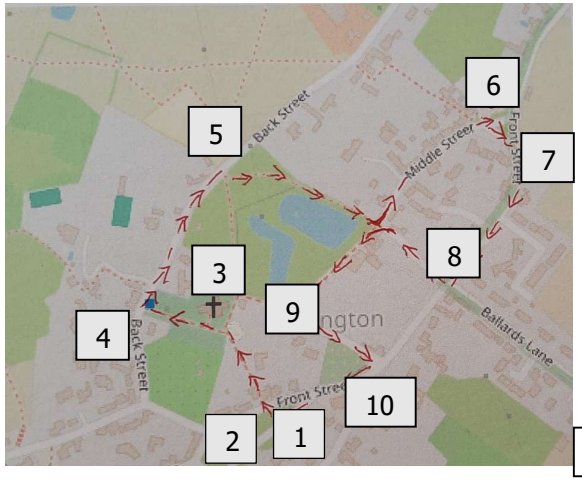
THE ARTS SOCIETY TRAILS OF DISCOVERY

ILMINGTON VILLAGE TRAIL
WARWICKSHIRE, CV36 4LB

CC BY NC SA

Ilmington is an unspoilt, delightful, quiet, large village towards the northern end of the Cotswold Hills at the foot of Ilmington Downs in Warwickshire. It is mentioned in the Doomsday Book of 1086 as Ilm done.



Base map © OpenStreetMap

This village walking trail starts at the welcoming and smart community run shop and café on Upper Green serving delicious homemade cakes and various beverages. (1 on map)



The building dates from the mid 18thC approximately. It was previously a Roman Catholic church and before the church, in Victorian times, a school.

There is parking alongside the quiet roads here.



Opposite the shop is Upper Green, a sloping area of managed grass. The site of the village War Memorial is here, a rather unusual memorial as it depicts a sword and a wreath. (2 on map)

At the bottom side of this green is an old spring water point. You can either cross the green via the grass footpath straight ahead of you or take a left or right turn from the shop and travel a semi-circle either side of the green down the tarmac road to the old water point.

Look left from this water point and you will just be able to see in the distance on your right the Studio Gallery cottage with crafts for sale. Some are often displayed in the window.

Over the road from this water point is a hard surfaced footpath leading to the church of St Mary's. The church has no access by road, only by footpath along Peggy's Lane. The name itself is half-way along fixed to an old shed where the Silver Band used to practice. Along this way as you approach the church are five rustic type lampposts dedicated to the memory of five residents.



Do notice the thatched cottages on your way to the church. A great many of the older houses in the village are a beautiful honey colour constructed from the local Oolitic limestone, known as Cotswold stone. Quite a few are still thatched.

St Mary's is an interesting Norman church dating from the middle of the 12th century. (3 on map) The church is of limestone ashlar coursed rubble with a tiled roof. Whilst inside look out for and see if you can count the eleven wooden mice carved by Robert " Mouseman" Thomas of Klburn.



Also seek out the beautifully embroidered Apple Map showing ancient orchards and bygone farms of the village. The idea for this embroidery came from June Hobson an artist who lived in the village.





St Mary's also has a thriving bell ringing group; practice is on a Wednesday evening. The bells are also rung for services and weddings. The ring is of eight bells, rung from the ground floor, with some of the bells dating from 1641 cast by Henry Bagley of Chacombe.

On leaving St Mary's we turn right along the footpath and after 100 yards reach Back Street.
Almost opposite - slightly to your right and over the road – is a footpath to the hills above Ilmington with wonderful views of the surrounding countryside.



If you look left, you will just about see the old building called Hurdlers Cottage Workshop which was once Ilmington Gin distillery. It is now a home to an Apple Brandy distillery. (4 on map)

Here turn right along Back Street passing the Dower House on your left, Grade II listed from 16th and 17th centuries, a pleasing sight constructed from Cotswold stone.

A little further on is the Church of England primary school, built in 1962. (5 on map)

Almost opposite the school take the footpath on your right into a large field, Bury Orchard; dogs on leads please as sheep graze here. This field is private but notice the two large fishponds renovated by Dennis Flower. One seen here and the other one from where the fairies are. (See later)



Leaving the field you are now in Middle Street. (More a footpath than a street as cars cannot pass this way, the width being too narrow.) Middle Brook originating in the nearby hills runs alongside this path. On exiting the gate, you are looking at the Doll's House, so called as it looks like a large dolls house. The exact date of this property is not recorded but was built before 1900 according to historical records. The right side of this house is the Wesleyan Chapel, now a home dated 1848.

On the right of the Dolls House is Ilmington Manor built between 1590 and 1600, another large Cotswold stone house, home of the Flower family of Flowers Brewery. A notable event occurred here in 1934 when King George V broadcast live his Christmas Message, introduced by 65-year old Walton Handy, a local shepherd.





On exiting the field turn left and within four minutes' walk the Howard Arms will be in sight. This 400 year old building is a delightful drinking and eating establishment. (6 on map)

In front of the Howard Arms there is a post box set into another old water point on a small area known as Lower



Running alongside the Howard Arms at right angles is Front Street. Turn right onto this street and walk along for 130 yards passing many old and interesting cottages.

The stocks, now replicas of the originals are on the left-hand side.
(7 on map)





Next, take Ballards Lane on the right immediately past The Red Lion, a Hook Norton pub established in 1849 serving local ales and good food with accommodation. There are seating areas outside at the front and back. (8 on map)

Just past the Red Lion is one of the two allotment areas in Ilmington, well used and kept. The bench in front of the allotments was donated by the Women's Institute in commemoration of the coronation in 1953 of Queen Elizabeth II.

Here also is the Jubilee Stone.





Turn left at the end of Ballards Lane and wander up to an impressive large, thatched house, where fairies sit at the foot of a water well. (9 on map) Bear left and stroll for approximately 40 yards down Vallenders Lane back to Front Street.
Turn right and over the road you will be back at the shop.

The village of Ilmington has a good sports field where cricket, tennis and football are played. There is also a thriving bowling green. There are two Morris dancing sides – the Flowers and the Morris Men, both are well known in the area. A famous fiddler, Sam Bennett, lived in Ilmington at the bottom of Foxcote Hill.
In the village hall curling, table tennis, a fitness club and monthly films are held; also, teas during the Ilmington Gardens Open Days which are very popular.(10 on map)

The trail around the village is now complete. If time allows there are many other footpaths in the village and the countryside around.

Trail created by The Arts Society Stratford Upon Avon.