

Little Cotswold Walks



The Daisy Way



RR Gordon

A two (or three) day circular walk down the Frome Valley, along the Thames & Severn Canal, back up the Painswick Valley:

Birdlip – Chalford – Stroud – Painswick - Birdlip

Also calling at Miserden, Sapperton, Frampton Mansell, Cranham

You can also download other booklets in the series from www.rrgordon.com including 1. Birdlip & Beyond, 2. Painswick Valley, 3. Toadsmoor Valley, 4. Frome Valley, 5. The Falcon & The Oak, Painswick, 6. Stroud & Surrounds and many more

Introduction – Heaven In A Triangle

I've realised over the last couple of decades of walking around Gloucestershire that my favourite corner of the Cotswolds happens to be right where we live: the triangle which is formed by Birdlip, Stroud and Cirencester. I, along with my wife Nicky and our dog Daisy, have covered pretty much every part of this area and we love it because the valleys are the steepest in the Cotswolds.

It may strike some as madness to enjoy the steepest walks, but they provide the most stunning of views and the most unspoilt countryside. In any case, we're doing it for some exercise so let's climb a few hills!

For the last few years, I've been mulling over a long circular route around our favourite area, mainly for the three of us, but also for our children when they venture back to the family nest. I thought it would be nice to stretch our legs and stride across the whole area. It also occurred to me, with my marketing head on that there might be some demand for a beautiful weekend walk which returns to the start point.

The Cotswold Way is fantastic, but like most other ways it requires a considerable investment of days – and you end up 130 miles away from your car. I wondered if people might fancy a two day walk of 10-15 miles per day, staying in a great pub on the middle night, and simply walk back to your car the next day.

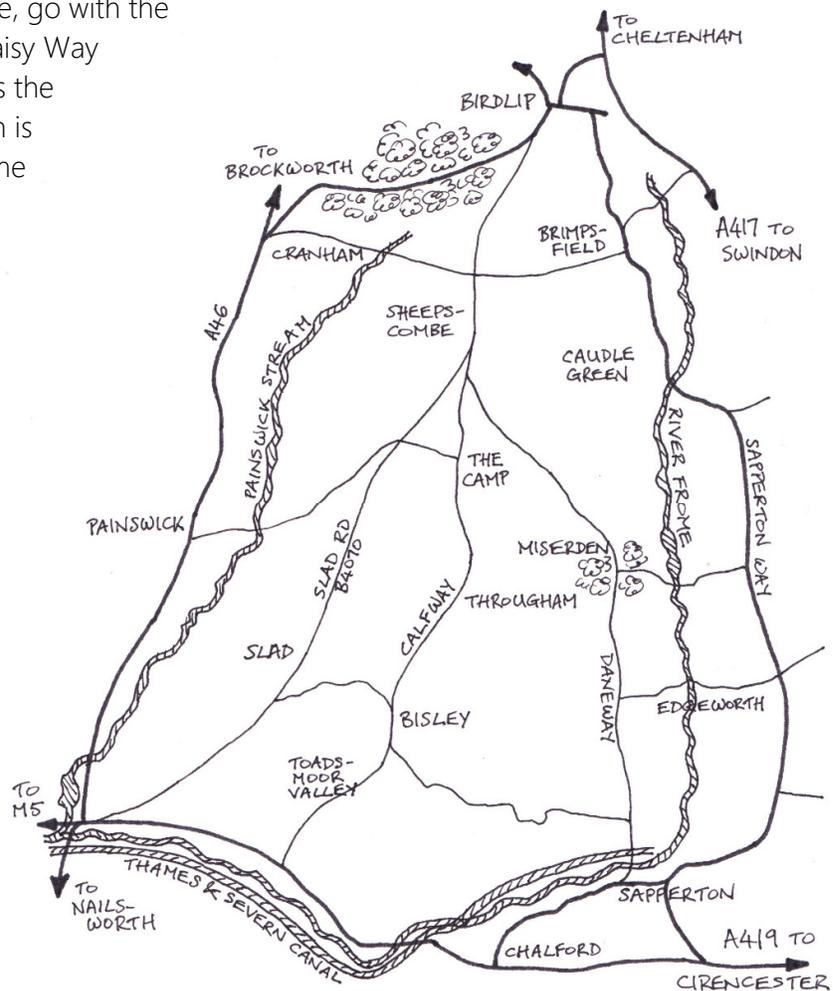
Daisy and I have contemplated a number of possible routes over many thousands of walks and this document is the culmination of many years of painstaking research of wolds, slads - not to mention pubs.

After much debate, we finally decided that the circle should be triangular. Don't fight nature, go with the flow, as water does. Therefore, The Daisy Way (Daisy came up with the name) follows the borders of our heavenly triangle which is formed on two sides by the River Frome and on the third side by the Painswick Stream. We've stitched together parts of walks from our other booklets and also found new terrain to explore – a heavenly weekend tour.

We hope you like it.

Rod Gordon rod@rrgordon.com

The walk follows the River Frome from Birdlip through Brimpsfield, Caudle Green, Edgeworth, Sapperton, and Chalford. It then returns along the Painswick stream via Painswick and Cranham back to Birdlip.



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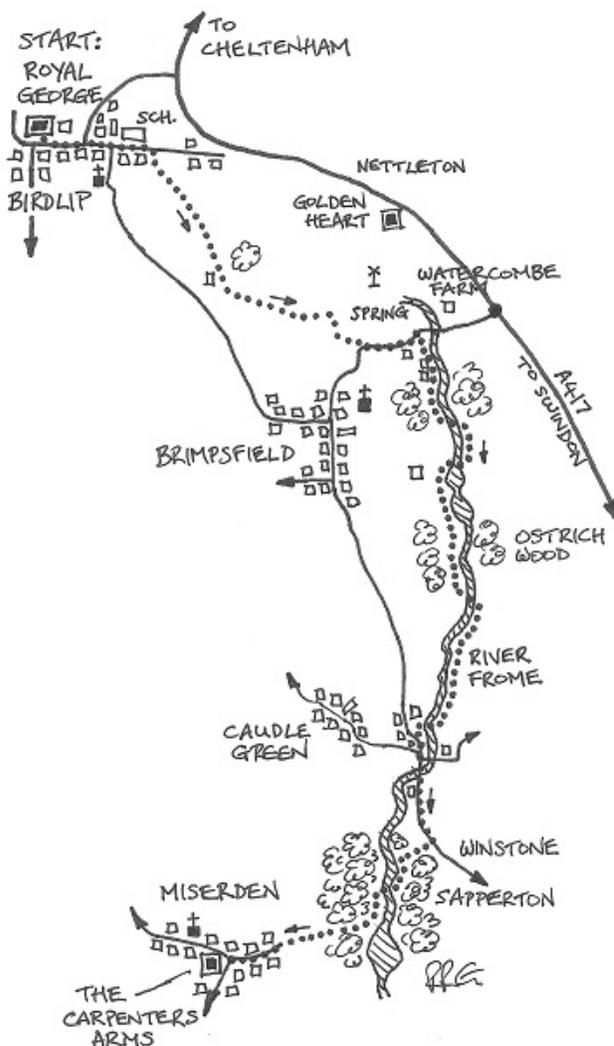
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1. Birdlip to Miserden

Following the River Frome from its source near Birdlip down a lovely meandering valley below Brimpsfield and through Caudle Green before finally climbing up out of the valley to the pub at Miserden.

You can park either at the Royal George or on the road in Birdlip village.

Pubs etc on this stretch	<p>Official Start: The Royal George, Roman Road, Birdlip, Gloucester GL4 8JH https://www.greeneking-pubs.co.uk/pubs/gloucestershire/royal-george-hotel/</p> <p>End of this section: The Carpenters Arms, Miserden, Birdlip, Glos GL6 7JA www.thecarps-miserden.co.uk/</p> <p>Miserden Shop: Please note that the lovely village shop also provides hot refreshments and drinks. For example: tea or coffee and bacon sandwiches!</p>
Length	2½ to 3 hours (approx. 6 miles)



In summary:

Head south following the River Frome from its source near Birdlip. Go through Caudle Green and on to Miserden.

