

# A weekend with walks in Fairford



## AT A GLANCE

- Stay in a cosy cottage or B&B
- Walk along the River Coln
- Visit St Mary's Church
- Explore the Cotswold Water Park's nature reserves
- Enjoy myriad water sports at the Cotswold Water Park
- Visit the Royal International Air Tattoo



## Fairford and Cotswold Water Park

### Leisurely walks and watery activities...

The town of Fairford sits on a lovely stretch of the River Coln between Cirencester and Lechlade. It owes its fortune to its location on the old London to Gloucester coaching route. Some of the inns and hotels hark back to this period.

Fairford Mill, the Oxpens, Market Place and High Street, lined with beautiful Grade II listed buildings, are all part of the town's attraction. As with so many Cotswold towns, Fairford's great glory is the parish church of St Mary's. This fine 'wool church' has Britain's only complete set of medieval stained glass windows – 28 in all.

The Coln is a slow and lazy river offering delightful walks in quiet countryside. A walk along the river may provide a glimpse of a kingfisher, swan, little grebe, brown trout or even a shy water vole.

Fairford is most synonymous with the Royal International Air Tattoo (RIAT) which takes place each July. This is the world's largest military air show and one of the UK's premier outdoor events, offering something for the whole family.

The Cotswold Water Park dominates the south of the Cotswolds and offers all sorts of water-based activities, as well as walking, cycling and wildlife-spotting. It even has its own beach. Despite its size, it's a well-kept secret, based around 150 lakes in 40 square miles.

### Walking around Fairford and Water Park:

**Fairford Heritage Trail approx 2 miles** – This circular walk takes in the historical sites of the town including Fairford Mill, Oxpens and St Mary's church. Available to buy from Fairford Town Council, High Street.

**River Coln Walk approx 2 miles** – A level circular walk from the Market Place along the tranquil banks of the River Coln. Features in Fairford & Lechlade Walks booklet, from Fairford Town Council.

**Fairford to Lechlade Southern Route approx 6 miles** – This linear walk follows the River Coln across meadows and passing the lakes of the Cotswold Water Park. Return by bus, or by the



The Great  
**Cotswold**  
wold  
Outdoors

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5.5 mile Northern Route. Features in Fairford & Lechlade Walks booklet, from Fairford Town Council.

The following walks are from the Cotswold Water Park Walks Guide, available to purchase from the Gateway Centre:

### Rivers, brooks and lakes approx 3.5 miles (or longer route of 4.5 miles) –

This circular walk from Neigh Bridge Country Park highlights the various landscapes of the Water Park in one walk. It heads through woodland, a nature reserve and open meadows along the lakes and the infant River Thames.

### Three villages walk approx 8.3 miles –

A circular walk passing through three pretty villages of the western Water Park, all with their own charm and fascinating history. The route follows the Thames Path National Trail as it wends its way from the source at Kemble downstream to London.

### Lechlade Seven Stiles and St John's Lock walks, each approx 2 miles –

These two short circular walks explore the town of Lechlade with its quaint shops, cafes and pubs. They then follow the Thames Path National Trail, one heading downstream to St John's Lock and the other upstream through meadows. You could join these two walks together to make a larger circular loop.

### Longer walks:

The Thames Path National Trail – This wonderful 184-mile (294km) walk follows the River Thames from its source near Kemble in the Cotswolds to the Thames Barrier near Greenwich in London, travelling through some of the finest countryside, including right



through the heart of the Cotswold Water Park.

### Things to do in Fairford

- Stroll along the River Coln
- Enjoy the medieval windows of St Mary's Church
- Browse Fairford Market (Weds)
- Go sailing or water-skiing at the Cotswold Water Park
- Ride, fish or bike at the Cotswold Water Park
- Explore nearby Lechlade or Cirencester
- Visit the Air Tattoo in July

### Accommodation that welcomes walkers

#### Lakeview Holidays, Fairford

(self-catering)

[www.lakeviewholidays.co.uk](http://www.lakeviewholidays.co.uk)

#### Watermark Holidays, Cotswold Water Park (self-catering)

[www.watermarkcotswolds.com/stay](http://www.watermarkcotswolds.com/stay)

#### Riverside House B&B, Cirencester

[www.riversidehouse.org.uk](http://www.riversidehouse.org.uk)

### Visitor Information

Fairford Town Council, High Street

01285 712344

(10am to 1pm Mon to Fri)

Cirencester TIC

01285 654180

Cotswold Water Park Gateway Centre

01793 752413



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