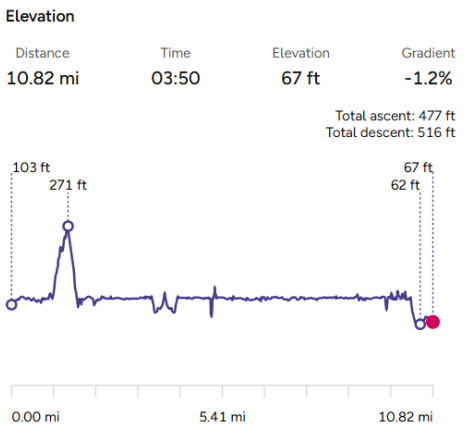
PUBS WORTH THE WALK

The Hop Pole Inn Pub Walk

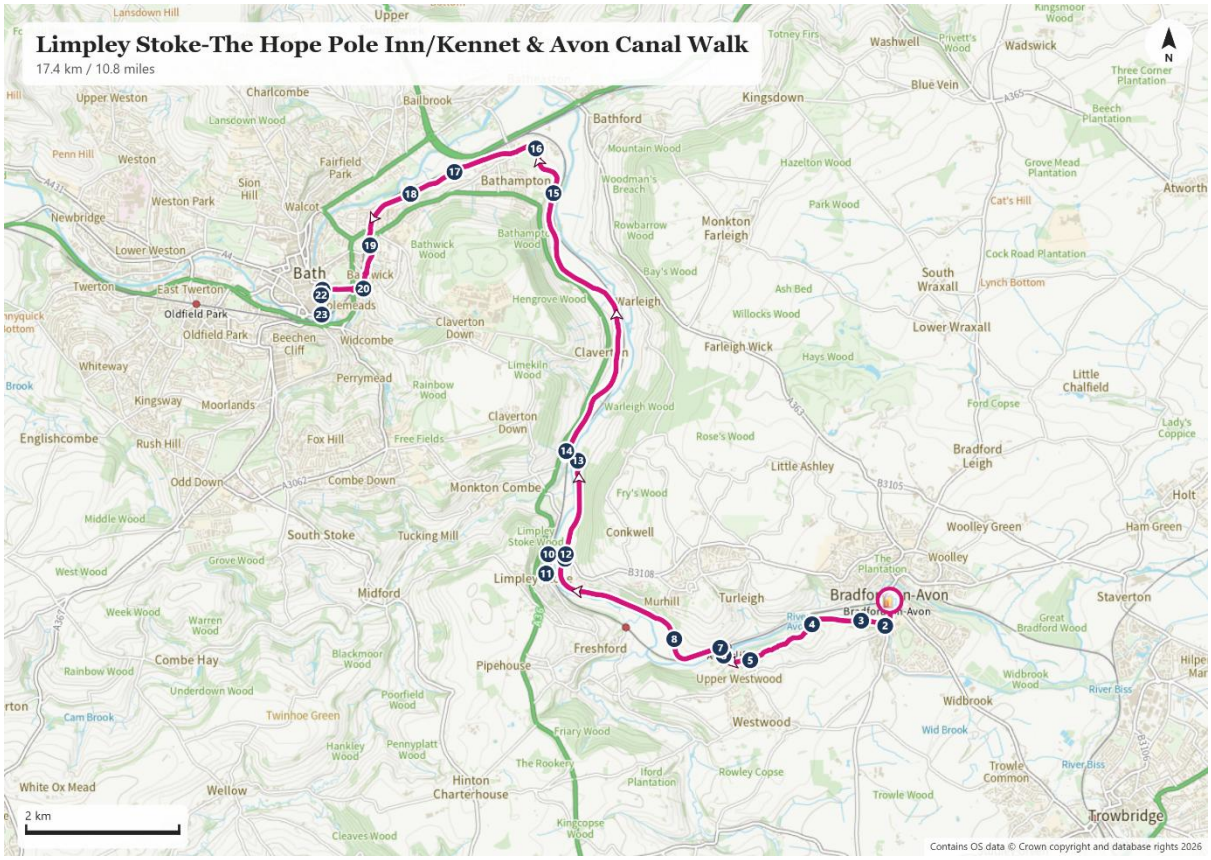
Long walk on the Kennet & Avon Canal to Bath, 11 miles

OVERVIEW

This is a linear, point-to-point walk starting at **Bradford-on-Avon railway station and follows the Kennet & Avon Canal to Bath Spa station**, taking in The Hop Pole Inn at Limpley Stoke along the way.
Highly recommend that you take some time to explore Bradford-on-Avon.
You can follow this path, which is well signposted, entirely along the level Canal tow path. My directions add in a short diversion uphill just outside Bradford-on-Avon, before dropping back down to the canal at Avoncliff.