In detail:

- Turn left out of the car park of the Royal George, heading into Birdlip village
- Cross over where the main road bends around to the left and continue heading into the village
- Continue straight ahead at the end where the road bends to the right, head past the village school on your left (all of our children went to this lovely school!)
- Just past school **turn right** to follow a Public Footpath, just past entrance to Birdlip House, go thru gate
- **Head diagonally left** across the small field
- Climb over a stile and head straight on with hedge on right, don't go thru gateway, stick close to hedge

- Climb over a stile and continue straight on through next field (house on left)
- Climb over a stile and go straight across a stone farm track, to enter a field via a metal 7-bar gate; although not marked (at time of writing) this is a public footpath
- Follow hedge on your right, going slightly downhill across the grass, a gentle hill to your left; you are heading towards a shallow valley in the direction of some farm buildings on the other side of the valley (don't go through gateway halfway along right edge)

- Once you are over a slight ridge in the field, as you near the far end, start cutting across to the left aiming for an old tree halfway along the far end of field
- Climb over a stile under old tree and **turn left**
- Walk along top/left edge of this lovely little valley and then after a few hundred yards (at a shallow depression running across in front of you down into the valley) head towards the right to bottom of valley
- Walk along bottom of valley
- Ignore a small stile just used by the farmer (you may not even notice it) and go through a metal 6-bar gate on right (marked by a Public Footpath sign)
- Go through gate and **head diagonally left**, going up the other side of the valley, aiming for far corner just over the top of a rise
- Ignore a small stile just used by the farmer at the top of the hill (you may not even notice it), go over the rise and down a little - then turn right at a metal 6-bar gate on right (marked by a Public Footpath sign)
- Go through gate and go straight ahead following farm track uphill through a cutting (trees on left)
- Follow farm track as it bends around to the left (Public Footpath sign on tree)
- At the top follow a hedge on your right for 100 yards and then **turn right** through a metal 6-bar gate
- Follow farm track between two hedges
- Go through gate and **turn left** onto road

You are now on the outskirts of Brimpsfield

- Follow the road as it heads downhill then bends left and becomes more steep then bends to the right
- Halfway back down to the bottom of the valley you will see a small pylon with solar panels to your left which pumps water up to Watercombe Farm (this was the farmland you were walking across earlier). This small pylon is situated at a spring which is the source of the River Frome. We will follow the waterway as it becomes a brook, then a stream and finally a river as it meanders through Stroud on its way to the River Severn.*
- Just before stream (Frome) in bottom of the valley, **fork right** following a Public Footpath sign up a track/driveway to Common Cottage (the house name is on a small wooden sign on the left hand verge)
 - Walk along driveway past first house on your left (Ivy Cottage); at end of driveway is Common Cottage
 - **Turn left** just before the house onto a Public Footpath which bends to the right to go below the house following the Frome at the bottom of the slope; follow the footpath through the trees, occasional yellow footpath signs painted on trees; if in doubt follow the River Frome (you could say this for the next 20 miles!)
 - The footpath meanders about 20 yards away from the Frome and after a while emerges from the trees onto an earthen farm track coming down from the right; **turn left** here, at a waist high wooden post with a Public Footpath sign; track leads through tall pine trees back in direction of the Frome, slightly downhill
 - *follow the Frome!*
 - At the end of the woods climb over a stile onto a stone farm track and **turn left**
 - Cross the stream and follow the track around to the right as it rises up to overlook the Frome on the right
- When my kids were young I would challenge them to lob a stone into the stream from the top of the rise – it's a little easier now as they have widened the stream into a pond*
- At the top of the rise the farm track bends to the left but you should climb over stile next to a gate and continue straight ahead into a field and then follow path alongside barbed wire fence on right with small lake beyond and down the slope (*the farm on the opposite hillside is Brimpsfield Park who run pheasant shooting with over 35,000 birds a year*)
 - Climb over stile in far right corner, go down a small dip and then up (bushes and small trees on right)
 - Follow the fence around to the right, go down a slope (slippery when wet!) and go over a stile
 - Cross the footbridge to the other side of the Frome

- **Turn left** and follow the farm track alongside the lake
- At end of lake continue straight ahead along farm track (crossing the Frome) and go through a gate
- The track goes slightly downhill for a 20 yards, then **turn right** to continue following the Frome (do not go straight ahead up the hill); *follow the Frome!*
- Climb over a stile to the right of a gate and continue to follow the farm track alongside the Frome as it curves around the left and then to the right; keep following the stream (ignoring track going off to left)
- This stretch for the next 2-3 miles along this beautiful valley is called The Cal Log Walk in our family. When our youngest son Callum was about five years old he dropped a small log into the stream at this point and then followed it all the way to Caudle Green. This log became snagged on the bank at many points on its route, but he picked up a longer stick and used that to free the small log whenever it was caught. It took a while to get to Caudle Green that day but fortunately it was warm spring day ...*
- After a while the path crosses over the stream and looks to be heading uphill; however you should **turn left** at this point to continue following the stream; go through a small wooden gate and go straight ahead
- You are now in a wide, open valley with the Frome to your left and trees to your right, follow the fence on your right as the valley bends around to the right
- Go through a metal gate and continue straight ahead up a rise, then down the other side
- The path crosses stream again, stream is now on your right
- Climb over a stile or go through a small gate & continue straight ahead for half a mile; *follow the Frome!*
- Eventually you come to an old rusty gate under a tall fir tree; go through kissing gate to right and after just ten yards climb over the stile; walk past the front of a house and out along their drive (don't worry - they are quite used to walkers!)
- **Turn left** when you reach the road and head downhill; you are now in the village of Caudle Green
- At the bottom of the hill the road turns 90 degrees left, follow the road alongside the Frome
- After a while the stream goes under the road and heads off to the right; continue straight ahead along the road signposted Winstone and Miserden; the road goes slightly uphill past a house (with chickens), Washbrook Cottage, then climbs more steeply; the Frome is in the valley to your right
- After a few hundred yards you come to two farm gates on your right; go through the small gate between the farm gates; follow the track downhill back to the valley
- At the bottom ignore track off to the right and continue straight ahead until you come to a ford
- Just to the right of the ford, another stream merges with the Frome; some actually consider the Frome to have two sources, the other one being at the head of this stream in Climperwell Woods (also near Birdlip); this ford is one of my favourite places in the Cotswolds: a great place for a picnic followed by a kick-around with a football; Daisy has been here hundreds of times and loves splashing around in the stream*
- Cross the Frome using the small bridge fashioned from two sleepers; continue straight ahead along track with the Frome on your left
- **Turn right** onto small tarmac road; *this is not a public road – it is simply part of Misarden Park (see below); the River Frome continues straight ahead but we need to detour via Miserden, as the public footpaths do not continue alongside the Frome but anyway we need to call in at the pub for a beer/coffee*
- Follow road as it goes slightly uphill through the trees; at the top cross a cattle grid and **turn left** as you emerge from the trees to a small T-junction of park roads
- **Go straight on** over a stream (not the Frome!), through a gate in a Cotswold stone wall and start climbing up to Miserden village; stay on the tarmac road which bends to the left and then to the right; up, up, up (think of the pub which is at the top of the hill)
- **Go through the kissing gate** at the top of the hill and continue straight ahead into the village
- After a hundred yards the pub will appear as if by magic behind the circular bench around the large tree

