

Little Cotswold Walks



Windrush Valley - West



RR Gordon

A series of short, circular walks around Cotswold villages – ending at pubs!
Covering Ford, Kineton, Guiting Power, Naunton, Bourton-on-the-Water

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,
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Cotswold Brew Co
Stow road
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GL54 2HN



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Introduction.

When I put these walks together, I'm looking for a good part of the walk to go through the pathways and lanes of a village, but also for part to be through the countryside with a bit of up and down. I aim for an hour or so – which justifies having a pudding at the pub!

This booklet follows the western end of the River Windrush through villages such as Ford, Kington, Guiting Power, the hidden village of Naunton – and the not so hidden village of Bourton-on-the-Water. We've tried to take in the best sights, but keep away from the busiest routes – and I hope you'll think we've had some success.

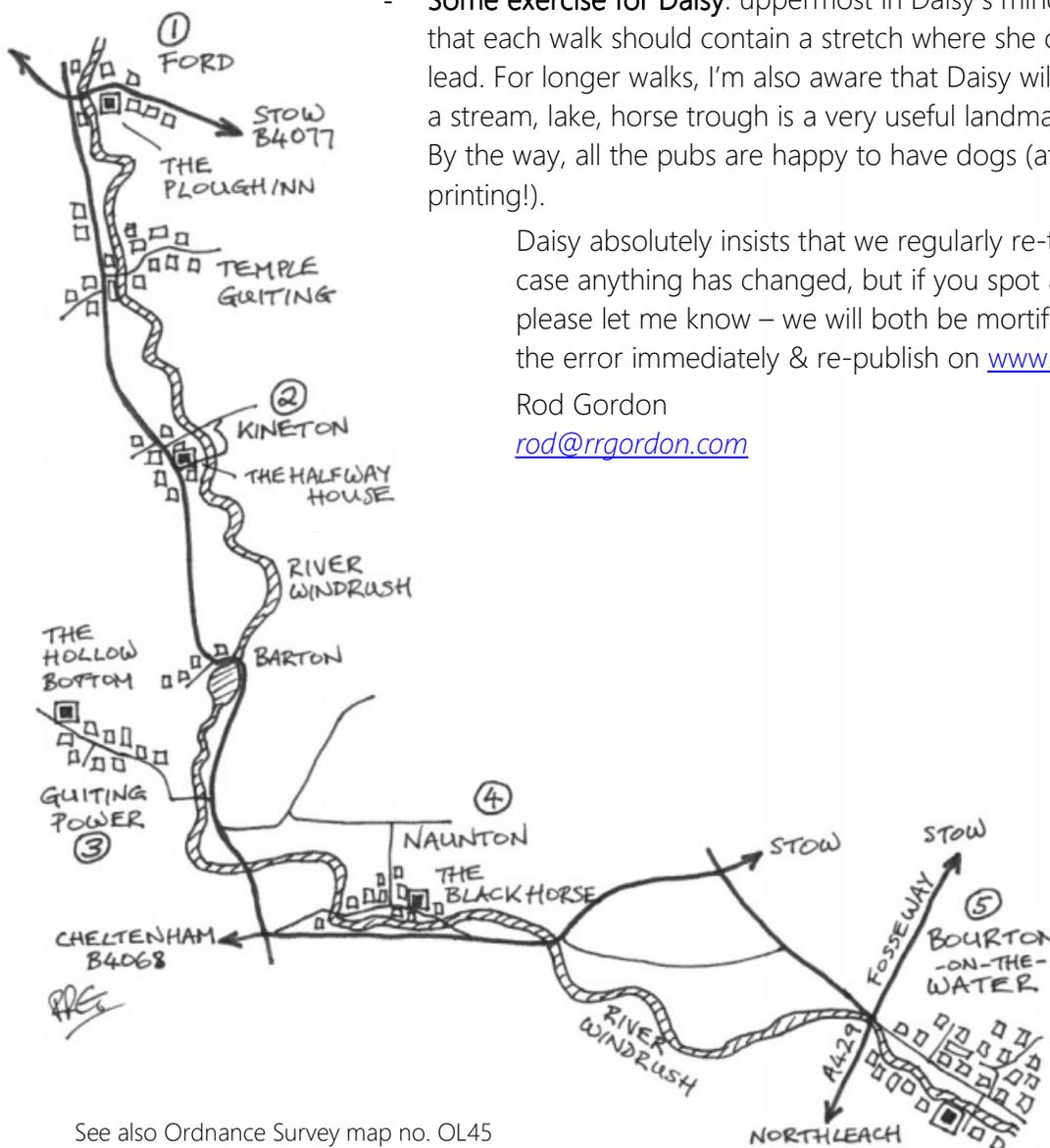
Each walk has been hand-crafted by me, my wife Nicky and our dog Daisy. Our combined objectives were:

- **A nice village:** there are so many stunningly beautiful villages in the Cotswolds and we've tried to include some of their lanes and walkways, especially in the Naunton walk
- **Circular walks:** we've tried to come up with circular (ish) walks, but there might be some interesting side paths which we've suggested and sometimes these require returning by the same route.
- **A good pub:** and why not? In my mind, each of these walks operates as follows: you finish work slightly early on a summer's evening, drive to the suggested parking spot (normally the pub), do a good, brisk walk and then sit outside a nice country pub having a drink and perhaps a bite to eat.
- **Some exercise for Daisy:** uppermost in Daisy's mind was her desire that each walk should contain a stretch where she could be off the lead. For longer walks, I'm also aware that Daisy will need a drink so a stream, lake, horse trough is a very useful landmark on the walk. By the way, all the pubs are happy to have dogs (at time of printing!).

