

Little Cotswold Walks



3. Toadsmoor Valley



RR Gordon

A series of short, circular walks around Cotswold villages – ending at pubs!
Covering Bisley, Eastcombe, Bussage, Oakridge Lynch & Frampton Mansell

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Little Cotswolds Walks
Book 3. Toadsmoor Valley 2023 Edition
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Introduction.

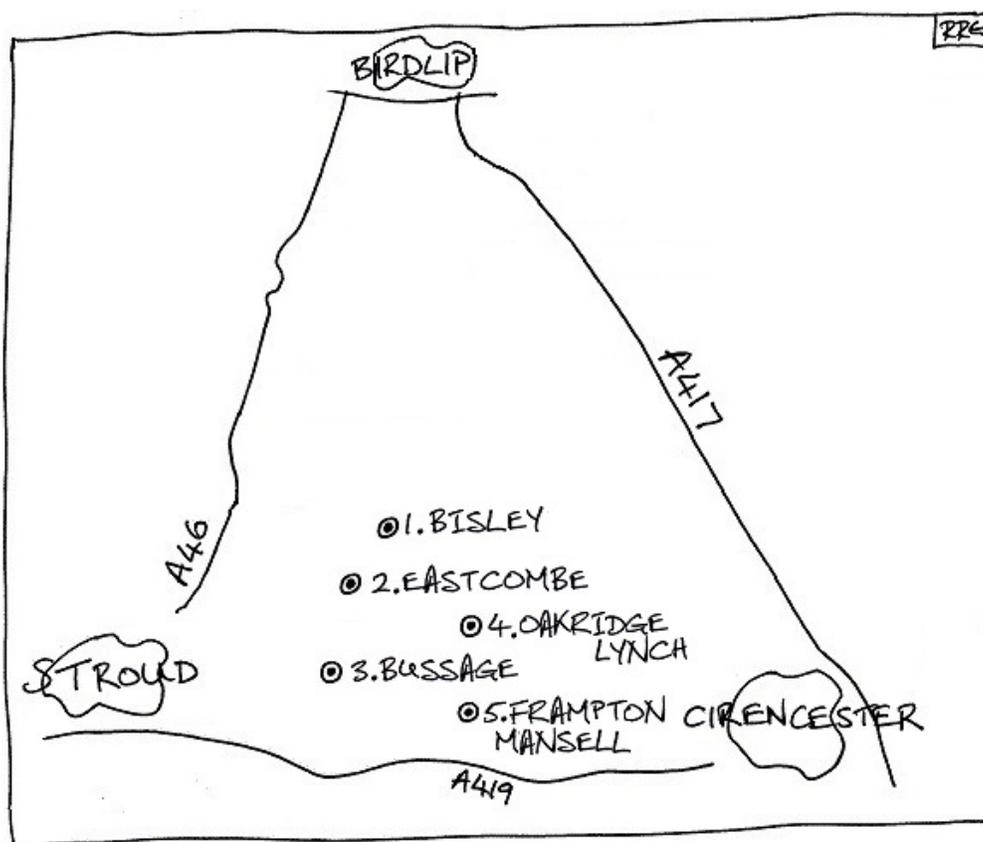
You might think that the walks in this booklet, each at just over an hour's duration, might be a little on the short side, but give them a try. You will be hot and tired after each one – and longing for a glimpse of the pub in the distance at the top of the final climb. Satisfaction assured or your money back!

The first three walks in this booklet break Toadsmoor Valley into thirds: top, middle, lower. They can also be daisy-chained together (no pun intended) to create a super-walk of the whole of this stunning, steep-sided valley. The other two walks are over the ridge into the next valley which is home to the River Frome.

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

- **A nice village:** it's always interesting to see how the other half lives and we've tried to select some places where you can look at some nice houses and discuss whether you would like to live there.
- **Circular walks:** we've tried to come up with circular (ish) walks, but there might be some interesting side paths which we've suggested which require returning by the same route.
- **A good pub:** and why not? Each walk starts and ends at a pub – and every single hostelry in this booklet is absolutely cracking. Five great pubs in such a small area.
- **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. All the pubs are happy to have dogs (at time of printing!)
- **Please note our 'Difficult for Dogs' (DD) symbol** – where stiles are not easily managed. Daisy says she's not getting older, the stiles are getting higher!

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 and will correct the error immediately and re-publish on www.rrgordon.com



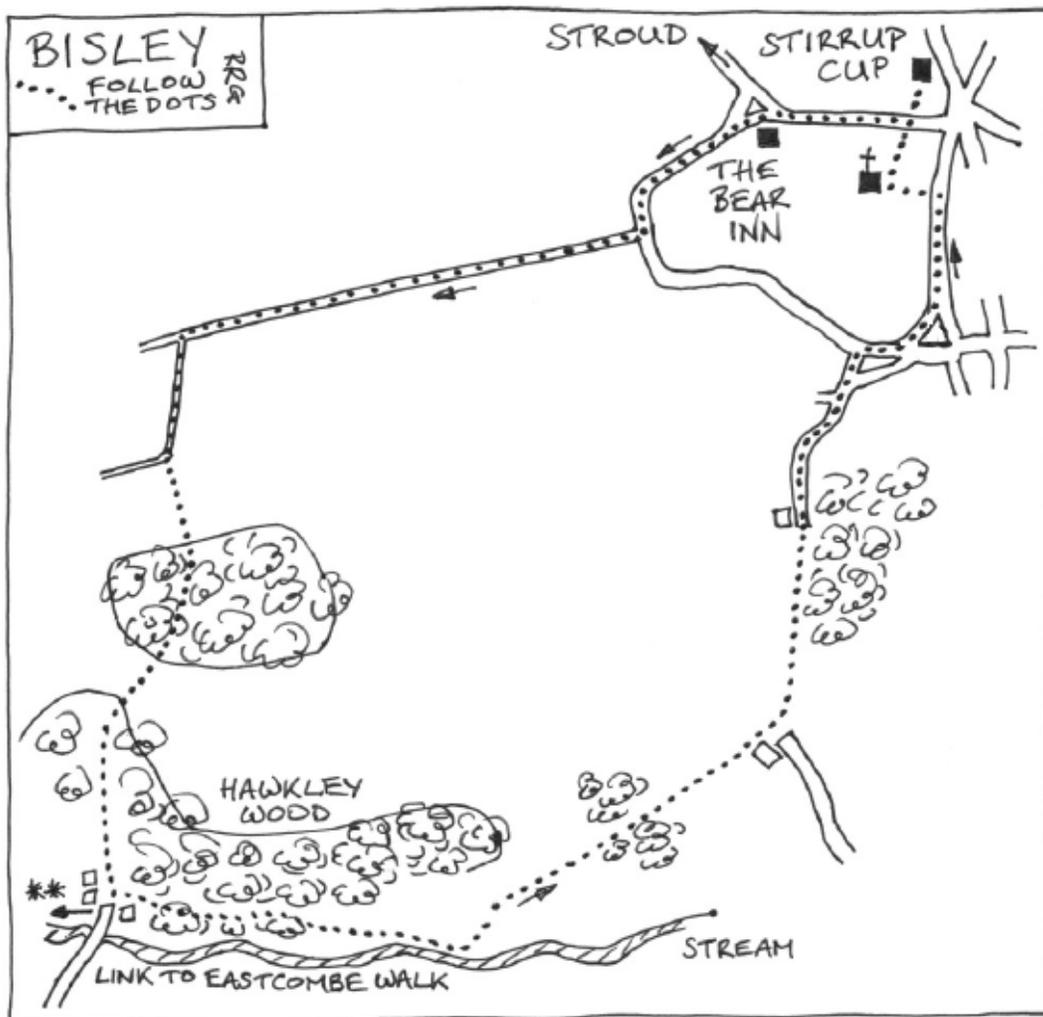
1. Bisley & Upper Toadsmoor.

