

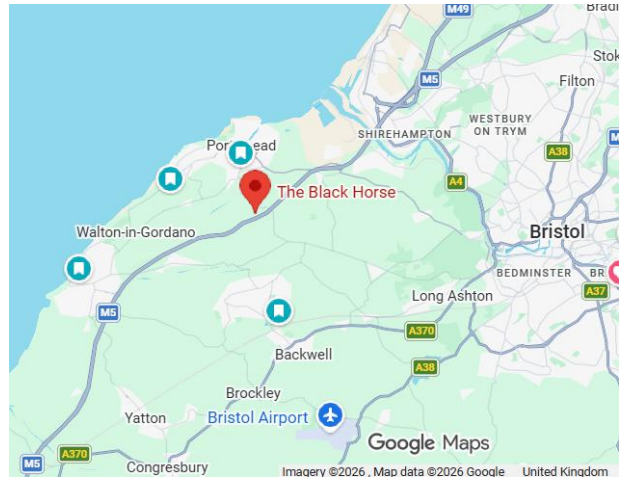
The Black Horse Walk

Sample the Gordano Valley, near Portishead

OVERVIEW

As the M5 heads south over Avonmouth Bridge, many will be familiar with Gordano Services as the motorway lands on the other side. Gordano is the name of the valley that the M5 now passes above as it makes its way to Clevedon.

Rather than heading for the Services at M5 Junction 19, much better to head towards Portishead and to navigate to the village of Clapton-in-Gordano for an easy, level walk that you could do in an hour or so. The Black Horse is a brilliant old pub, stuck in time, and serving beer straight from the cask. Food at lunchtimes only.

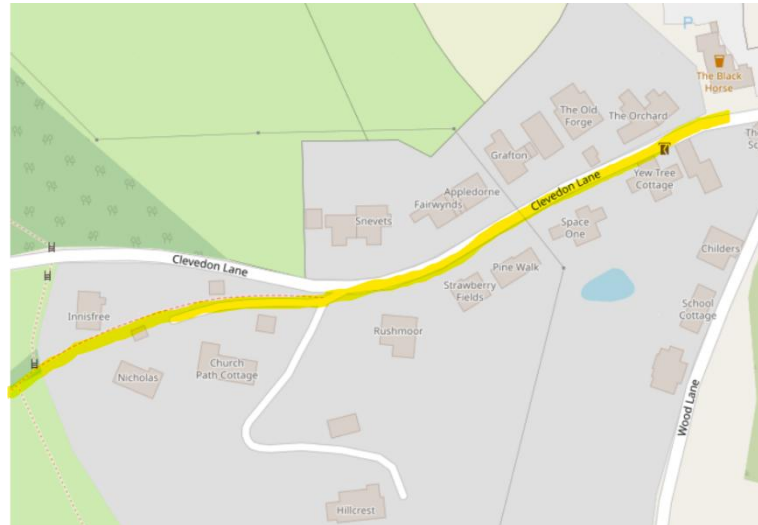


Start/Finish	The Black Horse, Clevedon Lane, Clapton-in-Gordano, BS20 7RH		
Parking	Pub car park. Further parking underneath the M5 on a lane across from the pub.		
Grid Reference	ST 473 739		
What3Words	///dynasties.coasting.wings		
Distance	3 miles / 5 km	Time 1 1/2 hrs	Ascent 178 ft / 55 m
Paths/Terrain	Mainly fields, some shared with horses & sheep in Winter. Can be wet underfoot so muddy in places. Quite a few gates, & the odd stile.		
Difficulty	Easy. Slopes rather than hills.		
Public Transport	Nothing through the village. Bus services run regularly to Portishead from Bristol (X4), and less frequently from Portishead towards Clevedon (X10 service) along the B3124. There are footpaths that connect this B road across fields to the village, which would add a mile or so to the walk.		
Toilets	The Black Horse.		
Other Pubs Nearby	Numerous pubs & bars in Portishead, such as The Ship, The Settle Inn, The Phoenix Bar and The Port. Towards Bristol, at Long Ashton are the brilliant Miners Arms and The Angel.		

DIRECTIONS

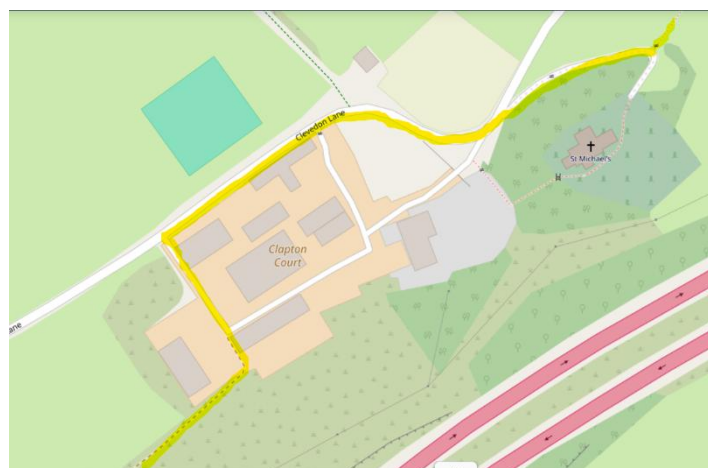
1. As you're facing the front of the pub, go left up Clevedon Lane through the village, in the direction of Clevedon.

