

Circular via Capel's Mill & Rodborough Common

OS Explorer Map 179

Grid ref: SP85107 05155

Distance: 3 miles (5km)

Time: 1.5 hours

Difficulty: Strenuous (fairly steep ascents, uneven riverside walk)

Start: Stroud Subscription Rooms

With the Subscription Rooms at your back, head towards the right hand corner of the forecourt and walk down George Street, turning left at the bottom to follow Rowcroft beneath the railway bridge.

Crossing the road at one of two points, head towards the Cotswold Canals Trust Visitor Centre. **(1)** Keeping the centre on your left, proceed beneath the subway and turn sharp left.

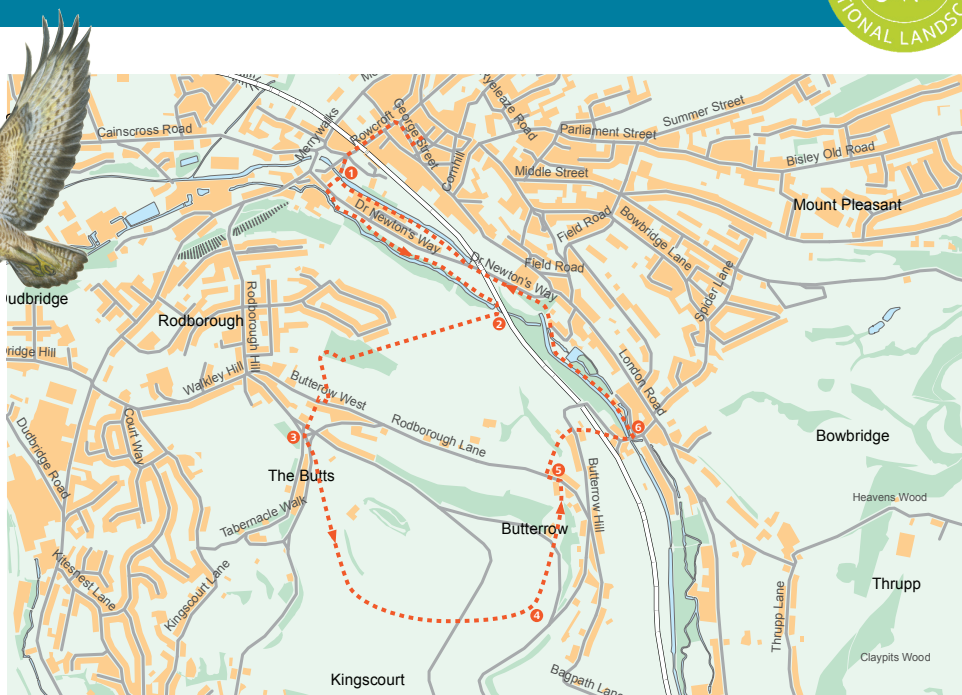
This footpath will take you through Frome Banks Nature Reserve emerging at the footbridge beneath Capel's Mill viaduct. This path can be soft underfoot and has steps and stiles.

An alternative route can be taken along the tow path of the canal opposite the visitor centre.



Capel's Mill

Once at Capel's Mill viaduct **(2)** cross the bridge over the river, bearing right at the top of the path to enter Rodborough Fields. The public footpath is clearly defined as you follow it up through two fields and into a small wood. There are two visible trails through the woods, both bring you to the base of Rodborough Community Hall Playing field.



Proceed past the hall towards the entry road to the hall. Keep left on the short path beside Elm Cottage. Taking care, cross the lane and opposite right there is a gate between two properties. Go through gate and climb a narrow lane to a gate and road at top. **(3)** Take care crossing road.

Having crossed you are now at the base of Rodborough Common. You can take any one of the trails which climb the common. Whichever you take, when you reach the top, keep the fort on your left.



Rodborough Common

You will need to follow the line of the wall as it curves around for a few hundred metres, before leaving it to head across the grassland towards the road. Do not head towards the main car park over to the right, but bear left towards a second car park. **(4)**

Cross the road with this car park on your left and enter the grassland on the other side, descending to join a footpath that goes right and left. Turn left and follow the path down with the Golden Valley on your right, passing the entrance to an old quarry on your left and then beneath a Horse Chestnut tree to another road.

Cross the road and proceed between a property wall and two more large horse chestnuts. Descend the tree lined path, which can be a little difficult underfoot, to a road at the bottom. Opposite there are a few steps down to a narrow path to the left of a cottage. **(5)**

Proceed down here to another road (Butterow Hill) and go straight across. Proceed down another narrow footpath, emerging on to the main GWR Railway line through a gate. Take care crossing the track and on the other side take the steps which bring you to the bottom of Butterow Hill on a bend.

Walk a little further and cross the road at a bridge over the canal. Take the immediate turning on the left and left again to the tow path of the canal. **(6)** Turn right on to a path between the canal and the River Frome on your right. Follow the tow path all the way back into Stroud.

You will pass Arundel Mill Pond on your right after a few hundred metres and then arrive back at Capels Mill. Follow the path to the main road, but turn left on reaching the road to continue on the path, walking beneath one of the arches of the viaduct. The path will bring you back to the main road and over a bridge over the canal.

Once over the bridge, turn left down to the tow path, turning left to walk beneath the bridge you have just walked over. The tow path will bring you back to the Canals Visitor Centre at Wallbridge.