** This walk also connects to the Eastcombe walk (with a stop at the Lamb Inn at the far end); see ** in instructions below.

Rod's Rating	 Fascinating walk taking in the seven springs which are the source of the Toadsmoor stream and the thoroughly interesting village of Bisley
Daisy's Rating/Difficult for Dogs (DD)?	 Good stretch through some woods, nice stream for a drink and a wallow. Two small stiles which are difficult for dogs (DD)
Is it a circular walk?	Yes
Pub/Cafe	The Stirrup Cup , Cheltenham Road, Bisley GL6 7BL 01452 770007 www.stirrupcupbisley.co.uk , The George Stores, PO & Tearoom , George Street, Bisley GL6 7BP 01452 771203 https://www.bisleyvillage.com/george-stores-and-post-office.html , Bear Inn , George Street, Bisley GL6 7BD http://bearinnbisley.com/find-contact/
How long did it take?	1 ¼ hrs (also connects to Eastcombe walk) 3.5 km (2 ¼ miles) 125m up/down

QUICK DIRECTIONS TO THE PARKING SPOT (The Stirrup Cup):

From Birdlip: fork left at the Fostons Ash, go through The Camp and on to Bisley. Pub on right as you enter village. You can also park on the nearby residential streets.



> **Turn right** out of the Stirrup Cup pub, but do not walk down the road; immediately to the side of the pub there is a small lane running down between the houses; follow this lane (Myra House is first on right)

> **Turn right** when you reach the road (George Street) and walk up the hill

> **Fork left** just past The Bear Inn (up a road between the pub and it's beer garden)

> After 20 yards **turn left** (down road signed "Unsuitable for Heavy Goods Vehicles")

> After 100 yards **turn right** onto narrow road (just after two dog poo bins and before "Unsuitable for Wide Vehicles" sign) – this road leads to Copsegrove Farm

> Continue along this road for half a mile or so (rough, tree-lined road with fields either side)

> When you reach the gate to the farm (marked Private), **turn left** following the Public Footpath sign

(either go across the cattle grid or just behind the large tree there is a wooden five-bar gate)

> Follow the tarmac footpath down through the field (ignore the Permissive Footpath off to the left)

> Where the tarmac footpath bends to the right, go straight down across the grass, head in the direction of a gate and stile to right of tall fir trees

> Go over the stile or through gate and into the small plantation of trees

> The path leads straight ahead, downhill

> At the edge of the plantation there is a wire fence; **go left** and through a metal kissing gate

> Go straight down for ten yards and climb over a stile

> Follow footpath downhill for a few hundred yards, following Cotswold stone wall on right, woods on left

> You will eventually arrive at a house: Hawkley Wood Cottage

**** NB This walk connects to the Eastcombe walk here; instead of following instructions below, go a little way down the concrete drive & turn right,**

then follow directions on the Eastcombe walk starting at **

> Walk down concrete drive for ten yards and **turn left** onto footpath above a lovely landscaped garden at bottom of valley; you will now head back up to Bisley through the top section of the Toadsmoor valley

> The footpath follows the stream (heading upstream) through some woods

> Go through a metal kissing gate into a rough field

> Walk uphill across two fields, separated by a line of hedges and trees, follow the stream uphill

> Head for a house at the top of the hill and go through a metal kissing gate to walk alongside the house

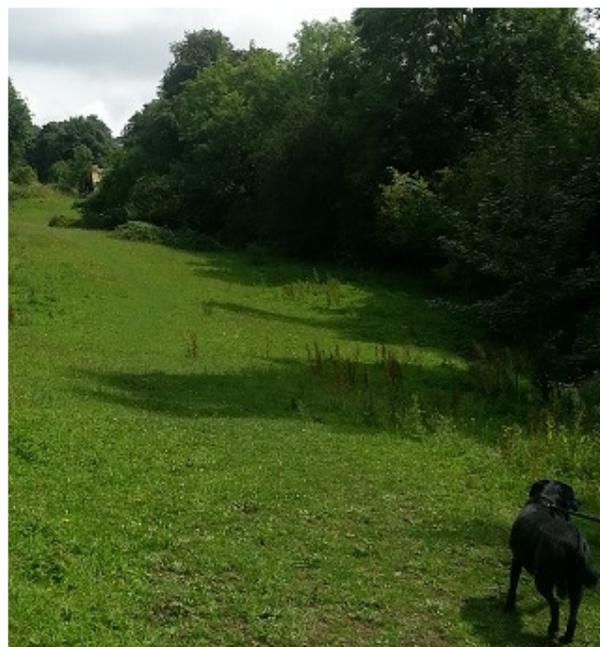
> Go through a metal kissing gate, over stream and into a field, stay on the left side of the field

> Ignore metal gate on left and go through wooden stile straight ahead

> Follow path uphill, along the edge of some woods, with a Cotswold stone wall on the left

> Emerge from path at a house (Brattons) on edge of Bisley, **turn left** onto road and continue uphill

> Follow the road uphill, staying left at the fork by Hartwell Cottage and go past the village springs on left



> **Turn left** onto the High Street, go past Bisley British Legion Hall (inscribed in stone lintel)
> After thirty yards, just after Old Bell Cottage and Wesley House on left (also look for a **BENCH**), **turn left** to go up an alleyway, which leads to an archway to the church
> At the church, **turn immediately right** and walk down church driveway, which leads to George Street where you will find the very friendly George Stores, Post Office and Tea Room

> Go straight across the road to go along alleyway back to The Stirrup Cup pub.

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



These Bisley village springs are the start of the Toadsmoor stream which you followed on this walk – and which runs all the way down the Toadsmoor valley to join the river Frome near Brimscombe

SOMETHING INTERESTING:

Whilst restoration was being undertaken in the church in 1862, Roman altars were found in the walls, one inscribed by Juveninus, who was beheaded by the emperor Julian in AD363 for supporting Christian worship. He later became a saint. The altars are now in the British Museum in London. The site on which the Church stands is believed to be the site of worship in Roman times.

