

10. Blackness and Brownhill

Where

Frith Youth Centre – Brownhill – Blackness – Skaiteshill – Old Neighbourhood (almost, but not onto the road) – Frith Youth Centre

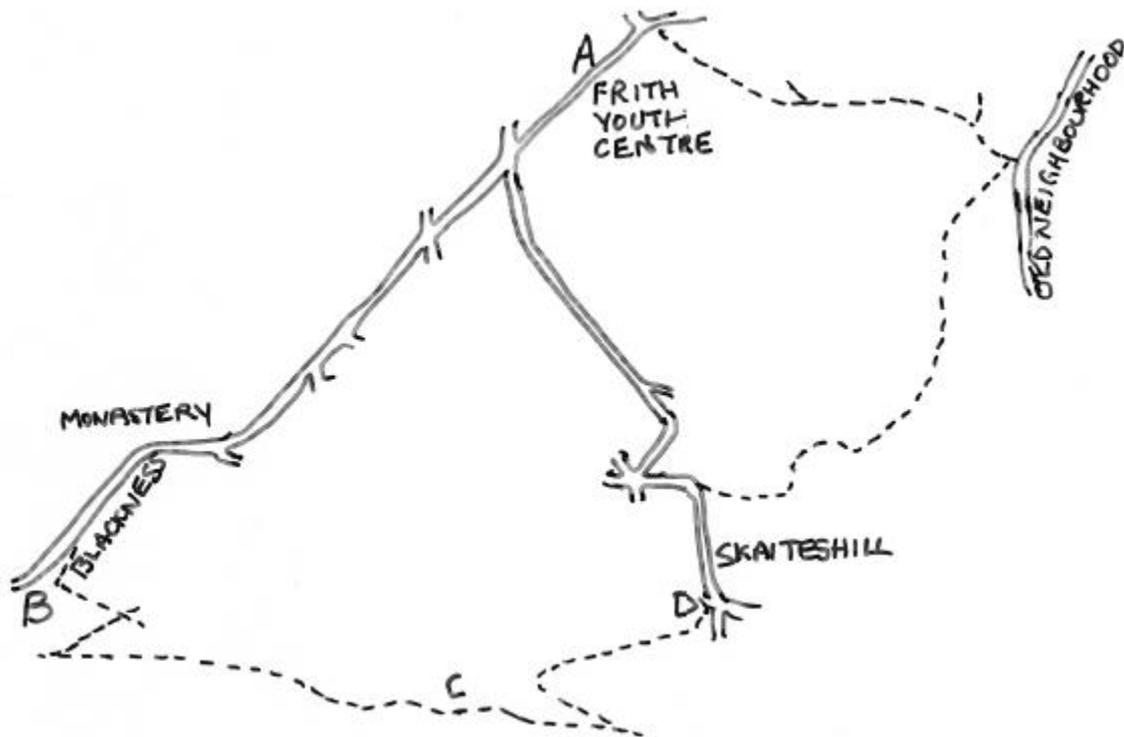
Length

About 2¼ miles

About the walk

This is a varied walk, through lanes, fields and woods, with some good views across the Golden Valley.

The route



A The walk begins outside the Frith Youth Centre. With your back to the building, turn left. Go straight across the crossroads. Brownhill allotments are on your left and you will be able to see the progress of the crops.

Do not take any of the turnings and keep straight ahead at the dead end sign. This is Blackness and there are lovely views to be glimpsed on your left. On the right, you pass the Monastery of Our Lady and Saint Bernard which is the home of a community of Bernadine Cistercian nuns.

The lane plunges downhill. Just in front of the bollards which block the way to vehicles, turn left on a signposted footpath which has a handrail to help you up the bank.

B You reach a stile [with dog gate]. Go over and follow the path as it bears left.

There will be a seat from which you can admire the view across the valley to Rodborough Common and inspect the progress of the building works on the old Critchley's site at Brimscombe. The grass around you has many different meadow flowers in season.

When you come to a broad track going downhill sharply to the right, take it, almost doubling back on yourself. Lower down, at a crossing of paths, turn left to walk above a wood.

At the field boundary ahead go over the stile.

The path reaches a stile and dog gate on the right. Cross this and immediately another stile [with dog gate], to the left.

C The path you are following is quite narrow. It comes to a stile and dog gate. Go over and, just after a house on the right, turn left into the wood over a dog friendly metal stile. The path loops uphill. Keep to this main path and enjoy the stillness of the wood.

The path passes the grounds of Firwood House and comes out onto the drive by way of a dog friendly stile. Turn right to reach the road, **Skaiteshill**. This road is usually quiet but do take care.

D Turn left up the road. Where the road turns left, go right onto a drive with a footpath sign and also a sign **for Skaiteshill Farm and Kennels**.

The next section may be difficult for some dogs. If you are in doubt, keep on past the turning to Skaiteshill Farm and kennels and follow a route through Brownhill by turning onto the first lane on the right, which will arrive at The Frith and the Youth Centre will be on your right.

Walk along the drive following the orange signs for the kennels. Eventually the drive goes right to the kennels. You go across a strip of grass to a metal stile.

The path goes straight ahead to another stile. In front of the stile there is an electric fence with insulated handles to unhook it.

Going over the stile keep straight ahead until you reach the end of a line of trees on the right. Then drop down to the right to a kissing gate. Then straight ahead again to a stile.

You are now just off '**Old Neighbourhood**'. Turn towards the road **but do not walk onto the road, which is very dangerous**. Instead, turn left onto a path near 'Corpus Christi Cottage.

Keep on this path. Do not turn right where another path joins, with a barrier across it, but stay left of this. Do not turn off at all and you will come back to The Frith, where you started.

Route description by Tessa Wood, Stroud Rambling Club

