

Repton Walk

This walk commences in the village of REPTON on the B5008 to the north-west of Burton on Trent. You should park either by the church, or the public car park just off Burton Road. If arriving by bus, alight at Repton Cross. The walk is approximately 6.7 miles long (10.8km) and you should allow about three and a half hours. For a more detailed map you are recommended to refer to Ordnance Survey Explorer™ 245: The National Forest.

Limited parking is available near the church in the centre of the village. From here, make your way to **Repton Cross** 1 in the centre of the village, where the walk starts. Turn down Brook End, where on your left is a high stone wall that was built as part of Repton Priory (established in 1172). Nowadays the wall encloses the cricket field of Repton School with its distinctive thatched pavilion, where the famous English cricketer C. B. Fry learnt the game. Continue over the humpback bridge which crosses Repton Brook, with a sign that harks back to former times. [Brook Farm Tea Rooms are on the left immediately after the bridge]. After a short distance, when the road bears sharp right 2, carry straight on along Monsom Lane. At the top of the lane 3, by the last house, turn left onto the wide track that follows **Old Trent Water**.

Follow this easy track past the turn to Meadows Farm on the right, until you reach a junction, just past the electricity pylons. Go straight on, passing through a vehicle gate with stile to left 4, on a grassy track that shortly arrives at another gate with a stile to the right 5. Turn right, following a straight field edge track, keeping first to the hedge on your right and then to another on your left, while heading towards Twyford church in the distance. Cross five fields before eventually reaching a quiet lane 6, where our route turns left towards the River Trent.

Passing the entrance to the Derby Angling Association's car park, follow the lane to a gateway and stile at the end 7. Climb over the stile and follow the path along the grassy riverbank (bearing right). Here you will find the remains of **Twyford Chain Ferry** 8. Continue along the faint track with the river on your left, to a wide gap in the old hedgerow 9. Passing through the gap, leave the faint track and bearing right, head diagonally across a field to the farthest corner, where you will find a stile 10.

Once over the stile, follow the right hand field edge, before crossing a footbridge on the right just before the far edge of the field 11. Bear left after crossing this bridge, following the path diagonally across the field, aiming to the left of the pylon, to a further footbridge 12, which you cross. Following a similar line, go diagonally

Old Trent Water is an earlier route of the River Trent which remained navigable until about 1820 when it was still passable by small craft. Repton's earlier importance as a major trading centre had diminished following the opening of the Trent & Mersey Canal in 1777. The 'ox-bow' which had served Repton for many centuries quickly silted up with disuse. Now a mere brook there is little evidence of its earlier importance. It is the likely route of the Viking army which invaded Repton having sailed up the Humber estuary and River Trent.



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The octagonal steps of **Repton Cross** are believed to date from 1330 when the Lord of the Manor claimed prescription to a market on Wednesdays and an annual fair on the first day of July and erected a pillory tumbrel, gallows and Market Cross. Only the latter remains, though somewhat smaller than the original which was replaced in 1806. This was also reputedly the first place in the midlands where Christianity was preached publicly.



The name of **Twyford** on the northern bank of the River Trent literally means 'two fords'. Crossing points of the river were of great importance for trading and military purposes. The nearest bridges were at Burton 7.5 miles to the west and Swarkestone 4.5 miles to the east. Large wooden posts on each side of the river are the only remains of the Twyford chain ferry which provided a vital link between Derby and Repton until 1839 when Willington toll bridge opened. Used only occasionally until the late 1930s, the ferry-boat and chain survived until at least 1958.



across the next field to a gateway in the far corner 13, skirting the righthand side of the pylon. Continue on the enclosed track that leads you 500 metres to a stile 14 at the Milton-Ingleby road. (Beware: this road can be very busy during school term, so be very careful).

