APPENDIX 5

Footpaths and walks in the Leckhampton Fields

Because of its network of footpaths, the Leckhampton Fields have many different walks. The rich diversity of landscape, hedgerows, trees, streams, ponds, many fields, small holdings, cottages, creates an excellent variety of interest and beauty that changes through the year.

Circular walks

The Leckhampton Field Circular Walk has several routes, depending on the choice one makes in the network of footpaths between Kidnappers Lane and Farm Lane. All of the routes do however pass through the small holdings and Robinswood Field and it is easiest to describe them by starting from the smallholdings. The walks are described below in an anti-clockwise direction, but can obviously be walked in either direction and the photographs illustrating the walks are similarly in an anticlockwise sequence.

Walking in the anticlockwise direction, there are fine views of the Hill across Robinswood Field, along Kidnappers Lane and from the fields of Church Farm.

Walking in the clockwise direction there are fine views of Leckhampton Hill in Lotts Meadow and Burrows Field, fields between Kidnappers west of Kidnappers Lane.

As well as the public footpaths, there are additional paths all over Lotts Meadow, round the perimeter of Robinswood Field and round the field by the old Leckhampton Cottages (the field south of the three fields marked Horses/Grazing near the middle of the map). The Cheltenham Circular Path crosses these fields and is shown on the map by the Ordnance Survey diamond markings.

In the anticlockwise direction and starting from the small holdings, the circular walk follows round the west end of the smallholdings to Robinswood Field and from there to Kidnappers Lane. There is wide grass verge on the west side of Kidnappers Lane and the route follows this to the corner where Kidnappers Lane east. From here, there are two public footpaths, one heading west and the other south.

The long circuit takes the path west, crossing Hatherley Brook to reach Farm Lane. Here the route turns left and follows Farm Lane south past a much appreciate pig field on the left. When the route reaches the Cheltenham Circular Path, it turns left (east) across a wild field, crossing Hatherley Brook by an impressive footbridge and then turning right and going south along Hatherley Brook to Church Road. At Church Road the route turns left and follows the road until it reaches St Peter’s Church. Here there is another choice to make. The longest circuit continues along Church Road until it reaches the footpath between Moorend Stream and the allotments. A slightly shorter route, turns left at St Peter’s and follows the Cheltenham Circular Path northwest to Moat Cottage, where there is an intersection of four paths. Here the route turns right, past Moat Cottage on the right to reach Kidnappers Lane. It crosses Lotts Meadow to the gate at the north end from where the path follows Moorend Stream until it reaches the smallholdings again.
The slightly longer route follows Moorend Stream from the allotment, either via Lotts Meadow or through Burrows Field on the other side of Moorend Stream. There are shorter variants that cut off sections of the long circuit by heading straight back to the four-way footpath intersection at Moat Cottage. The route is clearer following the photographs and descriptions below.

One can start also these circular walks also from the car park in Burrows Field, the roads north of Burrows Field, from Church Road, from Farm Lane and from the A46 via the access track through the smallholdings or via the path along Moorend Stream which continue to the A46 (not shown on map). The Leckhampton Fields Circular Path is used by residents from all directions and further afield, including from Charlton Kings and inner Cheltenham.

Loop walks

There are several loop walks round fields that are particularly used by dog walkers.

1. From Warden Hill and Shurdington Road along track through the small holdings and a loop round Robinswood Field or round Lotts Meadow.
2. Via the Cheltenham Circular Path across Farm Lane into White Cross Green, around these fields and back via the Cheltenham Circular Path.
3. From Burrows Field car park across Burrows Field and Lotts Meadow.
4. A loop around Lotts Meadow from small parking space (2 cars) where the public footpath from Moat Cottage crosses Kidnappers Lane.

Footpath maintenance

Leckhampton with Warden Hill Parish Council regularly maintains all of the walks on the Leckhampton Fields, cutting back nettles, brambles, tree branches, hedges and other obstructions. Local people also maintain some of the paths of their own accord. Various local volunteers regularly pick up litter along Church Road, Kidnappers Lane and Farm Lane.

Views along the Leckhampton Fields Circular Path

These photographs follow the route of the circular path as described above starting and ending in the smallholdings. The long circuit is described first that goes to Farm Lane and to Church Road. Three main routes are shown, but as noted earlier the network of footpaths makes it possible to choose a variety of circuits. All routes, however, pass along the footpath through the small holdings, and there is no doubt that this section of the path is greatly loved by many people for its charm, interest, animals and wilderness areas.

The photographs below which follow and describe the route of the path show some of its varied rural landscape. The views change with the seasons and the photographs show something of this. Most (37 out of 54) of the photographs were taken on two afternoons in December 2014 for the purpose of this submission. The loop walks on Lotts Meadow, Robinswood Field and White Cross Green are shown in separate annexes with photographs of each of these areas.
Path through the smallholdings.
The northern smallholding are on the right.
One of the northern smallholdings along the Leckhampton Fields Circular Path

The access track to the smallholdings. This also provides access to the Leckhampton Fields and the Circular Path from Warden Hill and Shurdington Road. The northern smallholdings are on the left.
Circular Path heading south from the smallholdings into Robinswood Field

Following the west hedge of Robinswood Field
Up Kidnappers Lane to the corner where the Lane bears left and the path bears right.

