



CIRCA 1445

Old Swan & Minster Mill

ON

THE RIVER WINDRUSH, IN THE COTSWOLDS

A  
SELECTION OF  
SELF GUIDED  
WALKS

FROM THE  
OLD SWAN & MINSTER MILL

## A SELECTION OF SELF GUIDED WALKS FROM THE OLD SWAN & MINSTER MILL

We believe that the best way to really get to know the area you are staying in is on foot. As such we have put together a selection of the best walks leaving from the door of the hotel, so that you can really enjoy exploring Minster Lovell and the beautiful villages, river valleys and hills that are its immediate surroundings. The Cotswolds are gentle, undulating limestone hills which offer beautiful walks, accessible to everyone. By strolling through this unique landscape of rolling 'wolds', pastures, water meadows and honey-coloured villages, one can really appreciate the way that nature and the hand of man have combined over thousands of years to shape the environment we see and admire today.

Every season has its reward. Hedgerow and woodland flowers are bright and full of colour in the spring, the young leaves unfolding on the trees. In summer, gaze out over fields of barley rippling in the breeze, then tread lush meadow grass to explore the reedy banks of clear-flowing rivers. Autumn sees the colours change, as foliage turns to russet and gold and the ripe crops are harvested. Winter's

short, cold days can be the most beautiful of all, with crystal clarity illuminating frost-whitened trees and hills. And at whatever time of year, ancient villages of honey-coloured stone nestle in the soft folds of the landscape, traditional houses and cottages clustering around old churches, each settlement full of interest and steeped in history.

With this selection of walks, you can spend anything from a couple of hours to the whole day exploring the local area, following the well-researched, detailed walking instructions provided. And why not ask us for a packed lunch to take along with you, to eat at one of the suggested picnic spots along the way, or book a well-earned foot massage and/or cream tea for your return? However you use these walking instructions, we hope that you enjoy your time exploring this beautiful corner of England.

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Please note that you embark on these walks entirely at your own risk. Every precaution is taken to ensure that these instructions are up-to-date and accurate but neither the Old Swan & Minster Mill nor Upland Escapes Ltd can be held responsible for inaccuracies in the notes, which can occur due to environmental changes, farming practices, weather events and for many other reasons.

All the walks give an approximate time and mileage. The time, of course can be affected by the different pace of the walker.



We request that everyone using these walking instructions follow the simple tenets of the

Countryside Code, which helps us all respect, protect and enjoy the countryside we are walking through. The five key points of the code are:

- Be safe, plan ahead and follow any signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants and animals and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under close control
- Consider other people

## HOW THESE WALKING NOTES WORK

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For each walk, a short introductory description includes the total distance, approximate walking time, and other details to help you decide on a particular outing.

The walking instructions include distances measured with a surveyor's wheel, rounded to the nearest 5 metres. These distances appear at the end of each 'instruction', indicating how far it is to the next junction, landmark, or instruction. We do not expect you to be counting paces – the idea is to give you an accurate idea of when you need to be concentrating on making the next turn!

Within the notes we have inserted numbers like this: **5**

These correspond to numbers in the appropriate place on the relevant map and should help you locate where you are on the map with ease.



We find that it takes about 5 minutes to walk 300 metres on relatively easy terrain. The times shown are approximate, reflecting an average walking pace (if there is such a thing!) and represent the interval from the last one shown, as well as the total walking time to that point. Please remember that they are 'walking time'

only, and do not take pauses or lunch stops into account.

We have suggested possible picnic spots with the word **PICNIC** in the text, but we are sure you will find plenty

of other lovely places of your own.

### *Abbreviations:*

L = Left      LHS = Left hand side  
R = Right     RHS = Right hand side

## WALK SAFELY

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To help ensure your safety while walking, the following tips may be useful:

- Tell reception where you are planning to walk and what time you plan to return.
- Follow the routes described in this handbook. If you have not reached the next expected junction or landmark after a reasonable time, it is safest to return to the last “sure” point and try again. Do not be tempted to set off across unknown country.
- Carry at least 1 litre of water per person if on a medium or long walk, especially if it is a hot day.
- Take your fully charged mobile phone with you.
- Check the weather before you set off, and continue to be aware of it during your walk.
- Wear sensible shoes or walking boots, with good grip and ankle support.
- Dress sensibly and take a few layers of spare clothing in case the weather changes.
- Always carry a waterproof coat.
- Use sunscreen and take a hat and sunglasses if the weather is fine.
- Take great care paddling in, or crossing, streams - rocks can be slippery, and the water is at times deep and fast-flowing, and always pretty cold!
- Be careful crossing fields of cows. It is best to give them a wide berth and avoid getting between mother and calf.
- Always follow the Countryside Code (see page 9)

## SUGGESTED KIT TO TAKE WITH YOU

Item	✓	Item	✓
Mobile Phone		Sunglasses and sun hat*	
Sunscreen*		Warm extra layer*	
Drinking Water		Waterproofs*	
Camera		Hat, gloves, scarf*	
Lunch/money to buy lunch		Sweets / trail mix	
Walking Pole/Stick		Pen / pencil	
Plastic bag to keep things dry			

\* *weather dependent*

# CRAWLEY

A SHORT CIRCULAR WALK 1.45 HOURS

A delightful, gentle circuit down the Windrush valley to the little village of Crawley, with its former blanket mill and pub. The return route passes through the water meadows on the south side of the river before passing through the ruins of Minster Hall and back into Minster Lovell.