Bisley is mentioned in the Domesday Book (1086) as being the property of Earl Hugh D'Avranches, cousin of William the Conqueror. It has other links with royalty, in the form of the hardly believable legend of the Bisley Boy: in 1542 Henry VIII was on his way to a hunt at Berkeley and left his 9 year-old daughter, Elizabeth, at Overcourt in Bisley (now a home, but once a royal hunting lodge) where she would be safe from the plague which was prevalent in those days. Unfortunately Elizabeth died, but the courtiers, ever fearful of their royal master, devised a cunning plan. A substitute for the princess had to be found before the king returned, but no girl could be found who resembled the recently deceased Elizabeth closely enough. So instead they found a red-headed boy in the village. If the legend is to be believed, Master/Mistress Elizabeth must have been very convincing, as history tells us that Elizabeth 1 went on to reign for 45 years!

2. Eastcombe & Mid Toadsmoor.

** This walk also connects to the Bisley walk (with a stop at the Stirrup Cup); see ** in instructions below.

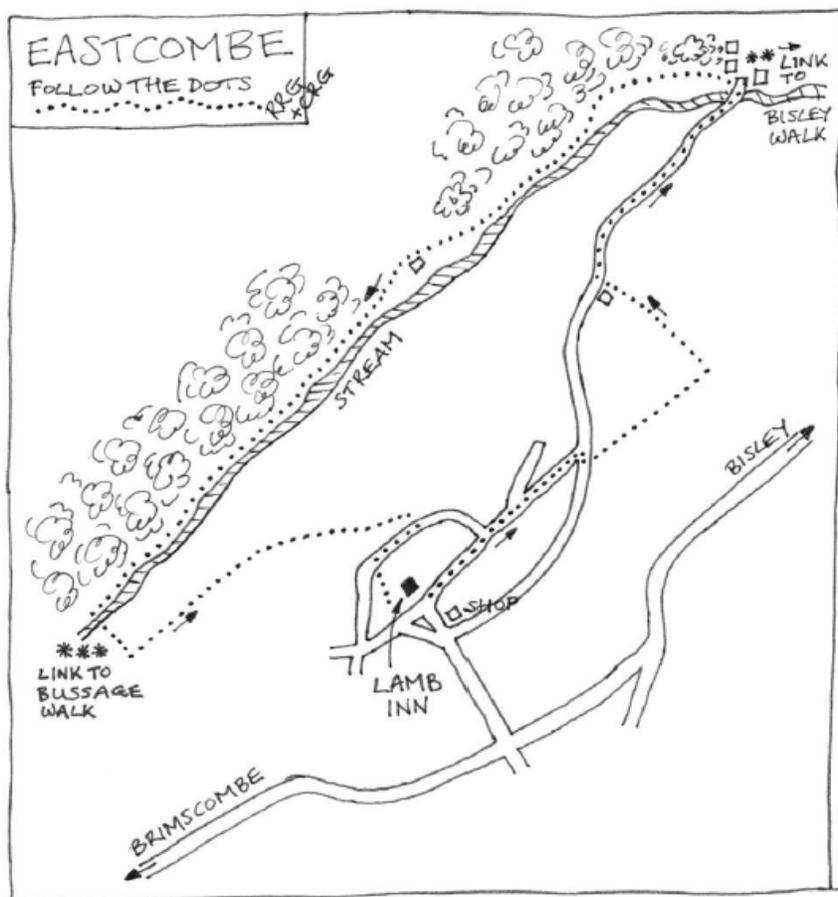
*** It also connects to the Bussage walk to add a further hour; see *** in instructions below.

Rod's Rating	 Out of the village along a ridge with beautiful views, then down into Toadsmoor valley, follow the stream down through the woods; then back up to Eastcombe. Great pub at the end!
Daisy's Rating/Difficult for Dogs (DD)?	 Daisy couldn't decide between 4 and 5 stars so went down the middle. Good section through the woods along the stream where she can be off the lead. No difficult stiles as both have dog gates!
Is it a circular walk?	Yes
Pub	The Lamb Inn, Dr Crouchs Road, Eastcombe, Stroud GL6 7DN http://www.lambinneastcombe.co.uk 01452 770 261
How long did it take?	1 hr 10 mins (also connects to Bisley and Bussage walks) 3.5km (2¼ miles) 175m up/down

QUICK DIRECTIONS TO THE PARKING SPOT (The Lamb Inn or around the village green):

From Birdlip: fork left at the Fostons Ash, go through The Camp and Bisley; look for sign to The Lamb Inn to the right as you enter Eastcombe.

From Stroud: take the Cirencester road and turn left up to Eastcombe just after Brimscombe; go through traffic lights halfway up the hill and look for sign to The Lamb Inn to the left as you go through Eastcombe



- > **Turn left** out of the Lamb Inn onto a narrow road called The Street (slight downhill)
- > Stay right as you go through the village (don't be tempted to fork left halfway through!)
- > **Fork right** at 1, Cotswold Cottages, following an even narrower tarmac road (*do cars drive up here?*)
- > After last house, cut across the grass and go straight on up grassy slope – or follow lane a little further and then turn sharp right onto tarmac road and immediately left – to go up to a grass pathway sign-posted by a Public Footpath sign; hedge on the right, a field on the left with views over valley
- > Go through a kissing gate and keep straight on across the bottom of a field (hedges and trees to left)
- > After 200yds there is a gap in the trees on the left looking out over the valley; go through the kissing gate; walk downhill heading diagonally left; aim for a house at the bottom-left of the field
NB. On the opposite side of the valley is a manor house which is part of Lypiatt Park, the home of Lynn Chadwick, sculptor, 1914-2003. See "Something Interesting" below for further information.
- > Go through kissing gate just to right of house and **turn right** onto road (Fidges Lane again)

- > Follow road all the way to bottom of valley, always bearing right and cross the stream at the bottom
- > As the road goes up on the other side there is a house called Hawkley Cottage on the right
**** NB This walk connects to Bisley walk here; instead of following instructions below, go a little way up the concrete drive to Hawkley Wood Cottage & turn right at public footpath sign into woods, then follow directions on the Bisley walk starting at **; you will return to this point after completing the Bisley walk**
- > Ten yards up the concrete section of road, **turn left** through a gap in a stone wall, (Public Footpath sign)
- > Follow the valley downstream, woods on your right, stream and valley floor on your left
- > Go through a five-bar gate; I let Daisy off the lead here as the walk continues through woods
- > After a few hundred yards a house appears (Keepers Cottage); continue out along their driveway (a stony track) following the valley (ignore two footpaths going up to the right)
- > After a few hundred yards you cross a road; continue to follow the footpath with the stream on your left



*** *Bussage Walk connection here – go to Bussage instructions marked by ****

> After a few hundred yards turn left, jumping across the stream (at a spot we call “Daisy’s Leap”), to climb over a stile; follow footpath uphill in order to start climbing back up towards Eastcombe

> At the top of this rise is another stile; **turn left** to walk along a farm track which heads back up the valley

*** *Bussage Walk connection – if re-joining after Eastcombe walk then follow instructions from here*

> After a house on the right, go straight ahead through a gateway, normally left open

> At the next gateway a few paces further on, **fork right** opposite a low Cotswold stone barn on the left; go through a kissing gate (with sign “Dogs to be kept on lead”) and proceed diagonally uphill

> Go through a kissing gate at the top and bear left to walk along the top of the ridge next to a fence (hedge on the right, field on the left sloping

down into the valley); *if tired, pretend to look at view!*

> Go over a stile and **turn right** onto a tarmac road; walk uphill; you are now back in Eastcombe

> After a few yards, **fork left** at a house called Wood View (large iron gates); continue uphill

> **Turn right** at the top onto a narrow, level road running along between some cottages

> **Turn left** up a public footpath between some houses (just after Chalfont Cottage on left and opposite the former Red Lion pub on right, name above front door); go uphill

> **Turn left** at the top and walk past a church on your right

> **Turn left** at the village green – the Lamb Inn pub is on the left after a few yards

The End. Any problems with these directions?