2. Miserden to Frampton Mansell

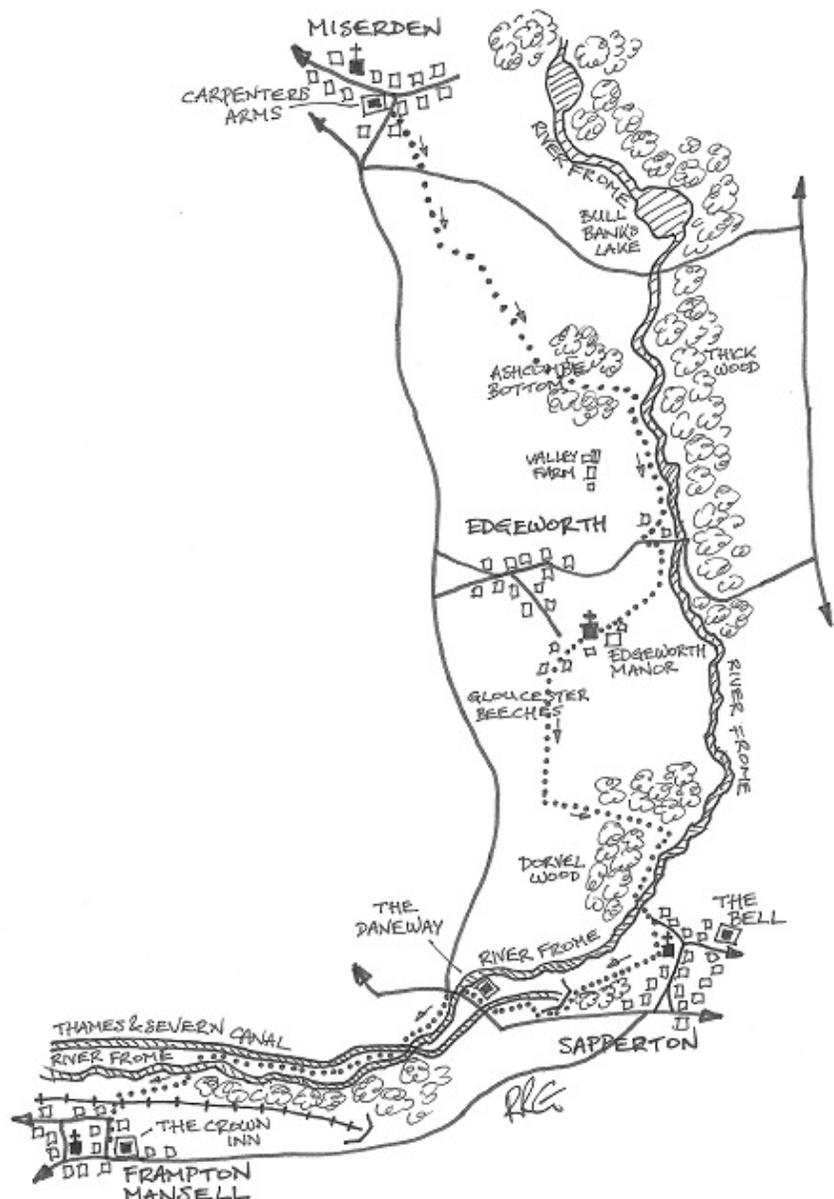
The meandering Frome valley continues to sway from side to side; the walk alternates between the valley floor and the top of the hillside overlooking it, with stunning views. The final stretch is alongside the Thames and Severn canal which runs parallel to the Frome.

<p>Pubs etc on this stretch</p>	<p><i>Start: The Carpenters Arms, Miserden, Birdlip, Glos GL6 7JA</i> http://www.thecarps-miserden.co.uk/</p> <p>The Bell At Sapperton, Nr Cirencester, Gloucestershire GL7 6LE http://bellsapperton.co.uk</p> <p>The Daneway Inn, Daneway Wood, Cirencester, Gloucestershire GL7 6LN www.thedaneway.com</p> <p><i>End: The Crown Inn, Frampton Mansell, Stroud, Glos, GL6 8JG</i> www.thecrowninn-cotswolds.co.uk 01285 760601</p> <p><i>Recommended Accommodation: The Crown Inn (lovely!)</i></p>
<p>Length</p>	<p>4 to 4½ hours (approx. 8 miles ie 11.5km)</p>

In summary:

Head back down to the valley to continue following Frome southwards – and follow it as it bends westwards just after Sapperton

- Turn left out of the Carpenters Arms to head back past the tree with the circular bench and on the right, just past The Club Room (sign on gate), is a Public Footpath. Follow this footpath to left of Musard Cottage, then for a few hundred yards, going over a stone stile halfway along.
- At the end, climb over another stone stile
- Go **straight across** road and through wooden gate; follow right edge of field
- Go through wooden gate, still following Cotswold stone wall along right edge of next field
- At end of field, under a 4-way telegraph pole, **turn left** to follow a farm track between two fields, heading slightly downhill

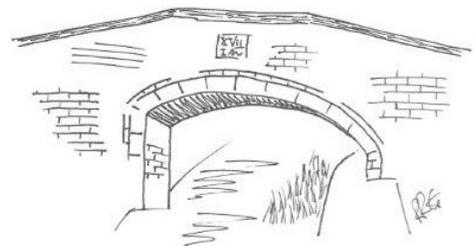


- The track goes past woods on the left and then opens out to reveal a view across the Frome valley, also to your left; ignore a farm track heading left and down, just before a stone marker post
- Continue between two metal fences; at end of track, head slightly left & down to go thru metal 5-bar gate
- Follow right edge of next field, heading slightly downhill
- Go over a stile, stay on right and after 20 yards go over another stile into woods; you are now heading downhill into a side valley which leads into the main Frome valley; follow barbed wire fence on your right staying just a couple of yards from it all the way down; steep!
- At the bottom turn left, along Ashcombe Bottom with stock fencing on right; climb over a stile (with footpath sign) just before wooden cow byre
- Continue on footpath below cow byre to a farm gate; turn right and follow bridleway (round sign with blue arrow on gatepost) that runs through the middle of the field to farm gate (below farmyard)
- Continue to follow the bridleway, keeping to the right-hand side of valley bottom (about 5yds up bank)
- When passing the weir/bathing pool on left, take the higher ground to the right of a line of tall trees and proceed along to a farm gate
- Continue along the bridleway on the right-hand side of the valley bottom for 500 meters or so and, when there are no more trees on bank to right, follow track up to a farm gate to join Valley Farm's private drive
- Turn left and follow the driveway to the road at the end, and then **turn left** down the hill
- Follow the road downhill, past a driveway to Edgeworth Mill Farm on left, with large gate
- Just after the road crosses the Frome at the bottom of the valley, **turn right** to follow a public footpath (through a wooden 5-bar gate) to follow the Frome along the valley floor; *follow the Frome!*
- Cross the footbridge and bear to the right hand side of the valley; the footpath leaves the Frome now
- Go past a tall wooden footpath signpost and start to climb the hill up a field; head for the next wooden post at the edge of a wood ahead of you
- Climb straight up through the trees, bearing slightly right near the top to emerge from the woods
- Climb over a stile (after sitting on it to look at the view?) and bear right towards the church; you are now heading towards the village of Edgeworth
- Enter the churchyard through the lych gate (sit on steps to look at view again??!!); go through the churchyard to the road on the other side
- On exiting the churchyard on the far side via the gate, go straight across the road (which leads to Edgeworth Manor to your left) and continue onto a small road which leads to some houses; continue all the way to the end past houses such as Rivendell
- At the end of the road, follow Public Footpath straight ahead across a field (maybe slightly left), down then up the other side; go past telegraph pole and head to the left of the trees on the ridge (do not fork left down the valley)
- Go through a gate at the top into the next field, continue **straight ahead**; the Frome is in valley to your left
- After 50 yards go through another wooden gate and continue straight ahead with fence on your left
- Go through a metal 6-bar gate and continue straight ahead along the left side of a large polo field keeping the Cotswold stone wall to your left; *NB officially the public footpath runs through the polo field, but if a match is on they generally leave the gate open so you can walk along the other side of the Cotswold stone wall; either way, follow the wall to the end of the polo field*
- Go through small wooden gate at the end of polo field (under a large tree) and continue straight ahead crossing a farm track; follow Cotswold stone wall to your left
- Go through a wooden gate into the next field and walk alongside a high-fenced compound on your right
- Go through a wooden gate and **turn left**, then almost immediately go through a metal gate

