

Winchcombe to the source of the River Isbourne

OS Landranger Map 163

Grid ref: SP025285

Distance: 6 miles (9km)

Time: 3 hours

Difficulty: Moderate

Start: Back Lane car-park
(charges apply)

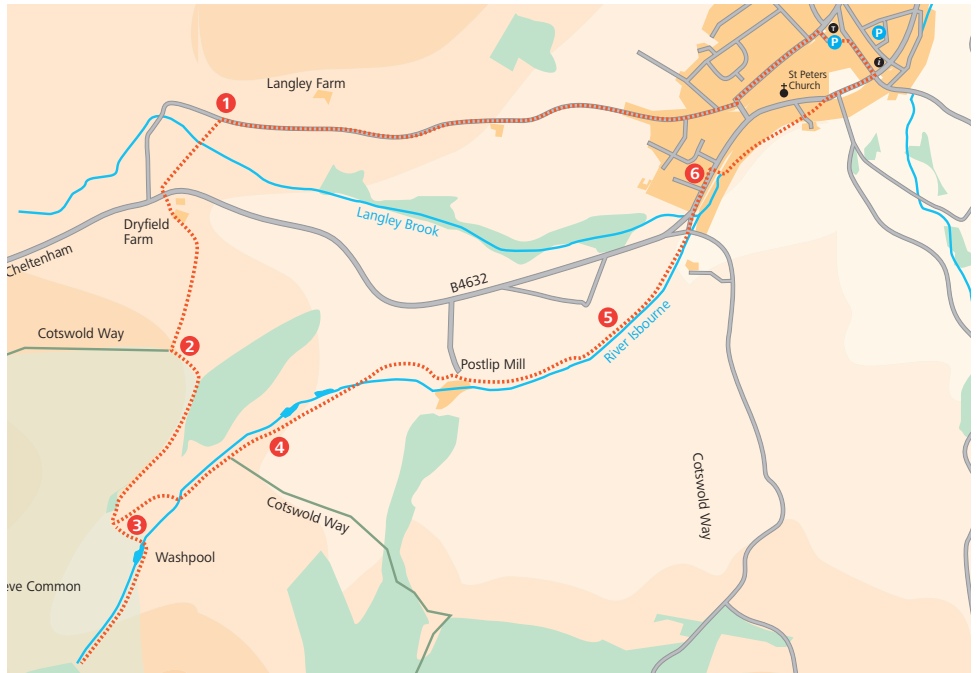
Leave Back Lane car park via the entrance into Back Lane. Cross the road and turn left, go past Abbey Field Community Centre and at the mini-roundabout, continue straight ahead into Langey Road. The Winchcombe Way goes up Harvey's Lane; however, this walk continues along Langey Road.

Walk along the road for about 1½ miles (2.4km), ascending gradually until you pass under some overhead electricity cables. At this point look for a stile on your left (1) and cross into the field. Walk down into the valley and cross a footbridge before ascending past a few trees in the middle of the field and head towards a stile in the top right hand corner.

Carefully cross the B4362 road and go over a stone stile; be careful as the verge is uneven. Turn left onto a drive. The drive quickly turns into two farm tracks. Take the right hand fork into the farmyard.

Follow this track uphill keeping the farmhouse on your left and the barn and cattle shed on your right. The track now bears right, alongside the left boundary of a field. Continue on this track until it meets another track at a T-junction (this is the Cotswold Way) (2).

Turn left and descend gradually to a metal gate, go through and follow the Cotswold Way. Bear right downhill on the Cotswold Way towards a line of trees flanking the Postlip estate. Ignore the signed Cotswold Way path leading off to the left and continue along the track as it gradually approaches and then follows a line of trees and the estate wall, before it curves to the left by a stile.



Ignore the stile (which you will use on your return journey) and continue along the track. The Washpool comes into sight: it was used at one time as a sheep dip. Take the path to the left to the far side of the pool then follow the lower path alongside the River Isbourne to its source which is approx. 200 metres upstream.

From here retrace your steps via the Washpool to the stile you ignored earlier and turn right over this stile (3). Follow the path downhill through a field, passing a horse arena on your right, then go over a stile.



Pass over a second stile before a high wall bordering Postlip Hall, signed 'Isbourne Way' and go through three gates in quick succession, keeping the wall on your left. After a fourth gate you reach a lane (4), continue straight on through a gate following the Isbourne Way and follow the (sometimes muddy) path alongside the river and the buildings of Postlip Hall on your left, partially hidden by trees.

