

# Bosherston Lily Ponds and the Green Bridge of Wales

WALK  
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Bosherston Lily Ponds and the Green Bridge of Wales

<b>Start</b>	Bosherston
<b>Distance</b>	10½ miles (16.9km). Shorter version 4 miles (6.4km)
<b>Approximate time</b>	5 hours (2 hours for shorter version)
<b>Parking</b>	National Trust car park at Bosherston
<b>Refreshments</b>	Pub and café at Bosherston
<b>Ordnance Survey maps</b>	Landranger 158 (Tenby & Pembroke), Explorer OL36 (South Pembrokeshire)

*From the village of Bosherston the walk follows the side of the lily ponds to the sandy beach at Broad Haven and continues via cliff tops to St Govan's Head and Chapel. Here the shorter version returns along the road to Bosherston, but if the coast path across the army range is open it is definitely worth continuing along the flat-topped limestone cliffs as far as the twin spectacular sights of the Elegug Stacks and the Green Bridge of Wales. From here the walk returns along the same route as far as St Govan's Chapel and continues by road back to Bosherston.*

*Occasionally the walk is not possible because the army range is closed. If the red flags are flying on the boundary of the range at point B, firing is in progress and you cannot proceed any further, in which case retrace your steps by the side of the lily ponds to the start. To check if the army range is open, consult the notice-board outside the café in Bosherston or telephone local tourist information centres (Pembroke 01646 622388). While inside the range boundary it is most important that you follow the line of white marker-posts and heed the warnings posted at the entrances.*

Although small and fairly remote, Bosherston is a good walking centre with its pub, café, good parking facilities and easy access to some fine coastal scenery. It also has an interesting 13th-century church and the lily ponds.

 Start by going down the steps at the bottom end of the car park and

continue down to the ponds, now maintained by the National Trust, which provides a series of useful information boards. The ponds, formerly part of the vast Stackpole estate, are three arms of a lake artificially created in the 18th century by damming the creek. They form an attractive scenic feature,

cliffs, keeping more or less in a straight line and later picking up a tarmac path that leads to St Govan's car park C. To the left steps lead steeply down to the almost inaccessible St Govan's Chapel, lying at the foot of a narrow cleft in the rocks. This tiny 13th-century chapel, which measures only about 18 by 12ft (5.5 by 3.6m), occupies the site of a hermit's cell allegedly founded in the 6th century by St Govan, a Celtic monk who chose the life of a hermit in this remote spot after enjoying the exalted rank of abbot in Ireland.

*For the shorter version of the walk turn right at the car park and follow the lane back to Bosherston.*

From the car park, keep ahead to climb a stile in another firing range boundary fence and continue along the coast path for just over 3 miles (4.8km) to Stack Rocks car park. For most of this

section you walk along or beside a vehicle track, but after the track bends to the right keep ahead along a broad grassy track, taking care to follow the line of white marker-posts all the time. This is an easy and fairly flat walk, with extensive views to the right inland, and it passes some spectacular cliff scenery, particularly the narrow chasm of the Huntsman's Leap near the start and Bullslaughter Bay and the Elegug Stacks at the end.

On reaching the car park D, continue across the grass, and just in front of the boundary fence of the prohibited military zone a viewing platform gives a dramatic view of the great natural arch of the Green Bridge of Wales and the cliffs stretching beyond.

Both the Elegug Stacks and the Green Bridge were formed through the action

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especially in early summer when the waterlilies are in bloom. Walk along the left-hand side of the pond and turn right to cross a bridge. Turn right again, continue along the left-hand side of the pond, and the path veers slightly to the left – here a short detour to the right brings you to a commanding viewpoint – and descends to a second bridge.

Cross the bridge, turn right and walk to a footpath sign at a T-junction of tracks and turn right. At the next footpath sign, turn right over a third, wider, bridge A and walk along a sandy track, alongside the edge of the dunes of Stackpole Warren. From here there are superb views to the right looking up the well-wooded shoreline of the ponds, and Bosherston church

sign and keep ahead, bearing right around the base of a cliff to cross a footbridge. Then bear left to walk across the glorious sandy beach of Broad Haven, following the edge of the dunes round to the right to reach some steps at the far end of the beach. Climb them and continue up to a footpath sign by a car park.

Turn left along the coast path, climb a stile and, with a good view of St Govan's Head in front, continue up to a stile beside a gate at the entrance to the Castlemartin Military Firing Range B.

At this point you will have to turn back and retrace your steps to the start if the range is closed. Otherwise climb the stile and keep ahead, following the line of white marker-posts across the top of the open, grassy, gorse-strewn

of sea water, salt, wind and rain wearing away the softer bands of limestone. The arch of the Green Bridge represents an early stage in the process; the final stage is when the roof of the arch collapses to leave two detached stacks.

From here retrace your steps to St Govan's car park C and turn left along the road for 1¼ miles (2km) to return to Bosherston.

*The spectacular natural arch of the Green Bridge of Wales*