<i>Total walking time</i>	<i>1.45 hours</i>
<i>Total distance</i>	<i>6.1 km – 3.8 miles</i>
<i>Terrain</i>	<i>Meadows, footpaths, tracks and some short stretches of quiet lane. In some seasons grasses and hedgerow plants do encroach on paths. One or two stiles. Some mud and possible bogginess by the river after rain.</i>
<i>Shade</i>	<i>Some.</i>
<i>Drinking water</i>	<i>At the Lamb Inn, Crawley</i>
<i>Padding</i>	<i>In the Windrush.</i>

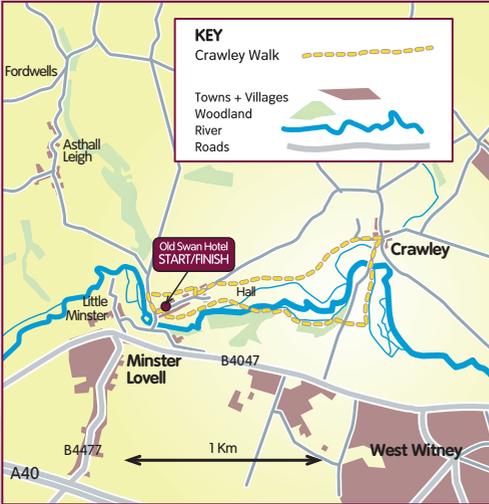
## Walking:

	Metres
Set off through the Mill gardens, along the main path from behind reception, continuing past and between buildings – river down to L.	150
Emerge into a small car-park beyond the last building and go out onto the road. Almost directly opposite is a footpath sign, pointing up some steps.	
Cross the road and follow this footpath.	520
The footpath meets a track under some electricity wires. Turn R down the track.	
Keep L.	65
Meet another track and turn L along it, towards a tarmac road.	15
Meet the tarmac road and turn L along it.	210
Just after passing the black and white lollipop speed limit signs, turn R off the road, through a kissing gate and onto a footpath signed to CRAWLEY. The path heads through the middle of the field towards a gate and gap in the hedge at the far end.	325

*The romantic ruins of Minster Hall are off to the R. We will pass back this way and visit them.*

Arrive at the gate. Pass through the kissing gate into the field beyond and continue with the wall and fencing just to your L.	420
Pass through another kissing gate and continue.	70
Ignore a L turn. Continue straight on, on the footpath.	205
Cross over a stile and continue on the footpath.	155
Ignore a track going sharp R into a field. Continue on the main footpath.	385

# & B A C K



*The building with the chimney on the RHS is Crawley Mill, which was part of the Witney area's former blanket-making industry. Since the middle ages, Witney was famous for its high-quality blankets, made with wool from the Cotswolds and using the waters of the River Windrush to power the mills, such as Crawley Mill, needed to convert the raw wool into cloth. At one time there were five blanket factories in and around the town but with the closure of Early's in 2002, the last blanket factory closed down and the ancient tradition sadly came to an end. Crawley Mill is now an industrial estate.*

The footpath (now a track) meets a tarmac road in front of Rose Cottage.  
Turn R along the road.

265

## 45 minutes

Arrive in the centre of the village of Crawley. The war memorial is ahead and the Lamb Inn is to the L. Turn R to continue the walk, and stay on the pavement towards the bridge ahead, ignoring a L turn up a smaller lane.

290

*Crawley is now a sleepy little Cotswold village on the outskirts of Witney. The focus of the village is now the Lamb Inn, which makes an excellent halfway house on this walk, if you would like to stop for a beer (from the local Wychwood Brewery) or lunch. Open Mon-Sat from 11.00am-3.00pm and 6.00pm-11.00pm / Sun: 12.00pm-3.00pm.*

Cross the road bridge over the Windrush. Then cross over the road and continue in the same direction.

65

Reach a green bridleway sign to WITNEY pointing L. Go through the little gate and onto the bridleway.

605

Arrive at a junction with 2 gates and a stile. Turn R, go through the gate and head uphill on a footpath.

220

Reach the top of the field. Cross straight over the road, go through the kissing gate on the other side and follow the path beyond.

60

Having crossed the little field, go through another kissing gate and continue on the path into the woods. 105

Go through another kissing gate at the end of the woods and continue on the path. 140

Reach a large gate with a kissing gate next to it. Go through this and continue straight ahead. Ignore the stile on the RHS with a sign saying NO ACCESS. 135

Reach a 2nd large gate (often open) with a kissing gate next to it. Go through this and continue straight ahead. 30

Reach a kissing gate with footpath signs. Go through this and continue on the path, keeping the hedge to your L. 170

Reach the end of the field with a large gate (often open) with a kissing gate next to it. **PICNIC**. Go through this and continue in the same direction. 125



*The River Windrush is one of the most famous watercourses in the Cotswolds, for its clear, trout-filled waters and strong flow. It rises in the Cotswolds above the lovely village of Guiting Power and flows 40 miles through Bourton-on-the-Water, Burford and Witney, before flowing into the Thames at Newbridge. It is one of the most exclusive trout-streams in the area and in 2007 it broke its banks and flooded many towns along its course, most notably the centre of Witney, which was badly affected.*

At the far end of the field, with an old brick shed to the L, go through a kissing gate and continue into the trees, staying on the main path. 85

At a fork, veer R down towards the river (not ahead/L past a gate with a battered sign saying "Private Land)". Cross a little wooden footbridge by the river and stay on the path through the trees. 225

