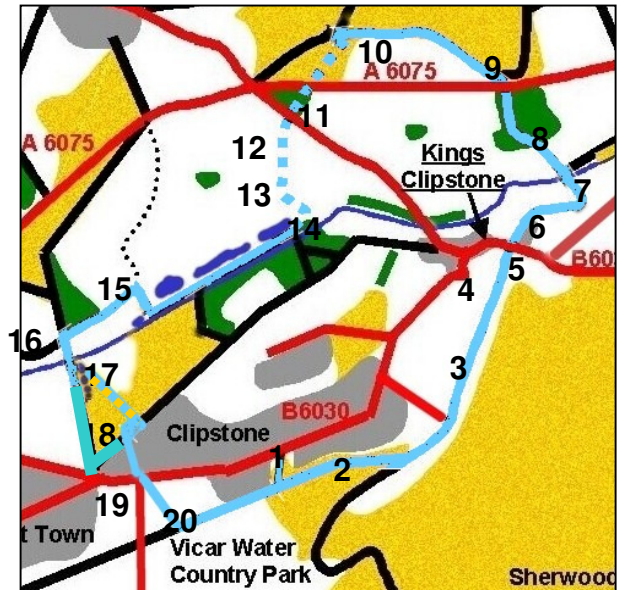




Kings Clipstone route 8

A circular route of about 8.5 miles along Bog Lane and Archway Road to Birklands, then via Sherwood Forest Farm Park and the Maun Valley before returning past the Spa Ponds.

The Spa Ponds



1. Parking by the visitors centre at Vicar Water Country Park take the left hand exit from the car park towards the lake.

2. Skirting the lake, go north on the national cycle route.

3. After Baulker Lane the route enters Kings Clipstone, the entrance on your left to Waterfield Farm marks the southern end of the Great Pond of Clipstone. The pond predates 1180 when it first appeared in records. The pond stretched to the road embankment you can see in front of you.

4. On the hill to your left are the remains of King John's Palace, which served as a home to all the Plantagenet kings.

5. Follow Bog Lane to the Dog & Duck -cross the B6030 and take Archway Road.

6. The signal box is one of the finest examples left in the county. If you turn and look at the field you will see how uniform the slope is. Between 1819 and 1838 the Duke of Portland spent almost £40,000 on a 7.5 Mile irrigation scheme called the Flood Dykes to create water meadows. Huge amounts of earth were moved to smooth the fields and move the river, with an irrigation canal being excavated along the top. The smaller arch under the railway allowed the Flood Dyke to pass under. At the junction ahead turn left under the railway bridge. All the fields on this side of the river were part of the irrigation scheme so show the same sort of uniform slope.

7. The bridge across the River Maun is called Forge Bridge and is believed to be the site of one of the iron forges and slitting mills found along the river around 1650. Forges needed a good supply of charcoal and waterpower to work the hammers and bellows. In a 20 year period from 1640 the forest was plundered of most of the tress and fencing to make charcoal.

8. Archway Lodge was built by the Duke of Portland to prove the durability of the stone from his Mansfield Woodhouse quarries after it had been rejected for the rebuilding of the Houses of Parliament following the fire of 1835. The outside of the building is a copy of the Worksop Prior gatehouse but instead of saints the niches are adorned with figures from forest folk-law.

9. Follow the road up to the A6075 and cross. Take the track bearing left along the edge of the forest (Birklands). When you reach a path crossing the track, turn left.

10. Follow the path along the edge of the forest (on the left) until you come to the cross marking St Edwin's Chapel and Hermitage.

11. Turn left at the next track, which will take you back towards the A6075, crossing into King's Wood, follow the permissive path through the wood.



12. The path emerges opposite the entrance to the Sunday Market and the Farm Park. There are good views over ancient Clipstone Park – the royal hunting park was 7.5 miles in circumference.

13. Follow the roadway down the hill past the Farm Park. Still going down hill you will pass through a gate with a sign stating that it is locked at dusk. There is a fine old wood to the left with Iron-age pigs roaming in an enclosure.

14. By the bridge over the River Maun turn right and proceed between the river and the lakes. The lakes have been created as a result of subsidence. Following the track, it turns right and goes up the hill.

15. At the top turn left along the old **Flood Dyke**. The Flood Dyke snaked along the hill carrying water & sewage from Mansfield. Sluices then allowed it to flood the water meadows on the slopes below. The irrigation system took 20 years to build and involved moving huge amounts of soil to produce the smooth slopes.

16. The path you are following is crossed by Packman's Road, turn left down the hill. Buried underneath the concrete on the bridge is the old stone bridge.

17. At the river follow the path round to **the Spa Ponds**. The hill above the spa ponds is the site of Beeston Lodge (the pele gatehouse). Our path continues past the first pond then turns left along the dam and then right up the hill.

18. Follow the path up the hill with the field on your left until you come to the playing field. At the top of the playing field turn right then second left (Newlands Drive is opposite the middle of the playing field)

19. At the B6030 roundabout you need to go left, cross the road and follow the track down – to continue in the same direction as Newlands Drive.

20. At the bottom of the hill turn left back towards Vicar Water.