

9. Along Toadsmoor Valley and Brownshill

Where

The Ram, Bussage – Old Bussage – Along Toadsmoor Valley – Blackness – Vine Farm – Brownshill – Bussage Pleasure Ground – The Ram

Length

About 2½ miles

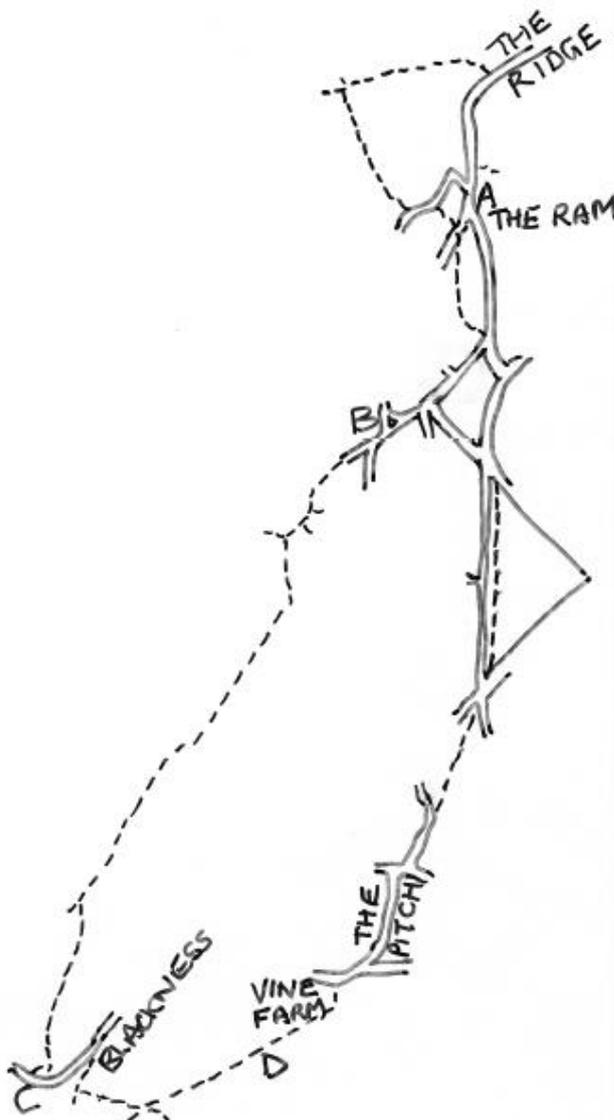
About the walk

A walk of about 2½ miles contouring the Toadsmoor Valley and returning via Brownshill.

This walk takes you through the woods alongside the Toadsmoor Valley and then offers grassland, two seats and views towards Rodborough Common.

The paths are a little rough in places and there are some ups and downs. There are some stiles, but most dogs will cope without any problem.

The route



Start to the walk – ‘The Ram’ on ‘The Ridge’.

A With your back to ‘The Ram’ turn right along The Ridge until you reach a footpath sign pointing left. Go through the self-closing gate and downhill, parallel to a hedge on your left. [Do not veer right]. There is a good view over the Toadsmoor Valley to Lypiatt. The path becomes steeper and stony. At a clear gap in the hedge turn left, crossing a trickle of water; if cattle have recently been in the field, it could be muddy here. Now keep another hedge to your left. Go through one new kissing gate and then another to reach a lane.

Here turn left for a few yards and then turn right onto a tarmac path. Cross a lane and go straight ahead, still on a tarmac path.

Reaching a lane at the top of the path turn right downhill to a triangular green with a bench.

B Keep straight ahead towards ‘The Old House’ sign and fork right, keeping ‘The Old House’ wall on your right. At the end of the wall, go straight ahead on the concrete track. When this ends, keep ahead on the

grassy path which has a house wall on its right and then, at the corner of the house, turn right and arrive at a footpath sign.

Carefully descend to the bottom of the steps and bear left to cross a slab stile. Go ahead. Pass a new kissing gate on the left. Keep straight on.

After a while there is a slab stile which you cross and go straight on into a wood, the path becoming more distinct as you go on.

After crossing the next stile, go slightly left which takes you to a wooden gate.

Go through and turn right. You are walking above the gardens of 'Edgecombe House'.

The path eventually swoops right and comes down some steps onto a lane. This is '**Blackness**'.

C Turn left which is quite steeply uphill. You pass two barriers and two sets of bollards barring this road to traffic. It gives pause for wonder to consider that vehicles used to drive both ways here until comparatively recently.

At the second set of bollards, turn sharp right up a signposted footpath with a handrail.

Reaching a stile, go over and turn left on a clear path.

There will be a bench and, after the uphill, you may wish to take a rest.

At a junction of paths, take the left hand path, which continues uphill. There will be another bench and another rest opportunity.

D At the top of the slope there is a gate. Going through, continue straight ahead to a stile, cross this and turn left. 'Vine Farm' will be on your left.

At the road, turn right and take the first turning on the left 'The Pitch'. On this road you pass 'St. Michael's', 'St. Mary's', and 'St. Anne's', names which are reminders that these houses once belonged to a community of nuns who used to live in this part of Brownhill; but their numbers dwindled and the remaining nuns moved to another house away from the area.

At the T junction, turn right and then first left. When you reach a footpath on your right turn into this, which will take you through a gate into the Brownhill allotments. It is interesting to see what is being grown and how the crops are faring.

At the end of the allotments, you come out at a crossroads. Go across into the pleasure ground and walk along the left hand side to reach the community noticeboard.

Here you are back on '**The Ridge**' and now walk ahead along 'The Ridge', forking left along the road at Bussage Village Hall, to regain '**The Ram**'.

Route Description by Tessa Wood, Stroud Rambling Club