Cross a little footbridge over the Windrush and through the kissing gate. Minster Hall is just up ahead. 240

Cross another little footbridge, go through the kissing gate and veer L towards a spiky metal gate. 20

Go through the spiky metal gate and into the ruins of Minster Hall. **PICNIC** 120

**45 minutes (Total: 1h 30)**

*Chamberlain to Richard III. The King is known to have stayed at the hall. After the death of Richard III, Francis supported the pretender, Lambert Simnel, and escaped capture by Henry VII to disappear. One legend has it that he lived in a secret room within the hall and that only his manservant knew his location. Unfortunately for Lovell, his manservant fell ill and died, taking his location to the grave. Years later in 1708, a skeleton (possibly Lovell's) was discovered whilst repairs were being made to the hall. Later the house passed into the Coke family, sometime Earls of Leicester, but they rarely lived here. The last resident, Thomas Coke, dismantled much of the house to sell off the materials to raise money to build his great house at Holkham in Norfolk. The remaining, romantic ruins show what a fine house it must have been – see the great hall, remains of the south-west tower and the complete dovecote nearby.*

At the far side of the hall, pass through a gap in the wall and into the graveyard of the church beyond. Veer R. 55

Arrive at the front door of the church, which is well worth a visit. On exiting the church, turn L and go round the church back towards the river (so not up to the road), then veer R towards a gap in the graveyard wall. 50

*St Kenelm's Church dates to about 1450 and is little changed since then, except for the removal of the chancel screen and the minstrel's gallery. The north transept was once set apart for the people of Crawley, who had no church of their own and is still called the Crawley Aisle. The alabaster tomb in the Lady Chapel belongs to William Lovell, founder of the church and the adjacent hall, and there are two 'squints' giving a view of the high altar. The attractive font is the original 15th century one. Open 09.30 to sunset on weekdays and 07.30-08.45 and 10.00 to sunset on Sundays.*

Pass through the gap in the graveyard wall and follow the footpath ahead. 165

Cross over a little footbridge and pass through a wooden kissing gate. Continue keeping the hedge close to your R. 155

At the end of the field, pass through another kissing gate and continue. 20

Ignore a R turn up to a road, but pass through a kissing gate ahead and onto the recreation ground. Keep the wall to your RHS and then bear R towards a little gate with 2 bins close to it. 175

Reach this gate. Pass through it and turn L onto the road. The Old Swan is just ahead, with the Mill beyond. 50

*Minster Lovell village is recorded in the Domesday Book. There were two manors on either side of the river and the connecting bridge was once a toll bridge. With fish in the river, marshland for gamefowl and lots of reed for thatching (many of the houses are still thatched), as well as plenty of quarriable stone and the Wychwood Forest for protection, timber and fuel, this was an obvious place to settle. At the turn of the 20th century, Minster Lovell was famous for its rushes and river crayfish. Rushes were used for caulking barrels and the Minster Lovell rushes were deemed to be the best in the south of England. Today the high street is extremely pretty, lined with a number of fine thatched cottages and houses.*

**15 minutes (Total: 1h 45)**

Arrive back at reception.

# SWINBROOK

A MEDIUM CIRCULAR WALK 4.5 HOURS

A lovely walk up the Windrush valley through the beautiful villages of Asthall and Swinbrook. You then pass the sweet, isolated church of Widford, before heading up onto the 'wold' and looping back to Swinbrook for the return to Minster Lovell.

*Total walking time* 4.5 hours

*Total distance* 15.6 km – 9.7 miles

*Terrain* Meadows, footpaths, tracks and some stretches of quiet lane. In some seasons grasses and hedgerow plants do encroach on paths. Some stiles. Some mud after rain.

*Shade* Generally only patches to pause in.

*Drinking water* At the pubs in Asthall and Swinbrook

*Padding* In the Windrush.

## Walking:

Set off through the Mill gardens, along the main path from behind reception, continuing past and between buildings – river down to L. Metres

Emerge into small car-park beyond last building, go out onto road and turn L, uphill, along it. 150

At road junction fork L, signed ASTHAL LEIGH. 190

Turn L off road - BRIDLEWAY sign - dipping down into field to then continue along edge of a series of fields, always with hedge on L. 540

Note a bend of the river Windrush on the L, continue ahead, still with hedge on L. 760

*The River Windrush is one of the most famous watercourses in the Cotswolds, for its clear, trout-filled waters and strong flow. It rises in the Cotswolds above the lovely village of Guiting Power and flows 40 miles through Bourton-on-the-Water, Burford and Witney, before flowing into the Thames at Newbridge. It is one of the most exclusive trout-streams in the area and in 2007 it broke its banks and flooded many towns along its course, most notably the centre of Witney, which was badly affected.*

Follow track dipping ahead/L out of corner of field. 165

Fork ahead/R off track along footpath (track is bending L). 25

Emerge into next field and keep L, on along edge, hedge on L again. 100

Join a track and continue ahead along it (houses etc on R). 910

Follow track dipping ahead/L out of corner of field. 110

Fork ahead/R off track along footpath (track is bending L). 25

Emerge into next field and keep L, on along edge, hedge on L again. 100

Join a track and continue ahead along it (houses etc on R). 910

**1 hour**



# K & B A C K

- 1** Arrive at lane (works entrance opposite-Worsham Mill) and turn R, uphill along it. 920

*Worsham Mill was built in the 19th Century as part of the famous Witney woollen blanket making industry. The current occupiers now design and build safety equipment. The large building on the other side of the valley is a Thames Water Reservoir.*