Email me at rod@rrgordon.com (also if you liked the walk!)

SOMETHING INTERESTING:

As mentioned above, Lypiatt Park sits on the opposite hillside from Eastcombe – and the park has an interesting heritage. In 1395 Richard Whittington, Lord Mayor of London, acquired the manor in satisfaction of a debt. In 1605, at the time of the Gunpowder Plot, the manor was owned by John Throckmorton, the cousin of Robert Catesby, the leader of the Gunpowder Plotters – and it is reputed that Catesby met with fellow plotters Tresham and Winter and Guy Fawkes at Lypiatt Park. On 1 January 1645, the house was captured and burnt by Royalist troops evicting a Parliamentary garrison, but it was later repaired and reoccupied.

In 1959 it was purchased by the Modernist British sculptor, Lynn Chadwick (1914–2003), whose expressionistic, figurative works in welded iron and bronze earned him international acclaim. Chadwick restored the house and died there on April 25, 2003.

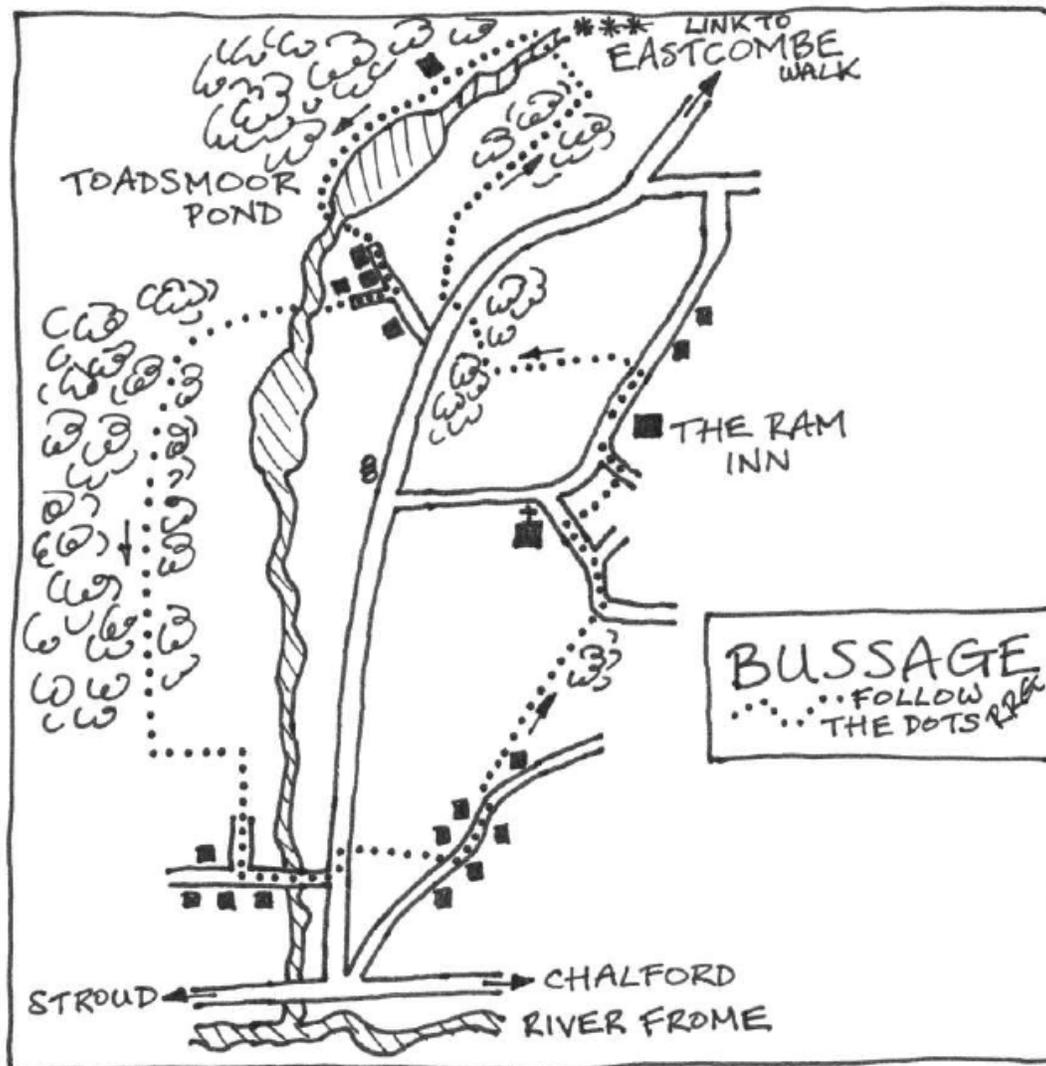
Today the park is owned by Lynn's son, Dan Chadwick, also a sculptor. The park acts as a setting for 32 pieces of Lynn Chadwick's work and is also a nature reserve. Admission is by pre-booked tickets only.



3. Bussage & Lower Toadsmoor.

*** This walk also connects to the Eastcombe walk which in turn connects to the Bisley walk; see *** below.

Rod's Rating	 <p>Further down Toadsmoor valley, this walk starts in Bussage, drops down into the valley, continues along the stream and past two lakes before ending back at the village - finishing at yet another cracking pub!</p>
Daisy's Rating/Difficult for Dogs (DD)?	 No difficult stiles! Woohoo! Around two thirds of the walk is off the lead, through woods & along a stream.
Is it a circular walk?	Yes
Pub	One of our favourites! The Ram Inn , Old Bussage, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL6 8BB www.the-ram-inn.co.uk
How long did it take?	2¼ hrs (also connects to Eastcombe walk) 6km (3¾ miles) 350m up/down – you'll be tired after this one!



QUICK DIRECTIONS TO THE PARKING SPOT (The Ram Inn):

From Birdlip: fork left at the Fostons Ash, go through The Camp and Bisley; continue through Eastcombe and turn left into The Ridgeway *and then see below ...*

From Stroud: take the Cirencester road and turn left up to Eastcombe just after Brimscombe; go through traffic lights halfway up the hill and at top of hill turn right into The Ridgeway *and then ...*

- When you turn into The Ridgeway there is a Cotswold stone village signpost for Bussage and Brownhill on green on right, turn right just after into The Ridge and the pub is on the left after approx. half a mile.