Daisy absolutely insists that we regularly re-trace the walks in case anything has changed, but if you spot any errors then please let me know – we will both be mortified & will correct the error immediately & re-publish on www.rrgordon.com

Rod Gordon

rod@rrgordon.com



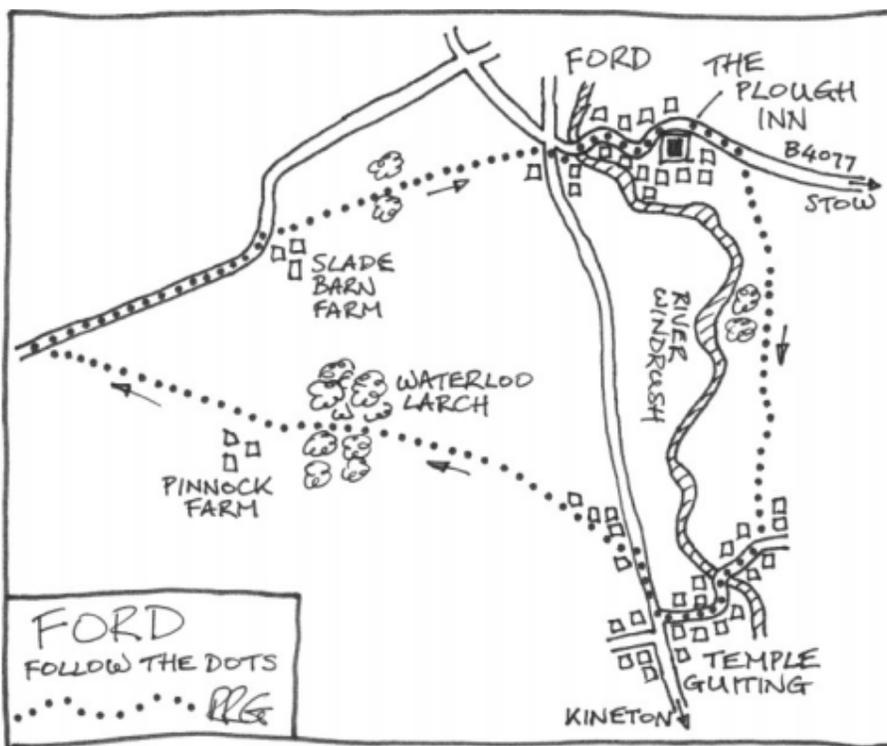
See also Ordnance Survey map no. OL45

1. Ford

Rod's Rating	 <p>A great walk made even greater by the pub at the end! A typical Cotswold village pub with log-burning stoves in each room, lovely beers and excellent food. One of the best pubs in the area.</p>
Daisy's Rating	 <p>Daisy loved roaming across the rounded hills and valleys of this walk. A great variety of fields and woods with plenty of streams for regular drinks.</p>
Is it a circular walk?	Yes, well, triangular in fact.
Pub	The Plough Inn, Ford, Gloucestershire GL54 5RU www.theploughinnford.co.uk
How long did it take?	2 hours 6.5km/4miles climbing 200m

WHERE TO PARK:

The Plough Inn has two large car parks, one on either side of the road.



THE WALK - In summary:

A triangle made up of:
 a southerly leg following the River Windrush to Temple Guiting, then a north-westerly leg to near Pinnock Farm, with a final north-easterly stretch back to Ford.

THE WALK - In detail:

> Turn right out of the pub and walk up the right hand side of the main road (B4077) in the direction of Stow; you will only need to go up the road a couple of hundred yards and you can walk on the verge all the way

> Turn right at a public footpath signposted marked Winchcombe Way, walk between bushes and trees

> Go round a stile, through a kissing gate and into a field, turning right

- > Follow public footpath signs along the right edge of four fields, the River Windrush below to your right
- > On reaching the first few houses of Temple Guiting, at end of 4th field, go through gateway and continue **straight ahead** along gravel driveway until you reach a road (tennis court on right shortly before!)
- > **Turn right** onto road still following Winchcombe Way; head down into valley, across the Windrush, back up the other side past church on your left
- > At the T-junction **turn right** onto another road (Kineton to Ford road)
- > After 200 yards, just after first cottage on left, **turn left** through a wooden gate to go up a public footpath between two driveways; footpath is marked by stone sign
- > Follow path all the way to the top between the two driveways/gardens
- > Go through a gateway by a small stable, a short way through some woods and over a stile
- > **Turn left** and walk up the left edge of the field, heading uphill
- > Go through metal gate and continue up the left edge of the field; as you crest rise turn to look at the view
- > Go through metal gate and continue straight ahead
- > Go over stile and into trees (Waterloo Larch), continue straight ahead on left edge of woods, heading down
- > At bottom of hill, just before a stream, **turn left** to follow public footpath sign

- > Go over and stile, turn right and then over another stile
 - > **Turn right** onto farm track
 - > At a junction with another farm track running from left to right (this is the driveway to Pinnock Farm), go straight across following footpath; a little further on the pathway becomes slightly sunken lined with trees on both sides
 - > **Turn right** when the footpath reaches road, follow road back down into valley
 - > Just after Slade Barn Farm (very grand!) **turn right** onto a public footpath marked Gloucestershire Way
 - > Follow footpath between two fences running across a large field
 - > The fences become hedges either side and eventually you emerge at the top of the hills
 - > Go straight ahead walking on the left side of the hedge which is ahead of you
 - > Follow footpath straight ahead, heading downhill towards Ford, keeping hedge on your right
 - > When you reach the road, **turn left**, walk five paces and then turn right to head down permissive path; this takes you down the side of the main road heading for the pub, but you will need to walk the last couple of hundred yards on the road itself; the Plough Inn will appear on your right hand side; go in for a beer or a cream tea!
- Any problems with these directions? Please email me at rod@rrgordon.com (also if you liked the walk!)*

SOMETHING INTERESTING:

As you descend the final hill of the walk, heading back down into Ford, you will see a horse-racing stables and gallops on the opposite hillside. This is Jackdaws Castle which is owned by JP McManus and is the base of trainer Jonjo O'Neill.

