top of the mound, (and probably hurtle straight down again). We advise a more benign route, keep left and the path will then curve around to the right ascending by a much more gentle route to the top of the mound.



This is an old spoil heap from when the area was mined for 'pennystone', a form of iron ore, so called because it resembled copper pennies. The mound is now covered with trees. In spring the woods are alive with birdsong, with a surprising number of species present for such a small wood.



There are many little ways across the top of the mound, we recommend the right hand options to take advantage of the extensive views you can glimpse through the trees. Descend the steep steps at the end and turn left, towards Cockshot Lane, turn left and cross the road. After about 50 meters turn right into Cherrybrook Drive and then right again into a cul de sac where a footpath post signs your way to the left through another wooded area behind some houses.

2 Stocking Mound to Red House Church Ruins 0.9km 0.5 miles

You will see another mound in front of you to the right, this is Stocking Mound, another pennystone waste mound dating from the mid 19th century. Keep to the left hand side paths through this area, as if you climb the mound there is no easy way through without retracing your steps down again.



You will soon pass Broseley Cricket Club grounds to your left and the path becomes a wide track between houses where you emerge onto Balls Lane and turn right. Walk along the lane past Woodlands Farm and enjoy views across fields to The Wrekin, clearly seen in the distance.



After about 100m of lane walking turn right through some green painted metal rails past the wooded area of another ironstone pit mound, Barnets Leasow Mound. There is more information about the mounds and iron mining here in another section of the guidebook. The path skirts a wooded area, then goes down the side of a field to a track, where you take the left fork past Fish House and continue straight on between railings. There are pleasant rural views on your left and there may be sheep and even donkeys in the fields.



The path gradually narrows and you come to a road, cross over and carry straight on on a tarmac path around the back of some houses. The path soon bends right past the site of the old Red Church, so called after the colour of local bricks used in its construction. To meet the needs of an increasing population in the industrial revolution, it was built with a bequest by Mary Brown of Broseley Hall Estate and completed by Francis Turner Blithe in 1767, she died in 1716 and never saw the results of her generosity. A popular legend is that building started on a north-south alignment, but each night she rose from her grave to destroy the day's work until it was built east-west as she wanted. Close by is the site of the Cholera Burial Ground for victims of epidemics in 1832 and 1834 marked by a single tombstone engraved "T. Crump." You are welcome to take a short circular stroll around the graveyard which is the last resting place of over 1200 persons from all walks of life, many being significant figures in the heritage of the district.



3 Red Church ruins to Fish House Farm 0.85km 0.5miles

Continue downhill from the entrance to the church ruins on a pretty wooded path, then cross the Ironbridge Road and walk down past the traffic lights. After about 20 m cross again to enter Fish House Wood just before a bungalow. Go through the metal gate and follow the path uphill through the woods opting for the left fork each time, passing through another small gate.

This is a beautiful small wood and in late April and May it is a carpet of emerald green and white wild garlic. Fish House Wood contains old spoil heaps from the mining legacy of the area. A stream known as 'Birch Batch' is close to the path which can be muddy in places. There were 18th and 19th century tramways from the mines here down through the woods to the ironworks and the Severn. The wood is mainly deciduous with associated woodland ferns, flowers and wildlife. There may be goats grazing in the woods too, so you must make sure dogs are on leads, please move quietly through, and no cycles are permitted .