Start/Finish	**Start Bradford-on-Avon rail station, finish at Bath Spa station.**
Parking	Avon Street Car Park near Bath Spa station. If you choose to do the path in reverse, there is parking at Bradford-on-Avon station.
Grid Reference	ST 826 607 is Bradford-on-Avon station.
What3Words	///whiplash.evoked.fully is Bradford-on-Avon 'station approach'
Distance	11 miles/17.6km **Time** c.4 hours **Ascent** 500 ft / 150 m
Paths/Terrain	Canal towpaths all the way. My route deviates slightly, for variety, to include a short section uphill through a field into woodland. And a steep downhill on a road back to the canal at Avoncliff.
Difficulty	Moderate. A long walk with a rest stop at The Hope Pole Inn.
Public Transport	This is a long, train-facilitated walk which includes an opportunity to shorten it: Trains run on the Bath to Bradford-on-Avon line through Freshford Station. It's about a mile to The Hop Pole Inn from there. Check that the service stops at Freshford.
Toilets	At both stations, plus pubs at Avoncliff, Limpley Stoke & Bathampton.
Other Pubs Nearby	The George Inn, Bathampton; Wheelrights Arms, Monkton Combe; Stumble Inn, Bradford-on-Avon. The Cross Guns at Avoncliff has re-opened. It's owned by the same people as The Inn at Freshford.



DIRECTIONS

1. From Bradford-on-Avon station, take Station Approach to the main road. Turn right, continuing to follow signs to the Kennet & Avon Canal. When you see the Kennet & Avon Canal, follow it to the right!
2. And that's pretty much it, all the way to Bath!
3. As you join the towpath, you'll soon see the Tithe Barn at Bradford-on-Avon. Built in the 1340's this Great Barn is one of the largest medieval barns in the country.
4. Passing moored canal barges, you soon leave Bradford-on-Avo and see the riverside path along the River Avon running in parallel below you, and slowly rising up towards the canal towpath.
5. Where the paths connect, a wooden bridge crosses over to the other side of the canal. Take this bridge and turn right.
6. For a short time you'll follow the canal from the other bank before breaking into a field through a kiss gate. Follow the fields uphill, the way is clear from regular use.
7. You'll leave the 2nd field at the top of the hill to the right-hand side of the field, entering into a small wood.
8. A well-marked path winds through the wood before eventually emerging onto a country road. Bear right to follow the road all the way down until you reach houses close to the canal.

9. This is Avoncliff, where an aqueduct takes the canal over the River Avon & the railway line. There's a pub here – The Cross Guns – which was closed for some winter maintenance when I did this walk. Check their website for re-opening plans.
10. With the canal on your right, navigate over the viaduct. The path bears to the left once you've crossed.
11. Now continue all the way until you see Limpley Stoke on the hillside to your left. A bridge over the canal carries the B3108. On the other side, you can leave the towpath to make your way to the pub.
12. Emerge onto the footpath by the B3108 and follow downhill, all the way to the railway bridge. You'll be going under it. Cross the road to take a lane into the village on the other side of the railway bridge.
13. After a short walk uphill, The Hop Pole Inn will be seen on the right.

    If you want to go back to Bradford-on-Avon by train from here, you need to make your way to Freshford Station a mile away. You'll know where the railway line is now, so follow your nose through the village in the opposite direction to the way you came to find Freshford and its station. People at the pub will be able to help!

14. Return to the canal the way you came to continue the journey to Bath Spa station. You still have 2 ½ to 3 hours to go!
15. Continue now on the towpath for c.6 miles, across Dundas Aqueduct, past The George, a canal-side pub in Bathampton, and eventually into the heart of Bath.
16. You'll see Bath Narrowboats HQ on the opposite bank. Beyond the upcoming tunnel you cross over to the other side and continue to follow the canal until you see an 'exit' – a path off to the right.
17. It takes you through a residential area before dropping underneath the railway. Cross the road onto North Parade heading into the centre of Bath, with the cricket pitch on your left.
18. Cross the river. You'll soon pick up signs for the station now another 5 minutes' walk to the left.