- Follow the hedge on your left back towards the valley and the woods (in direction indicated by blue sign)
- Enter woods via a metal 6-bar gate with blue arrow & sign, continue **straight on**, heading downhill; *you are now entering the Bathurst Estate and officially the footpaths are only accessible 8am to 5pm*
- Follow blue arrow downhill, almost to bottom of valley; ignore paths to left & right; follow sunken path
- 20 yds before River Frome at the bottom of the valley, **turn right** to follow footpath marked by yellow sign
You are now following the River Frome along the bottom of the valley again until you get to just below Sapperton village. The woods are known as Hen Wood which then merges into Dorval Wood.
- Follow the footpath through the trees as it meanders away from the stream and then back towards it a few times; continue for about a mile going past a derelict Cotswold stone cottage; *follow the Frome!*
- After a (long) while you bear left at an intersection with another footpath marked by a yellow sign; you may not even notice it; continue in the same direction along the bottom of the valley; *follow the Frome!*
- Cross the stream at a bridge known as Dorval Bridge (see large stone with inscription) and follow the footpath up to Sapperton (the footpath goes past a house/garden on the left with a hedge & field on the right – at one point you can look over the hedge to see the view down the next section of the valley)
- **Turn right** onto the tarmac road which leads away from the house and continue steeply uphill; up, up, up
- As you near the village, the road bends to left and there is a rusty 6-bar gate on your right with a Public Footpath sign, go over the stile here and head left & up towards the village

You are now on the edge of the village of Sapperton. There's a great pub here called The Bell. You can get to the pub in 5 minutes by following these instructions in italics: go through a wooden gate to walk alongside the churchyard (St Kenelm's Church); stay left alongside the churchyard until you emerge at a road (a junction with a phone box), continue straight ahead up the road opposite and the pub will be on your left; to continue with the walk (and on to The Daneway pub in another mile):

- **Turn right** just before the church gate to skirt along below the village; houses on left, dead tree on right; stay high at first then (just after a kissing gate on left) start heading diagonally down into the valley
- At the bottom of the hillside go through a metal kissing gate under the trees (below a smallish dead tree)
- Cross over the top of a canal tunnel entrance and turn right to walk alongside the Thames & Severn Canal – which you will follow for many miles (see Something Interesting below)
- Follow the canal towpath until you come to the car park of The Daneway pub; stop for a drink!
- Exit the pub car park using the exit which cars use and simply go straight across the road; there is a public footpath just to the right of the bridge over the river and canal; follow the canal towpath straight ahead
- The canal is on your left; follow the canal for a few hundred yards then cross over using a narrow wooden footbridge; the canal is now on your right and the Frome on your left
- After a while you come to a brick humpback bridge over the canal (called Whitehall Bridge); you need to leave the canal & river here and start climbing diagonally up the hillside to your left towards the village of Frampton Mansell



- At the bridge **fork left** to climb up onto the track that goes over the bridge, **turn left**, walk a few yards and then **turn right** to head up a farm track that leads in the direction which the River Frome is flowing (west) but which heads diagonally away from the river/canal heading uphill
- Go through a farm gate and continue uphill
- You reach some railway tracks at a pedestrian crossing; go through gate and cross the tracks (look carefully both ways! but I'm sure you don't need me to tell you) and go through the gate on other side
- **Go straight ahead** heading uphill up a narrow road; The Crown Inn is on your left after 50 yards
- Go in for a well-earned drink and a bite to eat!

SOMETHING INTERESTING:

The Thames & Severn Canal was completed in 1789 and was conceived as part of a river and canal route from Bristol to London. At its eastern end, it connects to the River Thames at Inglesham Lock near Lechlade, while at its western end, it connects to the Stroudwater Navigation (also a canal) at Wallbridge near Stroud, and then to the River Severn. It has one short branch, from Siddington to the Cirencester. It includes Sapperton Tunnel, which when built was the longest canal tunnel in Britain, and remains the fourth longest. There were always problems with water supply, as no reservoirs were built, while the summit section near the tunnel ran through porous limestone, and there were constant difficulties with leakage. Competition from the railways took much of the canal's traffic by the end of the 19th century, and most of the canal was abandoned in 1927, the remainder in 1941.

Early canal tunnels were built without a towpath as this would require a much larger bore, and hence cost more to build. Therefore a process known as legging was required to get the boat through the tunnel while the horse was led over the hill. Two people were required. They would lie on a plank across the bows of the boat, and holding the plank with their hands, would propel the boat with their feet against the tunnel wall. For a tunnel with a low roof, leggers could walk on the ceiling.

On short tunnels the legging was done by the boat owner and crew. At long tunnels like Sapperton, professional leggers were available. Expert leggers could get an empty boat through the 3,817 yards in around 1 hour 30 minutes, with up to 3 hours for a boat with a full load, for which they were paid 1s 6d.

The Daneway Inn was originally built in 1784 as three cottages to house the navvies who constructed the now dis-used Thames & Severn canal. In 1807 the leftmost cottage became The Bricklayers Arms in honour of the men who lined the locks and the nearby 2¼ mile Sapperton tunnel. This cottage is now the Bar and the other cottages are the Lounge.

A wealthy Stroud bookmaker took over the pub in 1955 and he owned a successful racehorse called Daneway – and therefore renamed the pub. The pub has appeared in a number of TV productions including House of Elliott (BBC1), Between Two Rivers and Particular Pubs (both on ITV).

Right Place, Right Time

To London for the day, the grumble of ten thousand trains,
Towers dragged screaming from the earth by cranes,
Ten million people hurrying, ten million ants scurrying,

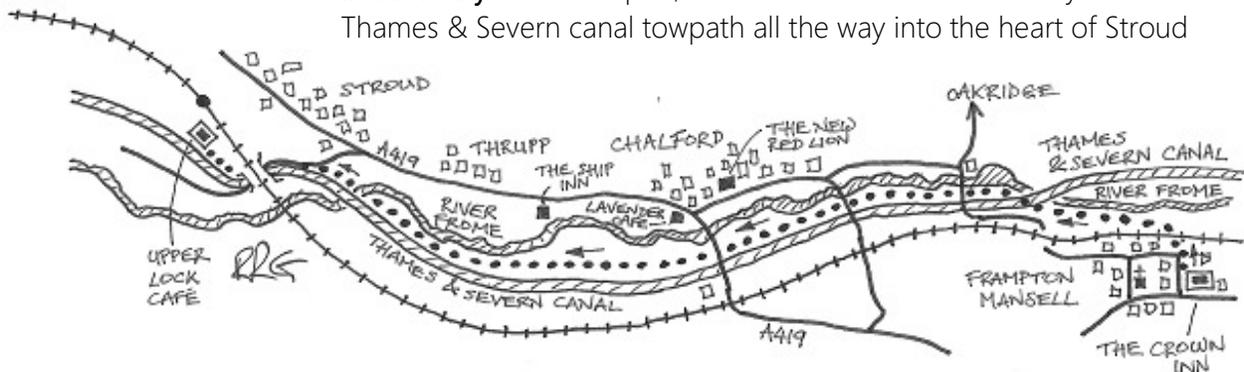
Back home, Daisy on the mat by the door, was she there all day?
Change of shoes, grab the lead, we're on our way,
Frome Valley is our place for a chase and a race,

Breathe in the clean air, breathe in the sumptuous hills,
Breathe in the verdant valleys, breathe in 'til your mind fills,
Not a single machine, the world here is green.