Just beyond lonely house on R, turn L off the road through gate - FOOTPATH sign - following telegraph poles, hedge on R. 135

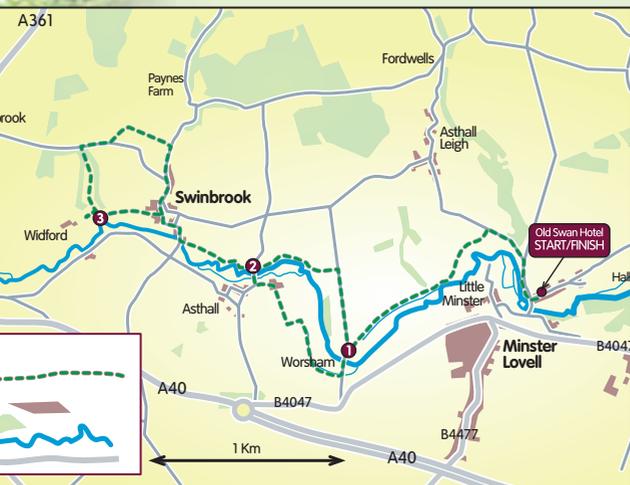
Go through gate and continue down hill, following telegraph poles. 325

Arrive by bend in the river (shallow here) and continue along beside it (river on L) through gate(s). 445

**35 minutes (Total: 1h 35)**

- 2** Arrive at road by bridge (gate and steps). Cross over and continue ahead, into next meadow, following line of FOOTPATH arrow. (You will, eventually, return to this point.) 90

As fence on L bends L away from you, continue ahead across meadow, aiming about 20 metres to R of tall tree (poplar) ahead. 145



*To the L, across the river is the little village of Asthall, which you will pass through on the way back. The large manor house was home to Lord and Lady Redesdale, who owned much of the estate comprising Asthall, Swinbrook and Widford. The Redesdales had 6 daughters (and a son!), the Mitford sisters, who all achieved contemporary notoriety for their controversial and stylish lives, and later for their very public political divisions between communism and fascism. Nancy was a famous novelist (*The Pursuit of Love*, *Love in a Cold Climate*); Unity was a great admirer of Hitler who shot herself in the head when Britain declared war on Germany; Diana, who was rated more perfect than Boticelli's *Venus*, married Oswald Mosley, the leader of the British Union of Fascists; Jessica was an ardent socialist who eloped to fight the Spanish Civil War and who became a famous writer; Pamela was happiest in the country with her dogs but was greatly admired by John Betjeman; and Deborah, married the Duke of Devonshire, helping to re-establish Chatsworth as one of the Treasure Houses of England. Their brother Thomas, who must have felt heavily outnumbered, died at the end of the war, fighting in Burma.*

Arrive at hedge and cross stile to continue ahead (slightly R) across next meadow – aiming towards buildings visible ahead along the valley. This line will soon bring you alongside the wall/fence on the RHS of the meadow. 365

Arrive in far RH corner of meadow – cross stone stile and continue, again aiming for the same buildings. 245

**10 minutes (Total: 1h 45)**

Leave first (closest) building on your L to arrive at stone stile and lane beyond. Onward route is R along the lane. 135

*Across the lane is the Swan Inn, which is a very popular hostelry with locals and visitors alike (if you are too early, at this point, you will pass this way on your return route). The Inn is owned by the Dowager Duchess of Devonshire, the last surviving Mitford sister, and – along with the neighbouring cottage – forms the residual part of the estate inherited by the family at the beginning of the 19th century. Open Mon-Fri from 11.00am-3.00pm and 6.00pm-11.00pm Sat-Sun: 11.00am-11.00pm.*



Continue ahead, ignoring R turn. 185

Junction - in the centre of Swinbrook - continue on main lane, ignoring turns to R then L (the later with big FOOTPATH sign). 55

Find and take steps (wooden banister) up bank and follow path on across church yard, leaving church on R. 95

*Swinbrook is one of the most desirable villages in the Cotswolds, famed for its beautiful houses, fine church, lovely riverside setting and connections with the Mitfords. St Mary's church is well worth a visit, for its fine Perpendicular window filling the whole of the east end and for the triple-decker wall tombs of the Fettiplace family, depicted in full Tudor-style armour, who lived in the great manor house of Swinbrook. This was, reputedly the finest Tudor house in Oxfordshire, but was sadly destroyed by fire in 1806. In the churchyard are the gravestones of 4 of the Mitford sisters, Nancy, Unity, Diana and Pamela (Jackson on her gravestone).*



Go through small gate and follow path beyond, turning R between walls.	90
Emerge into meadow and continue ahead across it.	250
Cross stile and continue ahead, leaving wall and small house on L, joining track. 270	

**20 minutes (Total: 2h 05)**

<b>3</b> Cross gate/cattle-grid and veer R up the grass towards the little church.	55
Arrive at Widford Church for a quick visit. <b>PICNIC.</b> Afterwards, head back down to the cattle-grid.*	55



St Oswald's Church stands in splendid isolation, in the middle of a field above the Windrush. All the lumps and bumps in the surrounding field are all that is left of the main village of Widford which was destroyed by the Black Death in the 17th century. However, the fine manor house also survives (further on and to the R), with its window frames still painted in Redesdale blue. St Oswald's is one of the most delightful and unspoilt churches in the area. Built in the 12th century on the remains of a Roman villa (you can still see some of the Roman mosaic pavement in the old stone floor around the font), it has some rare 14th century wall-paintings and its old box pews also survive. In front of the church, down by the river, are lots of willow trees after which the village was named - 'withig ford' meaning 'the ford by the willows'.

