



Cotswolds

Area of Outstanding  
Natural Beauty

Issue 18 | 2019

# Explore the Cotswolds

BY FOOT, BIKE, BUS AND TRAIN



Ideas on how to  
enjoy the Cotswolds  
without a car

Stride out along many  
recognised walks  
including The Cotswold  
Way National Trail

Places to see, things to  
do in England's walking  
& exploring capital

[www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk](http://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk)



## Welcome to our car-free guide to exploring the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural beauty.

Published by the Cotswolds Conservation Board, this guide is designed to help you get out of the car, and into your hiking boots, or onto a bike, horse, bus, or train across the Cotswolds. We've included information to help you plan your trip, highlighted some attractions you might enjoy and provided ideas for walking, cycling, or sightseeing days.

## Around 2,000 square kilometers to explore!

The Cotswolds attracts visitors all year round who are drawn to the area by its rural charm, rolling countryside, picture postcard villages, and vibrant market towns. Human history in the Cotswolds goes back thousands of years - today's explorers can still find the remains of Neolithic long barrows and Iron Age hill forts. The region is perfect for walking, cycling, and riding or simply enjoying a relaxing day out or short break.



The Cotswold Way National Trail and other recognised walks see page 17



Broadway Tower

Special thanks go to Cotswolds Tourism for many of the photos used within this publication and South West Public Transport Information for their support in producing this booklet.

### Key

- Railway station
- The Cotswold Way National Trail
- Bus route number

### Transport providers

- Stagecoach
- Pulhams Coaches
- Astons Coaches
- First
- Marchants Coaches
- Johnsons Excelbus
- Hedgehog CT
- NN Cresswell
- Swanbrook Coaches
- Cotswold Green
- Coachstyle
- Faresaver
- National Express
- Gloucester Warwickshire Railway



All buses mentioned in this booklet run at least four days a week. Please check online for latest travel information.

Northern Cotswolds page 4

Central Cotswolds page 8

Southern Cotswolds page 12

## Planning your trip



Bus & Train information  
[www.travelinesw.com](http://www.travelinesw.com)  
tel: 0871 200 22 33\*



Cotswolds by bike  
[www.sustrans.org](http://www.sustrans.org)



Tourist information  
[www.cotswolds.com](http://www.cotswolds.com)



Walking in the Cotswolds  
[www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk](http://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk)

\* Calls cost 12p per minute plus your phone company's access charges.





Cleeve Hill



Credit: Nick Turner

# Explore Northern Cotswolds

The northern Cotswolds is home to many of the market towns made famous by wool trading.

Chipping Campden, Stow-on-the-Wold, Burford, Moreton-in-Marsh, Tetbury, and Northleach are all famous for the medieval history of the wool trade.

The northern landscape is formed of rolling hills, criss-crossed by Roman roads and the dry stone walls which originally kept in the sheep. Spectacular views can be found from Bredon Hill, Sudeley Castle, Stow-on-the-Wold and Cleeve Hill.