3. Frampton Mansell to Stroud

<p>Intriguing walk along the Thames & Severn canal towpath, the canal on one side, the Frome on the other side. A fascinating glimpse into the beginnings of the industrial revolution where mills and factories clustered around these two important waterways which made the Cotswolds a rich source of wool, flour and other products.</p>	
<p>Pubs, cafés etc on this stretch</p>	<p><i>Start:</i> The Crown Inn, Frampton Mansell, Stroud, Glos, GL6 8JG www.thecrowninn-cotswolds.co.uk 01285 760601</p> <p>The New Red Lion, High Street, Chalford, Glos, GL6 8DJ https://newredlion.wordpress.com</p> <p>Lavender Bakehouse & Coffee Shop, 20 London Rd, Chalford, Glos, GL6 8NW www.lavenderbakehouse.co.uk</p> <p>The Ship Inn, Brimscombe Hill, Brimscombe, Stroud GL5 2QN</p> <p>Stroud Brewery, Kingfisher Business Park, London Rd, Thrupp, Glos GL5 2BY www.stroudbrewery.co.uk</p> <p><i>End:</i> The Lock Keeper's Café, Wallbridge, Stroud GL5 3JS (close to train station) www.lockkeeperscafe.co.uk</p> <p>Lots of other pubs, cafés, restaurants etc in Stroud!!</p>
<p>Length</p>	<p>3 hours of walking (about 6½ miles) but we normally stop at the Bakehouse (after the first hour), The Ship Inn (after the second hour) and of course at the Lock Keeper's Café at the end – we like stopping! Very flat section along canal.</p>

In summary: From the pub, head back down into the valley and follow the Thames & Severn canal towpath all the way into the heart of Stroud



- **Turn right** out of the pub car park to follow the narrow road downhill
- Where the road bends to the left, fork right to go downhill until you reach train tracks; go through gate and cross the tracks (look carefully both ways!) and go through the gate on other side
- After a few yards **turn left** through a wooden 5-bar gate and follow a grass track down towards valley
- Go over stile at the bottom (or through gate) and follow the footpath left, heading around a house, keeping the house on your left and the canal on your right.

*Remember – if you are confused about the direction at any point, you are still following the River Frome **downstream** all the way to Stroud.*

One of this small cluster of three houses is Puck Mill House; there were three canal locks at Puck Mill.

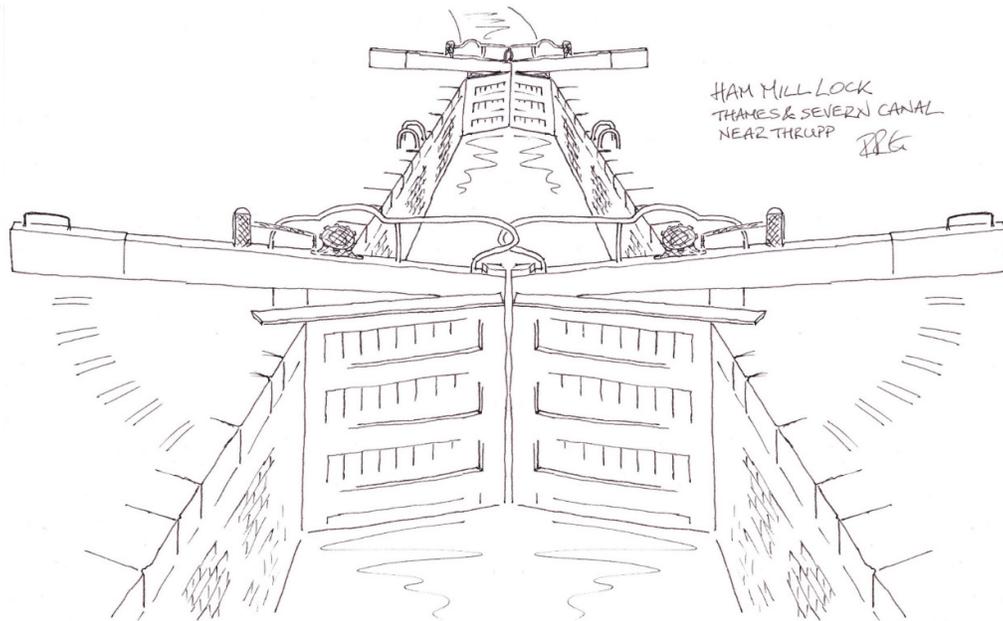
Please note that the River Frome now runs alongside the Thames & Severn canal for a considerable distance, sometimes just a couple of yards apart and sometimes even changing sides (see if you can spot how this happens!). You should now follow both canal and river for approximately 6 miles into the heart of Stroud (to

the Lock Keeper's Café at Wallbridge Lock); the Thames & Severn way runs along the former canal towpath & is marked by a series of T&S signs; the following brief directions are provided primarily as landmarks. If in doubt just keep going straight ahead to follow towpath.

- Continue along the track between the three houses and just after the last house on the left (with sculptures), **turn right over a small stone bridge** & immediately left to continue along other side of canal
- Go past small lake on right
- Continue another few hundred yards along canal footpath to go under a road by an old millhouse (*ignore narrow footbridge on left just before the road, which is used on the Oakridge Lynch walk in booklet 3*)
- Follow towpath to Chalford, as you enter Chalford there is a playground on right, **bench** on left (Nickolay) *Keep following canal towpath for the next 6 miles; the following are just things that you might see on the way*
- Go under low bridge (concrete girders)
- Canal & reeds on left, river Frome & houses (and greenhouse) on right
- Railways arches high on the left
- Row of terraced houses on right
- Go past small arched bridge over canal on left
- **New Red Lion** pub on right
- Wetpaint Art Gallery on right, go straight across road, heading for **Lavender Bakehouse & Coffee Shop**
- Head to left of coffee shop to return to towpath: just in front of Cotswold stone warehouse with sign for Elbese Products on the wall, you will see T&S logo on Public Footpath sign
- After a few hundred yards the footpath goes back up to the road by a bus shelter; stay on left of main road; go straight across the side road to Give Way sign on other side to go back down to the towpath
- Round house, small green by canal pond, **benches**

In its heyday Stroud was a cloth town: woollen mills were powered by its small yet energetic rivers and supplied from Cotswold sheep which grazed on the hills above. The valley along which you are walking is still known as the Golden Valley for the number of wool mills that were crammed into it all the way along the river Frome. See Something Interesting below for more information. Keep following the T&S canal towpath, noting the following landmarks to make sure you are heading the right way:

- 4 garages, straight on, down steps between wooden fence and dog poo bin to go back down to towpath
 - Under brick bridge > through corrugated tunnel > under brick bridge
 - Long stretch then past a small brick bridge on right
 - Straight across small road > under bridge 99-48-50 SWM > **bench** > under brick bridge
 - River Frome re-appears on left, bigger now – you'll be saying goodbye at Stroud
 - Go past the **Felt Café** (stop for another cup of tea?!!)
 - Footpath becomes a road by Brimscombe Port car park
 - Where the road bends to left (by some bins) **turn right**, then **turn left** in front of Brimscombe Port sign (just behind a small Cotswold stone building)
 - Follow public footpath signs along river then turn left to go around a brick light-industrial unit with "15mph" and "Speed Humps" signs on the wall; follow "Slow" on the road
 - Go straight across the road
 - Walk down quiet side road straight ahead to the right of **The Ship Inn** and follow footpath alongside disused brick warehouse
 - **bench** on right, go past brick bridge on left; cross a small road which leads to some industrial units
- Along this next stretch can I suggest you visit a hidden gem: Stroud Brewery which is tucked away in a little industrial unit near Thrupp. It has a bar which is open most days – and they do fantastic pizzas from a wood-fired oven on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. The brewery is on your right of the towpath.*



After drinking lots of Budding then return to the same spot to continue the walk:

- Keep following canal path to Stroud, going past a bridge, Ham Mill Lock, Jubilee Bridge (black and white), Griffin Mill Lock, a bridge, another lock, then under a road (called Butterow Hill in Bowbridge; please note Bowbridge Arms nearby); after another few hundred yards you come to an interesting section ...
- The River Frome goes underneath the canal (whose idea was that??!) and the canal widens out at Arundel Aqueduct; keep following the T&S towpath around to the left and up & down the rise
- There are high railway arches on your left and the T&S towpath goes close to a main road (A419 bypass around Stroud) and then underneath the last of the railway arches
- Where the T&S towpath comes to the road again, you *can* turn right to cross the busy road but it is better to **turn left** following signpost to Wallbridge, then **turn left** again to walk along the canalside *underneath* the busy road; keep following signs to Wallbridge which is the endpoint of this section of the walk
- To be specific, the endpoint of this section is the Lock Keeper's Café at Wallbridge Lock (see also Travis Perkins on opposite side). Go into the café for a well-earned cup of tea!