As a rider, Jonjo O'Neill won the Cheltenham Gold Cup with Dawn Run and remains the only person to have won a hundred races in a season both as a jockey and a trainer.

This walk follows short stretches of the following ways:

The Gloucestershire Way which runs from Chepstow up the left side of the Severn, around the north of Gloucester and then the south of Cheltenham (near Birdlip and Cowley) across to Stow-on-the-Wold; the way then goes all the way back across to Tewkesbury where there is a connection to the Worcestershire Way.

The Winchcombe Way is a figure of eight footpath centred on Winchcombe. The eastern loop goes through Kineton, Temple Guiting, Ford, Cutsdean, Snowhill, Laverton, Stanton, Stanway. The western loop goes through Alderton, Dumbleton, Gretton, Gotherington and Bishops Cleeve.

2. Kineton

Rod's Rating	 <p>Sumptuous undulating hills and valleys around this quiet little village. Part of the walk crosses the Guiting Manor estate, part of which is an official "open access area" where visitors are encouraged to visit and enjoy the landscape. See www.naturalengland.org.uk for details of which parts of the estate are open access or during the walk refer to the map that is on the gateway as you enter. Also see Something Interesting below for background information.</p>
Daisy's Rating	 <p>Daisy's favourite walk in this booklet. Lots of fields to gallop around, woods for hunting, streams for cooling down and having a drink.</p>
Is it a circular walk?	Yes (triangular route to the west of Kineton)
Pub	The very friendly Half Way House , Kineton, GL54 5UG www.thehalfwayhousekineton.co.uk
How long did it take?	1½ hours

WHERE TO PARK:

Either at the pub or on the roadside near the pub.

THE WALK - In summary:

Up a rise to the west of Kineton and down into a shallow valley; follow the valley upstream through Guiting Manor Estate and then back along a farm track to the village.

THE WALK - In detail:

> Turn left out of the pub heading past the phone box

> Turn right at a Public Footpath sign after 200 yards to go up a track to the left of a barn

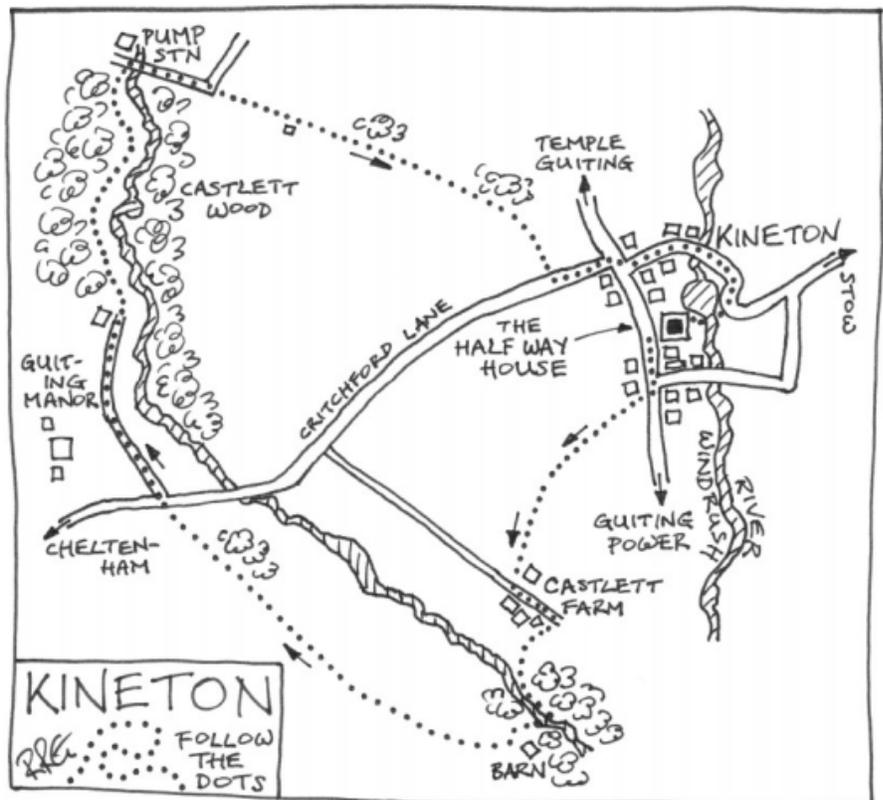
> Go straight up two fields (moderately uphill) keeping the hedge on your left

> Go through a kissing gate at the top & continue straight ahead between hedge on left & fence on right

> Climb over a stile which leads past a farmhouse (Castlett Farm)

> Continue straight ahead out of the drive and turn left onto the road (oppose some large wooden gates)

> After 200 yards turn right at a Public Path signpost, heading slightly downhill, the path curving to the left



- > Go through a wooden gate (marked PLEASE KEEP GATE SHUT) and continue straight ahead through some woods to the bottom of the valley
- > Cross the stream using a small bridge and **turn right** to climb up a steep track on the other side
- > At the top of the rise, you find a barn on the edge of some fields; ignore first track to right (marked Private) but go out of the entranceway onto the end of a tarmac road
- > **Turn right** to follow a sandy coloured track running through the middle of some fields; you are now following Wardens Way for a while
- > Follow the track as it dips down into a shallow valley, trees on the right, and through a gateway into the open access area of Guiting Manor Estate (see map on gatepost)
- > Go straight on up the sandy coloured track (past a small parking area on your right)
- > Go straight across the road to follow an old tarmac track marked "Unsuitable for motors"; the manor building is up to your left
- > **Bear right** across the front of a small house following a track marked Winchcombe Way
- > The track goes slightly uphill and then slightly downhill following the stream upstream through the woods
- > Ignore a tempting opening in a fence just before a small pond (with Winchcombe Way arrows on both fenceposts); keep straight ahead on the same track
- > **Turn sharp right** onto tarmac road in poor repair (Pinnock pumping station opposite, Severn Trent Water)
- > The road goes over the stream and then steeply up and left

