

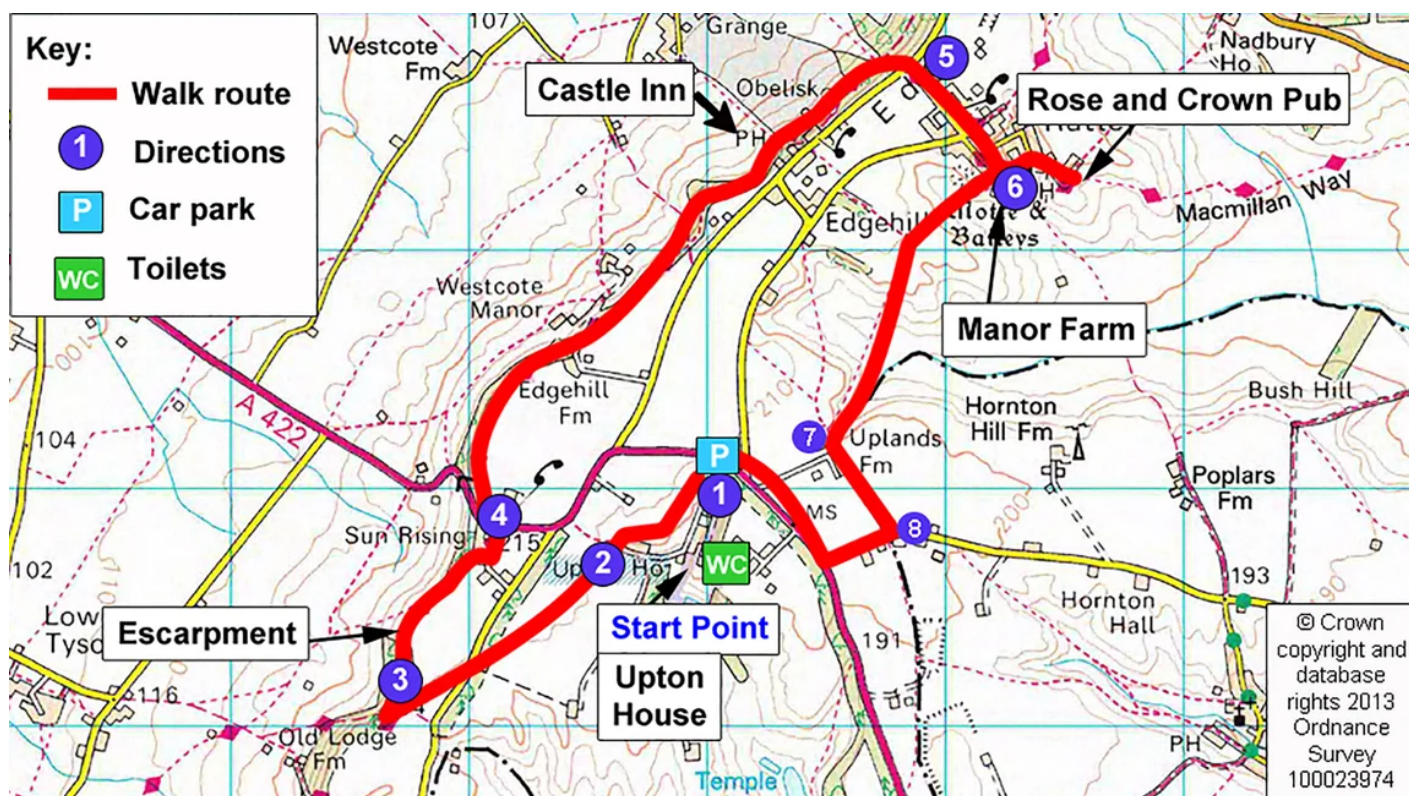
## WARWICKSHIRE

# Upton House ley line walk

This circular walk traces the ley lines across Edge Hill that amateur archaeologist Alfred Watkins first discovered in 1921. Look out for the pub with an octagonal tower where King Charles I raised the Royal Standard, with another said to be haunted by the ghost of an opposing Roundhead.

## ! Opening times and local land

All walks start at the car park, which is only open during Upton House and Gardens' usual hours – please check our website for details. The surrounding land is not in the care of the National Trust. Please follow the Countryside Code.



## Information

Address: Upton House and Gardens, Nr Banbury, Warwickshire OX15 6HL

OS map: Explorer 206 Edge Hill and Fenny Compton

Activity: Walking

Moderate: Includes a number of stiles and is steep in places. For further details, please see Terrain section.