> **Turn right** out of The Ram Inn car park and walk up the road, which goes slightly uphill

> After a hundred yards, at a Public Footpath sign, go through a small metal gate on the left which leads into a field overlooking Toadsmoor Valley

> Follow the left hand edge of the field, heading downhill

> At the bottom of the field, continue through a gap in the bottom-left corner and follow path through bushes into next field

> Continue straight ahead, keeping hedge on left, heading downhill towards the trees

> At the bottom of the field, near a small stone trough, go over a stile and into the woods

> **Head to the right**, going downhill towards a road

> At road, a public footpath sign directs to Eastcombe straight ahead; a handful of buildings on other side

> Go straight across the road and head **diagonally right** along a farm track with a Public Footpath sign (and "No Horses or Bicycles" sign on gatepost); do not follow path beside house which goes downhill

> Follow this farm track for nearly half a mile, between fields and woods, staying on same level

> Continue until past the lake at the bottom of the valley. At a section where the track goes down and then up again there is a Public Footpath to the left leading downhill; this is at a stile with a dog gate. Follow path down to stream at bottom of valley

***** Eastcombe walk connection here *****

Joining from the Eastcombe walk: stay on path following stream downstream towards Toadsmoor Pond, ignoring the first bit about

Daisy's Leap.

Just completed Bussage walk & wishing to re-join Eastcombe walk? do not go down into valley here but continue straight ahead on farm track; leave these instructions and follow Eastcombe instructions from ***

> Climb over stile and jump over stream (known as Daisy's Leap); **turn left** and walk down the valley heading downstream and then past a lake (Toadsmoor Pond)

> After following the stream for a short way, you will pass a garden on left and a house on right (Keepers Cottage); continue along track, keeping stream and then lake on your left

> At the end of the lake, follow the track round to the left, heading towards a small group of houses; cross over the flat concrete bridge with stream running under it

> Go up narrow tarmac road between houses and after 50 yards **turn right** (by telegraph pole on right and large convex traffic mirror on left); head downhill towards the valley floor again

> Go past "Field House" on the left and then **fork left** up a footpath (opposite two garage doors for Dene Cottage); path goes up between Cotswold stone wall on left and hedge on right, leads uphill for 50yards

> Bear left at the top of the rise to follow tree line overlooking the valley floor (yellow Public Footpath sign)

> Jump over a stream and continue up the track
> Continue along path following it round and down to the right into a spur of the valley. As the track bends to the left ignore wide track to right and head down

> At a seven-bar metal gate, go over a stile on the right and **bear left**

- > The path leads slightly uphill through the trees but continues to follow the valley at about the same height
- > After half a mile you need to step over a stream that runs down through a cutting. Ignore a track which forks up right shortly before it
- > Walk over a broken stile
- > Go over another stile (or step through as there is a large gap between the upper and lower bars)
- > The path continues straight on above a small estate on the left (interestingly named *Lawrenceland*). *Do not be tempted to turn left before Lawrenceland at a Public Footpath sign down into the valley*
- > Go over a stile & you will find yourself on a tarmac drive at the gate to Lawrenceland; **turn right** and follow drive away from house. **BENCH**
- > After a hundred yards you come to another gateway for Lawrenceland (two Cotswold stone gateposts); **turn left** here at a Public Footpath sign and climb over a stile; follow path steeply downhill through bushes across grass; halfway down there might be a fork, bear right
- > You will see a house on the left and a stile at the bottom of the hill that you can simply walk around; **turn right** onto tarmac drive
- > At the bottom of the drive **turn left** onto a road (Bourne Lane)
- > At the main road go straight across (or you could say it's slight left for five yards then right) and up a lane called Cherry Bank, which is marked with a Public Footpath sign
- > At the top of the lane turn left up some stone steps then follow the road left uphill between some houses
- > As you near the end of the houses, just after The Brigands, there is a free-standing garage (with brown door) in front of you; go to the left of

this garage which is a driveway to a small group of houses

- > At Pilgrim Cottage **turn left** onto the Public Footpath to go below No. 4; this is a path that goes to the left of the final house
- > Follow footpath through trees, valley floor away to your left; go over stile and then path turns right to go uphill and past a stile. Don't go straight ahead!
- > Go over a three-step stile, cross a tarmac track, go over another two-step stile with footpath sign to Bussage
- > Follow path slightly uphill alongside a metal link fence on your left, valley still on your left; *look at view!*
- > Go over a stile and into some trees, still following the fence on your left. Keep going, nearly there!
- > Go over a stile (with stone steps) and bear right, then left. You'll see houses soon!
- > Go over a final stile and kissing gate to climb more steeply uphill between two mossy walls
- > At the top the path bends to the left and levels out, then comes out on the bend of a stone track, turn right and head up to Bussage
- > **Turn left** to continue up the narrow road to a small green with tree in the middle, **bear left** at the green - **BENCH**
- > After a while the single-track road goes downhill and you will see Bussage Church on your left
- > Just past church parking area on right, **turn right** opposite lych-gate to follow a lane uphill - Walk up this lane between some (very nice) houses (one with a tennis court!)
- > **Turn left** at the top and you will see the Ram Inn; phew ...

The End. Any problems with these directions? Email me at rod@rrgordon.com

SOMETHING INTERESTING:

In 1827, Thomas Keble, reformer and member of the Oxford Movement, came to the parish of Bisley to be vicar. In 1833, the Movement began to publish various spiritual writings, or tracts, confirming their approval of the Anglican divines of the seventeenth century and rejecting reform of the church by the state. They became known as Tractarians. Keble was motivated to attend to the spiritual needs of his parishioners and went about setting up new churches and spiritual institutions, funded by appeals and private donations. Funded by 20 anonymous young men from Oxford University - where Keble studied from the age of 14 - the church of St Michael and All Angels in Bussage was built on a shelf of land by a yew tree overlooking the steep wooded valley - romantic yet inaccessible. The secondary school in nearby Eastcombe is called Thomas Keble School.