The path leads to another gate into a large field. Continue in the same direction for about ½ mile, (0.8km) passing some attractive, restored pools on the river. At the end of the field, turn left through the gate cross over a footbridge and turn right to follow the path towards Postlip Mill.

The path which leads you through the busy mill site is well signed, but keep a sharp lookout for vehicles and equipment.

Cross a mill access road and continue on a gravelled path to the access road (signed public footpath). Cross the road and go through the gate opposite. Turn right and follow the stone path above the mill buildings, through trees before descending to another gate.

Go through the gate and turn left to follow a track, signposted Isbourne Way. Follow the track and where the main track bears left, go straight on and rise up to a gate ahead (5). Pass through and follow this footpath, with a hedge on your right, to reach a gate on your left before the road. Go through the gate and turn right to another gate by the lane.

Circular via Sudeley Castle and river

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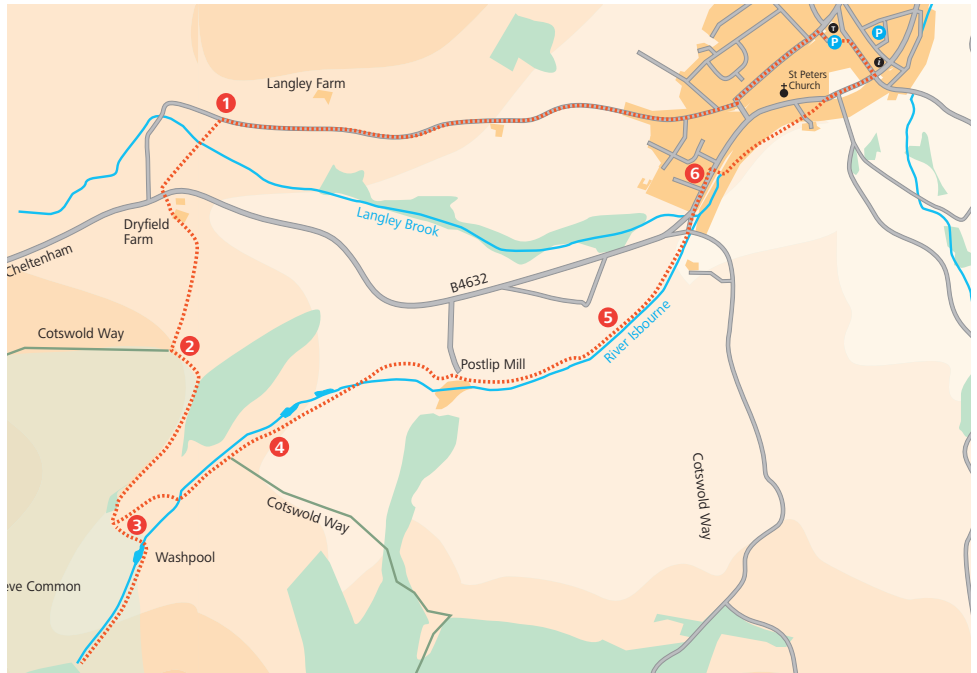
Go through the gate onto the lane ahead, where, after 100 metres you meet the main road. Continue following the road towards the town centre. Look for the Scout Hut on your right and then Pear Tree Cottage next door. Turn right just after the cottage F and over a stone stile. Go down to and cross the river and turn left.

Walk through a gate, along a duckboard and a second gate before proceeding through a field with the river on your left. Go through another gate and continue ahead through a playing field. Cross the foot bridge and carry on into a lane (Mill Lane). Turn left here, and almost immediately, turn right up a slope to arrive in Queens Square. Continue in the same direction to reach Abbey Terrace. When you reach the shops turn left up Cowl Lane to the rear pedestrian entrance to Back Lane car park.

Points of interest

The Washpool

Built in 1897, the Washpool is a deep, keyhole-shaped trough with stone sides. Temporary pens were erected containing hundreds of sheep, gathered for dipping. They were herded into the round well and, once thoroughly soaked, allowed to scramble out up the narrow ramp. The Washpool was fed with water from the pond immediately above it, formed by damming the stream that flows down from a spring about 200 metres up the valley which is known, appropriately, as 'Watery Bottom'.



Cotswold Gateways

Cotswolds National Landscape has worked with local communities to create ten new Cotswold Gateways locations, from which people can follow walking and cycling routes to explore the surrounding countryside of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

It is part funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development



The European Agricultural
Fund for Rural Development:
Europe investing in rural areas



Cotswolds National Landscape