

10. Wotton-under-Edge

As rich farmland gives way to woodland tracks and rolling parkland, this enchanting walk leads you from scarp top to valley bottom, back into one of the Cotswold's most charming and thriving small towns. With spectacular views, intriguing shops and historic architecture, all tastes will find something wonderful in this special little corner of the Cotswolds.

Distance:

5 miles (6½ with detour to Newark Park)

Duration:

3 - 4 hours (4 - 5 hours with detour)

Difficulty:

Moderate - Stiles and steep sections.

Public transport:

Numerous bus services from various towns. See Cotswold Way public transport leaflet, visit www.traveline.org.uk or call 0871 200 2233

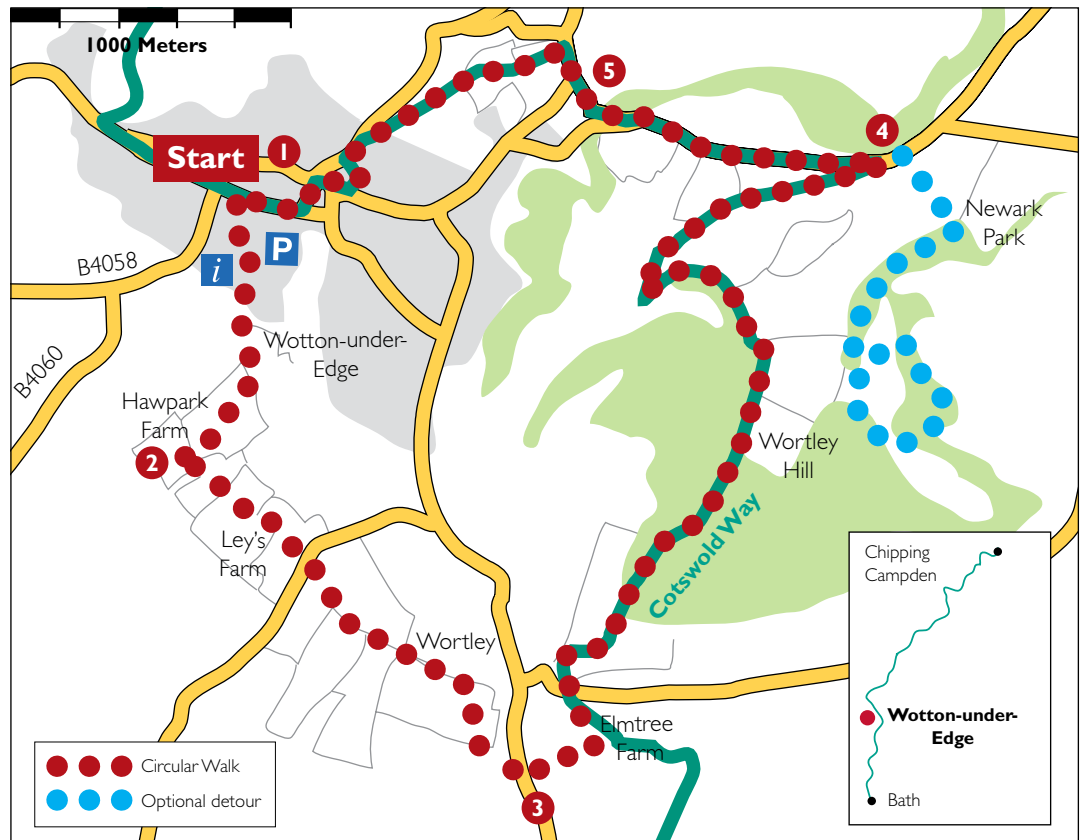
Start/Finish:

Grid reference ST755932
(OS Explorer sheet 167)
postcode GL12 7DB.

Refreshments:

Numerous pubs and café's in town centre.

1 Begin the walk underneath the Jubilee Clock on the corner of High Street and Market Street. Head down Market Street passing the heritage centre and tourist information point on your left, and cross the car park towards the far left corner. Follow the alleyway to the right of the church and cross the road to head up the path opposite towards the school. Continue up the wide grassy path, through the kissing gate at the end. Carry on across the middle of the field towards the gap in the hedge and head down across the next little field, crossing over the stile in the bottom right corner. Keeping the hedge on your left, continue round towards the farmhouse.



2 Turn immediately left after the stile at the bottom, and take the path over the little stream. Pass through the gate on the far side of the next field, and head towards another farmhouse. Continue around the left of the house and pass through the wide gate on your right, to turn left up the access track towards the road. At the T-junction, cross over the stile opposite and follow the path along the edge of the fields. Halfway across the last field follow the path to your right, diagonally through the field. After the stile next to the gate at the far corner, take the path to the left and head towards the gates at the far side.

3 Keeping a good ear out for traffic, cross the road and take the footpath towards Ozleworth. Head toward the gap in the hedge and over another field towards a stile at the far end. Turn immediately left after the next stile, and head left across the field to pick up the Cotswold Way at the far corner. Head through the kissing gate, and cross the road to follow the

Cotswold Way towards Wotton-under-Edge. Before the wide gate at the end, pass through the kissing gate on your right and follow the steep-sided gully uphill. At the top, take the path up to the right and continue to follow the Cotswold Way along a shaded woodland track. After about half a mile, look out for the waymarker on your left and take the path down through the woods. Pass through the kissing gate at the bottom and continue around the side of the hill as breathtaking views begin to open up to your left. Follow the Cotswold Way as it rejoins the track, and continue for half a mile until you reach the road.

4 For a short detour into tranquil parkland and a wonderful Tudor hunting Lodge, follow the sign to Newark Park past the access road and through the kissing gate on the right. Continue around the edge of the field and switch back through two gates towards an information board in the woods. From here you can follow any of three excellent waymarked trails through this

picturesque estate owned and managed by the National Trust.

To continue the walk, turn left down the road and continue past half a mile of wonderful valley views until you reach another fingerpost on the right. Watching your footing after wet weather, follow the Cotswold Way down the steep path and turn right when you meet the road at the bottom.

5 After a short distance, pass through a gate on your left and continue to follow the trail alongside a small stream and through the outskirts of the town. When you reach the 13th century parish church, pass through the tranquillity of its grounds and follow the signs back towards the High Street. With curious shops for browsing, ancient buildings for wondering and inviting cafes for refreshing, welcoming Wotton has everything you could need at the end your walk, and even more to entice you back...