\* *If you are on the long walk via Burford, this is the point where you should start following the instructions for that walk on page 16*

\* *If you are on the medium walk, just carry on following these instructions*

**3** At the cattle-grid, retrace your steps as if you were heading back to Swinbrook. 75

Reach a wooden post with a couple of arrows on it, close to the corner of the garden of a little cottage on the RHS. Turn L and head towards a gate up ahead. 115

At the gate, cross over the stile and continue in the same direction, up the middle of the valley ahead. 650

At the top of the valley, cross over the stile and turn R along the little road. 310

Turn L off the road into a tarmac turning area and follow the footpath off the back of it, heading away from the road. 290

Go through a gate at the bottom and turn immediately R, along a faint footpath heading down the middle of a small valley. **PICNIC** 345

Reach a wooden post with a yellow arrow on it, a little way up the LHS of the valley and a bit before the head of the valley is blocked by a fence. 60

Veer ahead/L in the direction of the arrow into some low trees. 60

Emerge from the trees into a field and veer R immediately, down towards a little stile amid brambles in the very corner of the field. 20

Cross stile and follow path on down across (usually overgrown) meadow. 80

\* *If you are on the long walk via Burford, this is the point where you pick up these instructions once again*

Emerge onto lane and turn R along it, following this main lane on, through Swinbrook, ignoring turns off. 1070

**Medium Walk - 35 minutes (Total: 2h 40)**

**Long Walk - 1 hour 30 minutes (Total: 5h 10)**

The Swan Inn (car park) is on your R, the onward route is L across the stone stile (FOOTPATH ASTHALL sign) and on across the meadow - you are retracing your steps on this section. 255

Cross stone stile (between 2 gates) and continue with wall on L.	175
As wall bends L, continue ahead, aiming 20 metres to L of tall tree.	190
Cross stile through hedge and continue on same line, into corner of meadow.	235

**Medium Walk - 10 minutes (Total: 2h 50)**

**Long Walk - 10 minutes (Total: 5h 20)**

<b>2</b> At corner of meadow, cross stone stile to lane and turn R over the bridge (you came from ahead earlier).	125
Take the first L turn.	200

*(If you continue ahead/R at this junction, after 130 metres you reach another junction in Asthall, with the Maytime Inn on the R, and the church and Manor House further on.)*

Amongst houses follow tarmac bending R, then follow track on, barns etc on L, then on out across fields.	445
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*At this point, you are crossing the old Roman Road of Akeman Street, which ran from Cirencester (Corinium), Roman Britain's second city, across the ford at Asthall, to St Albans (Verulamium), linking the Fosse Way with Watling Street.*

Look for post and arrows to turn L downhill on grassier track, hedge on R.	165
At bottom turn R and continue along valley, hedge/trees on L.	795
Go through gate onto lane and turn L along it.	225

**Medium Walk - 40 minutes (Total: 3h 30)**

**Long Walk - 40 minutes (Total: 6 hours)**

<b>1</b> Just beyond bridge, turn R down track (opposite works entrance). From here you are retracing your steps to Mister Lovell.	110
Track emerges in corner of field, continue, always with hedge etc. on R.	910
Hedge in front - onward route is path steeply down to R into wood.	100
Meet track and continue ahead/L along it.	25
Emerge into field and continue, hedge always on R.	925
At road turn R along it.	540
At junction turn R downhill.	190
Go R into small car-park then immediately L through buildings and on down to the gardens.	150

**Medium Walk - 1 hour (Total: 4h 30)**

**Long Walk - 1 hour (Total: 7 hours)**

Arrive back at reception.

# BURFORD

A LONG CIRCULAR WALK 7 HOURS

Lovely walk up the Windrush valley, incorporating most of the medium walk, but extending to the stunning market town of Burford and its neighbour Fulbrook. Pass through the beautiful villages of Asthall and Swinbrook and then pass the sweet, isolated church of Widford, before heading on into Burford. Cross the river into Fulbrook before looping back on the high ground to Swinbrook for the return to Minster Lovell.

<i>Total walking time</i>	7 hours
<i>Total distance</i>	21.9 km – 13.7 miles
<i>Terrain</i>	Meadows, footpaths, tracks and some stretches of quiet lane. In some seasons grasses and hedgerow plants do encroach on paths. Some stiles. Some mud after rain.
<i>Shade</i>	Generally only patches to pause in.
<i>Drinking water</i>	At the pubs in Asthall and Swinbrook
<i>Paddling</i>	In the Windrush.

## Walking:

Metres

Follow the instructions for the medium walk until you reach Widford church, marked with asterisks on pages 13/14. At that point follow the instructions below.

