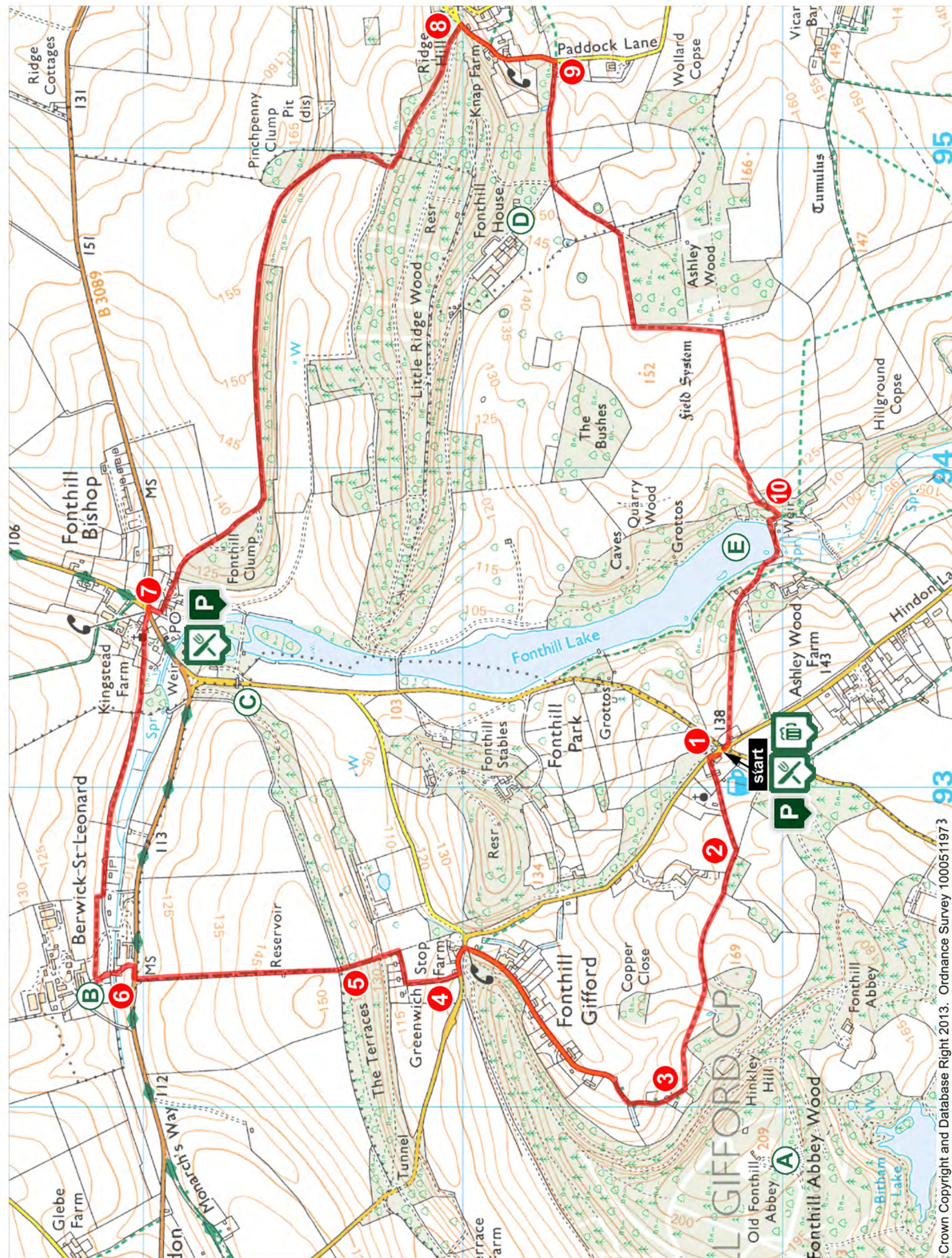


Walk 8: The Splendour of the Fonthill Estate and Fonthill Abbey

Length of Walk
6 miles (10km)

Ordnance Survey map: Explorer 143
Walk Start: ST 93101 31209



Key

- Walk route with waypoint
- Parking
- Pub
- Place to eat
- Historic Site
- Nature Reserve
- Point of Interest

Distance: 6 miles (10km)
Time: Allow 3 hrs
Terrain: Moderate with a number of steep inclines and declines. 3 stiles.

Start: The Beckford Arms pub, Fonthill Gifford, near Tisbury, SP3 6PX.
Start Grid Reference:
X : 393101
Y : 131209
Latitude : 51.080163
Longitude : -2.0998618
ST 93101 31209

OS Explorer Map (1:25 000)
Warminster & Trowbridge
No. 143

Notes:
Alternatively, why not start from The Riverbarn at point 7 which has a car-park.

This circular walk has it all! Discover some of the most scenic countryside the Nadder Valley has to offer, as well as picturesque villages and an impressive rich architectural history. Follow in the footsteps of the notorious Beckford family, wealthy landowners who once owned the Estate, and learn of a bygone era of building extravagant country mansions including the famous 19th Century Fonthill Abbey (also aptly named 'Beckford's Folly'), one of the first ever Gothic revival buildings which collapsed and is now a ruin!