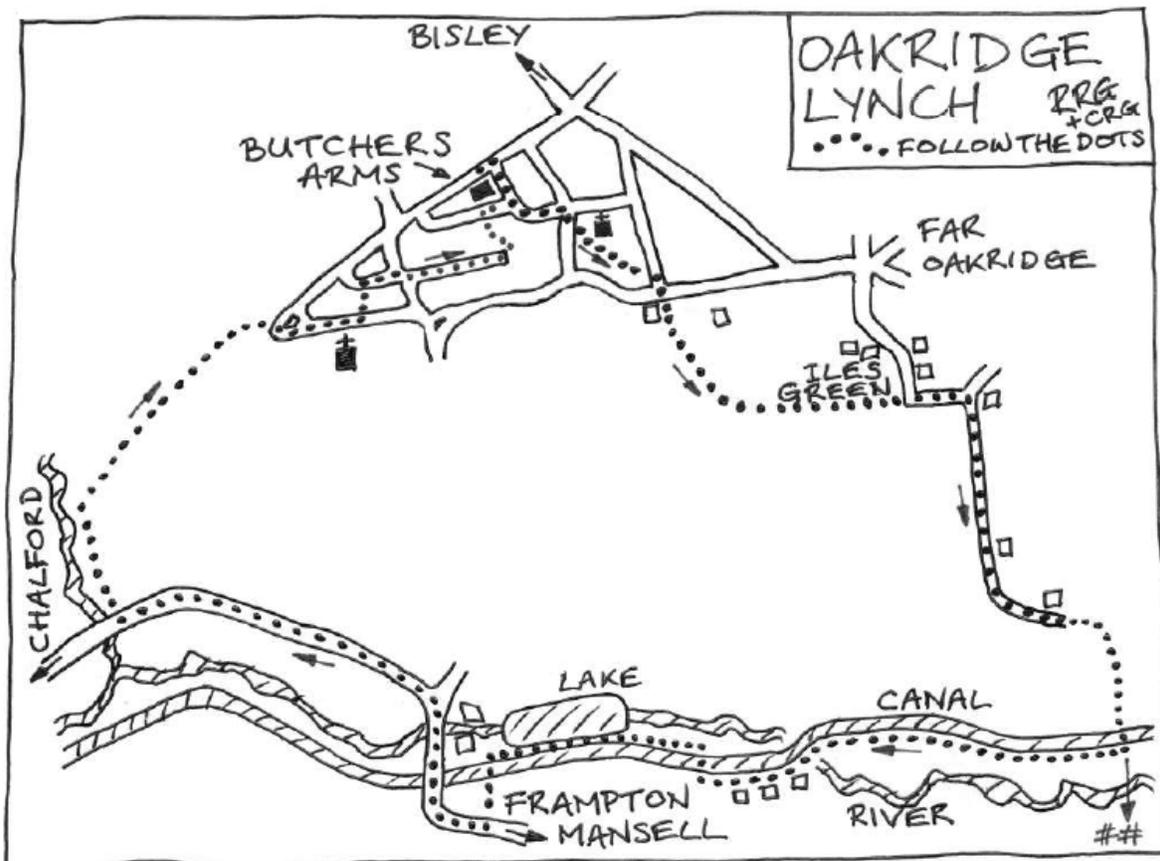
4. Oakridge Lynch.

This walk also connects to Frampton Mansell walk; see ## below

Rod's Rating	 <p>There can't be many villages in England that have as many little lanes, walkways, footpaths as Oakridge Lynch. There are dozens of them running up and down between the houses which are perched on this lovely hillside overlooking the Frome valley.</p>
Daisy's Rating/Difficult for Dogs (DD)?	 <p>Daisy said this was top notch. Plenty of stretches off the lead and she liked the stream and canal, not to mention the woods and the fields! Only one difficult stile but there is a gate which is not locked at present</p>
Is it a circular walk?	Yes.
Pub	<p>The Butchers Arms Oakridge Lynch, Stroud GL6 7NZ http://www.butchersarmsoakridge.com</p> <p>Oakridge Lynch Post Office GL6 7NZ https://www.postoffice.co.uk/branch-finder/3185230/oakridge-lynch</p>
How long did it take?	<p>1¼ - 1½ hrs (also connects to Frampton Mansell walk)</p> <p>5km (3 miles) 190m up/down</p>

QUICK DIRECTIONS TO THE PARKING SPOT (The Butchers Arms):

From Birdlip: head in the direction of Stroud, but fork left at the Fostons Ash, go through The Camp and on to Bisley. Just as you exit Bisley, Oakridge Lynch is signposted on the left. The Butchers Arms is also signposted when you get to the village.



THE WALK - In summary:

Down the hillside towards the Frome valley, in the direction of Frampton Mansell; walk along the disused Thames & Severn canal in the direction of Chalford; climb back up out of the valley towards Oakridge Lynch again and walk through the village.

- > **Turn right** out of pub car park
- > **Turn right** down first road after a few yards; road has no name, but first house on right is Christopher Corner
- > Follow road downhill and round to left, ignore first two Public Footpaths on right & head for chapel ahead
- > **Turn right** in front of chapel along a public footpath between two drives, stony track with grass in middle
- > **Turn right** when you reach a tarmac road, continue slightly downhill for 20yards
- > Cross straight over at the T junction and over a stile (**DD**), marked as a Public Footpath
- > Walk along the right edge of a field, slightly downhill, heading towards the valley
- > Over a stile (**DD**) (and gate) and into next field, walk down below boughs of a tree & round to left
- > Follow the beaten path across the top of the field, staying on the same level, keeping valley to the right
- > Climb over a stile into the next field, hedge on the right (and valley beyond), houses ahead (Iles Green)

- > At end of field (by houses) go through gate and **turn right**; follow tarmac road downhill/right signed Trillis

The road is a dead end so very little traffic and we normally allow Daisy off the lead here

- > Road continues downhill steeply for a few hundred yards – and after the second house becomes a stony track
- > Continue down the track until you reach the bottom of the valley at a stone bridge (Whitehall Bridge) over a disused canal

At this point the walk connects to Frampton Mansell walk; look for ## in the instructions for that walk; start by crossing stone bridge & turning left onto deep-rutted farm track;

- > Immediately after crossing bridge, **turn right** to join canal footpath (canal will be on right, stream on left!) Post with lots of walks symbols on left!
- > **You will now walk alongside the canal for nearly a mile, switching to other side just after halfway. NB. The stream also switches sides! How does this happen?? See "Something Interesting" below for details of canal.**



- > Continue along canal footpath, going through kissing gate & another gate just before 3 houses (*One of these houses is Puck Mill House*)
- > Continue along the stone track between the houses and just after the last house on the left (with sculptures), **turn right** over a small stone bridge and then **immediately left** to continue along other side of canal
- > Continue a few hundred yards along canal path until you reach a narrow footbridge on left
- > Cross the narrow footbridge and **turn right** onto the road
- > Follow the road to cross back across the canal
- > **Turn left** at the fork in the road, (signposted Chalford and Stroud); continue along the road
- > Ignore the first Public Footpath sign on the right
- > **Turn right** and leave the road at the second Public Footpath sign (hidden in a tree – also look for wide five-bar gate and board for Three Groves Wood Nature Reserve)
- > Walk steeply uphill along a path through the woods (*dogs can be let off here*); with stream to your left
- > After 200 yards **fork right** away from the stream and continue uphill. **BENCH** half-way up
- > Go through a gate and bear right, still climbing through the woods (*dogs should be on leads now*)
- > Go through a kissing gate into a field, follow the hedge on right of the field as it curves around to right
- > Go over a stile into another field; go through a metal V-shaped stile a few paces later, follow hedge on right