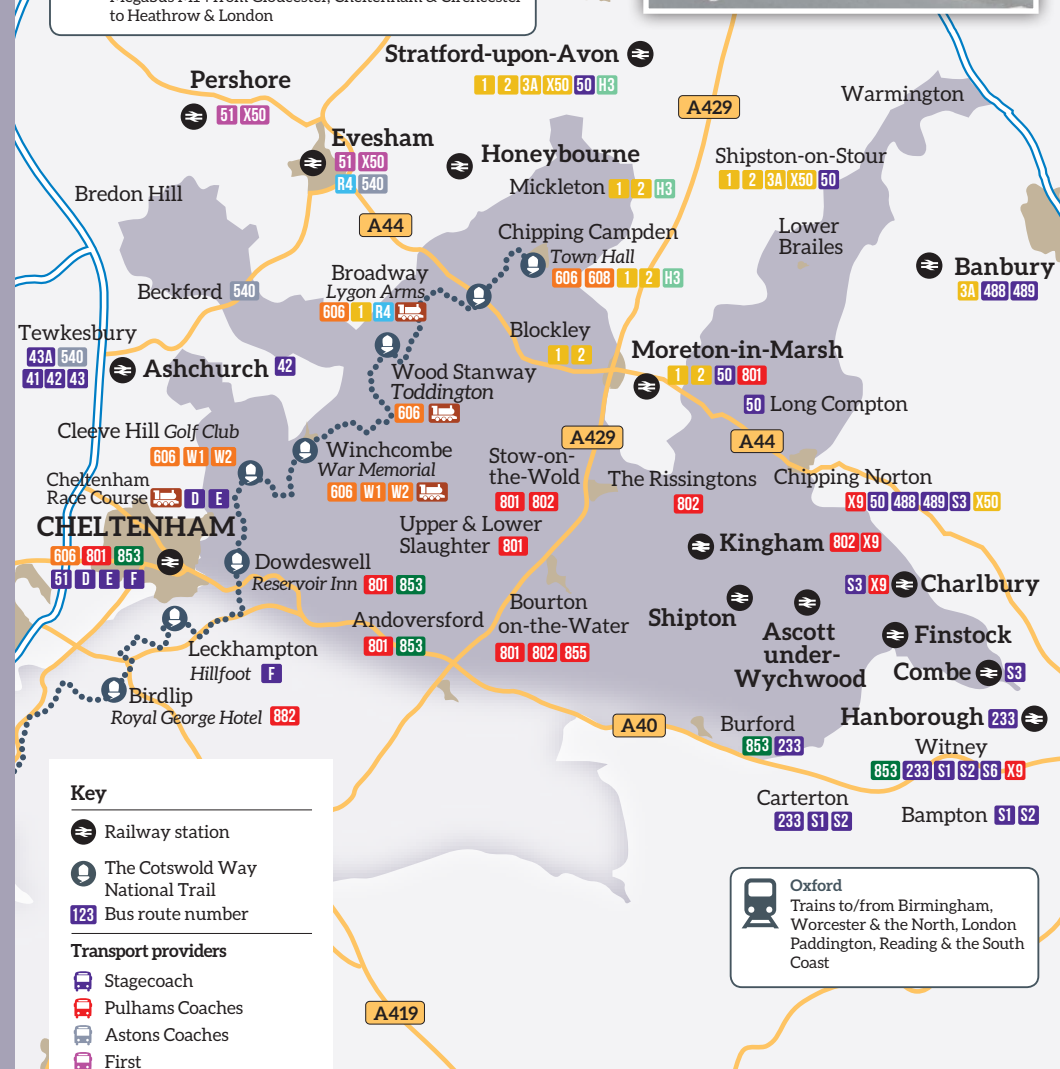
For latest bus and train information:  
[www.travelinesw.com](http://www.travelinesw.com)



National Express 444 & 445 from Hereford, Gloucester, Cheltenham & Cirencester to Heathrow & London.  
Megabus M14 from Gloucester, Cheltenham & Cirencester to Heathrow & London



The Square, Northleach



**Bus & Train Information**  
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tel: 0871 200 22 33\*

**Cotswolds by bike**  
[www.sustrans.org](http://www.sustrans.org)

**Tourist information**  
[www.cotswolds.com](http://www.cotswolds.com)

**Walking in the Cotswolds**  
[www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk](http://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk)

\*Calls cost 12p per minute plus your phone company's access charges.



Sezincote House

Go online to plan your trip





## Trading towns

Travelling from London or Oxford? Why not make your first stop the market town of Moreton-in-Marsh with a train ride of around an hour or so station to station?

Hop off there, enjoy a coffee and a stroll around the town's art galleries, before jumping on a bus for a short bus ride to Stow-on-the-Wold (the highest town in the Cotswolds).

Then continuing by bus, travel on to Bourton-on-the-Water to enjoy famously good fish and chips with a river view.

After Bourton, you could jump back on a bus to hop just over the AONB border into the Regency town of Cheltenham, or to Cirencester – often referred to as the capital of the Cotswolds.

London/ Oxford Moreton-in-Marsh Stow-on-the-Wold Bourton-on-the-Water Cheltenham/ Cirencester

GREAT  
DAYS  
OUT



Stow-on-the-Wold

Credit: The Picture Taker



GREAT  
DAYS  
OUT

## Travel in style

For something a little different, why not look into a trip on a steam train? The Gloucestershire Warwickshire Steam Railway offers a 28 mile round trip with spectacular views across the Cotswolds, and takes in stops at Winchcombe (a fantastic starting point for walkers), Toddington (with its have-a-go signal box), and Cheltenham Racecourse.

Broadway Toddington Winchcombe Cheltenham



## MAKE TIME FOR A TIPPLE

Leave the car and take a brewery or distillery tour at Wychwood Brewery, Cotswolds Distillery and The Cotswold Brewing Company.



## In the know

Visit [www.cotswolds.com](http://www.cotswolds.com) to pick up more ideas of where you'd like to visit and stay.



## THESE BOOTS ARE MADE FOR WALKING!

Stride along the Cotswold Way National Trail for a magnificent view of the Cotswolds. It's easy to access by public transport. See Page 16 for more details.