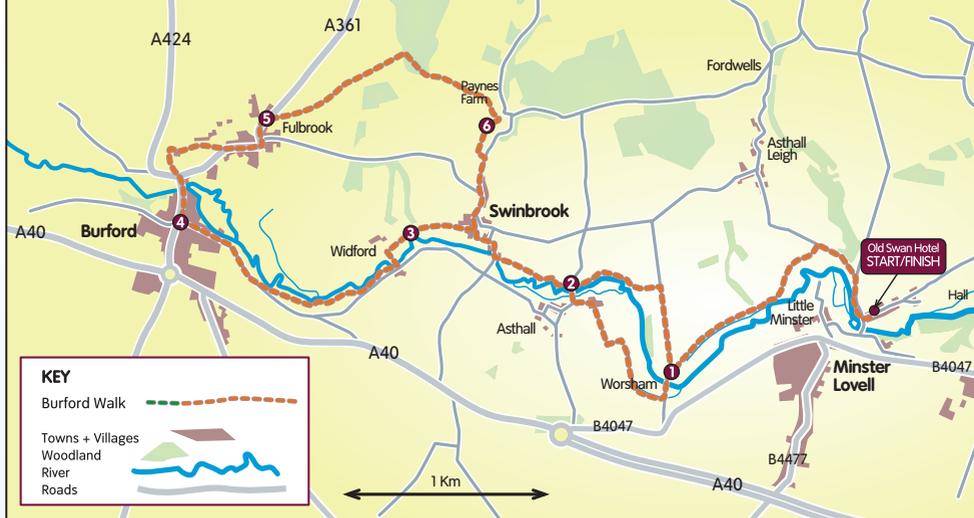
**Total time walking to this point: 2h 05**

- 3** After visiting Widford church, continue along the track heading away from the cattle-grid. 250  
Meet lane and turn L along it. 170

*On the LHS is Widford Mill, which was originally a fulling mill for the wool industry (fulling is the process of cleansing the wool to eliminate oils, dirt, and other impurities, and making it thicker), but which was changed to a paper mill before finally being converted into private housing.*

- At main road, turn R along it, keeping to RHS. 165  
Fork R off road down footpath (FOOTPATH sign) and follow this on across a series of meadows, with the river meandering on the R. **PICNIC** 1345  
Emerge onto road and turn R along it – soon with path on RHS. Follow this on, always ahead, into Burford. 1055

**1 hour (Total: 3h 05)**



**4** Meet Burford's famous High Street. Onward route is R downhill along it.

160



*Burford has a great number of pubs, shops and points of interest - too many to list here so if you would like to visit the Tourist Information Office, it is on Sheep Street (down the High Street and first L), past the Bay Tree Hotel. The town of Burford (which means fortress by the ford in Saxon) was built on the wool trade and was a flourishing market town with local industries including fulling, tannery, saddlery, glove making, brewing and two bell foundries.*

*There are a large number of impressive houses demonstrating the wealth of the local merchants and a cathedral-like church which is now completely out of proportion to the size of the town.*

To visit church turn R down Church Lane (Mrs Bumble's deli on corner here).

80

Bear L towards church, and through gate to church door.

65

*The church is very splendid indeed with its impressive spire and interior bathed in light from the beautiful windows. Inside, see the handsome tomb of Lord Chief Justice Sir Lawrence Tanfield, and the plaque to Edmond Harmon who was barber surgeon to Henry VIII, which has the earliest depiction of American Indians in the UK. William Lenthall, the speaker of the Long Parliament who famously defied Charles I, is also buried in the church, but at his own request, the grave was never marked. Just outside the main door is a tablet commemorating an event just after the Civil War when over 1000 soldiers of the New Model Army rebelled against Cromwell (lack of pay and not wishing to be sent to Ireland), 340 of whom were rounded up in Burford and locked in the church. On 17 May 1649, after 3 days imprisonment in the church, the ringleaders were taken out and shot. If you look at the font, you will see a bit of graffiti by one of the mutineers, saying "Anthony Sedley, 1649, Prisoner". In the churchyard there is a fine collection of "woolsack tombs" - the representation of a woolsack on top of the table tombs being an indication of the debt owed to the wool trade by the entombed. With the Wychwood Forest only a mile away, the men of Burford were granted one deer per annum, but legend has it that this did not satisfy them and a lot of poaching went on. The carcasses would then be hidden in one of the 'bale' tombs in the churchyard.*

Visit church, then, on leaving church door turn R through churchyard towards gate.	60
Go through gate and continue ahead.	70
Rejoin High Street and turn R, on across bridge, keeping to RHS.	220

*Burford bridge is a medieval packhorse bridge which replaced the old ford. There is a wonderful myth connected to the town that following the deaths of Lord Chief Justice Sir Lawrence Tanfield and his wife (whose impressive tombs are in the church), who greatly upset the townsfolk by removing all the rights and privileges of the Guild Merchants and who rode roughshod over everyone, the couple came back to haunt the town, riding a coach and four over the rooftops. Eventually seven clerics were called upon to exorcise them, which they did by shutting up the spirits in a bottle and dropping it into the river. The story went that if the level of the river dropped so that the third arch of the bridge were dry, the Tanfields would escape, so in time of drought, superstitious locals could be seen bucketing water into the river from the bridge to keep the level up!*

At roundabout cross over road ahead to steps visible on far side - FOOTPATH sign – and go up steps.	35
Bear R past concrete structure to continue across fields.	260

*This concrete structure is a WW2 gun emplacement which was sited opposite Burford bridge to prevent German troops from crossing the Windrush in the event of an invasion of Britain.*

Emerge onto lane and turn R along it.	605
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*Opposite is the delightful manor house and surrounding houses of Westhall Hill, with its coaching pond and stunning views back to Burford.*

At main road cross over to then turn L along it – pavement.	150
Cross back over road to turn L up GARNES LANE.	55
Take first R down DOLPHIN LANE.	65
At T junction turn L towards church.	30

**35 minutes (Total: 3h 40)**

Go through church gate and bear L across grass, leaving church on R. <b>PICNIC</b>	60
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*There is a fine English Yew tree in the churchyard with a girth of over 19 feet which has been professionally estimated to be nearly 1000 years old. It is likely to have been planted to celebrate the first millennium.*

