

Lower Woods have a reputation for being muddy, so appropriate footwear is strongly recommended for this and a couple of stream crossings.

The Lower Woods Nature Reserve parking area is reached by travelling down the gravel track opposite Inglestone Farm, which is on the minor road from Hawkesbury Upton to Wickwar.

The walk starts from the parking area by The Lodge. [1] Go through the gate to the left of The Lodge with green and yellow way marks and number 21 on the post into the grassy track. After about 200 yds (185 m) the track bears to the left. Turn left opposite the oak tree with a log bench beneath and take the small track into the wood. [2] When you reach the junction turn left. Shortly this track forks and you take the right fork and keep on until you reach a kissing gate/large gate to arrive on a grassy slope (Shepherds Knap).

Turn right down this slope and shortly bear right again at the wide clearing [3] to reach a kissing gate on the left of a large gate ahead. Go through the kissing gate and down the slope towards the Little Avon River. Keep the river on your left and follow this for about 500 yds (460 m) until you arrive at a wooden footbridge over the river. Cross over the bridge and immediately turn right. Continue parallel to the river bank.

The path is not that obvious at first but very soon you will see a flight of steps. Climb the steps and follow this path (with further steps and bridges) which provides glimpses of the river to your right and over three small gullies

until you reach the junction with a path that is heading steeply down to the river.

Turn left up the path [4] to the top. You will now see four possible routes. Take the second track from the right, bear right when you reach the small meadow and then immediately left along a broad track (ignoring track off to the right) keeping the meadow on your left until you reach a grassy meeting point of six rides (The Hub).

Take the ride straight ahead of you (i.e. ignoring the first ride/opening on the right), turn left at the next junction and follow on until you come to a very wide grassy bridleway (Horton Great Trench). [5] Turn right to follow the bridleway for about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile (1 km).

At the Y-junction where a gravel track starts, leave the bridleway and follow the left fork to a T-junction where you turn left. [6] Follow this track until you arrive at the edge of the woods with a double set of field gates (Wood Lane). [7] Go ahead through the gates and take the stile immediately on the left over possibly slippery wooden planks into the field. There are beautiful Cotswold views from this point with Hawkesbury monument clearly visible and Hawkesbury and Horton churches coming more into view as you walk. Keeping the trees on your left head across the field to the wooden field gate/opening in the corner ahead of you. Pass through this gate and head diagonally across the next field towards the far corner. As you reach the highest point of the field (ignoring the first gate on the right) you will see another wooden gate in the right hand hedge before the corner of the field. Go

through the gate and head down the middle of this field keeping Hawkesbury Monument directly ahead of you to drop down into a thicket. [8]

Go right into the thicket to find a small wooden gate. Go through this gate and keep left following the field edge. Go through the small metal gate and post and rail fenced track leading down to ford the stream and through the metal kissing gate. Cross the field, keeping close to the woods on the left and at the end of the field re-enter the woods through a small wooden gate which is about 15 yds (14 m) to the left of the large oak tree in the field. [9]

Go through this gate and straight ahead of you will see a wooden kissing gate and large gate. This leads back into Lower Woods and into an ancient 'ride' which was restored from a derelict state in 2010 (Little Lower Trench). Follow the ride or the parallel path through the woods, with glimpses of the Little Avon River on the left. Continue until the path's end (yellow way mark 60) down a muddy track to a wooden kissing gate (yellow way mark 61) next to a large gate by the river.

Cross the tiny stream that feeds into the river (but do not cross the metal footbridge) and head right up the often muddy slope. This is Shepherds Knap again and this time you go up it to the top where it meets a gravel track where you turn left to arrive back at the car park.

