

3. Stanton, Snowshill and the Edge

This beauty of a walk leads you between two of the most picturesque villages in the Cotswolds; over hilltops, down valleys and through shaded woodlands. Whilst slightly more challenging than others in the series, your efforts will be rewarded by invitingly warm pubs and some of the most splendid views in the country.

Distance:

6 miles or 9.7km (Shorter route 2½ miles or 4km)

Duration:

3½-4½ hrs (Shorter: 1½-2½ hrs)

Difficulty:

Moderate, some steep sections and stiles

Public transport:

No. 606 bus from Cheltenham and a short walk (See the 'Explore the Cotswolds' public transport guide or visit www.traveline.info)

Start/Finish:

Grid reference SP 067/343
(OS Explorer sheet OL45)
Postcode WR12 7NG

Refreshments:

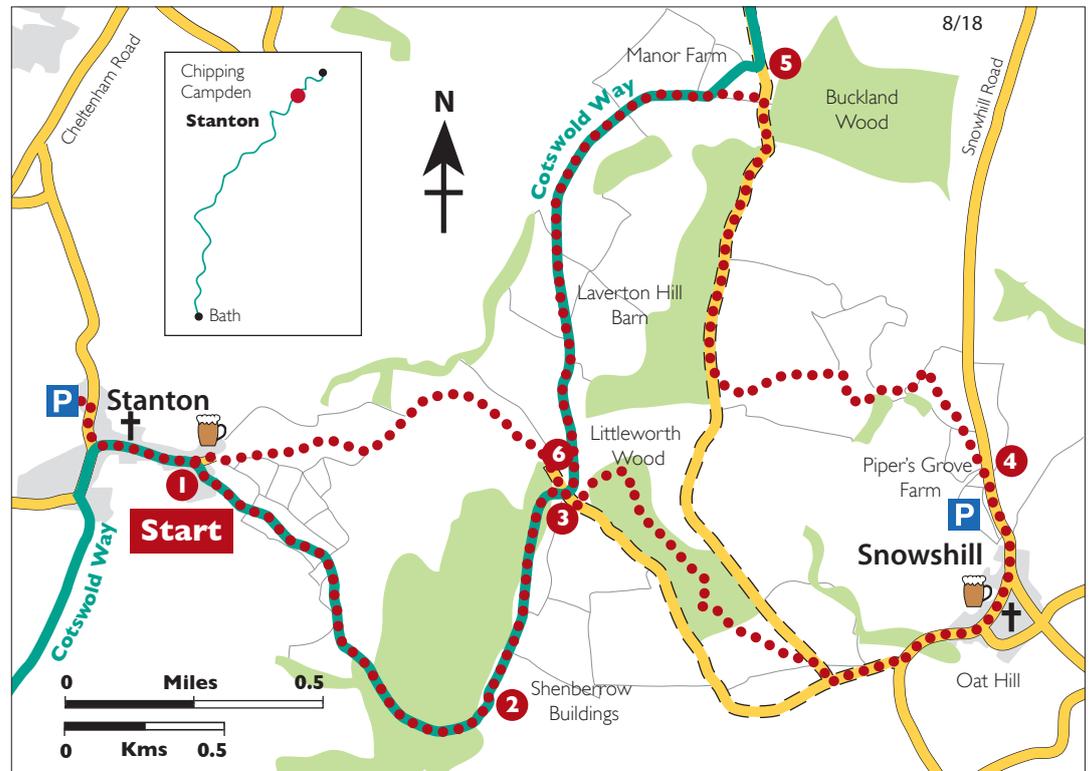
Pub at Stanton. Further pub at Snowshill Manor and garden. (National Trust members free).

Parking

Parish Council car park next to the cricket ground on main road out of village. Parking also available at the Mount Inn for customers only.

Please do not park in village centre.

1 Turn right out of the village car park and in 50m bear left up Stanton main street and continue to a Cotswold Way signpost towards the top of the village near an old lamppost on a triangle of grass. Bear right here following the Cotswold Way past a thatched cottage. Just before the water station, which may be hidden by trees in the summer, turn right at the marker post as the Cotswold



Way leaves the track to follow a footpath down to the right and through two gates. After you pass the small pond on your right, watch your footing, and follow the trail all the way to the top, crossing two stiles.

2 Continue on through the kissing gate to the left of the house, and follow the track across the field for half a mile (0.8km) until you reach a cattle grid at the end.

3 At this point you leave the Cotswold Way for a while (*For the shorter route, skip forward to point 6 and turn left to take the track downhill back towards Stanton, ignoring the Cotswold Way signpost*). Turn right along the road to Snowshill and after some 50 metres head down the wide path sharp left, opposite new gates. Keep right to enter Littleworth Wood, and some 50 metres further down turn right. Follow this path, keeping straight through this peaceful little woodland, owned and managed by the National Trust, until you reach the gate at the end. Continue down across the next field towards the

kissing gate at the far left corner, turning right along the road and left at the T junction. Take another left turn and continue down into Snowshill. Pass through the delightful village between the pub and the church, past the carpark.

4 Turn left at the entrance to Snowshill Manor and go through a kissing gate immediately on your right then down through the field past a line of trees. Head through the next field and pass through the kissing gate at the far side, turning left to follow the fenceline downhill. Go through the gate at the bottom and veer left up through the woods, turning right just before the next gate. Continue up along the edge of the woods with the fence on your left, watching for muddy patches after wet weather, and go through the gate at the top. Walk steeply left up the narrow field towards the line of trees until you reach an old iron kissing gate. Turn right and follow the farm track for half a mile (0.8km) until you reach a field gate between the two woodlands.

5 After pausing for a few minutes

to catch your breath, go through the kissing gate on your left and follow the footpath down across a field to the track at the bottom. Turn left to rejoin the Cotswold Way and continue up the trail for about a mile (1.6km), past a house and old quarries on your left, until you reach the waymarker post at the top next to where you left the Cotswold Way nearly four miles earlier (6.5km).

6 Turn right along the track down towards a field gate, and continue downhill along the steep-sided path. Be careful to watch your footing along this track, but also not to miss the awe-inspiring views over Stanton and across the Severn Vale into Wales that open up below you – once tasted, this slice of Cotswolds will never be forgotten. Passing through the last gate at the bottom of the track, you emerge next to the Mount Inn. Continue down to the left of the pub towards the start point, or take the chance to rest tired feet at a warm and welcoming Cotswold inn – the perfect end to a perfect walk.