SOMETHING INTERESTING:

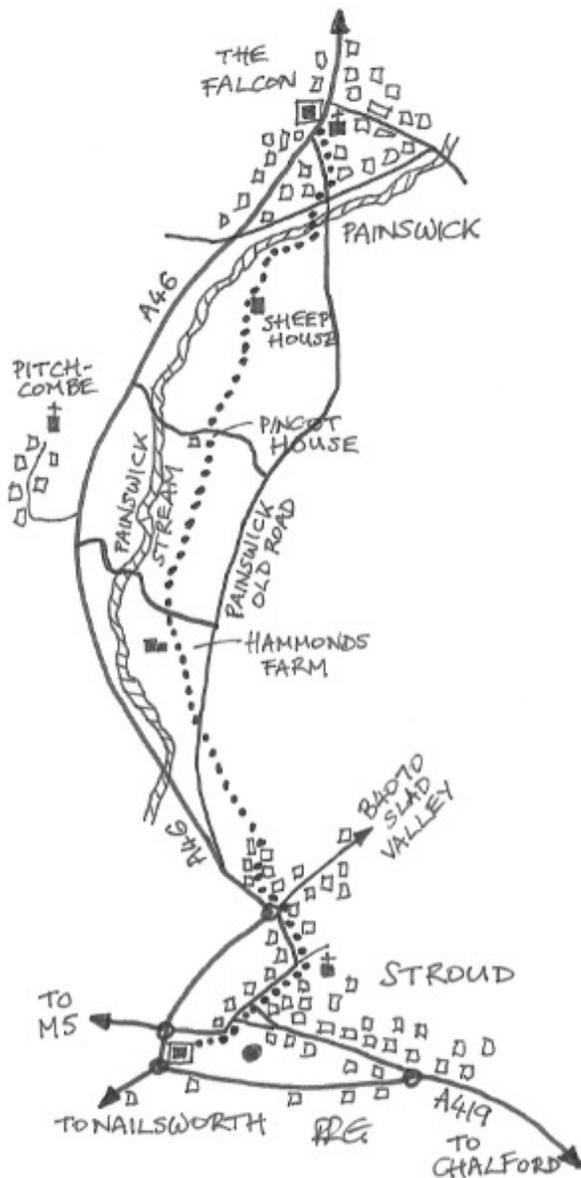
The town of Stroud was formed at the natural meeting point of Five Valleys: the Chalford valley (also known as the "Golden Valley"), Nailsworth Valley, Ruscombe Valley, Slad Valley (of Cider with Rosie fame) and the Painswick Valley. Stroud is well known for its independent lifestyle and Bohemian culture, with many alternative practitioners, writers, musicians and artists living in the area.

Novelists Sue Limb, Jilly Cooper and Katie Fforde, children's authors Jamila Gavin, John Dougherty, Cindy Jefferies and Clive Dale, poet Jenny Joseph, plus national newspaper journalists like The Guardian's food critic Matthew Fort following in the footsteps of the Rev. W. Awdry, and W H Davies have made the Stroud area their home. Two of its most famous sons are the authors Laurie Lee, whose most notable creation Cider with Rosie is set in the nearby Slad valley, and Booker Prize-winning author Alan Hollinghurst. Poets such as Dennis Gould, Jeff Cloves, Philip Rush, Ted Milton, Michael Horovitz, Frances Horovitz and Adam Horovitz have grown up, lived and/or live in the area. Other notable names who have lived in the area are: Keith Allen, Tim McInnerny, Simon Ward, Damian Hirst, Gerry Rafferty, Mike Oldfield and the hero of the Calgary Winter Olympics: Eddie "The Eagle" Edwards.

Stroud is known for its involvement in the Industrial Revolution. It was a cloth town: woollen mills were powered by the small rivers which flow through the five valleys, and supplied from Cotswold sheep which grazed on the hills above. Particularly noteworthy was the production of military uniforms in the colour Stroudwater Scarlet. The area became home to a sizable Huguenot community in the 17th century, fleeing persecution in Catholic France, followed by a significant Jewish presence in the 19th century, linked to the tailoring and cloth industries.

4. Stroud to Painswick

<p>This section takes you straight up the fabulous Painswick Valley following the line of the Painswick stream across a dozen fields. Look out for the villages of Whiteshill, Pitchcombe and Edge which cling to the hillside to the left.</p>	
<p>Pub</p>	<p><i>Start: The Lock Keeper's Café</i>, Wallbridge, Stroud GL5 3JS (close to train station) www.lockkeeperscafe.co.uk</p> <p><i>End: The Falcon</i>, New Street, Painswick, Gloucestershire, GL6 6UN or The Royal Oak, St Mary's St, Painswick GL6 6QG</p> <p>There is also a village shop in Painswick and couple of cafés</p>
<p>How long did it take?</p>	<p>2 hours (ish) 5km/3miles; height gain: 125m, height loss: 80m</p>



In summary:

Simple: just follow the Painswick Stream up to Painswick

- From the Lock Keeper's Café, **turn right** up a road called Wallbridge past redbrick buildings, straight over a roundabout and onto a street called Rowcroft going under railway bridge; you are now heading through Stroud town centre
- Where Rowcroft bends to the right, you should continue straight ahead along King Street (pedestrianised)
- Turn left down Gloucester Street heading past two Indian restaurants and the Queen Victoria Inn
- Walk on right pavement, past Ye Old Painswick Inn and the former Police Station, and go straight across the roundabout. Just after Beeches Green road sign, take footpath on the right (only about ten yards from the roundabout); it leads uphill with a railing on left

- At the top of this short (but quite steep) footpath go through bollards to continue straight on uphill along Lovedays Mead; this is a residential road heading slightly uphill
- At the top, Lovedays Mead bears right into a small parking area for houses but you should continue straight ahead up a grassy track

- Go over a stile to right of metal 7-bar gate to continue up the farm track, then through next gateway (normally open) and straight ahead up the slope across the grass, keeping to the right of the small field
- Go through a gap in a hedge/bushes and emerge into another field; walk along right edge of field; valley & view on both sides!
- Go through metal kissing gate, walk along track on right side of next field for 100 yds then **turn left** through small metal gate, heading for polytunnel greenhouse in far-left corner of field (you may need to negotiate vegetable plots, polytunnel and go through tall metal gate and also a wooden gate)
- Exit the field via the metal stile on the left of the gate (normally overgrown) or through the gateway
- Cross the road and climb over a wooden stile; head **diagonally right** across the field in the direction of the barns of Hammonds Farm
- At the far side of the field, go over wooden stile, along grass lane and to right of converted barn, then bear left for a few yards in direction of main farmhouse
- Before barns **go over stone stile on your right** (or through gateway) following Public Footpath sign and walk along left edge of field

Remember, you're simply walking up the valley to Painswick, the stream to your left at bottom of valley

- At end of field go slightly left (straight on really) over a stile to walk between 2 hedges towards next field; then over another stile into field (*note carved owl on stile post!*)
- Continue on left side of field; *on the opposite hillside on your left: Whiteshill village is to left & slightly behind, Pitchcombe village is to left & slightly ahead*
- Go through metal kissing gate and **turn left** onto road
- After 25 yds **bear right** to go through metal kissing gate and then almost immediately go through another metal kissing gate
- Continue straight ahead following right (top) edge of field

Pitchcombe church is up and to your left on the opposite hillside

- Go through a metal kissing gate in the trees, across a stream, continue straight ahead
- After 50 yds the path veers diagonally left past a large tree; then aim for a tall cedar with Painswick church steeple glimpsed in the distance
- Head into some trees in a dip & go through a gate (inside a gate)
- Head up a small (yet steep!) rise and walk out along the drive of a house (keep house on your left)
- Cross the road (Pincot Lane), go over a stile and continue straight across the next field
- Climb over a stile at the base of an ash tree, go down into a dip with some trees
- Cross a wooden footbridge (quite high!), continue straight on up a rise and across a field
- Go through a wooden kissing gate to the left of a large house (Sheephouse)
- Go out along the driveway into parkland (ignore metal kissing gate on left as you leave the house)
- At a fork in the driveway **go left and down** (grass in the middle of the road), heading for the stream
- Cross over the stream, follow stream past house on left, stream on right
- **Turn right** and go through a gate to cross the stream at a weir
- Go through kissing gate into field and follow the stream on your left
- Go through kissing gate and go straight ahead between two fences and then two garden hedges
- Go through a gap in a Cotswold stone wall and **turn left** onto the road (Stepping Stones Lane, Painswick)
- Follow the road over the stream and up the hill, go straight on past the turning for King's Mill Lane