- > Go through a kissing gate by a wooden gate into the last small field before returning into Oakridge Lynch
- > Go through a metal V shaped step-through between two houses
- > **Bear right** at the village green and walk along the path alongside the churchyard wall, and at the end of the green continue along road between the houses (eg The School House)
- > **Turn left** up a narrow Public Footpath (no sign) between the houses by a sign advertising a blacksmith (just after Hope Cottage and school signpost on right)
- > **Turn right** at top onto a narrow tarmac road (past house named Brambles on the left)
- > Go straight across (actually a few steps right/downhill and then left) to go across the top of another small triangular green (past Wesley Cottage on your left, green on your right) **BENCH**
- > This road is a dead end for cars, but continue along the footpath straight ahead (slightly to the left), which leads inbetween a stand-alone garage and a house called The Venture (there is a GCC sign marked *Public Footpath No Motor Vehicles*)
- > Immediately **fork left** up a tarmac footpath which leads behind/above the standalone garage
- > Follow the path to the top, where there is a road; the Butcher's Arms is a few yards to your right on the left of the road or the village Post Office is to your left

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

SOMETHING INTERESTING:

The Thames & Severn Canal was completed in 1789, conceived as part of a river and canal route from Bristol to London. At its eastern end it connects to the River Thames at Inglesham Lock near Lechlade, while at its western end it connects to the Stroudwater Navigation (also a canal) at Wallbridge near Stroud and then to the River Severn. It has one short branch, from Siddington to the Cirencester. It includes Sapperton Tunnel which, when built, was the longest canal tunnel in Britain and remains the fourth longest. There were always problems with water supply as no reservoirs were built while the summit section near the tunnel ran through porous limestone and there were constant difficulties with leakage. Competition from the railways took much of the canal's traffic by the end of the 19th century and most of the canal was abandoned in 1927, the remainder in 1941. Early canal tunnels were built without a towpath as this would require a much larger bore and hence cost more to build. Therefore a process known as legging was needed to get the boat through the tunnel while the horse was led over the hill. Two men would lie on a plank across the bows of the boat and, holding the plank with their hands, would propel the boat with their feet against the tunnel wall. For a tunnel with a low roof, leggers could walk on the ceiling. On short tunnels the legging was done by the boat owner and crew. At long tunnels like Sapperton, professional leggers were available. Expert leggers could get an empty boat through the 3,817 yards in around 1 hour 30 minutes, with up to 3 hours for a fully loaded boat, for which they were paid 1s 6d.

5. Frampton Mansell.

This walk also connects to Oakridge Lynch walk; see ## below

Rod's Rating	 <p>Everything jam-packed into one walk: hilltops with beautiful views of the Golden Valley, a meandering stream along a valley floor, even a thrilling crossing of some train tracks and, amidst a book of fine pubs, perhaps one of the best.</p>
Daisy's Rating/Difficult for Dogs (DD)?	 <p>A couple of difficult stiles to negotiate! Woods, streams, open fields, lying in front of the log-burner in the pub.</p>
Is it a circular walk?	Yes
Pub	One of our favourites! The Crown Inn , Frampton Mansell, Stroud GL6 8JG www.thecrowninn-cotswolds.co.uk 01285 760601
How long did it take?	1 hour with an optional loop of an extra 40 mins (actually it's mandatory!) 6km (3¾ miles) 180m up/down (also connects to Oakridge Lynch walk)

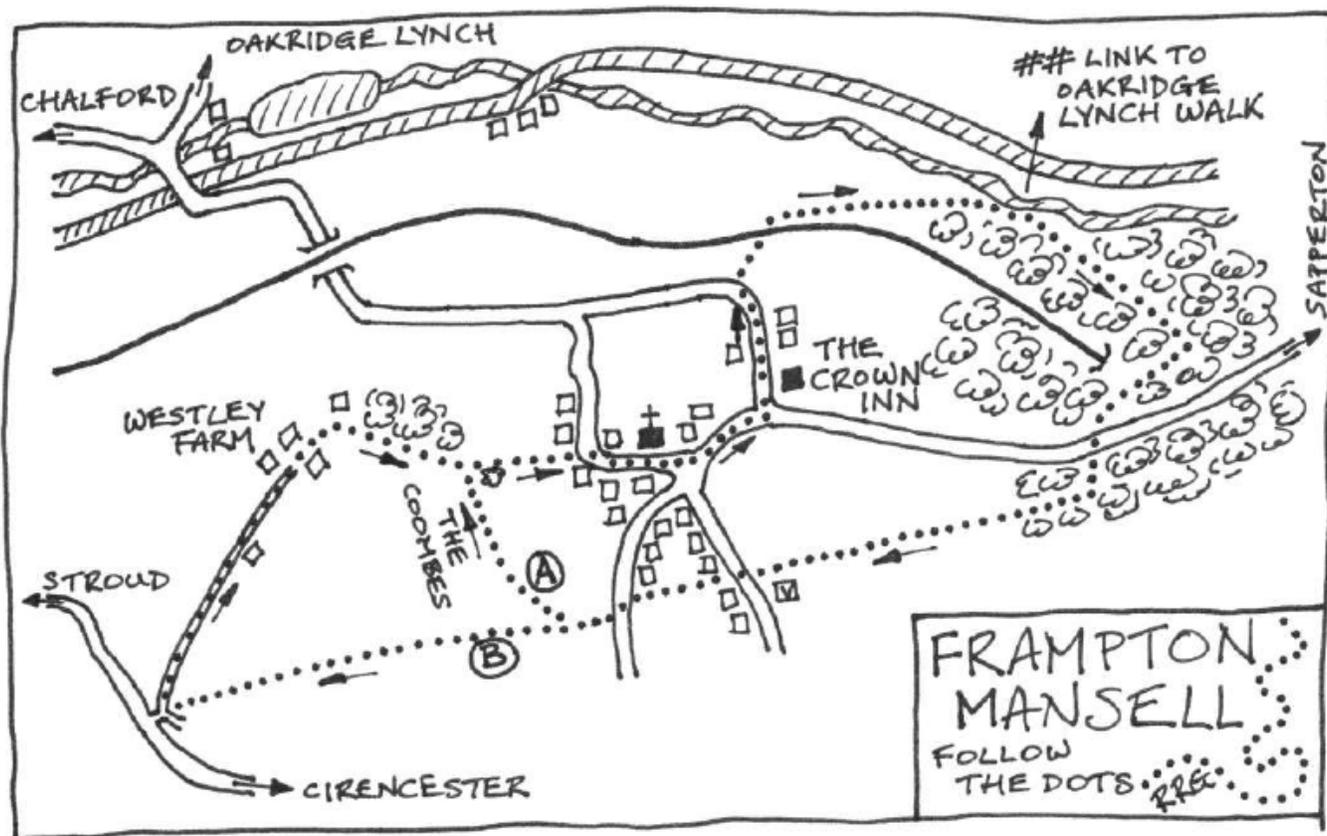
DIRECTIONS TO THE PARKING SPOT (The Crown Inn):

From Stroud-Cirencester road: turn off at top of hill above Chalford, near Aston Down airfield

From Birdlip: left at Fostons Ash, through The Camp, left just after Bisley towards Oakridge & out other side

THE WALK - In summary:

Right out of the pub, down into the valley, then climb up behind the pub in a clockwise direction, circling above it. Walk out along the ridge and then back through a couple of nice valleys and past the church.



