

A short detour turning RIGHT just past 'The Old Forge' cottage leads to Inkpen's 'Crocus Field', another BBOWT reserve. It is one of only two in this country containing Mediterranean crocuses (usually in bloom in February/March), believed to have been brought here by the Knights Templar over 500 years ago.

Continue along Pottery Lane to the end and go almost straight over the road to a gap opposite between two bungalows ('Pen-y-Nant' and 'Crofton') to a kissing gate set back from the road. Follow the 'corridor' between a fence/electrified tapes diagonally right across a field through a kissing gate onto a track. Turn LEFT, passing 'Mistletoe Cottage' on the right, and follow this track descending to small bridge. Walk up the rise to take the LEFT fork to reach an old stone marker post, turn RIGHT before the way-marks to exit the wood past 'Inkpen Cottage' on the right to the road to arrive back at the starting point.

Inkpen 1 Walk



Distance: 3.6 miles/5.8 km
Time: 1.5 – 2.5 hours
O.S. Explorer Sheet 158
Start: SU 378 639

This walk starts and ends at the Crown & Garter PH, Inkpen Common.

This is an easy walk in and around Inkpen village. There are no stiles.

Except in a dry summer, some parts are likely to be muddy.

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Details of 5 different circular walks around Inkpen, together with GPS downloads are available from:

www.inkpen-village.co.uk/maps.html

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Overview

This walk keeps to a low elevation around Inkpen village and visits its two BBOWT-managed nature reserves: Inkpen Common and the Inkpen Crocus Field.

From the 'Crown and Garter' car park, with the pub behind, turn RIGHT and head on down the byway. Just after a track to farm buildings on the left, turn LEFT at the byway junction, sign-posted 'Restricted Byway', which winds through a narrow tree belt towards Inkpen Common. Where the field on the left ends and fencing begins, take the first kissing gate on the LEFT to enter the BBOWT nature reserve.

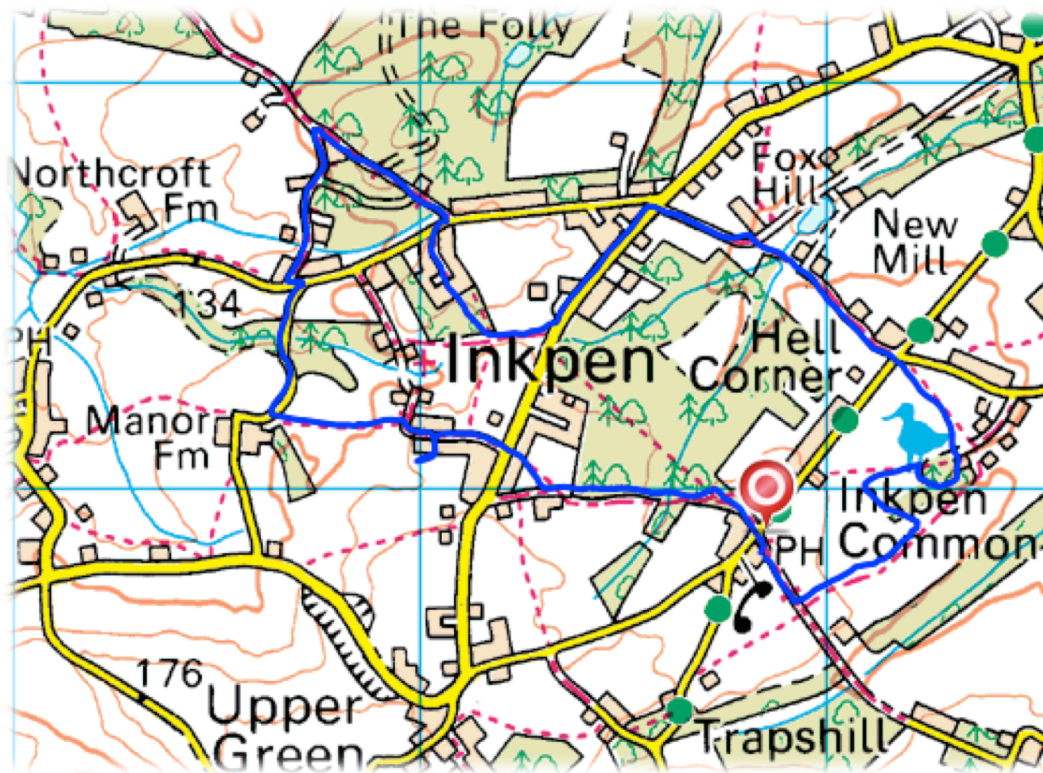
The reserve is an SSSI owned by the Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) and is an important lowland heathland site with a wide variety of bird and plant life.