At the bend the path bears right heads across the field on the other side of this fence.
To the right is a view of two of the old Leckhampton cottages.

The longer circuit heads west across the fields to Farm Lane. The land here has an unusual form of sliding gate. The top slides across and one can then walk through the V.
To the right are stables.

To the north there is a view towards Moat Cottage. The shorter version of the circular path run along the hedge on the left and goes straight to Moat cottage.
The longer circuit crosses the main tributary of Hatherley Brook and climbs back to Farm Lane. There are two fields on the map, but the boundary hedge has been removed. Both are owned by GCC and used for horse grazing.

Looking back along the path. Hatherley Brook runs along the line of trees.
The circular path follows south along Farm Lane besides a pig field. In the distance one is looking across Hatherley Brook to one of the old cottages.

Past the pig field, the Circular Path turns left following onto the Cheltenham Circular Path back to Hatherley Brook. The path runs over a pretty ungrazed field with an abundance of blackberry bushes and grasses.
From the footpath, looking south towards Leckhampton Hill.

From the footpath looking north across the field.
From the footpath, looking south with Leckhampton Court Farm on the right. This is an example of the type of recent development that has blended in well.

From the path, looking south along the line of Hatherley Brook on the left, marked by the willows.
After crossing Hatherley Brook by a sturdy footbridge, the route either continues to follow the Cheltenham Circular Path to Moat Cottage, or it turns right and follows Hatherley Brook (just visible on the right in this picture) and across the Church Farm fields to Church Road.

Shorter route following the Cheltenham Circular Path to the four-path intersection at Moat Cottage
The longer circuit path follows Hatherley Brook through Church Farm fields to Church Road. This view is looking north.

Same view in winter
View from the path looking back across the Church Farm land to one of the old cottages. Moat cottage is visible in the centre by the two tall poplars.

Same view across Church Farm fields in May
View of Leckhampton Hill across the Church Farm fields.

At Church Road, the Leckhampton Fields Circular Path turns left and follow along Church Road to St Peter’s Church..
This is the view the other way, west towards the Crippets junction and Leckhampton Lane. A much longer version of the walks turns left at the junction, up via the Crippets to follow the Cotswold Way National Trail to Leckhampton Hill and back down the Cheltenham Circular Path to St Peter’s Church. On the right are old orchards.

Old orchard at the corner of Church Road and Farm Lane
Another view in the old orchard.

Church Road by St Peter's Church. This path is part of the Cheltenham Circular Walk.
St Peter's Church from Church Road.

Another view of St Peter's from Church Road
From St Peter’s Church one can either continue along Church Road or follow the Cheltenham Circular Path north past the Medieval moat to Moat Cottage. Here the route turns right at the intersection of four path and follows the shorter circuit which is described right at the end.
The longer circuit continues along Church Road past Leckhampton Manor, which dates from about 1315 and is now a Sue Ryder hospice. The fields in the foreground below the Manor are in the Cotswold AONB.

![Image of allotments with Leckhampton Primary School in the background]

Allotments with Leckhampton Primary School in the background
Path along Moorend Stream looking south. The allotments are over the hedge on the left.

Moorend streams is the boundary between Burrows Sports ground above (looking south towards Leckhampton Hill) or through Lotts Meadow below looking north along the path with Moorend Stream on the right in the line of willows.
By either route, the Leckhampton Fields Circular Path then continue again along Moorend Stream and back to the smallholdings. This view is looking south. The stream is to the left and the field north of Lotts Meadow is across the hedge to the right.
Field north of Lotts Meadow from the Path along Moorend Stream, looking towards the nursery/orchards site

Field north of Lotts Meadow from the path along Moorend Stream, looking north towards the boundary hedge of the smallholdings.
Path along Moorend Stream by the smallholdings, looking south.

Smallholdings in snow
The shorter version of the circular walk heads south from the bend in Kidnapper Lane to Moat Cottage.
On the way, the path passes a small pond, which is probably part of what may be a Medieval feature on the land north of Moat Cottage, shown below.
The Path passes to two old cottages

Beside Moat Cottage, four paths cross at the point the walker in red is standing. The path on the right, with two walkers is the Cheltenham Circular Path. This turns right at the intersection and goes to past the Medieval moat to St Peter’s Church and then climbs up Leckhampton Hill. At St Peters the Leckhampton Fields Circular Path turns left and joins the route of the longer circuit along Church Road to the footpath along Moorend Stream.
The alternative at the four path intersection is to take the path to the left, over a stile and to the left of Moat Cottage. The path passes this field on the right and two other old cottages on the left (below) to reach Kidnappers Lane. The route crosses Kidnappers Lane, into Lotts Meadow and across the Meadow to the path along Moorend Stream and back to the smallholdings.