WALKS AROUND HAWKESBURY

No: 08

OS Explorer Map167
Thornbury, Dursley & Yate

Grid ref: ST 745 880

Distance: 3.5 miles (5.6 km)

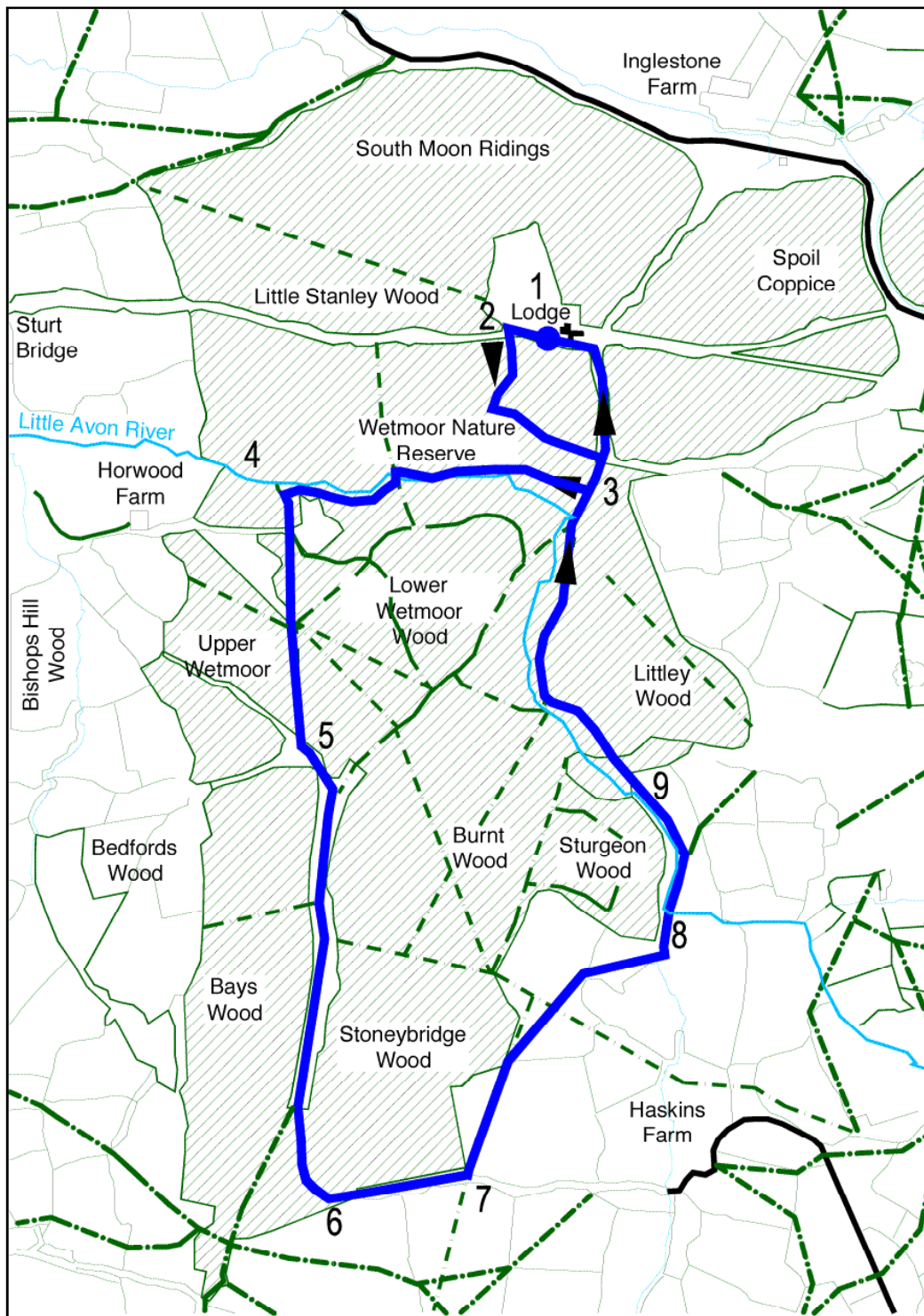
Time: 2 - 2.5 hours

Difficulty: Moderate

Start: Lower Woods Nature
Reserve car park



**The Little Avon River and
Beyond**



***NB: The Village Hall
car park has an
honesty box for
donations for car
park use***

**Produced by the
Walking In
Hawkesbury Group
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Vision Parish Plan**
[http://www.hawkesbury
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