

# The Spring Challenge

## Batavian scout report regarding the Fosse Way

Summary: There are three possible routes here. Of the three the Blue route is possibly the best choice (see map)

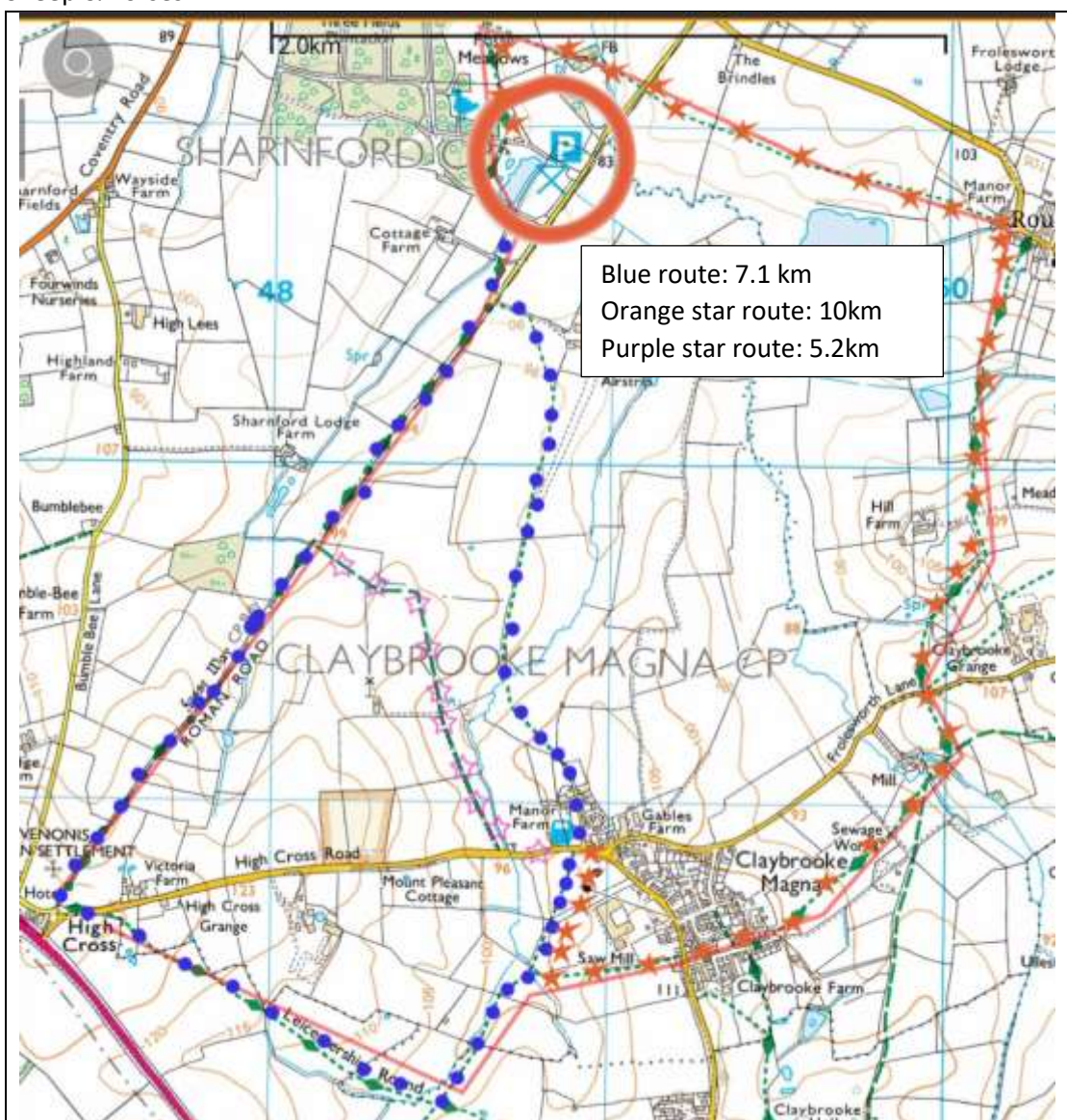
There are two FREE car parks at the start of the route at Fosse meadows (GR486909). This is quite a popular spot on the weekend so I'd suggest an early start (09:00 to 10:30). There is a caravan selling hot drinks, cakes etc in the larger of the two car parks. There is some parking available on the grass verges outside the car park.

