

How to get there

The walk described in this leaflet will take you around the borough of Solihull from Castle Bromwich in the North to St Alphege Church in Solihull Town Centre. The Walk will allow you to explore the area's historic past including its connection with the Green Man as well as other points of interest.

For further information on public transport links to Castle Bromwich please contact Traveline West Midlands on 0871 200 22 33 or at <http://www.travelinemidlands.co.uk>

If you are travelling by car, please remember that in some areas parking may be limited so please always park considerately.

Thank you to all involved in the project:

Castle Bromwich Junior School
Kingshurst Primary School
George Fentham School
St Anne's School
Lady Katherine Leveson
Dr Colin Harris (www.GreenManForum.co.uk)

If you find any problems with the trail please notify Solihull Neighbourhood Rangers on 0121 704 8472.

An OS map is recommended for guidance on this walk. The OS maps needed are Explorer 220 and 221.



Solihull Countryside Walks

A guide to walks in the local area

Solihull Green Man Trail



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The Green Man Trail is a walk that covers over 21 miles of public footpaths connecting the urban and rural hearts of the borough. Along the route are many examples of the Green Man just waiting to be discovered...

Who is the Green Man? By Dr Colin Harris

The Green Man lives deep within our folklore, customs, myths and legends. We have all seen these curious faces hiding behind leaves in our churches, cathedrals and civic buildings. Perhaps you wonder what they mean?

Our problem is that no-one ever wrote down "A Green Man is". The name was created by Lady Raglan in 1939 who realised that these foliate faces weaved together our past and our future even though the oldest are over 3,000 years old and found in all continents.

Many pubs are called The Green Man. Solihull has none now but examples still exist at Coleshill, Harborne and Kenilworth. A Green Man pub stood on the corner of Blackford Road and Stratford Road from 1842 – 1861 which became The George and Dragon before being demolished. The nearest Green Men on churches are in Hampton-in-Arden, Temple Balsall and Henley-in-Arden. We need to keep alive the traditions of the Green Man for he is an endangered species. Unless we pass on folklore to future generations it will fade into distant memories.

Solihull Neighbourhood Rangers have created a Trail in partnership with Schools in the Borough who have had great fun making lots of Green Men who are hiding along the Trail for you to find. We hope families, schools, clubs, walkers, visitors and "green maniacs" can all explore and enjoy our beautiful area by finding more Green Men.

Many activities are devised each year in Solihull. By enjoying fun, friendship, fresh air, finding out and physical activity together then you will add extra quality to your life. The Green Man Trail is here to help you!

Solihull is an active "green" place to live. We are responsible and need to learn more about our sustainable futures, climate change, our friendly environment and local historical treasures.

Our need to be close to nature and enjoy our surroundings is essential. The Forest School Project enables skills like den making, cooking, tree climbing, team work and creating structures and models and it blends in well with our Green Man Project.

The new Green Man Trail not only helps us to see the cycle of birth, life, death and re-birth but also to appreciate that he is the ancient forerunner of our oneness and closeness with the Earth.

If you would like to find out more phone Dr Colin Harris 0121 745 1803 or look at www.GreenManForum.co.uk



Points of interest along the trail

1. Castle Bromwich Hall and gardens

The Hall is a Jacobean style 17th Century mansion which is Grade 1 listed. The Hall was built for Sir Edward Devereaux, the first MP for Tamworth in Staffordshire. The house is now in private hands and is not open to the public. The Hall gardens are an excellent surviving example of English formal gardens of the period 1680-1760. Restoration of the gardens commenced in 1985 with the formation of the Castle Bromwich Hall Gardens Trust. The gardens extend to eight acres and feature an extensive collection of over 600 species of historically correct plants. Open Daily. For more information visit www.cbhgt.org.uk