- > At a crossroads of sorts, the tarmac road goes left and another path arrives from the right, but you should continue **straight ahead** up a Cotswold stone track
- > As you reach the tree at the top of the rise, look to your right to see a view of the manor house and the route you walked earlier
- > Continue following this track for a mile or two, past an old barn on the right, slightly uphill then flat-ish and then finally a long downhill stretch; enjoy this stretch as not many of my walks end on a downhill leg (not my fault! they normally put the pubs on higher ground!)
- > **Turn left** onto the road and continue down to a T junction with Lane House opposite
- > **Turn right** back into Kineton and you can either go straight along to the pub or if you would like a short extra loop just for fun then follow the remaining instructions; these add an extra 10-15 minutes to take you down to the River Windrush and back up again behind the pub
- > Immediately after turning right at the T-junction, **turn left** down a road marked "Ford"
- > Go steeply downhill following the road
- > Cross the stream at the bottom using the footbridge and go a short way along the road
- > Follow the Public Path sign to cross back over the stream at a footbridge (small lake on right)
- > Go up the track and **turn right** at a farm gate marked "Private"
- > Walk along the edge of a garden and out along a driveway; the pub is on your left at the top of the drive

Any problems with these directions? Please email me at rod@rrgordon.com (also if you liked the walk!)

SOMETHING INTERESTING:

Background to the Guiting Manor open access area:

The great agricultural depression of the 1870's hit Guiting very hard and by the beginning of the 20th century its houses were in a dilapidated state. In the 1930's Moya Davidson began to buy up properties in the village in order to ensure that they continued to be rented to local people.

Raymond Cochrane acquired the Estate in 1958 for agricultural research purposes and continued the restoration work begun by Moya Davidson. In 1964 the original Guiting Manor Trust won a Civic Trust Award and in 1971 the core of the village was made a Conservation Area.

In 1976 the new Guiting Manor Amenity Trust was founded by Raymond Cochrane to ensure the future of the village lands and houses, nature and the environment, character and community of Guiting Power. The Trust owns and manages about 50% of village's residential properties and lets them out to local people. The Trust now owns 67 dwellings and about 2,000 acres.

The Trust's policy of choosing tenants from local families and from people working in or near the village, and also giving priority to young married couples, has given the population balance and stability and has happily renewed the trend initiated so courageously in the 1930's.

The Trust's farming subsidiary, Guiting Manor Farms, has won various awards including the national Booker Silver Lapwing Trophy for combining good sustainable farming with the conservation of wildlife. The land is managed under DEFRA's Higher Level Stewardship Scheme which encourages diversity and access to all – hence the open access area and why there is a small car park near the manor house.



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Dating back to 1554 the Falcon is a small, select hotel and restaurant situated in the centre of the beautiful Cotswold village of Painswick. Overlooking the historic village church and its famous 99 clipped yew trees, the Falcon hotel offers great hospitality with a warm welcome.

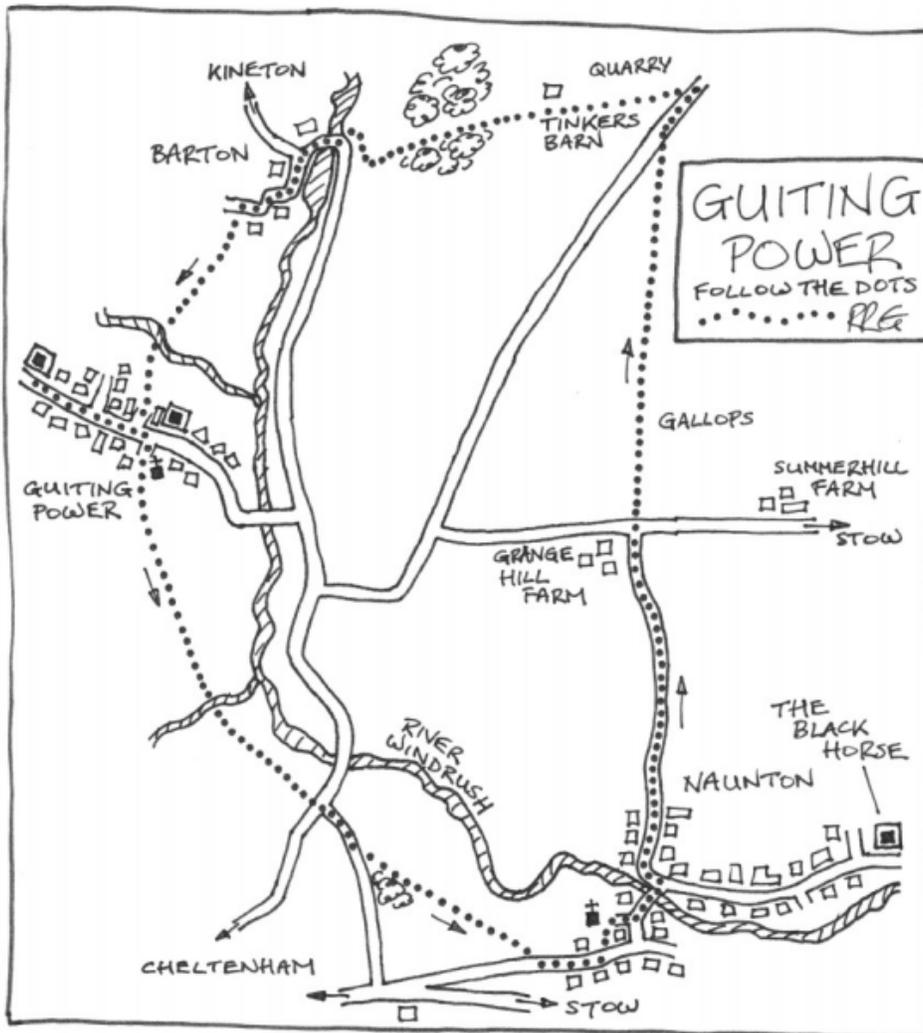
The Oak is a traditional town pub, located in the narrow streets of Painswick, always guaranteeing a warm welcome, with a varied menu of good pub food with a few twists, from nibbles at the bar, snacks, platters to share and full meals, the choice is yours, with a sun trap of a patio in the summer and a roaring open fire in the winter, tastefully refurbished without losing the character. Good selection of Real Ales, beers and ciders, with a wine list to suit all.