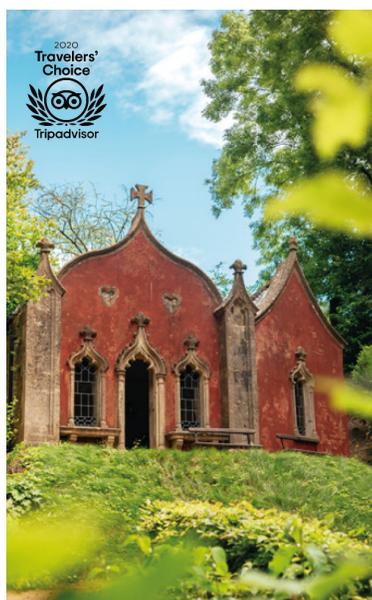
- Walk up the road until you get to a driveway on your right (to Hale Croft, Hideaway, Woodland) with a public footpath sign, walk to the end of the driveway and go down a narrow path to the left of the garage at the end
- Go over a small metal stile, into a small field and **head left and uphill**
- Climb over a stile at the top and **turn right** to follow a grass track to the gate at the end
- Go through the gate and out through the driveway between two houses
- **Turn left** onto Kemps Lane, heading uphill
- Go up past houses such as Fig Tree Cottage, Wyck House and then **turn left** at the end of a high Cotswold stone wall to go up a narrow alleyway between two houses (metal handrail on the side)
- The alleyway opens out into a road (Hale Lane), walk up to the top and turn right
- Painswick church is in front of you (and you go past the village stocks)
- The Falcon Inn is just the other side of the churchyard; the Royal Oak is to your right

SOMETHING INTERESTING:

Known as the *Queen of the Cotswolds*, Painswick grew up around the wool and cloth trade in the 14th Century. Many of the houses along the stream at the bottom of the valley have waterwheels and two of the houses in Bisley Street contain “donkey doors” which were doorways wide enough for donkeys to pass through with wide paniers containing wool from local farmers. St Mary’s church is famous throughout Gloucestershire for its 99 yew trees and legend has it that every time a 100th tree is planted the devil comes along to pull it out. A bell ringers’ society was formed in 1686 and the ringers are still known as the “Ancient Society of Painswick Youths”.

Thomas Twining, tea merchant, was born in Painswick in 1675, and in 1706 set up his first tea shop at 216 Strand, London, - later to become home of the famous Twinings brand.

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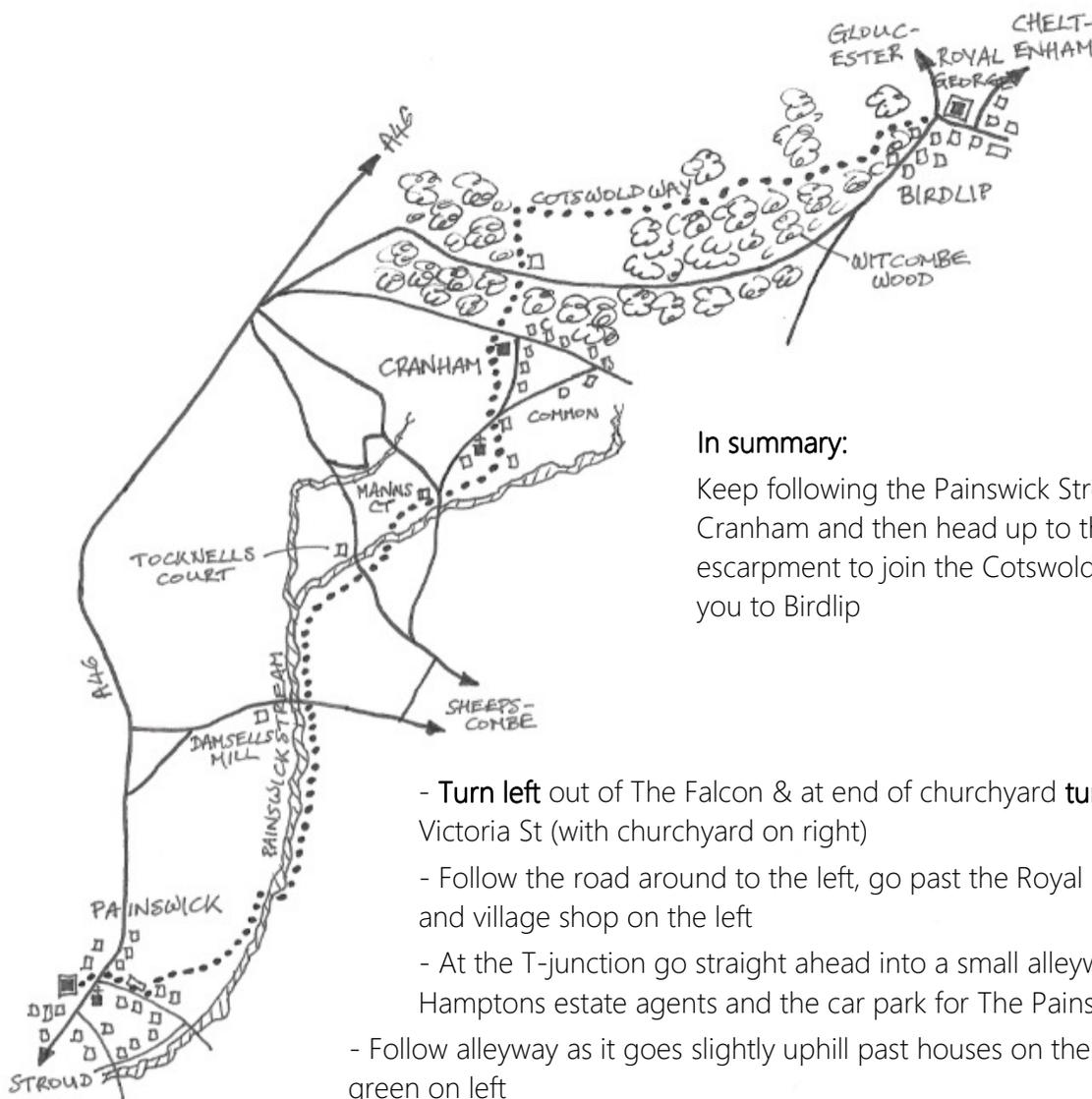


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5. Painswick to Birdlip

The final stretch is as beautiful as the rest! Climb up out of the head of the Painswick valley near the picturesque village of Cranham which is scattered about the hillsides and then join a section of the Cotswold way with views over the Severn valley.

Pub	<p><i>Start: The Falcon, New Street, Painswick, Gloucestershire, GL6 6UN</i> www.falconpainswick.co.uk</p> <p><i>The Black Horse Inn, Cranham, Gloucester, GL4 8HP</i> http://www.theblackhorsecranham.co.uk/</p> <p><i>Official End: The Royal George, Roman Road, Birdlip, Gloucester GL4 8JH</i> www.oldenglishinns.co.uk/birdlip</p>
How long did it take?	3-4 hours 9km/5½miles; height gain: 385m, height loss: 245m



In summary:

Keep following the Painswick Stream north to Cranham and then head up to the Cotswold escarpment to join the Cotswold Way which leads you to Birdlip

- **Turn left** out of The Falcon & at end of churchyard **turn right** down Victoria St (with churchyard on right)
- Follow the road around to the left, go past the Royal Oak on the right and village shop on the left
- At the T-junction go straight ahead into a small alleyway in between Hamptons estate agents and the car park for The Painswick Centre
- Follow alleyway as it goes slightly uphill past houses on the right and bowling green on left
- At tennis court the alleyway opens out into a recreation field (known as The Rec); head straight across the field (maybe slightly right) aiming for the metal gate on the far side
- Go through the pedestrian wooden gate next to the metal gate and continue **straight ahead** following the road as it goes downhill and round to the right; this is Lower Washwell Lane

