

Guiting Power and Castlett

This easy route follows drovers' trails and quiet lanes through woodland and along the Guiting Stream. A good family walk at any time of the year, with much to see on the way.

Distance: 7.2 km / 4.5 miles
with an up and down of
140m/460 ft

Time: 2 ½ hours

Start: Guiting Power
Village Hall car park
(50p/£1), signed from the
village green. SP094247
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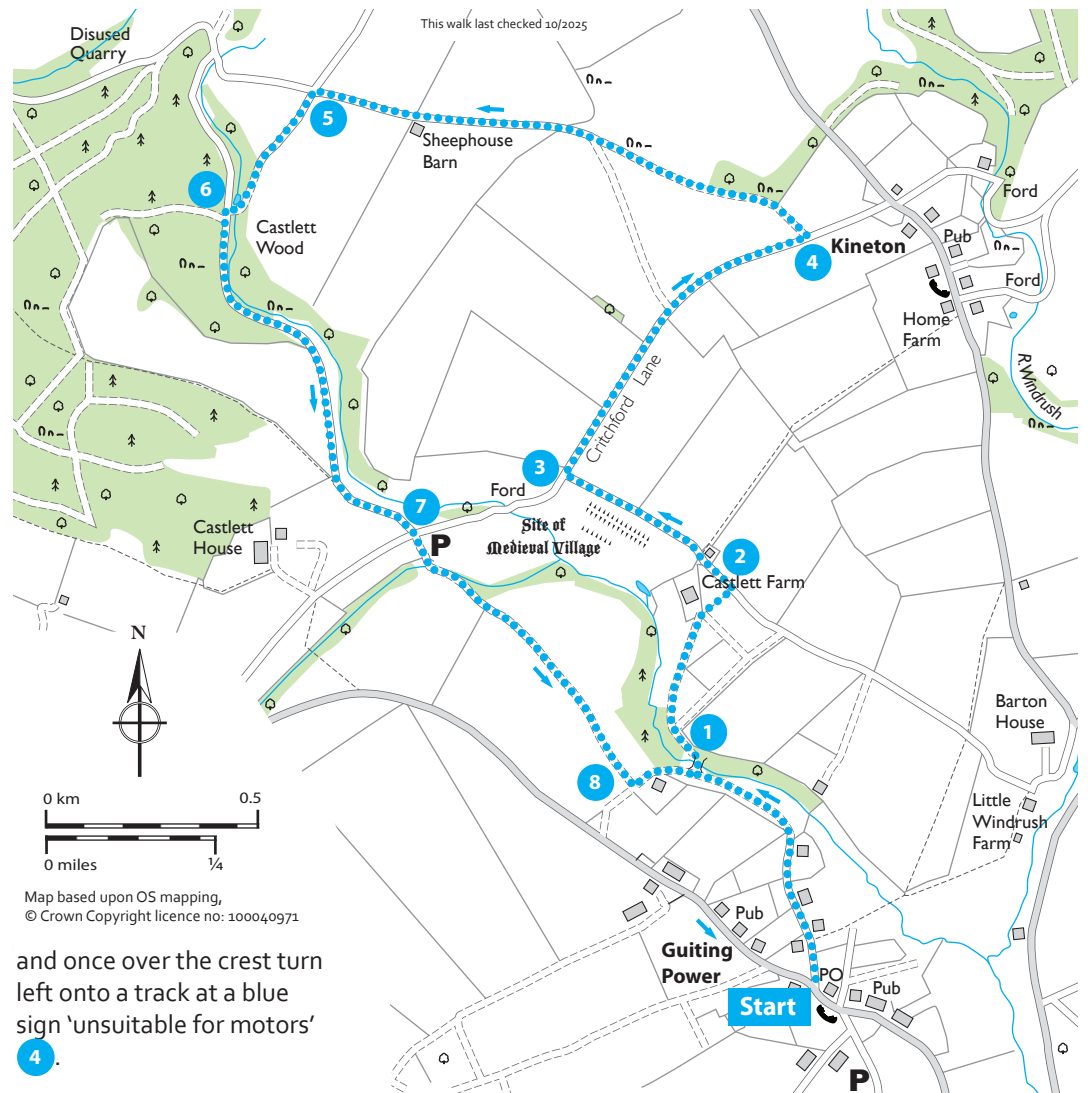
Refreshments: Cafés
and pubs in Guiting, also
midway, off route, pub at
Kington.

