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Brook End Ford

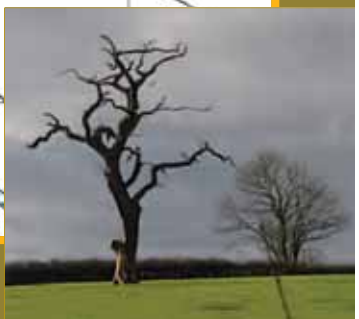
Using Brook Hill, Sherston 20, Backrill Lane, Luckington 53, Alderton Road and Sherston 19 & 34.

3.2 miles - *includes a couple of gentle hills.*

Leave the High Street, heading towards Luckington, down Brook Hill past the old silk mill site. At the bottom of the hill is a signpost on the left to The Grove and Alderton (SHER20). Take this signed footpath, cross the stone stile or access the field via the wooden kissing gate and bear right over the river bridge, continuing right to follow SHER20 (which incorporates a section of the Macmillan Way) enter Grove Wood via the wooden kissing gate. The Parish has acquired this wood on a long lease and it is being developed as a community asset for local groups to enhance and enjoy. The wood was probably a valuable resource as there is evidence of coppiced hazel. On leaving the wood, turn half-left and find the waymark on the brow of the slope. The path continues across the field to another waymark and on to the corner of the field by a group of old ivy-clad hawthorn. Cross the stone stile and pass into the next field. There are two footpaths across this field but, depending on the cropping, it is suggested that the path straight in front of you leading to a gap in the hedgerow may be the easier route. This leads to a waymarked gap onto Backrill Lane, the verges of which contain a variety of wild flowers. Turn right and continue for approximately 150 yards. You then have a choice:

Either: turn left through the metal kissing gate, staying on SHER20, to go diagonally right across the field, past the buildings of the old vineyard. The vineyard once used to make ciders, one locally famous brew being called 'Sherston Scorcher'. Through the pedestrian metal kissing gate and over bridge in the hedgerow and veer right across the next field to a bridge and stile beside an oak tree. Then bear right towards the tree in the middle of the brow of the slope and go on to cross another bridge and stile. Go straight over this field to the pedestrian gate and onto the bridleway (LUCK53), where you turn left to walk to the Alderton Road.*

Or: continue on the road to the ford. You can walk down to the ford, which has a small causeway beside it. Using Brook Hill, Sherston 20, Backrill Lane, Luckington 53, Alderton Road and Sherston 19 & 34. 3.2 miles - includes a couple of gentle hills. Just before the ford there is a left turn onto the bridleway (LUCK53), which soon takes you past the orchards that once served the old vineyard. The bridleway is a charming walk, with lovely views and an interesting character. This route also leads you to Alderton Road and is a very similar length to the option overleaf.*

Turn left onto Alderton Road and after 350 yards, SHER19 is on your left soon after a metal field gate on that bend, cutting off a blind corner. Now continue left along the road as it winds past Widley's Farm. Further on, just past Widley's Farm Cottage, there is a fine old barn (on your left), dated 1749. Stay on this road until you reach a crossroads. Now go half-left via a pedestrian gate onto SHER34. Keep the hedge on your left and pass through a gap into the next field. Bear left down the hill, making your way along the bottom edge of the field, going through a metal kissing gate just before the corner. Bear left down the steepish bank towards the river and left to re-cross the bridge on SHER20. Now bear right to cross the stile back onto Brook Hill and turn right to return to the High Street.

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