Chipping Camden

## Great for Green fingers

Inspiring gardens at Sezincote House, Hidcote Manor, Kiftgate Court, Mill Dene, Batsford and Bleinheim.



Hidcote Manor



Sudeley Castle

## Step back in time

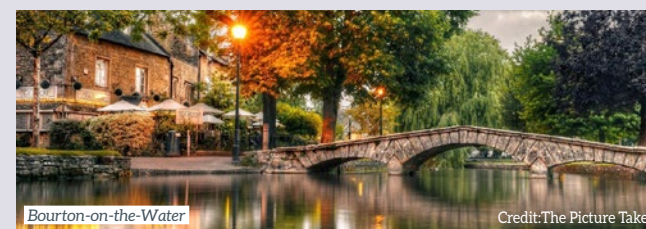
Discover fascinating history at Sudeley Castle, Broadway Tower and on the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Steam Railway.

## On the Water

Visit Bourton-on-the-Water with its enchanting village centre, plus the Model Village, Motoring Museum and Toy Collection, Cotswold Perfumery, and Birdland Park and Gardens.



Motoring Museum



Bourton-on-the-Water

Credit: The Picture Taker

## Built Heritage

Influences from the Arts and Crafts Movement are still living and breathing today in Chipping Camden.

Kemerton Camp - Iron Age hill fort on Bredon Hill



Credit: Nick Turner

GREAT  
DAYS  
OUT

## Good for the sole!

Remember that buses stop at many towns throughout the Northern Cotswolds which are ideal for picking up the Cotswold Way National Trail.

Pack a picnic and head out to Winchcombe, Wood Stanway, Broadway or Chipping Campden to find the Cotswold Way and its spectacular views.



## Discover more

Cotswolds Discovery Centre in Northleach explores farming, land use, rural skills, flora and fauna – all in an old prison!



## STAYING FOR A WHILE?

Why not? There are plenty of ideas of where to stay from bed and breakfasts to inns to hotels all around the Cotswolds. [www.cotswolds.com](http://www.cotswolds.com)





# Explore Central Cotswolds



Plan your journey, download and print timetables or get the free mobile app. (Data updated weekly)



Go online to  
plan your trip







## In the know

Visit [www.cotswolds.com](http://www.cotswolds.com) to pick up more ideas of where you'd like to visit and stay.

Cirencester Park

## The Cotswold capital

Cirencester is a perfect starting point for a couple of days of exploring, with lots of rail routes coming into *Kemble*, the nearest station and just a few miles from town. Catch a bus into *Cirencester* and take in the sights for a few hours, then hop on a bus from town into bohemian *Stroud* to explore their farmers' market, and arts and music events.

🚆 Kemble 🚌 Cirencester 🚆 Stroud 🚌 Painswick 🚌 Birdlip

Alternatively take a train from *Kemble* to continue your journey by rail on to *Stroud* and finish your day in this beautiful market town. Stay the night at one of the quaint inns or a hotel then in the morning, head over to *Painswick* village by bus and enjoy strolling around this historic wool town in the Cotswold hills. Buildings date from the 14th century, so your trip will be steeped in history.



Rococo Garden

Visit the Rococo Garden at Painswick House while you're here – you won't be disappointed.

From here, grab your walking boots and pick up the **Cotswold Way** on towards *Bath* or *Chipping Campden*. You could walk to *Birdlip*, 14km from *Painswick*, enjoy a well earned meal then stay the night before taking a bus back to *Cirencester* the following day.

GREAT  
— DAYS —  
OUT

## Make your own antique roadshow

Kick off your trip in *Stroud* and catch the bus to *Tetbury* (where you can browse the famous antique and independent shops), before heading on the bus to *Duntisbourne Abbots* where you can explore the church with its 13th century wall paintings, on the way to *Gloucester* – just over the AONB border, and packed with contemporary shopping and fascinating museums.

GREAT  
— DAYS —  
OUT

🚆 Stroud 🚌 Tetbury 🚌 Duntisbourne Abbots 🚆 Gloucester



Tetbury Town Hall



Duntisbourne Abbots Church

## Fishy business

Watching the 'boiling' water at Bibury Trout Farm as the fish are fed.



## Roman Holiday

Chedworth's Roman Villa is the remains of one of the grandest Roman villas in Britain.

## TAKING YOUR BIKE ON THE TRAIN?



Bikes can usually be taken onto trains free of charge, but space is limited. When traveling on long distance trains, it's usually necessary to reserve a space for your bike online. We suggest checking with the train operator in advance as rules for bikes vary across train lines.



## A tale of two cities

Regency architecture, theatres, and hip bars and restaurants are all just outside the AONB in *Cheltenham*, whilst *Gloucester* boasts its historical docks, impressive cathedral, and a re-energised shopping centre at Gloucester Quays.