Follow the path straight ahead over the boardwalk and through a kissing gate. Passing a memorial seat to Lillian Watts on the right, fork RIGHT just before reaching a way-marked post going around two large trees on the right. Follow this path for 50 metres and pass through the kissing gate and go straight ahead for another 50 metres, where three paths meet. Take the RIGHT one at the way-marked post. Walk towards a post and rail

fenced area then turn LEFT just before it to follow the path through the trees to descend steps with a handrail on their right side and then bear RIGHT to go through a kissing gate leading to Ashton's Pool.

Ashton's Pool is a very quiet spot formed into a heathland pool from an old clay extraction site for making pottery in Inkpen.

Turn LEFT around the left-hand bank, bearing LEFT at the far side onto a narrow path towards a railed fence. Turn LEFT, with the fence on the right, to follow the path that leads up to a kissing and field gate into the BBOWT reserve. Go through the gate and bear slightly RIGHT passing to the left of a way-marked post to follow the grassed 'permissive path' (PP) straight ahead passing to the left of another way-marked post (indicating that the PP path is now an official right of way) to a junction of paths.



A slight detour here to the LEFT leads to an information board about the Common and Arthur's Seat with views up to Inkpen Beacon.

Continue on to the footpath sign on the left, keeping straight on to a kissing and field gate to leave the Common by the reserve sign and post box. Go straight over the road to follow, as signposted, 'Bridleway to PO and Folly Roads', onto a wide gravelled track. Proceed on the track, with houses on the right, down to a bridge; crossing this go up the rise, bearing LEFT at 'Jangles' to continue on the track to reach Post Office Road. Turn LEFT to walk along the right hand side of the road.

Of interest on this stretch:

- *The first house on the right, called 'Olive Branch', was once the site of one of Inkpen's four inns*

- *The area of small industrial units on the right was originally the site of Inkpen's thriving sawmills*
- *On the left, further along the road, the house called 'The Old Chapel' was once Inkpen's third Methodist Chapel*

Go down a slight incline to turn RIGHT off the road at the lower end of a paddock onto a track signposted 'Restricted Byway' that runs between the Memorial Playing Fields on the left and the paddock on the right. At a 'crossway', where there is a signpost on the left, turn RIGHT and continue through the tree-line path of a copse into Bracken Close, a square of bungalows, and then the houses of Robins Hill. Keep straight on to the T-junction ahead. Turn RIGHT into Folly Road and then very shortly LEFT onto a byway passing on the left of 'Folly Lodge'. Follow this wide rough track through light woodland known as 'The Folly'. On reaching a farm-machinery shed on the left, immediately after it take a sharp LEFT turn just before the byway signpost

onto another wide track to pass on the right a thatched cottage, known as 'The Folly', within a walled garden.

There are good views at this point over to Lower Green and beyond to Ham Hill in Wiltshire.

Proceed along this track passing 'Folly Cottage' and 'Haycroft Cottages' until it reaches a road. Turn LEFT and almost immediately RIGHT, just after the 30 MPH and school signs onto a narrow tarmac road. This pleasant lane drops down to cross a stream (an area once known as 'Sheepwash'). Just before the farm buildings, turn LEFT through a kissing gate. Go straight across the field to another kissing gate, passing through a small plantation and another kissing gate. Bearing slightly right, continue along the right edge of the large garden on the left and through a steel gate. Turn RIGHT onto a rough track; follow round the left-hand bend and up the rise where the track then becomes Pottery Lane.