2. Alcott Wood

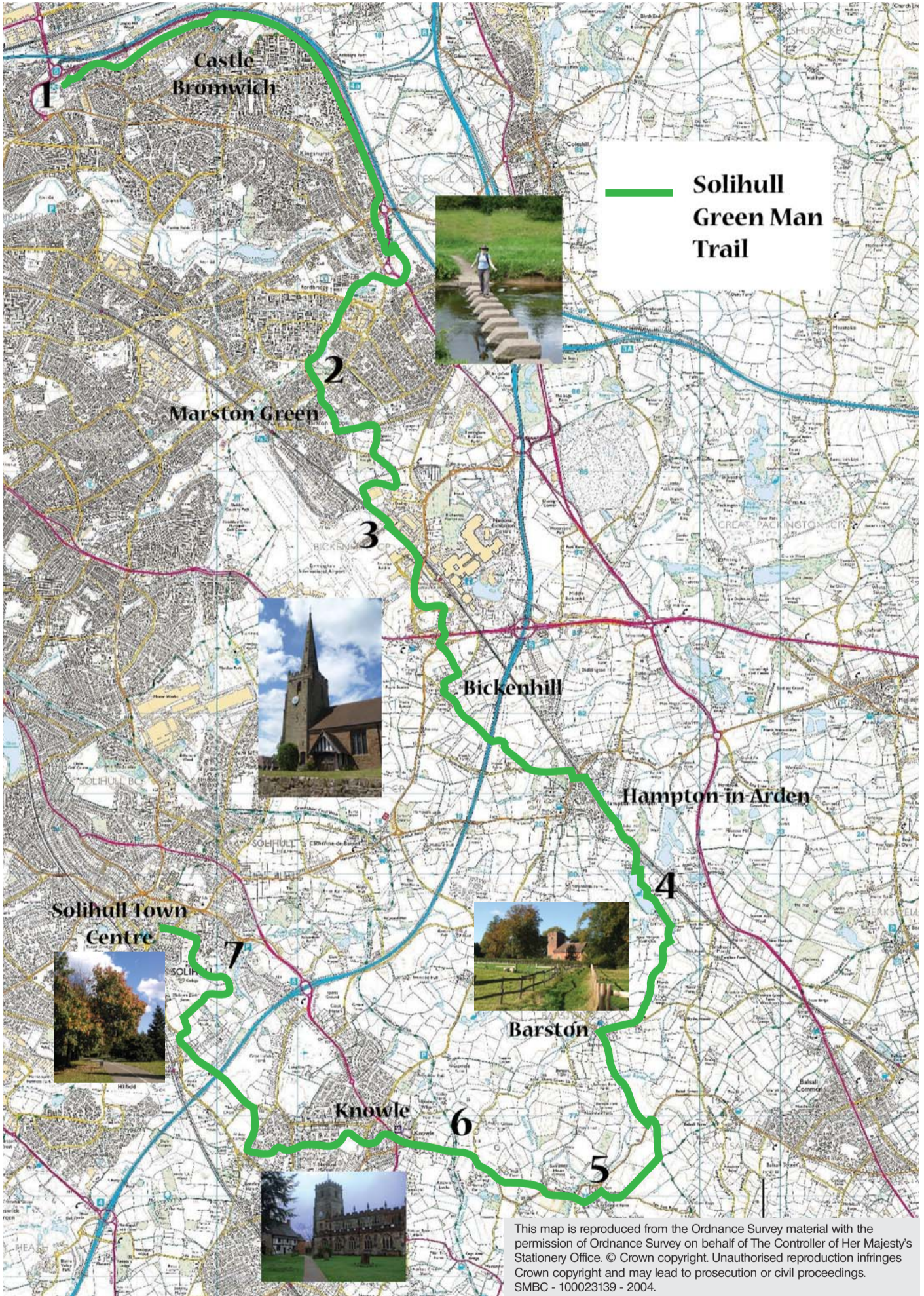
Alcott Wood is a good example of traditional oak woodland which contains ground flora containing several ancient species including Wood Anemone, Remote Sedge, Wood Sorrel.

3. Birmingham Airport

Birmingham Airport was initially built as a municipal airport for the city in the mid 1920's, an important test facility for Avro Lancaster and Sterling Bombers during the Second World War, the airport is now a busy international passenger and freight airport for the West Midlands. The Green Man Trail will take you past the airport and give good views as planes take off and land for the plane spotters amongst you.

4. Packhorse Bridge

To the south-east of Hampton-in-Arden the 15th century Packhorse Bridge straddles the River Blythe. Although the Trail does not directly go over the bridge you will be able to obtain one of the finest views of it as you walk beside Barston lakes.



5. Temple Balsall

In the reign of King Stephen, the manor of Balsall was granted to the Knights Templar who built the church. If you get the chance to view inside the church, try and see how many representations of the Green Man you can find.

6. Grand Union Canal

The Green Man trail will take you onto the canal towpath as it winds itself through the Borough on its 137 mile journey from Birmingham to London. Don't worry, you will only be passing over this route which came into being in 1929 and is made up of a number of earlier canals and harks back to our important industrial past.

7. Malvern and Brueton Park

Malvern Park was opened to the public as a place of leisure in 1926. Ornamental flowerbeds were added over a number of years. The gates and the Prancing Horse statue, donated by Captain Oliver Bird, were added in the 1950's.

Brueton Park was donated by Horace Brueton, of Malvern Hall, in 1944, as a gift for the people of Solihull. In 1963, the two parks were linked together with a footpath to create Malvern and Brueton Park.

Within the WWT Parkridge Centre, at Brueton Park, there is another Green Man Trail, see if you can find even more.

Countryside Code:

When using these walks, please respect, protect and enjoy the countryside you pass through.

You can do this by:

- Being safe, plan ahead and follow any signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants and animals and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under close control at all times
- Consider other people