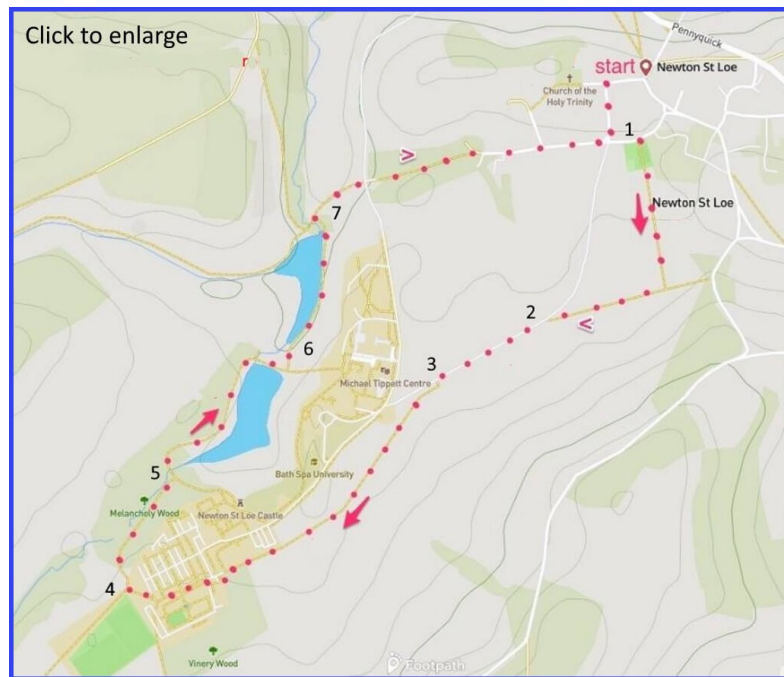




Newton

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BA2 9BU 4 mile walk over fields, through a university campus, lakeside paths and back to the charming village. *Click map to enlarge.* Water is blue, wooded green, contour lines show slopes. Click [here](#) for arial view. Click [here](#) to download/print PDF



(Routes to take from map points + metres to next point)

- 0:** Walking away from church, turn right at house in picture [A](#). Left at the end of this road until gate into playground on right. 230m
- 1:** Walk across field (350m). Shortly before field boundary turn right and walk (200m) towards join with lane (pic [C](#)).
- 2:** Walk towards University gates. 430m
- 3:** May be limited access at gate. If so, use rough footpath in field to side of lane (pic [D](#)) to enter campus. Walk to end of campus. 700m
- 4:** Walk round edge to find path down through wood. 450m
- 5:** Drop down towards lake and walk along it. 200m
- 6:** Follow sharp bend to walk along far side of second lake to its end. 350m
- 7:** Up path, cross road and enter second path to return you to village. 700m

The pictures below are in the order things were seen on this walk. Clicking on any one will enlarge it (and the slideshow)



[B]



[C]



Observations

The route starts in the Norman village (parking may be a challenge). It contains a [large number](#) of listed buildings and is postcard picturesque. But the look of a village does not always speak its full history. Up until the mid-19th century there were pits here supplying coal to Bath. No sign of those today: instead there is a slice of tranquility to sample before setting off across fields (pic [B](#)). Then through a university campus and, finally, across a traditional English country estate. The area of this walk is now mainly arable farming and grassland. And, unexpectedly perhaps, higher education.

Most of the village (and its surrounding area) was purchased by the Duchy of Cornwall in 1941. In fact the old church Rectory is the headquarters of their 'Eastern District' (just how big is this *Cornwall* Duchy?). Their presence is [controversial](#), following a proposal to build 2000 houses in the area (not yet granted, and possibly abandoned?). The dispute gave rise to much ridiculing of Prince Charles for his evidently suspect environmental credentials.

Notice the 'Free School' (established in 1698), which continued to function as the village school until 1972. Also worth visiting is the 14th century [Holy Trinity Church](#). The 15th century west tower has a good set of six bells.

Campus walk

The second half of this walk takes you through the main campus of Bath Spa University. This institution grew out of the old Bath School of Art (partly based at Corsham) and the Bath Teacher Training College – set up after the second war to help with teacher shortages. It was a women's college offering two year courses. Following a group of mergers with other small colleges, in 2005 it became Bath's second university.

Two universities in a small town is surprising. In an age of scaling up academic research groups, an institutional merger might be expected between high profile Bath University and the loose amalgamation that became Bath Spa University. On the other hand the latter's distinctive and developed niche identity might be attractive, and something to protect. So, Bath Spa does have a high standing in *performing arts*. For instance, this campus includes the [Michael Tippett Centre](#) – the composer had strong connections with the Bath music festival (not quite what it once was).

The university botanical gardens offer a potential resting place for the walker – its on the way out at the far end of this campus.

Estate walk

In the latter part of the walk you trail through the original Newton Park Estate – grounds designed by Capability Brown. Odd name? It seems he traded on a promise of: 'your site is *capable* of being great (and I am *capable* of achieving it)'. Unadorned expanses of grass, water and trees: nature now made the subject, not just the setting. Judge for yourself as you walk on from here (pics [E](#) – [I](#)).

In the estate is Newton Park, an 18th-century Grade I listed Palladian country house. The Park was designed by Stiff Leadbetter (another odd name – implications uncertain) and built in 1762–5 for Joseph Langton. Langton was distinguished as the man beaten by William Pitt the Elder in the 1757 Bath election. There is a monument to Langton's father in the Holy Trinity Church – a monument which Pevsner says is "stately, restrained...worthy of Westminster Abbey".

The grounds were set with artificial lakes and cascades, a wild space very 'capably' landscaped perhaps. The house itself is currently home to the administrative staff of the university (who traditionally in this sector always get the most distinguished buildings). This house was once the residence of the Lady Anna Temple-Nugent-Brydges-Chandos-Grenville (1820-79) – who, despite her daunting aristocratic pedigree, was an active campaigner for women's suffrage, including working for the right that women could become doctors. There is more on the history of the estate [here](#).

You will enjoy the lakeside walk, where there are a number of sitting spots. Anglers may be seen, as its a good spot for fishing but otherwise there should be few people about: its pleasingly tranquil – unless you go during university term time. Which is not the best plan.

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