After crossing the road take the wide track opposite from which you can see **St. Saviour's Church** ahead, a visit to which is recommended. After your visit,

The Church of St. Saviour's was built for Sir Francis Burdett and consecrated in 1662. One of the first churches built in England after the Restoration of the Monarchy and the lifting of the Protectorate's ban on church-building, some believe it may have been the very first. Built in the Gothic style it has changed little in three centuries, making it one of the most interesting of small churches in Derbyshire. It retains the original box pews and a triple-decker pulpit, while the handsome gilded wrought-iron gates are an addition by the famous smith Robert Bakewell of Derby (1685-1752). The church was built to serve Foremark and Ingleby whose old chapels were ruinous, and also Milton.



retrace your steps a short distance and turn left 15 on the cross-field path which heads for the right hand end of the woodland (Church Spinney). Carry on straight across the next field, over a stile and bear slightly left across a further field (pasture), downhill to a gateway which leads through a small block of willow woodland 16. Just before the next field gate, cross a stile on the left hand side, following the path through woodland and over a footbridge, before climbing gradually through grassland to reach the village of **Milton**.

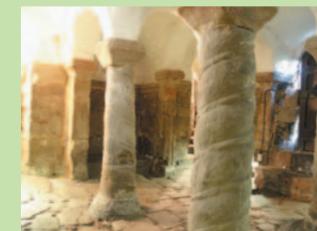
Milton - an attractive hamlet owned by Thomas Burden in 1602 who came from Bramcote to marry a local heiress. In 1607 the estate came into the hands of the Burdett family until sold to the Prudential Assurance Co. in 1943 and sold on to the Church Commissioners who still own much of the land around Milton today. The old mission room provided by the Burdett family is now the village hall. An ice stone standing outside is believed to have been brought down in the last Ice Age.

Turn right along the road a short way before crossing and taking the path which leads through a former farmyard 17, passing under an 'archway' and following the walled driveway that leads to a grassy track 18. Follow this track, which turns into a field edge path for a short distance, before crossing two arable fields, initially heading straight towards Repton Church. The path then crosses an area of rough grassland before entering a short walkway between houses 19.

At the end of the walkway, turn right following the pavement for about 200 metres before turning left 20 into a tarmac path between two houses. Shortly afterwards, take the left-hand fork, passing two 'metal hoops' to arrive at the end of a cul-de-sac. Turn left here and then right at the T-junction and follow the road to the end, where we continue down a small flight of steps at the far end 21. Turn left and follow this path round to the right, turning left again to descend another small flight of steps - this tarmac path crosses Repton Brook and eventually brings you onto High Street 22. Turn right here and walk the short distance back to Repton Cross 1 noting the many fine buildings as you go.

There is a range of places to eat and drink in Repton, ranging from takeaways to restaurants - please support local businesses while you are in the village. In Repton church you can purchase leaflets and guides to the church and crypt, as well as the 'Repton Trail' published by Repton Village History Group which provides fascinating details of the many fine buildings in the village.

Repton has been described as 'one of the most ancient places in all of England' and its place in history is significant. One time Capital of Mercia, a monastery was founded around AD653 following the arrival of Christianity in Mercia. Under St Wystans Church is a unique **Saxon Mausoleum**: one of the most important surviving pieces of Saxon architecture, this burial place of Mercian Kings dates from c750 AD and became a well known place of pilgrimage. The village was the site of a bloody battle and razed to the ground by marauding Vikings in AD 874. The Church of St. Wystan is a very fine survivor of a 9th century Saxon abbey and its 212 ft spire a land mark for miles around.



Repton priory was founded c1172 and dissolved at the Reformation in 1538 - it is said the Priory Church was pulled

down in a single day by workmen who had been gathered from all over England for that purpose. Dressed stone from the demolished buildings can be seen in houses and walls in various parts of the village (see **Tudor Lodge** and **Stone House** on High Street). Repton School was established on the site of the priory in 1557 - now a world famous Public School, the buildings include the 12th century Priory Guesthouse, Lodge and Gateway, and Prior Overton's Tower (c1437), one of the earliest brick buildings in England.

There are many fine old buildings: take time to explore High Street. Seek out The Grange on Main Street built 1703 for Joseph Holbrook, a former Lord Mayor of London. Returning to the Market Cross, it was here that in 1848 a man brought his wife, with a halter round her waist, and offered her for sale for a shilling.