1. From The Beckford Arms pub along Hindon Lane, take the first turning on the L after the pub and before the Holy Trinity Church built in 1866.
2. Continue straight on along Wood Lane past Bratch Farmhouse on the R and along the grassy track. At the end of the track, bear R over the stile into field and follow the hedgerow edge heading towards the privately owned Fonthill Abbey Woods.
3. Continue along the path until you reach Stop Street and then turn R through the small village of Fonthill Gifford dating back to Norman times.
4. At the end of the lane, cross the road with care as this is a busy road, turn L and keeping close into the verge, walk uphill past Stop Farm on the R built in the 17th Century, and take the first turning on the R following the lane leading to the small hamlet of Greenwich. At the end of the lane, turn R passing a row of estate cottages (built circa 1800s) on your R. When you get to the last cottage, keep to the R of the low wire fence which is on your R and follow it around to the L and continue uphill (this section is very steep and could be slippery in wet weather so take care and use the hand rail).
5. Continue in a northerly direction through The Terraces, a wooded ridge where the underlying greensand stone meets the chalk, and out of the woods through a field heading for the small village of Berwick St Leonard. At the bottom of the field, go through a bridle-gate in the corner to the B3089.
6. Walk a short distance along the verge and cross over the B3089 (take care as this road can get busy) and walk along the L hand verge into the entrance of Berwick Courtyard. This is a small complex of commercial units and home to the local Keystone Brewery. Continue along the road and take a L turn at the rear of the units to visit the secluded and beautiful 12th Century Church of St Leonard's. From the church, return back along the track and continue straight along the lane at the rear of a row of cottages on the R over the stile and through two fields. Bear L up the slope at the end of the second field, through another field and into the churchyard of All Saints Church and then to the B3089. A short distance along the road is The Riverbarn for refreshments and lovely cream teas!
7. Cross over the B3089 (take care as this road can be busy) and head through the Fonthill Estate Office yard keeping to the L and following the bridleway straight along up a



Walk 8: The Splendour of the Fonthill Estate and Fonthill Abbey

Length of Walk
6 miles (10km)

Ordnance Survey map: Explorer 143
Walk Start: ST 93101 31209

short incline along the edge of Fonthill Clump, an area of woodland to the R, and downhill past Pinchpenny Clump to the L bearing right along a narrow strip of woodland towards Little Ridge Wood (bluebells when in season). At boundary to the wood, bear L and continue along the track through the woods

8. At the end of the track, turn R onto Knap Lane through Ridge Village and downhill past Knap Farm on R.

9. Before the lane joins Paddock Lane, bear R through the white estate gates leading to Fonthill House in the distance. Continue along the drive but as the house comes into view, turn L by the footpath sign and continue straight on along the track, then turn R, following the boundary to Ashley Wood through fields. Glance R and you can catch a glimpse of the spire of the Holy Trinity Church at Fonthill Gifford. Follow the way-mark at the corner of the last field and head down slope past ancient beech trees towards Fonthill Lake.

10. Why not stop and rest a while at this beauty spot, admire views across Fonthill Lake and listen to the running water from the Hydro Dam. Nearby is Ashley Wood Farmhouse (which offers accommodation and where the popular Ashley Wood Festival is held). Follow the path along the edge of the lake and up the hill. At the top of incline, bear R through the gate and across the field heading towards the spire of Fonthill Gifford Church back to Hindon Lane and The Beckford Arms for some refreshments.

Countryside Code

- **Be safe - plan ahead and follow any signs**
- **Leave gates and property as you find them.**
- **Protect plants and animals, and take your litter home.**
- **Keep dogs under close control**
- **Consider other people**



Points of Interest

A Fonthill Abbey Woods. These woods were once the site for one of the most remarkable and extravagant buildings of the early 19th Century-Fonthill Abbey. This was an immense Gothic revival house with the grandeur of the finest cathedrals, built on Hinkley Hill by super rich author William Beckford Junior, but which later collapsed due to faulty workmanship destroying most of the building. A small fragment remains today but this is hidden from public view.

B Church of St Leonard's. A beautiful 12th Century Church. Closed in 1966, it is now in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust.

C The Fonthill Arch. A short distance from The Riverbarn is the grand Palladian lodge and believed to be the work of original Palladian architect Inigo Jones.

D Fonthill House. This is one in a succession of grand country mansions built and destroyed at the site since the 15th Century. Two burned down and 'Fonthill Spensens', a grand palladian lodge built by William Beckford senior, was largely destroyed soon afterwards by his son in order to use its materials to create 'Fonthill Abbey'!

E Fonthill Lake. The lake is over 1 mile in length and was used as a film location for romance film Chocolat starring Johnny Depp in 2000. There has always been a long history of hydro-power at Fonthill dating back to when a flax mill used water from the lake to produce linen. In 2011, a hydro-dam was installed to generate electricity which is used on the estate with surplus sold back to the grid.