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3. Guiting Power.

Rod's Rating	 <p>A great walk, albeit a little tiring! The walk takes you from Guiting Power to Naunton along the Warden's Way and then loops back across the hill on the north side of the valley. Picturesque valleys and bracing uplands.</p>
Daisy's Rating	 <p>Daisy slept for hours after this one!</p>
Is it a circular walk?	Yes.
Pub	<p>The Hollow Bottom, Guiting Power, GL54 5UX, Tel:01451 850392 www.hollowbottom.com or</p> <p>The Farmers Arms, Guiting Power, GL54 5TZ www.donnington-brewery.com/the_farmers_arms_guiting_power.htm</p> <p>The Old Post Office Tea Rooms, Guiting Power</p>
How long did it take?	2½ to 2¾ hours



WHERE TO PARK:

Plenty of parking on the roadside at The Hollow Bottom or you can park on the village green or at the village hall (see walk instructions below).

THE WALK - In summary:

From Guiting Power along the southern side of the River Windrush valley to Naunton – then back across the top of the northern slope

THE WALK - In detail:

> Turn left out of the pub and head back towards the main part of the village

> Walk past The Old Post Office tea rooms opposite the village green

- > **Turn right** just past the war memorial on the green up road signposted to the school and Warden's Way
 - > **Stay left (ie straight on)** at the playground building where the road bends to the right
 - > Go past village hall on right (with public Car Park) and head for church
 - > Go to right of church, following Warden's Way, through a gate and then a kissing gate into a field
 - > Go through a kissing gate at the end of the field and head **diagonally left** across next field, following Warden's Way and Gustav Holst Way
 - > At end of field, go through a kissing gate and cross a stream using a footbridge just below a small lake
 - > Climb up to a kissing gate on the brow straight ahead
 - > Walk straight across middle of next field (Guiting Grange is to your left, Church Farm on horizon ahead)
(Halfway across the field glance back to look at the view of Guiting Power)
 - > Go thru gate at end of field & follow road straight ahead which leads uphill, still following Warden's Way *(road sign shows Naunton ½ and Stow-on-the-Wold 6)*
 - > After 200 yards the road flattens out; **turn left** into a field at the Warden's Way signpost
 - > Follow farm track along the top (right) edge of the field; the River Windrush is in the valley below
 - > There is a small wood on the right and then the track opens out into a wide field; continue straight ahead
- Church Farm is at the top of the rise on your right; head for woods on far side of field
- > Go through a gate into a steep-sided valley with River Windrush meandering along the bottom to Naunton
 - > Go through a kissing gate and **turn left** onto the road which runs down into Naunton
 - > Shortly after a small farm on the right and driveway to Upper Dale Cottage on your right, there is a small track which forks off to the left of the road (by Overbrook house and a water pump); this is where we leave the Warden's Way;

go past the bench and **turn left** to go through the gate into the churchyard

> Follow the wall on the left and then turn right to walk across the front of church & out of the main gate

** The church, dedicated to St Andrew, is largely 15th century but replaces an older Saxon church on the same site. It is known for two 18th century sun dials in the tower, one of which is above a Latin inscription Lux Umbra Dei meaning "light is the shadow of God". Visitors are welcome*

> After exiting main church gate, walk straight ahead for 20 yards past a small green and **turn left** onto road

> Cross the River Windrush (postbox on left just before bridge) and continue up the road

> Just after Windrush Vale house (on left) and Pixie Cottage (on right) the road bends to the right but you should **turn left** here; **NB. if you wish to have a break in Naunton follow the main road round to the right for a few hundred yards until you get to the Black Horse Inn; then return to this spot and continue ...**

> The road heads slightly uphill past houses such as Sleepwell House, Old Well Cottage, Greystones

> The road then heads out of the village; follow the road to the top of the hill; up, up, up!

If you need a rest then look back at the view of the valley!

> Grange Hill Farm is on your left at the top (just after Mucky Cottage); this farm is the base of Nigel Twiston-Davies, racehorse trainer – see *Something Interesting for this walk and Naunton walk*

> Go straight across the main road to follow a farm track which leads pasts Grange Hill Quarry; **NB. This track is an "other route with public access", ie it is not marked as a footpath but it is open to the public**

> After the small quarry, you will see fields on your right – these are part of Summerhill Farm Equine Vets

> Follow the track for about a mile and then **turn right** when you reach the road

> Follow road for 200 yards as it goes slightly downhill into a dip and then up the other side

- > **Turn sharp left** onto a farm track which leads past Tinkers Barn Quarry; *once again this is an "other route with public access"; don't worry you go past quarry quite quickly, ie after a couple of hundred yards*
- > Continue to follow the track up to Tinkers Barn Farm (which is now the quarry offices)
- > Continue straight on past Tinkers Barn Farm (farm buildings on your right)
- > Keep following track between a barbed wire fence & a field on your right – and Cotswold stone wall on left
- > Go past young wood on left and valley opens out on right; field to right is part of Cotswold Farm Park
- > Continue down track and into woods; after a while track bends to left and Guiting Power can be seen ahead
- > **Turn right** at the road to cross over the River Windrush when you reach the bottom of the valley
- > **Turn left** down small road marked No HGVs with pond on your left
- > The road goes slightly uphill then bends to right, goes past The Old Farmhouse, then bends left

- > Where the road bends to the right again, continue **straight ahead** following Public Footpath sign
- > Walk past Little Windrush Farm (on left) & climb over stile straight ahead between two barns (metal and stone)
- > Go through a small field, the River Windrush on your left, and climb over a stile
- > Go through another small field and through kissing gate; **fork right** diagonally across field
- > The path goes past the inner corner of the L-shaped field and then hugs the fence on the right
- > Go through kissing gate in the corner of the field and turn left to go down to a stream
- > Cross the stream using the footbridge and go straight up the other side, following a small brook
- > At the top of the rise go through kissing gate straight ahead and then up track which becomes a tarmac road
- > **Turn right** at village green (cup of tea at The Old Post Office?); the pub is then on the right after a couple of hundred yards

Any problems with these directions? Please email me at rod@rrgordon.com (also if you liked the walk!)