- Just past a combined driveway to three houses on the left, one of which is Whispering Trees, & just before road bends to right again, **turn left** down a Public Footpath which runs between two wooden fences
- **Turn left** onto farm driveway
- After 25 yds **turn right** over a stile and go straight down (slightly left) towards valley; stay on right side of stream and line of trees that appears in the middle of the field

NB. The hamlet of Longridge is on the opposite hillside

- Go left through a gateway in a clump of trees and follow the path which runs parallel to the Painswick Stream on right in the bottom of the valley; *you are now following Painswick stream all the way to Cranham*
- Climb over a stile on your left and **turn right** onto farm track you crossed earlier
- Follow farm track over cattle grid to farmhouse (Highgrove) and continue to the right of the house
- Go through a wooden 5-bar gate; continue **straight ahead**; keep hedge on your left & stream on right
- Go through a metal 6-bar gate and into field; walk along the right (bottom) edge of the field
- Halfway along the field **turn right** over the stream using a bridge which leads to an intersection of half a dozen footpaths. I call this intersection *Sixways*. At the intersection there is a stile on the right, a metal 5-bar gate in front of you – but you should go through the narrow wooden gate on your left to follow the stream
- **Bear left** to follow the Painswick Stream; you now follow footpath through the woods for a while; after 200yds there is a metal gate; continue following the stream for about half a mile until you reach a road
- **Go straight across the road**, keeping the Cotswold stone house (Damsells Mill) on your left and its garage on the right; **go through the kissing gate**; stay on left of field following Painswick Stream on left

You are now in the section of Painswick Valley which is known as Paradise. The hamlet which is up the hill to your left has Paradise as its address. See Something Interesting below for the full story ...

- **Go through the metal gate (or over stile)** at the end of the field – and continue into the next field
- **Go through gateway** (no gate!) – and continue into next field
- Immediately **bear left** away from farm track to the right, and head down towards the Painswick Stream
- Climb over a stile on the **left** and cross a wooden footbridge at the downstream end of a lake
- Go around the lake and follow track to the right (under a willow tree) across the front of Mill Cottage
- Climb over two stiles into a field and continue straight ahead following the Painswick Stream on your right
- At the end of the field, climb over a stile and bear right over the bridge over the stream
- Follow Painswick Stream on your left (Tocknells Court on the other side of the stream)
- Climb over stile near entrance to Tocknells Court and turn left onto road
- Walk a dozen yards along the road, crossing the stream in the process; go through kissing gate marked by a Pubic Footpath sign and follow stream on your right, heading upstream
- Cross two footbridges, back and forth over the stream
- Go through another kissing gate and head **diagonally left** up a small rise
- At top of rise, head slightly to the right of a house ahead (not left to the house with tennis court)
- Cross the stream again using a footbridge; climb the next rise past a log store (with solar panels)
- Go through gate and then follow footpath up the hill between two fences towards another house at the top (Mann's Court); go through two kissing gates on the way
- When you reach the garden of Mann's Court, turn right to go around the bottom of the garden ie down the steps and then left
- Go through wooden gate and **turn left** onto the road; head a few paces up the road and then **turn right** into the driveway of Haregrove; although it's a driveway this is a public footpath

- Follow the long driveway and as road bends to left (near metal gates) **fork left** to follow a footpath parallel to the drive (behind tall hedge/bushes) which then leads past the back of the house; the valley is away to your right, woods on your left, continue straight on all the way to the top
- Go through a gate to a tarmac driveway (leading to Brook Farm trout farm) **turn left** heading uphill
- Follow the tarmac driveway which then becomes a Cotswold stone farm track, past some houses on left
You are now in the village of Cranham
- **Turn left** at the last house (Picardy), head down past Cranham school on your left
- Cross the road and **turn right** to follow a public footpath along the bottom edge of Cranham Common, with woods and valley on your left; follow the path all the way to the car park for The Black Horse, go through the car park and down the road about thirty yards to the pub; *go in for a well-deserved drink!*
- **Turn right** out of the Black Horse and walk 50 yds to the main road which runs through the village
- Go **straight across** following a public footpath between two houses
- Follow the footpath down and then cross the stream using stepping stones
- Climb up from the stream (approx. 10-20 paces) and **turn left** onto a footpath
- Follow the path uphill through trees
- **Turn sharp right** (the *most* right of all the options) to go uphill
- Follow the path uphill through the trees
- Just before the path flattens out a little there is a fork, **take the right fork** marked by white signs on trees
- Follow the path as it meanders through the trees for quite a way, eventually it comes to a road
NB the road is the Painswick to Birdlip road, formerly known as Sanatorium Road, now called Buckholt Road; this road goes to the Royal George in Birdlip, but you will cross the road, go down through woods for a few hundred yards, losing 30-40m of altitude in the process, to follow the Cotswold Way which runs (sort of) parallel with the road; now let's go back a bit and be more specific ...
- Before you reach the road, you arrive at a parking area amongst the trees; you should exit the parking area at the top left corner and follow a narrow footpath through the trees to the road (NB. the more tempting route is to exit the parking area at the top *right* corner and walk along a wide farm track which is used by the cars; if you do this you should turn left at the road and walk along for 30-40 yards going past the postbox)
- Cross the road into a small parking area on the opposite side (note dotted lines of white line edging the far side of the road); go to left of derelict wooden lodge following farm track downhill through woods
NB at time of writing there is a planning application to turn the wooden lodge into a permanent building
- After 50 yards there is a house called The Paddocks; go to left of the gate, still heading down
- Just after sign for Buckholt Wood, **turn right** to go down and around below The Paddocks
- After 50 yards **turn right** onto Cotswold Way;
- In front of you there is a gateway into a field with the Severn Valley beyond – and Witcombe Reservoirs in the middle distance; the Cotswold Way follows the bottom edge of the woods for some way; keep following the acorn signposts over the next few instructions as there are few landmarks (just lots of trees!); remember – the road is uphill to your right (and you are now 1-2 miles from Birdlip)*
- After $\frac{3}{4}$ mile the field on the left ends; follow the Cotswold Way as it turns left ie down and then goes more steeply down (past some corrugated sheeting at the bottom) and then up again; keep following the Cotswold Way acorn signposts
- After quite some time, at an intersection there is an 18-inch high stone block on the right, along with a couple of large stones; follow the Cotswold Way as it goes uphill again

- At the top of this rise, the Cotswold Way turns left to go downhill again (and there is another footpath which is even more left) – but at this point you need to continue straight ahead to get back up towards the road and Birdlip village; follow the rightmost farm track as it bends around to the right going gently uphill
- Go past Severn Trent Water substation on left, farm track becomes tarmac driveway and goes more steeply uphill into houses
- Go past houses such as The Lodge (on right) and High Ridge (on left)
- Go straight across the road onto pavement on opposite side; **turn left** and follow pavement around to the right (metal handrail on your left)
- After you go round the corner, you will see The Royal George on the opposite side of the road – you’ve made it! Congratulations! Anyone for a drink?

SOMETHING INTERESTING:

While Royalists were encamped in Painswick during the Civil War, tradition has it that King Charles I went up to Painswick Beacon, the hill a few miles to the north, and, seeing the beautiful valley to the east said "This must be Paradise". Since then that valley, and the hamlet on its western side to the north of Painswick have been called Paradise.

Composer Gustav Holst lived in Cranham for a while, and it was there, in the house now called 'Midwinter Cottage' that he wrote what is probably the best known tune for the Christmas carol In the Bleak Midwinter by Christina Rossetti.

In medieval times Birdlip was spelt 'Brydelep' which may have come from two Old English words — 'bridd' — a bird, and 'hleþ' — a leap.

Birdlip is well-known in archaeological circles for the Birdlip Mirror, which is now housed in Gloucester Museum. In 1879 workmen discovered three skeletons in a quarry between Crickley Hill and Birdlip overlooking the Vale of Gloucester. With the bones, were some amazing Iron Age artefacts. The most important object was a handheld mirror of bronze. The front of this was originally highly polished for reflections, but the rear is decorated with flowing patterns worked into the metal. It is one of the finest items of Celtic art to survive in Britain and perhaps the finest example housed outside a national museum.

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