

MWW website directions – stage 6, Steeple Ashton to the Barge Inn at Seend Cleeve

Maps: OS Landranger 173, OS Explorer 156

Distance: Option 1, 5.2 miles (8.3 km), option 2, 4.1 miles (6.6 km)

West to east

Facing the Longs Arms, turn R along the main road. Turn R again opposite Bartletts Mead down a narrow track signposted 2 Church View. At the end turn R through a rusty metal gate onto a path between fence and hedge, then sharply back on yourself to L through a gate just outside the graveyard. Follow the path in a sweeping right hand curve through the field beside the graveyard. Go through a kissing gate at the end, then immediately left through another one. Head half R down the field to go through another gate at the bottom. Cross a footbridge on the other side of the next field, follow the path through a swampy area, then head slightly uphill along the edge of a field with hedge R. At the corner, ignore the gate on your R and go through the gate in front of you. After a few metres, go through another gate to the R, reaching a stile next to a metal farm gate after 30m or so. Here go L along the top of the field, passing a metal farm gate to L, and through a third one. Proceed down the broad track on the other side between fence and hedge (and under the rope across the entrance if necessary) to cross the top of another field with hedge L.

Go through a wooden gate into a brief section between hedges to another wooden gate. Approx. 30m after this, go through the metal kissing gate in the hedge on the L. Cross the field diagonally towards the church to arrive at a sturdy footbridge between two metal gates. Maintain direction across the next field to the gate into Keevil church's graveyard. Go through this, keeping the church on your R, and down the short street at the end (Church Lane) to emerge onto the main road through the village. Turn R here, passing Pyatts Corner/Butts Lane, Martins Road, Longleaze Farm and a byway, and after approx. ½ mile (0.8 km), on a right hand bend, take the road on the L (effectively straight on). After passing a farm (on R) and The Old Dairy (on L) and a right hand bend, arrive at a T junction. Turn L to reach the busy A361 road.

At this point, there two options, the first of which avoids the village of Seend Cleeve and the extra road walking that this involves, but which is over a mile (1.6 km) longer. It also adds 1.2 miles (1.9 km) onto the lengthy stretch of walking beside the Kennet and Avon Canal, which comprises the entire next stage – which may or may not be a good thing!

Option 1: Cross the A361, turn L and after a few metres turn R down a quiet lane, signposted “Restricted Byway”, behind a new, wooden gate. After 80m, just before a bridge over Semington Brook to Seend Head Mill, take the stile to L into a field. Cross this to a stile on the other side, with Semington Brook to R. (When it has been raining, turning the centre of this field into a lake, follow the hedge on L round the field). Turn L on the other side of the stile into a nettle infested lane. The lane bends R and slowly becomes more navigable. Beware of huge badger sett entrances partly hidden by nettles in this section. After 150m the nettles retreat to the edges of the lane and grass predominates. Where the lane joins a quiet metalled road, with the A361 only a few metres to the L, turn R down said metalled road. 100m after a sharp left hand bend, go down the drive on R into Seend Park Farm. Follow the waymarks around it to reach the Kennet and Avon Canal. Cross the swing bridge to the other side and turn R. After 1.2 miles (1.9 km), come abreast of the Barge Inn on the other side. There is a handy road bridge at this point which enables you to visit the pub for sustenance if needed!

Option 2:

Cross the busy A361, turn L and after a few metres turn R down a quiet lane, signposted “Restricted Byway” behind a wooden gate. Cross the bridge over Semington Brook, passing Seend Head Mill on L, and immediately after this go L (effectively straight on) at junction with a metalled road. This is Row Lane. Walk along this for ¾ mile (1.35 km) to arrive at a T junction.

Turn L here down Seend Cleeve's main street. Pass the Brewery Inn (or go in if thirsty!) and two turnings to the R, to arrive at the Barge Inn after approx. 0.6 miles (1.1 km).

East to west

On reaching the Barge Inn at the end of the last stage, there are two options, the first of which avoids the village of Seend Cleeve and the extra road walking that this involves, but which is over a mile (1.6 km) longer. It also adds 1.2 miles (1.9 km) onto the lengthy stretch of walking along the Kennet and Avon Canal which you have already done on the previous stage – which may or may not be a good thing!

Option 1: Continue along the Kennet and Avon Canal for 1.2 miles (1.9 km) until you arrive at the swing bridge opposite Seend Park Farm. Cross over the canal via the bridge and follow the waymarks around the farm to emerge onto its drive. At the end of the drive, having crossed the bridge over Semington Brook, turn L and follow this metalled road almost to the A361. A few metres before reaching it, take the grassy bridleway to the L. At the end of the first field on the L, the lane gets narrower as the nettles close in. They soon predominate, partially hiding huge badger sett entrances. Just after the lane bends L, look for a stile on the R into a field. Walk across this field, with Semington Brook on L, to arrive at another stile into a quiet lane. (When it has been raining, turning the centre of this field into a lake, follow the hedge on R round the field). Cross this stile, to find a bridge and Seend Head Mill to L, and turn R up the lane to reach the A361 after 80m. Cross the A361, turn L, and after a few metres take the road R signposted Bulkington and Keevil.

Option 2: Cross the Kennet and Avon Canal via the road bridge, pass the Barge Inn on the R, and walk for approx. 0.6 miles (1 km) along Seend Cleeve's main street. Pass the Brewery Inn on the L (or go in if thirsty!) and two turnings to the L. Just before reaching the A361, turn R down Row Lane, and after $\frac{3}{4}$ mile (1.35 km), after a downhill section, and as the road turns sharp L, go R (effectively straight on) on a track past Seend Head Mill on R, to reach a quiet lane via a bridge over Semington Brook. Follow this for approximately 80m to reach the busy A361. Cross over, turn L, and after a few metres turn R down the road signposted Bulkington and Keevil.

Approx. 700m later, take the first lane to R, which soon bends L and passes The Old Dairy (on R) and a farm (on L). On arriving at a junction on a bend, turn R (effectively straight on) and walk $\frac{1}{2}$ mile (0.8 km) into the heart of the village of Keevil, passing a Byway, Longleaze Farm, Martins Lane and Pyatts Corner/Butts Lane, all to L. Take the next L into Church Lane, and walk through the graveyard keeping the church on the L. Go through the gate out of the graveyard and cross a field to a sturdy footbridge between two metal gates. Maintain direction to the left hand corner of the next field, and go through a metal kissing gate into a third field. Here turn R along edge of field to a wooden kissing gate in the corner. There is then a brief section between hedges before another wooden kissing gate into the next field. Walk through this with hedge R to a broad track, which sometimes has a rope across its entrance, with fence L and hedge R. Go through a metal farm gate at the end into another field and follow the right hand hedge, passing another metal farm gate, to take a stile on R by a third one about 30m from the end of the field.

After 30m or so, arrive at another stile, turn L and go through the gate immediately in front of you. Continue down the field edge, ignoring the gate to the L, with hedge L. At the bottom, go through a swampy area to arrive at a footbridge in the corner of a field. Cross this and follow the path across two fields, with Steeple Ashton's church directly in front of you. Go through a kissing gate at the end, then immediately right through another one into a field beside the church graveyard. Follow the path in a wide sweep L beside the graveyard. At a gate beside the entrance to the graveyard, turn sharply R along a path between hedge and fence to come out opposite a house at the end of a narrow track. Turn L down the track to reach Steeple Ashton's main street, opposite Bartletts Mead. Turn L down this to arrive at the Longs Arms pub on R.