SOMETHING INTERESTING:

The Olde Inn was bought in August 1996 by a group of race horse trainers including Nigel Twiston-Davies and Raymond Mould (the Hollow Bottom Partnership). Upon the acquisition the name of the pub was changed to the Hollow Bottom, apparently locals had referred to the Old Inn as 'the pub in the hollow in the bottom of the road' for a considerable time.

The pub was the scene for jubilation in April 1998 when Earth Summit, trained by Nigel Twiston-Davies, won the Grand National. More than a hundred cheering and clapping locals lined the street by the Hollow Bottom forming a guard of honour to welcome the 10 year old winner back home.

Friends and business partners Hugh Kelly and Charles Pettigrew bought the lease in May 2001, and to mark the occasion Scotsmen Hugh and Charlie donned their kilts and hired a piper.

The horse racing memorabilia still adorns the walls, from paintings to newspaper cuttings. Saddles and racing outfits are also proudly displayed. Visitors entering the pub are greeted by a pair of boots worn by Richard Dunwoody when he rode Charter Party to victory in the 1988 Gold Cup. The Hollow Bottom is a shrine to the Cheltenham Festival.

Nigel Twiston-Davies secured another Grand National win in 2002 when his horse Bindaree narrowly pipped the post in front of a What's Up Boys ridden by Toddington based jockey, Richard Johnson. Bindaree was guest of honour at the Hollow Bottom in when it reopened in May 2005 after a refurbishment. The restaurant had been doubled in size and a new kitchen, toilets, cellar and staff accommodation were also added.

After two winners at the Grand National it was only a matter of time before Nigel Twiston-Davies trained a Gold Cup winner. That ultimate accolade came in March 2010 when Imperial Commander crossed the finishing line at Cheltenham at odds of 7-1.

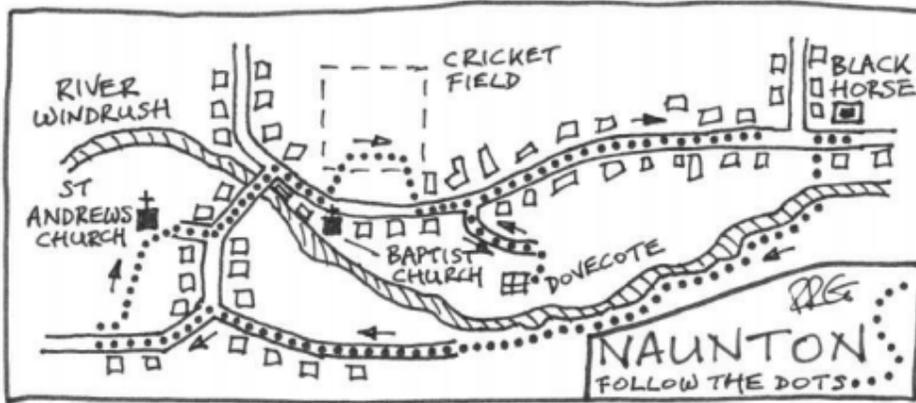
Guiting Power is based on its manor which belonged to King Edward (the Confessor) and was the seat of his sheriff Aldwyn. By the time of Doomsday it had declined and further declined when the then Lords, the lePohers, gave half the lands to the Cistercian Abbey of Bruern. It was from the lePohers that it got its name Power. Guiting comes from the Saxon *getinge* meaning rushing which presumably refers to the Windrush, then a considerable river.

4. Naunton

Rod's Rating	 <p>This walk's just a tiddler! However I wanted to include Naunton as it's a lovely village tucked away in its own secret valley – with a great pub. This walk takes in a delightful stretch along the River Windrush before the valley widens out before the village church. It's only a short walk, but small ones are more juicy.</p>
Daisy's Rating	 <p>Daisy is not so bothered about picturesque villages, but she did enjoy jumping in the River Windrush. In any case, there's no such thing as a bad walk.</p>
Is it a circular walk?	Yes
Pub	The Black Horse Inn, Naunton, Cheltenham GL54 3AD www.theblackhorseaunton.co.uk
How long did it take?	20-40 minutes depending on whether you visit all of the sights – we've added a couple of extra little extra loops to take in the church and cricket pitch

DIRECTIONS/WHERE TO PARK:

Naunton is four miles west of Bourton-on-the-Water, just the other side of the Slaughters. You can park at the pub car park (opposite the pub) or on the road just outside the pub.



THE WALK - In summary:

Walk west alongside the River Windrush to the village church – and then come back along the village high street.