2. You're looking for a footpath off this lane on your left hand side. It's slightly up the drive of Church Path Cottage, a wide driveway that serves a few houses on this left hand side at the end of the village (including one called Hillcrest further up the slope).



3. The footpath runs to the side of the Church Path Cottage's wooden fence/hedge, now slightly above Clevedon Lane. Don't worry if you miss it – just follow the lane to pick up the path in the instructions below!
4. This footpath eventually leads into a field via a gate. With the sound of the M5 as your backing track, follow the marked path straight ahead, making for the St Michael's Church that you'll see in front of you beyond the next field.
5. The Church is thought to be 12th Century, and sits on a bluff above the Gordano Valley which would have been a muddy marsh. Clapton means 'hill settlement'.
6. Proceed down the Church driveway back onto Clevedon Lane, now in front of the 13th Century Clapton Court. It has been home to various gentry, including Somerset MP Sir Thomas Arthur in the 1390's, but is now a farmhouse and holiday accommodation.

7. Follow Clevedon Lane around a 90 degree bend. You're in horse country here, and will be turning left into a farmyard path quite soon. A green footpath sign guides the way through the farm yard, with a large modern barn on your left hand side as you rise slightly uphill.



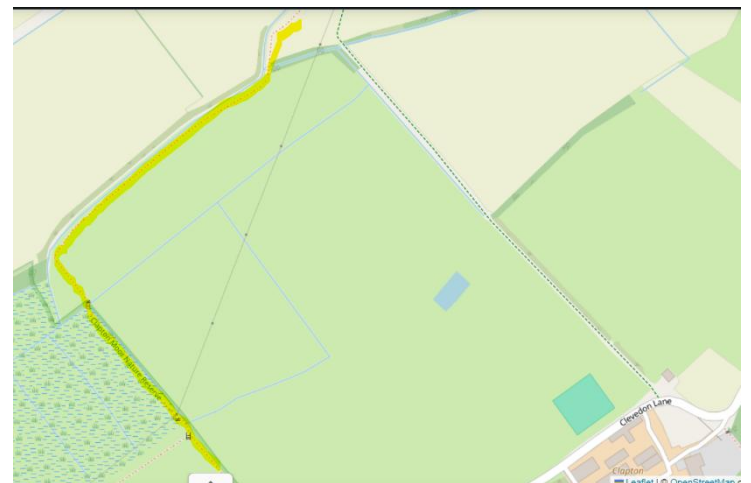
8. Bear right just beyond this barn on a grassy path up to a gate into a field, which you might share with a few horses. The direction through the field is clearly marked, and often adjusted slightly as enclosures for horses are created with electric fencing. The path for walkers to and through various footpath gates across these fields are distinctly maintained.
9. You've gained height across the fields now to walk alongside a fence just below the M5. The path takes you back down hill in the next field alongside a coppice, on your left. You'll see a gate at the far end of this field, and once through it, the path takes you back onto Clevedon Lane once again.

10. Cross straight over the lane into the opposite field to pick up the footpath that now runs back in the direction of Clapton, alongside the hedge on this other side of Clevedon Lane. As you follow the field hedge line you'll pass through a few gates, with footpath signage to



confirm you're in the right spot. If the Lane is the other side of the hedge you are!

11. Continue until the end of the field, then bear left down the field where you exit via a gate into a short section of boggy Clapton Moor. It was dry-ish when I walked across this section, but will be damp after a wet spell no doubt.



12. Continue to a footbridge into a field, again you'll see it signposted. As you enter the field, go straight ahead to the edge of the drainage ditch, and then follow it to your right, eventually onto Moor Lane aka Clapton Drive straight ahead.
13. This is a muddy farm track that passes farm buildings and houses (Mayo Farm), and much used by horse riders from the nearby Sperrings Equestrian Centre.
14. Along this lane you're looking for a path through a gate into a field on your right. Ignore the first footpath sign opposite Mayo Farm until you see another one about 200 yards further up this lane. As a clue, as you look into the field you'll see Clapton Farm on your left. Head into the field towards a small footbridge over a stream.

15. You'll be able to see the village of Clapton-in-Gordano in front of you as you walk through this field. Proceed to the top, passing a duck pond behind a hedge on your right.
16. Leaving the field through a gate, bear right. You'll soon cross into and through a yard of a private house (Myrtle Cottage) with a small stable block, before eventually emerging into the entrance to The Black Horse.