Almost all the route is off road. Road sections are very short and all have grass verges that can be used to avoid traffic. The roads here are quiet.

We walked the region in late February after a number of "Named storms" had passed over, so we may have seen conditions at their worst!

Hazards and obstacles (in terms of the Blue route):

- Styles. There are a number of styles. Most are wide enough for shield carriers to cross. See images!
- "Swing gates". There are also a number of these. These should be easily passably by shield carriers
- Gates. No real issues here!
- Mud. The route was mostly dry, considering the storms that we have experienced. However, there were some sections where mud was impossible to avoid.
- Navigation: Most of the track is clearly marked by yellow topped posts and arrows. However, a map is recommended!
- Sheep & horses



## Detail

Note: Distances in metres where mentioned have been rounded up to the nearest 50!

**Toilets:** There are NO toilets in the car park. There are plenty of wild toilets available. There are also toilets at the “Pig in Muck” pub which is roughly half way.

**Food:** It is difficult to gauge our exact start time and the pace that will be maintained. Also, we cannot guarantee reaching the “Pig in Muck” pub at a set time, so it would not be practical to book tables. Possibly the best solution here is to bring your own food and/or rations to take with you.

**Equipment:** This is more a social event than an endurance test. It would be great if you can wear armour, undress kit or civilian clothing. However, modern day dress would also be acceptable! If wearing armour then perhaps leave pila and hasta at home! This would be a good opportunity to experiment with shoulder shield carrying or carrying impedimenta if you are feeling sufficiently fit/masochistic. Make sure that any baldrics/belts etc are in a good state of repair!  
Could we take the unit Signa and share carrying this?

**Footwear:** You could wear caligae if you think your feet will take the strain, but more modern footwear might be more suitable if parts of the track remain as muddy as they were on the day we walked the route.

**Fitness:** You will need to judge for yourselves how fit you feel to carry your equipment on the walk. A distance of 7.1km is not that extreme and the terrain is relatively flat, but carrying armour will add a certain amount of strain.

## Route

Almost immediately after turning right out of carpark onto the Fosse way heading south west you encounter a “Not suitable for Motor vehicles” sign, so there’s next to no traffic. The surface here is tarmac. There are wide grass verges available.



After 450 meters the road surface changes from tarmac to a stone and mud mixture. Looks a little like a badly maintained Roman Road!



The path we return on is to the left / East. There were muddy patches in places but there are still grass verges to escape the worst deeper pot holes.

After another 900m there is a rusty iron “5 bar” gate. The shorter (purple star) route turns east here.



Rusty iron gate

The route past the iron gate provided more mud with sections of stone and concrete.



The path narrows and rises slightly until the High Cross Road is reached. This is another 150m from the iron gate. The Roman settlement of “Venonis” is to the right / West. Not much to see though!

Turn left at the road and follow the grass verge until you see the yellow footpath post on the opposite side of the road.



Cross a style (possibly the most difficult one on this route?) and follow the “Leicestershire Round” path South West. There is a decent looking B&B near here (Victoria farm). The path crosses grassy fields with odd string fencing that can be stepped over with no great problem.

Another style and leftish. Path descends slowly toward a solitary wind turbine. Swing Gate.



The next yellow post is visible to the south west at the corner of the field. Another style and cross a small bridge to a large field.

Continue left toward the houses at the edge of Claybrooke Magna. Roughly 1,250m from leaving the road.



← Outskirts of Claybrooke Magna

Turn Left over double style.



There is an option here to carry straight on across the field and walk through the estate at the top of the rise if the path left looks too muddy.

If going via the estate.

Pass through the gate at the top of the field. Turn left once you meet the road and head downhill until you reach the “Pig in Muck” (PIM)

If going across the style. Follow the path across the field and down the steps to the road. The PIM is immediately to your front.

Stop at the PIM if you **really** must.

Walk down Manor Road outside the PIM. This turns into a footpath past three Maserati’s. Path from here is very clear.



Cross over a bridge and follow the field boundary.



Slide left just before the farm until you reach a tarmac road. The path runs by the side of this road and returns to the Fosse way.

Head North back to the car park.



Carpark café!

Thanks to Mrs A, without whose help this would not have been possible.

I have similar notes on the other two alternatives if anyone is interested!