THE WALK - In detail:

- > Turn **right** out of the pub
- > Walk half a dozen paces and then **turn left** up Close Hill
- > Cross the stream (River Windrush) and **turn right** over the stone stile
- > Walk along the riverbank (heading upstream)
- > Go through a metal kissing gate and continue straight ahead
- > Go through a wooden gate and continue straight ahead (ignore Wardens Way to the side)

- > Climb over stile by metal 6-bar gate and continue straight ahead (heading for church at end of the valley)
- > The path becomes a tarmac road with houses on the left
- > At the T-junction **turn left** to walk 100 yards uphill up the road
- > Just after the bend, **turn sharp right**, almost back on yourself, in front of Overbrook house
- > Head for wide gate into stables, but **go left** through a narrow gate into churchyard

** The church, dedicated to St Andrew, is largely 15th century but replaces an older Saxon church on the same site. It is known for two 18th century sun dials in the tower one of which is above a Latin inscription Lux Umbra Dei meaning "light is the shadow of God". Visitors are welcome*

> Walk down past the church and out of the main church gate onto Windrush View

> **Turn left** at the road and cross back over the River Windrush

> Follow the road around to the right (past the very tiny Pixie Cottage)

You can actually rent this as a holiday cottage! Just search for "Pixie Cottage, Naunton" on Google

** If you wish to visit the Dovecote turn right down the lane and follow the lane around to the left (ignore gate with Dovecote sign straight ahead of you); the entrance to the Dovecote is on your right just before you reach the stream; you may go into lean-to on the left side of the building and then look through the doorway into the main part of the Dovecote; nearly every hole in the interior walls is home to a pigeon - just wait and after a while they start going back and forth.*

> Head back up to the road and turn right

> The Black Horse pub will be on your left after a few hundred yards

> After a short while you will see a Baptist Church on your right

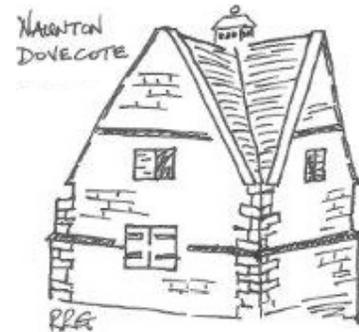
** You are encouraged to visit the Baptist garden of remembrance which is through the heavy metal gates (open 9am-dusk); worth a quick look as the garden has a lovely aspect over the valley*

> Opposite Baptist Church there is a public footpath up some wooden steps - follow these to top of bank

> Walk along the right edge of the cricket field, thru small playground

> Exit field at gate next to main gateway to the sports field and turn right to head back down to the road

> After another couple of hundred yards there is a Dovecote which is normally open



Any problems with these directions? Please email me at rod@rrgordon.com (also if you liked the walk!)

SOMETHING INTERESTING:

A number of ways go through or near Naunton: Wardens Way is a 14-mile walk from Winchcombe to Bourton-on-the-Water along the valleys and the Windrush Way links the same two places but follows the hilltops. The Diamond Way is a roughly diamond-shaped, 66-mile walk created to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Ramblers Association North Cotswolds Group. Horse trainer Nigel Twiston-Davies is based at Grange Hill Farm just to the north of the village. Nigel trained Grand National winners Earth Summit (1998) and Bindaree (2002) as well as Gold Cup winner Imperial Commander (2010). See *Something Interesting* for the Guiting Power walk for further information. Also see www.nigeltwistondavies.co.uk for holiday cottages!

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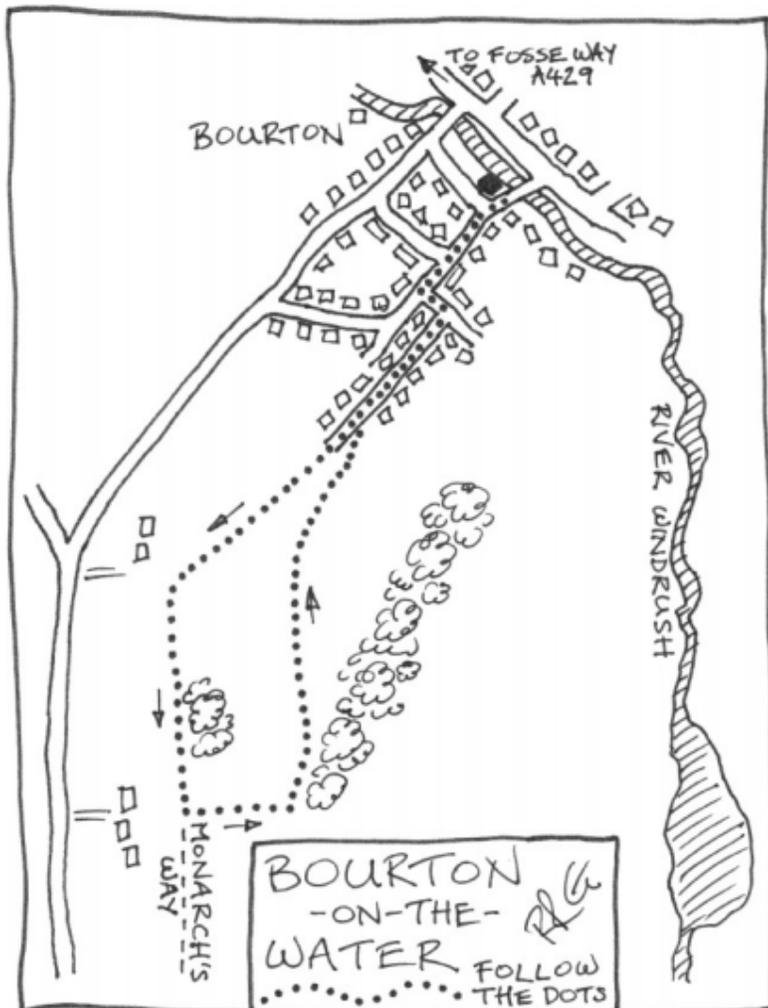
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5. Bourton-on-the-Water: Outside the Goldfish Bowl

Rod's Rating	 <p>Bourton is a lovely village but there are always so many tourists there so I like to venture out to see the soft, rolling valley in which the village is situated. The River Windrush makes Bourton the picturesque location it has become but the waterway is also responsible for the valley which meanders to the east through some other great villages towards Burford.</p>
Daisy's Rating	 <p>A great walk for Daisy: nice fields for a run around (but watch out for livestock), woods to have a sniff about and a couple of streams for a drink.</p>
Is it a circular walk?	Yes
Pub	<p>Lots of nice pubs & cafes in Bourton, but I usually go to this pub which is right on the banks of the River Windrush:</p> <p>The Kingsbridge Inn, Riverside, Bourton on the Water, Gloucester, GL54 2BS www.kingsbridgepub.co.uk</p>
How long did it take?	1 hour 15 mins 4km/2.5miles; climbing: 50m (40m/hr)



WHERE TO PARK:

Bourton is a busy place so it's normally best to go for one of the car parks.