On far side of church find and cross stone stile, continuing ahead, slightly R down across meadow towards small metal gate.	100
Cross stile by gate and continue on same line, past lone (walnut) tree.	70
Cross stone stile (wooden bar moves) and turn R along lane beyond.	45

*The house at the end of the long meadow opposite is called Knight's Spill and the one to its R is called The Roarings. It seems that this long flat meadow was the scene of a medieval jousting field, and the houses are named after the knights who would be knocked off their steeds and the roaring of the crowd, presumably in approval of any de-saddling that took place.*

- 5** At main road cross over and turn L along it (on verge). 65  
Fork R off road (down steps - FOOTPATH sign) and soon emerge into field, continuing along RH edge of it. 280  
Fork L along path away from field edge, following bottom of gentle dip up across this big field. 635  
In corner of field continue ahead through narrow "tunnel" through hedge in front, emerging to follow diagonal across next field. 140  
In corner of next field go through another "tunnel" in hedge and follow path on across middle of next field. 455  
Meet track at edge of trees and turn R along it into and through woods, continuing ahead and ignoring minor tracks off. The track becomes a lane, passes a pair of cottages then a farm and after... 1210

*The village of Fulbrook which you have just left was home to Tom, Dick and Harry Dunsdon (supposedly the original Tom, Dick and Harry). These brothers were notorious brigands and highwaymen, who began their life of crime by robbing farmers of stock and money as they travelled to market and moved on to robbing the Gloucester to Oxford coach. The oldest brother Dick disappeared after a failed robbery at Tanglely Hall, 2 miles outside Burford. The owners had been tipped off and as Dick put his arm through an opening in the door to remove the bolt the people waiting inside grabbed his arm and tied it to the bolt. Dick shouted to his brothers "cut! cut!" and one of his brothers drew his sword and severed off his arm at the elbow. The brothers fled and Dick was never seen or heard of again and is believed to have died of his injuries. Tom and Harry were captured after attending the Burford Whitsuntide Festival, after an altercation with a man called Harding who was shot by Harry in the chest. Some weeks later Harding died and the brothers were tried for his murder and convicted. The sentence on these "desperate fellows who had long been a terror to the country where they lived" was death by hanging and their bodies to be hung in chains thereafter. Their bodies were hanged from a gibbet tree on the edge of the forest which was once their refuge. This tree is still there today and is off to the L of the entrance to the wood.*

Soon after the farm, as lane bends L, take track R, uphill off bend. 100

- 6** Go through gate into meadow and turn L off track, along meadow edge with wall/fence/hedge on L. **PICNIC** 255  
Note gap in hedge on L, but continue ahead into corner of meadow to find... 15  
Small path dropping L amid brambles (can be overgrown). 15  
Cross stile and follow path on down across (usually overgrown) meadow.

For the remaining instructions for this walk, go back to page 14 and pick up the instructions from the line marked with asterisks

## NOTES

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### Taxi firms:

If you decide that you would like to cut a walk short for any reason (blisters, out of puff, torrential rain etc) here are some numbers of local taxi firms you can call:

Fairways, Fulbrook: 01993 823152 • Angela's Travel, Minster Lovell: 01993 771072

Excel Cars, Minster Lovell: 01993 775198 • M J Taxis, Carterton: 01993 800999

Charlie's Taxis, Carterton 01993 845253

### Packed lunch:

If you would like to picnic during your walk, please call reception and order a packed lunch. We would be grateful if you could order this the day before.

### Pub lunch:

If you would like to book a table for lunch in a pub along the route of your walk, here are some phone numbers of the pubs you will pass along the way:

Short Walk:	The Lamb Inn, Crawley	01993 703753
Medium Walk:	The Maytime, Asthall	01993 822068
Medium Walk:	The Swan, Swinbrook	01993 823339
Long Walk:	The Lamb Inn, Burford	01993 823155
Long Walk:	The Highway, Burford	01993 823661
Long Walk:	The Mermaid, Burford	01993 822193
Long Walk:	Huffkins, Burford	01993 822126
Long Walk:	Mason's Arms, Fulbrook	01993 822354

