

During the flood the water was deep enough to submerge five-bar gates in the village. Sharples of Southam built the present bridge. The character of the river is quite different today since post-war dredging. The river had deep pools and riffles. There were 32 pegs from which local Angling Clubs competed to catch roach, dace, chub and perch. There was a fly-fishing club which stocked the river with trout.

After the bridge, turn ► at an angle across the field aiming for the point where the river swings to the right. From here head for the field boundary straight ahead and rejoin the river bank at a small sleeper bridge. The path climbs slightly and passes to the left of an electricity pole. After reaching a level area of path strike out to the ◀ uphill. Once over the hill make for the waymark between the trees on the far hedgerow. Turn ◀ and head for the corner of the field where you cross a sleeper bridge and stile. Walk diagonally ► away from the hedgerow on your left to the point where the hedge gives way and you will see a stile with houses behind it. Go over the stile and turn ► along a well-worn track to Welsh Road West in Southam. Turn ◀ cross the road and turn ► down St James Road passing Southam Primary School and the Church and Community Project. Where the road bears left carry straight on then turn ◀ halfway down the hill through a metal kissing gate into the recreation ground. Cross the recreation ground aiming for a point to the left of the spire to a metal gate into the churchyard. Carry straight on towards the church and turn ◀ and follow the path through an avenue of lime trees to come through the lych-gate and turn ◀ onto Park Lane. Turn ► into Little Park and go up the footpath on the right immediately after Victor Hodges House. Turn ◀ after the bungalows, go past the Scout Hut and come out onto Welsh Road West. Turn ► and then ◀ onto Coventry Street to end the walk.

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Printed for information on leisure activities and to promote healthier communities.

Blue Lias Rings - Inner Loop

Southam, Stockton, Long Itchington and Bascote

A circular walk of 10½ km (6½ miles). Use this leaflet in conjunction with leaflet **Blue Lias Rings - Main Walk and Outer Loop**.



Historical notes on points of interest are shown in italics.

Stiles referred to in the text may have been replaced with gates as part of an ongoing access improvement plan.

INNER LOOP A - At Stockton (reduces the main walk by approximately 1 km). At the end of Beck's Lane turn ◀ and go up Mount Pleasant. Carry straight on when it becomes a narrower road and then a path.

Main walk Cross two stiles, come out into a field and cross this field with the hedge on your left. Cross the stile and the main

Southam to Rugby road and climb down the steps into the field opposite. Go through two fields with the

hedge on your left and then follow the path between the hedge and a wire fence on your right. Passing Stockton Fields Farm on

your right cross two plank bridges and continue straight ahead on a wide track between a

hedge on the right and a small copse on the left.



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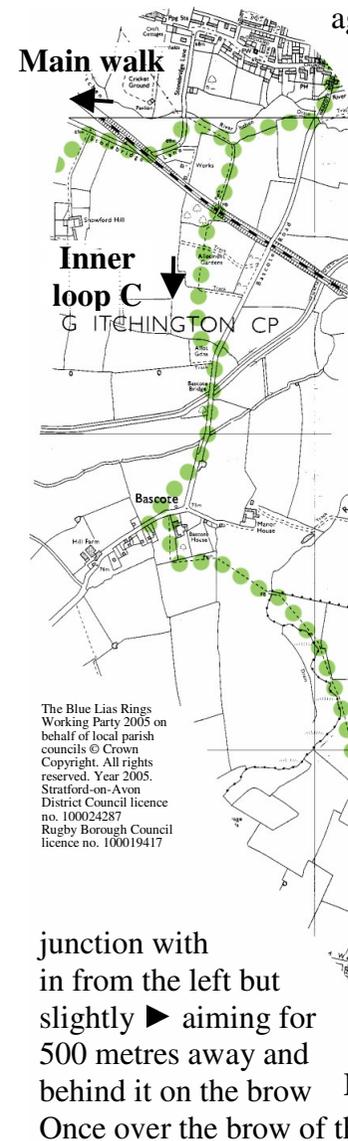
50 metres after the copse turn diagonally ► into the field gateway and carry on down the hill with the hedge on your left. Cross the stile and walk down through the wood, passing through two metal kissing gates to cross the disused railway line. Come out onto a very pleasant lake formed from a flooded quarry pit. Keep this on your left and walk towards the gap in the hedge. Go past the Blue Lias Inn on your left and turn ◀ onto the Stockton to Long Itchington Road. Cross over the canal bridge to rejoin the main walk.

INNER LOOP C - At Long Itchington (shortens the main walk by approximately 2 km). At the junction of the footpaths turn ◀ and cross the stile into the field and walk straight up the hill with the hedge on your left to arrive at a metal kissing gate. Go through this gate and down the steps to cross over another path which follows the disused railway line. *The railway line ran from Rugby to Leamington and fed the cement works. It was closed to passenger traffic in the mid 1960's but continued to supply the Works for another 20 years. The tracks were later removed and a footbridge which used to take the footpath across the railway was demolished in 1992.*

After crossing the railway continue up the steps and through another metal kissing gate and go straight ahead for about 50 metres through the small wood to the field beyond. *White's Spinney was ravaged by Dutch Elm disease in the mid-1970's and was replanted by Long Itchington Parish Council with about 900 oak, ash, maple and wild cherry in 1989. In the middle of the spinney a few of the old elm trees are regrowing.*

Carry straight on slightly uphill into the field. Manor House Farm is slightly to the left about one kilometre away and Bascote House is a similar distance directly ahead behind the trees. Aim for Bascote House, or if is not visible, the two largest trees in the middle of the hedgerow at the far end of the field. Continue across the middle of the field to a point about 75 metres short of the far hedgerow and turn sharp ◀ towards the Bascote Road aiming for a gap in the hedge with a waymark post in the middle of it. Turn ► onto the road and follow it over the canal bridge and down the hill for about 200 metres. Continue around a slight right hand bend and past the access gate to the British Waterways Bascote Wharf moorings to a gateway to the Severn Trent sewage treatment works. The route runs from a kissing gate to the left hand side of the sewage works gate, diagonally ◀ across the field ahead. Cross two fields diagonally aiming for the large oak tree close to the bungalow which is the only

building on this side of the road. Pass through a gate which is just to the left of the oak tree into the hamlet of Bascote. Cross over and turn ◀ along the road for about 100 metres. Turn ► through a gate which is up against the first building you come to. If you wish to see Bascote House continue along the road to the next entrance, and then return to the gate. *Bascote House was sold after the Second World War and became a hosiery factory until bankruptcy in the late 1950's. Empsons bought the House and then set up a mushroom farm along with their general engineering company from Harbury. In the late 1960's they made car sound insulation for the Standard-Triumph Motor Co. In the 1980's the premises were used for the manufacture of brackets and clamps. The barns and out-houses have now been converted to housing.*



Go through the gate and walk uphill with the buildings and then the hedge on your left until the hedge turns ◀ at a gate. Turn ◀ around the corner formed by the hedge, cross the field aiming just to the right of the Cement Works chimney, to a waymark post located in the hedge 20 metres in from the left hand corner of the field. This marks the another footpath coming ignore this and go the nearest house about the service station of the hill opposite. hill make for the

Once over the brow of the footbridge and cross the River Itchen. *Prior to 1932 the bridge was a wooden construction with white-painted rails. On the Saturday before Trinity Sunday in 1932 there was heavy rain all day and night. On Sunday the bridge was lifted by floodwater and carried away to be left high and dry in the meadow downstream.*