Route:

Walk back to the green,
cross to the Old Post Office
and turn left. Go carefully
round the corner and fork
right onto a lane (Wardens'
Way) leading to a path down
to the Guiting Stream.

Here **1** turn right over a
small stone bridge (or ford
the shallow water). Climb
to a gate and take the grass
path ahead alongside horse
paddocks, with occasional
views on the left, to reach
a lane **2**. Turn left along
the lane and look out for
'polo mint' stones in the wall
ahead, to the right of the
big house gates. *Read about
those on the next page.*

Carry on past more
paddocks to a T-junction **3**
Just before you get there
look left to see bumps and
hollows in the last field: all
that remains of the deserted
village of Castlett. Turn right
uphill on the lane (you may
hear buzzards or skylarks)



and once over the crest turn
left onto a track at a blue
sign 'unsuitable for motors'
4.

(The Halfway House Inn at
Kington is 400m away; just
go straight on to the village
and turn right).

Walk along the track past
trees on the right to the
summit then carry on
downhill past Sheephouse
Barn. For centuries this
was an overnight stop for
drovers and their animals
walking to Banbury market.

Approx 250m further on,
at a cross roads **5** look
half-left for two boulders in

the hedge. One is roughly
carved as a toad. Walk
between the stones and
down into the valley past
an overgrown lake on your
right. At the bottom bear
right to meet a quiet lane
6.

Turn left downstream
through beautiful woodland,
out into parkland and to
a crossroads with a car
park **7**. (You could start a

shorter walk from here).

Carry on along the track
ahead for ½ mile (0.8km).
At a cottage and barn look
over your right shoulder for
more polo-mints in the wall
8.

From here bear left down
a short stony path to point
1 and retrace your steps
back to the village and the
car park.

See the next page for more details about the walk.

Miles Without Stiles

Guiting Power and Castlett



The surprising world of Guiting Power

When Mr E. R. Cochrane bought the manor estate of Guiting Power in 1958 the land was meagre and the village dilapidated. He set up a trust and devoted the rest of his life to restoring the houses, improving the land and creating a community.

Building craftsmen were offered cottages in exchange for their labour, and some still live here. Although an integral part of the trust, the 1,500 acre farm is a profit earning business working arable crops, sheep and woodland. Natural wildlife has flourished thanks to careful crop rotation, planting and laying hedges, and leaving wide edges of cropped fields to encourage the growth of wild plants and ground-nesting birds.

Skylarks have returned to Guiting, also yellowhammers, barn owls, little owls, sparrowhawks, visiting merlins and the occasional hobby. Over 50 different bird species are recorded annually. For more information about the farm see www.guitingmanorfarms.co.uk.

When the village school was closed the trust bought the building and opened a nursery school. There's an annual music festival in the village hall.

Why Guiting?

'Gyte' was the old English word meaning to flow fast, and that's what the Guiting stream does.

To spy along the way

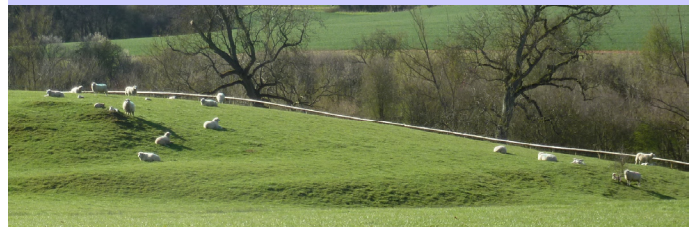
Polo mints



After your first river crossing and a pretty pond you'll meet Castlett farm. Then, just after the front gates look out for the wall with a stone with a hole right through it.

Would you believe that 200 years ago someone thought he could make Cotswold stone pipes for the growing demand by the Manchester Water Company? They leaked or burst under the pressure, and the company went bust.

Vanished village



Carry on past the horse paddocks and before point ③ look down left at a few bumps and hollows. In the middle ages there was a thriving village of Castlett here.

'Animals welcome' at this Cotswolds B&B



After point ④ of the walk, Sheephouse Barn appears on your left. For centuries it was a welcome overnight stop for drovers from Wales and the west country.

They were walking to Banbury market and beyond with sheep, cattle, pigs, horses or bales of wool. The men had a roof over them and the beasts settled down in walled pens. The Welsh black cattle wore simple iron shoes on their hooves for the long march, until the railways opened and put the drovers out of business.