### Emergencies:

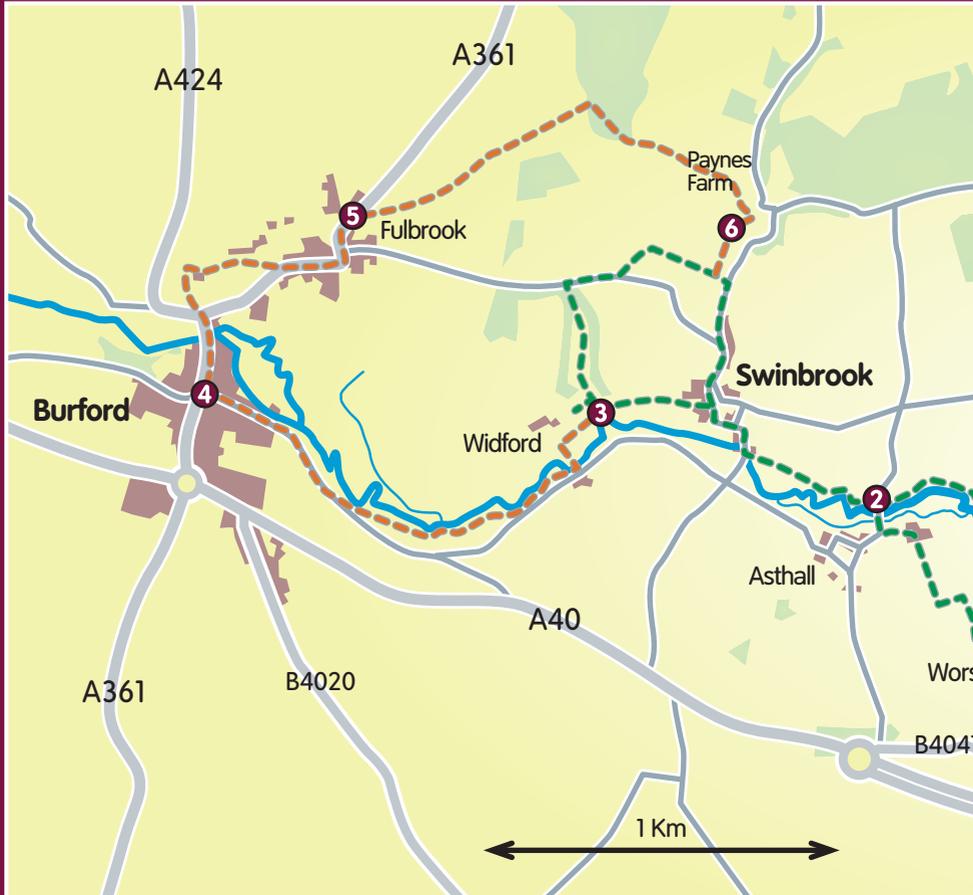
The number to call in the UK for the emergency services is 999.

The phone number of the Old Swan & Minster Mill is 01993 774441

If you would like to do a walk in the Cotswolds, but in the company of a local private guide, call Upland Escapes Ltd on 01367 851111.

# The three walks

CRAWLEY · SWINBROOK · BURFORD



THIS MAP IS FOR GUIDANCE ONLY AND IS NOT TO SCALE. WE RECOMMEND THE USE OF OS MAPS -

OS Explorer 180 Oxford • OS Explorer OL45 The Cotswold  
OS Landranger 163 /164

IF FURTHER DETAILS ARE REQUIRED.

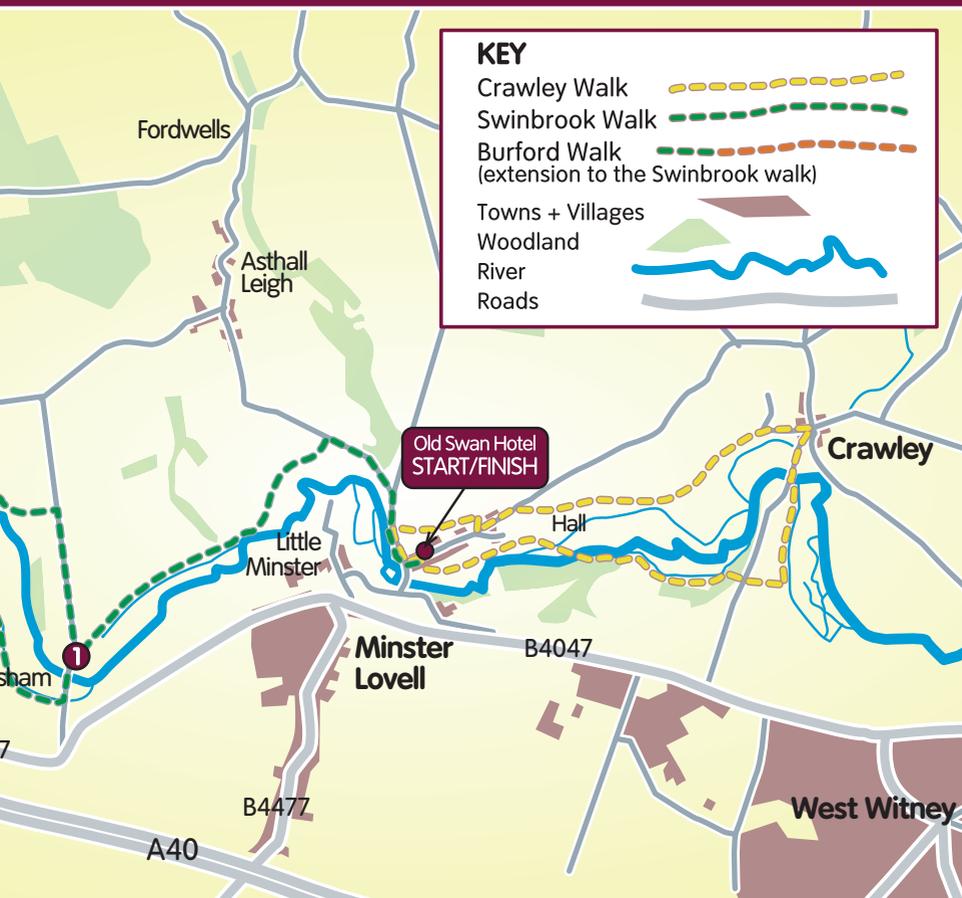


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# Old Swan & Minster Mill

on

THE RIVER WINDRUSH, IN THE COTSWOLDS



[www.oldswanandminstermill.com](http://www.oldswanandminstermill.com)

Old Minster, Minster Lovell, Witney, Oxfordshire OX29 0RN, England

Telephone: 01993 724441 · Email: [enquiries@oldswanandminstermill.com](mailto:enquiries@oldswanandminstermill.com)