- > **Turn right** (downhill) out of the pub car park and walk down the road
- > After 100 yards **fork right** down a farm track where the road bends to the left
- > After 50 yards cross the railway tracks (look carefully both ways! but I'm sure you don't need me to tell you)
- > The track continues gently downhill and to the right towards the bottom of the valley (which is on left)
- > Go through a gate and continue down the track until you reach the valley floor

You can connect to Oakridge Lynch walk at bottom of valley: turn left & then turn left again just before stone bridge to follow canal footpath

- > Upon reaching intersection at valley floor, continue along farm track that **bears slightly right** (do not turn right into woods at Public Footpath sign)
 - > After 50 yards **go right** at the next yellow Public Footpath sign into woods; go over the stile and follow path as it leads diagonally up the hill; path continues in broadly the same direction for a long while; up, up, up! (*ignore fork on right near top*)
 - > There is a point where the path descends slightly for a few yards and then ascends again: at this point the path seems to be blocked by a bush which is in fact a fallen tree; bear right here, walking under the broken tree; *if in doubt go up and to the right until you reach the farm track described below*
 - > **Turn right** onto a farm track which is wide enough for a vehicle; this track continues uphill; up, up, up!
 - > You will reach a wooden gate by a road, continue straight across the road (slightly to the right)
 - > Footpath continues up, up, up through the trees (heading diagonally right)
 - > After 50 yards, **turn right** at a "T-junction" with another footpath (there is a field straight ahead through bushes)
- You will be pleased to hear that you are now at the top!*
- > Follow footpath along the top of the woods (field on your left)

- > When you emerge from the woods, you will see a large, open field ahead; you need to go straight across the middle of this field (really! it is a public footpath!); the farmer normally creates a path for walkers using his tractor; you may need to go left for 20 yards and then turn right onto his path; after a short while you will see chimney pots ahead of you on the horizon; head for these houses; valley and Oakridge Lynch are to right
- > Go straight across next field (through gap in old dry stone wall); head for village hall & playground
- > Exit the field by the gap at the left gatepost of a metal 5-bar gate (marked by Public Footpath sign)
- > Go straight across the road (slightly right) and through a very narrow stone stile (**DD**) down a footpath between two houses (no 14 on left)
- > Climb over a stile into a field; follow the right edge of the field
- > Climb over sturdy stile at end of field (**DD**) and turn left onto road (past a bench on your left)

BENCH

- > After 50 yards (just past village signpost) **turn right** up a bridleway; this is a stone farm track
- NB. After 100 yards there is a silver metal 7-bar gate to the right & at this point you have a choice: Option A is to go through metal gate which is 15 mins back to pub; Option B is to continue along farm track which adds a longer loop which is 45 mins back to pub (but it's worth it!); are you an Option B kind of person?!**

OPTION A

- > Go through silver metal 7-bar gate; there is no sign but it is a Public Footpath (you will see later); sometimes there is a sign on the gatepost from the farmer stating when livestock is in the field; follow the farm track down through this steep-sided valley
- > After 200 yards the valley opens out into a field with a footpath crossroads in the middle; **turn right** here, heading for the stone trough at the base of a large tree in the middle of the field; follow instructions below marked "From Stone Trough"

OPTION B

- > Continue straight ahead along stone farm track, heading for barns in the distance
- > Walk to the right of the barns, continuing along edge of field (remember this is still a bridleway so you can look for hoofprints – and mountain bike tracks - if in doubt!); *Aston Down airfield is on the left*
- > Go through wooden five-bar gate in corner of field; walk down to the narrow tarmac road and **turn right**

This is a quiet public road which leads to a handful of houses including Westley Farm; the small Cowcombe valley is on your left leading down to the larger Frome Valley with Chalford and France Lynch (slightly higher and to the right) on the opposite hillside; I told you it was nice on Option B!

- > Continue to the end of the road, through the farmyard (farmhouse on left, barn on right) and along a farm track; approx. 100 yards after the farm there is a **sign on the right** with the very basic message: "Walk"
- > Go up 20 yards, through a gate and into a field; walk along left edge; valley is to your left
- > After a while the path leads across the field, between a tree and the corner of a field on the right. Continue down and diagonally right

> As you go past this corner, **bear left**, heading to the lower side of the field (do not be tempted to turn sharp right – this is simply an animal track); Frampton Mansell is ahead of you across a small valley

> Head down to the lowest side of the field, continue to the right and go through a gateway into next field

> Go directly across field to a stone trough next to a large tree in the middle of the field

FROM STONE TROUGH:

> Go up left past the trough and the tree, up a bank heading for a very tall 10-foot post next to a stile; go over stone stile (**DD**)

> Go through a gap in hedge and straight across a stone track to walk alongside a riding area

> At the end of the riding area, go over a stile and walk out along the drive of a house (called *Frampton Belvedere*);

> **Turn right** onto road (sort of straight on) and continue slightly uphill, past church on your left

> **Bear left** at next junction and the pub will be ahead of you after 100 yards

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

Please let the pub know that you followed this walk as they kindly stock our booklets.

SOMETHING INTERESTING:

A belvedere or belvidere (from Italian for "fair view") is an architectural structure sited to take advantage of a scenic view. While a belvedere may be built in the upper part of a building the actual structure can take any form, turret, cupola, or open gallery.

Frampton Mansell lies in the valley of the River Frome, from which it takes its name. In the 13th century the manor was held by the Maunsell family, from whom the second part of the name is derived.

The Crown Inn is a seventeenth century 'cider house' which in recent years has become famous for its Bonfire Nights. In 2008 a piano, rumoured to be Kate Bush's, was dumped out the back of the pub in preparation for the pub's second Bonfire event which became the focus of an ornate fire. Since that evening the bonfires have become increasingly extravagant with larger & more complex structures being built just to burn including Houses of Parliament, Tower Bridge & a dragon. With fantastic firework display, hog roast, BBQ & beer tent the event has attracted crowds of over 400 people to this quiet spot in the Golden Valley.

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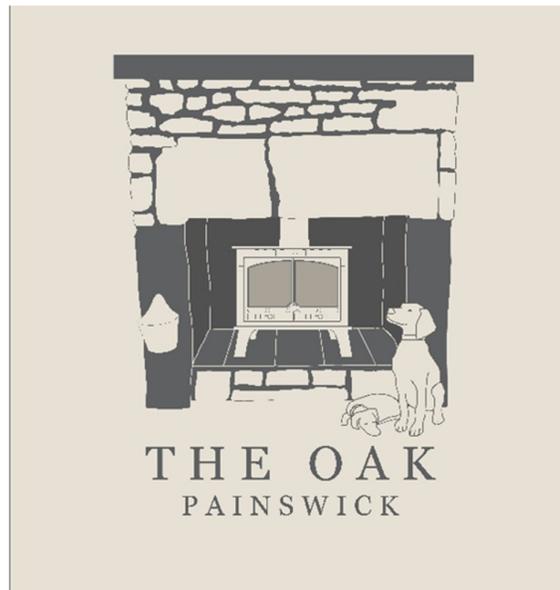
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