The Rissington Road car park (near Birdland) is normally the cheapest and probably the nearest to the start of this walk. Use GL54 2BN for your satnav.

THE WALK - In summary:

Up the ridge that overlooks the Windrush valley, following part of the Monarch's Way. Then back along a footpath near the bottom of the valley.

THE WALK - In detail:

> **Turn right** out of the front door of the Kingsbridge Arms and immediately **right** down the side street (Victoria Street) which heads away from the River Windrush heading for Chester House Hotel

> The road bends to the left (where the Victoria Street sign is)

> **Take the second left** onto Clapton Row

> **Turn immediately right** onto a road with no name (Gasworks Lane) with a public footpath sign which has a small Monarchs Way sticker on it; go past Broadlands Guest House and all the way to the end

> At the end of the lane is a new development of half a dozen houses, with a public footpath either side; **take the footpath to the right** along the wooden fence, the sign has a Monarchs Way sticker

> Follow the grass footpath with the new development on the left, the backs of other houses on the right

You will now go up a couple of fields before turning left to follow the side of the valley

> Go through metal gate and **continue straight ahead** up the right edge of the field

> Climb over a stile and **continue straight ahead** up the right edge of the next field which climbs slightly

At the top of the field look back at the view of the valley, Bourton slightly to your left in the trees

> Climb over two wooden stiles and **head diagonally left** to metal gate in top left corner

> Go over the wooden stile next to the gate and follow the left (lower) edge of the field

You will now go through a few fields following a footpath which runs along the side of the valley, halfway up, the River Windrush at the bottom of the valley to your left

> Climb over a wooden stile under the trees, over a small stream in winter, and straight across the middle of the next field

> Go through small metal gate inside a larger metal gate, go **straight ahead** along the left edge of the field

> Go over a small footbridge which crosses a stream in winter, going through two gates

You now leave the Monarchs Way here and head down towards the bottom of the valley to make your way back to Bourton-on-the-Water

> **Turn left** through a metal 7-bar gate (with yellow public footpath sign) and head down the middle of the field towards the tree line at the bottom

> When you reach the trees you will see that one footpath goes straight on (and then left into other side of trees), but you should **turn left before the trees** to stay on the lower edge of the field you've just traversed

> Continue to corner of field and then left a few yards past the corner in order to cross a wooden bridge

> **Head slightly diagonally left** across the next field towards three small trees in the hedge

> Go across a wooden footbridge and straight across the next field

> Go through a wooden gate and **continue straight ahead** along the right edge of the next field

> Climb over wooden stile next to a metal 6-bar gate & continue straight ahead across middle of next field

> Go over a wooden footbridge, through a wooden gate, straight on across field past telegraph pole towards the houses

> Go through gateway (by an old bath!) and follow the left edge of the field towards houses

> Go through a rusty metal 6-bar gate and continue straight ahead; you are now back in Bourton at the new development of half a dozen houses where there were two public footpaths – you have come back along the other footpath

> Head back down the road (Gasworks Lane), turn left at the end and then right to head back towards the River Windrush in the centre of Bourton-on-the-Water

Any problems with these directions? Please email me at rod@rrgordon.com (also if you liked the walk!)

SOMETHING INTERESTING:

The earliest evidence of human activity within the Bourton-on-the-Water area was found in the Slaughter Bridge gravel-spread, where Neolithic pottery (dated c. 4000 B.C.) was discovered. Excavations of the Salmonsbury Camp (on the north-east of the village) give evidence of almost continuous habitation through the Neolithic period, the Bronze Age and throughout England's Roman period. By the 11th century a Christian church was established and the village had developed along the River Windrush much as it is today. Despite the long history of habitation almost every building is now of 17th century origin. For further information about Salmondsbury Camp see <https://historicensland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1017340>

Bourton sits on The Fosse Way which was a Roman road in England that linked Exeter (Isca Dumnoniorum) in South West England to Lincoln (Lindum Colonia) in Lincolnshire, via Ilchester (Lindinis), Bath (Aquae Sulis), Cirencester (Corinium) and Leicester (Ratae Corieltauorum).

It joined Akeman Street and Ermin Way at Cirencester, crossed Watling Street at Venonis (High Cross) south of Leicester, and joined Ermine Street at Lincoln.

The word Fosse is derived from the Latin fossa, meaning ditch. For the first few decades after the Roman invasion of Britain in AD 43, the Fosse Way marked the western frontier of Roman rule in Iron Age Britain. It is possible that the road began as a defensive ditch that was later filled in and converted into a road, or possibly a defensive ditch ran alongside the road for at least some of its length. It is remarkable for its extremely direct route: from Lincoln to Ilchester in Somerset, a distance of 182 miles, it is never more than 6 miles from a straight line.



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Cotswold Snow

I remember the day, Ben and I pulling a train of three sledges,
Hauling them through the fields, snow drifting up to the hedges,
Cal, Jamie and Ali on a sleigh ride to the steep-sided valley

Red-cheeked faces poking out of hats and scarves, smiling away,
The sky fat with more snow ready to drop, slate grey,
Again the snow started swirling down, nature's white gown,

My memories are fragile butterflies, on the wind they have flown,
But I have this moment still, though my children are grown,
A knife-sharp image in my mind, cut into stone

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