Dog friendly: Trail crosses farmland in many places so dogs must be kept under close control. Dogs are not permitted within the grounds at Upton House (assistance dogs excepted).

Full trail: Miles: 5.5 (km: 8.8)

Access: Challenging

Duration: 2 hours 30 mins

## Terrain

Mostly easy-going on established footpaths and fields. Can be slippery in places in wet weather, especially along the edge of the Edgehill ridge. Includes a number of stiles and is steep in places, including a long flight of steps.

## Total steps: 8

Start point: National Trust car park at Upton House and Gardens; grid ref: SP371461.

1. In the car park, with your back to the main road, head for the grassy knoll then proceed through the kissing gate set in the fence line. Keep to the right. When the farm buildings come into view, continue on the left to a stile. Cross the stile, staying on the left. Cross the valley to the kissing gate set in the hedge.
2. Take the straight, diagonal path to Sugarswell Lane (the first time you cross the Cotswold ley). Cross the lane, go through the gate and cross the field via the diagonal path to the gate set in the fence. Pass through the gate and turn right on to a bridleway. Continue on to the next gate and proceed through it. To your left, enjoy a panoramic view of south Warwickshire, at a height of 700 feet (215m) above sea level. To your right, view the site of the Battle of Edgehill, the first battle of the English Civil War in October 1642. You'll find a noticeboard with information about the battle halfway along the fence line.
3. You are now on the long distance walks of Warwickshire's Centenary Way (from Kingsbury Water Park to Upper Quinton 98 miles/158km) and the Macmillan Way (from Boston in Lincolnshire to Abbotsbury in Dorset, 290 miles/467km). With a distant view of the Malvern Hills on your left, continue north along the ridge line of the edge, which marks the north-eastern extremity of the Cotswolds. Continue along the edge to the next iron gate and through the woodland, passing the paddocks on the right and the stables to the left. Viscount Bearsted chose this property for his hunting retreat in the area until his acquisition of Upton House, which in due course he vested to the

National Trust. At the farm turn right on to the short metalled lane, then left at the T-junction to the A422 road at Sun Rising Hill. Take care crossing as there is no pedestrian footpath. Cross the A422 diagonally to the left for a few paces, then take a footpath, marked by a yellow painted post, which continues through the trees along the line of the ridge.

4. Continue along the line of the ridge, catching glimpses through the trees of the plains below. Cross the metalled lane (this leads to Westcote Manor) slightly to the left for a few paces to rejoin the path on the other side of the lane. Continue until you come to a small area that opens out to the left. Going downhill is a track known as King John's Lane. You'll see some ruined walls either side of the track, which leads down to the end of the village of Radway. Cross the area to the path and continue along the ridgeway. You'll soon spot the unmistakable Octagonal Tower of the Castle Inn on your right. This is about halfway through the walk so you may wish to take a rest. Just a few paces down to your left across a stile you'll find a stone bench where you can sit and take in uninterrupted views. Whatever your choice, continue along the ridge-line path, past an obelisk, and within a few minutes you approach 'Jacob's ladder', a long flight of stone steps leading up to a B road. At this point you can cut the walk short and return to Upton House by turning right onto the road and past the Castle Inn. After 1 mile (1.6 km) or so, heading left at the T-junction, the car park at Upton House comes into view on your right. Otherwise, cross the road to take the turning signposted for Ratley village.
5. Continue for around 750 yards (700m) to the bottom of the hill in Ratley village. Once the road bears to the left you need to take the right turn onto a track heading towards Manor Farm. However, there is another chance to divert for refreshment, this time to the Rose and Crown, by continuing to follow the road as it bears left until you come to the end of the village. Retrace your steps to take the track towards Manor Farm. Just before the farm gate, cross the stile in the corner to the right.
6. The path climbs the hill then drops down to another stile beside a gate. A longer climb follows to the far right corner of the field with an open byre near one more stile to the left of three trees. Once over the stile, walk across the lane to the left of the tree and continue along the left side of the hedge.
7. Continuing alongside the hedge leads you to the other side of the valley and Uplands Farm. Follow the path to a stile. Cross the stile and walk, with the barns to your right, to another stile. Cross this stile and walk a short way through the trees to an open field. Stay on the path, with the hedge on your left, until you come to a metalled road.
8. Turn right into the lane and walk to the T-junction with the A422. Turn right again along the wide grass verge, which leads back to the National Trust car park on your left. Please check the website for up to date opening times as the car park is locked outside of these hours.

End point: National Trust car park at Upton House and Gardens; grid ref: SP371461

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