🚆 Cheltenham 🚆 Gloucester



Gloucester Cathedral



For latest bus and train information:  
[www.travelinesw.com](http://www.travelinesw.com)

## Do it your way!

Remember that buses and trains stop at many towns throughout the Central Cotswolds which are ideal for picking up the **Cotswold Way National Trail**.

Pack a picnic and head out to *Birdlip*, *Painswick*, *Stonehouse*, *Dursley* or *Wotton-under-Edge* to find the **Cotswold Way** and its spectacular views. You can also head to *Kemble* to explore the Thames Path National Trail.

GREAT  
— DAYS —  
OUT



Credit Nick Turner





Village of Castle Combe

# Explore Southern Cotswolds

The quieter and more intimate southern Cotswolds area is sprinkled with pretty towns and villages found along winding country lanes.

The softer landscapes and beautiful, often wooded, valleys radiating out from Bath offer opportunities for relaxing days exploring the charming villages dotted across the southern Cotswolds.



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Tourist information  
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**GREAT  
— DAYS —  
OUT**

## Food & Forest

Start and end the day in the foodie town of Nailsworth with some wonderful places to choose from for breakfast and dinner.

Once you've taken in the delights of Nailsworth, jump on a bus out to Westonbirt Arboretum, via Stroud, to explore this natural gem of the Cotswolds.

Alternatively hop over by bus to Wotton-under-Edge or Dursley – you can walk a section of the **Cotswold Way National Trail** from both these locations.



Credit: Nick Turner

Williams Kitchen Produce, Nailsworth

View from Coaley Peak



Credit: Nick Turner

## The Cotswold Way

**GREAT  
— DAYS —  
OUT**

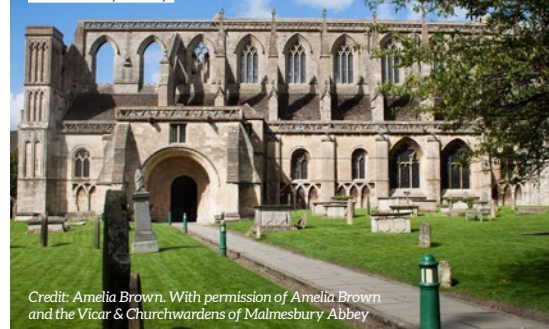
Remember that buses stop at many towns throughout the Southern Cotswolds which are ideal for picking up the **Cotswold Way National Trail**.

Pack a picnic and head out to places such as Dursley, Wotton-under-Edge, Tormarton or Bath to find the **Cotswold Way** and its spectacular views. Head over to Kemble to pick up the Thames Path National Trail.



Roman Baths

Malmesbury Abbey



Credit: Amelia Brown. With permission of Amelia Brown and the Vicar & Churchwardens of Malmesbury Abbey



## In the know

Visit [www.cotswolds.com](http://www.cotswolds.com) to pick up more ideas of where you'd like to visit and stay.

## Take the plunge

Take a train or bus to Bath and visit the world famous Roman Baths, and the city's museums, galleries, shops, and restaurants.

## On your bike

The southern Cotswolds is a lovely area to explore by bike. Why not take to two wheels and plan a ride that could take in the sights at the villages of Badminton and Castle Combe, before travelling over to Dyrham Park, a beautiful and ancient deer park, 17th-century house and garden.



Dyrham Park near Chippenham



## TAKING YOUR BIKE ON THE TRAIN?

Bikes can usually be taken onto trains free of charge, but space is limited. When traveling on long distance trains, it's usually necessary to reserve a space for your bike online. We suggest checking with the train operator in advance as rules for bikes vary across train lines.



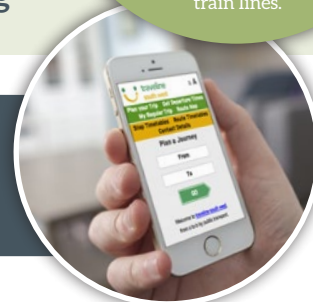
**COTSWOLDS BY BIKE** [www.sustrans.org](http://www.sustrans.org)



## TRAVEL INFO AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

[www.travelinesw.com](http://www.travelinesw.com)

Plan your journey, download and print timetables or get the free mobile app. (Data updated weekly)





# over 3,000 miles of magical walking, cycling and riding



The Cotswolds offers over 3,000 miles of walking, cycling and riding routes. Many long distance routes criss-cross the region, and take in spectacular views from the Cotswolds escarpment, picturesque villages and famous ancient sites.



Broadway Tower

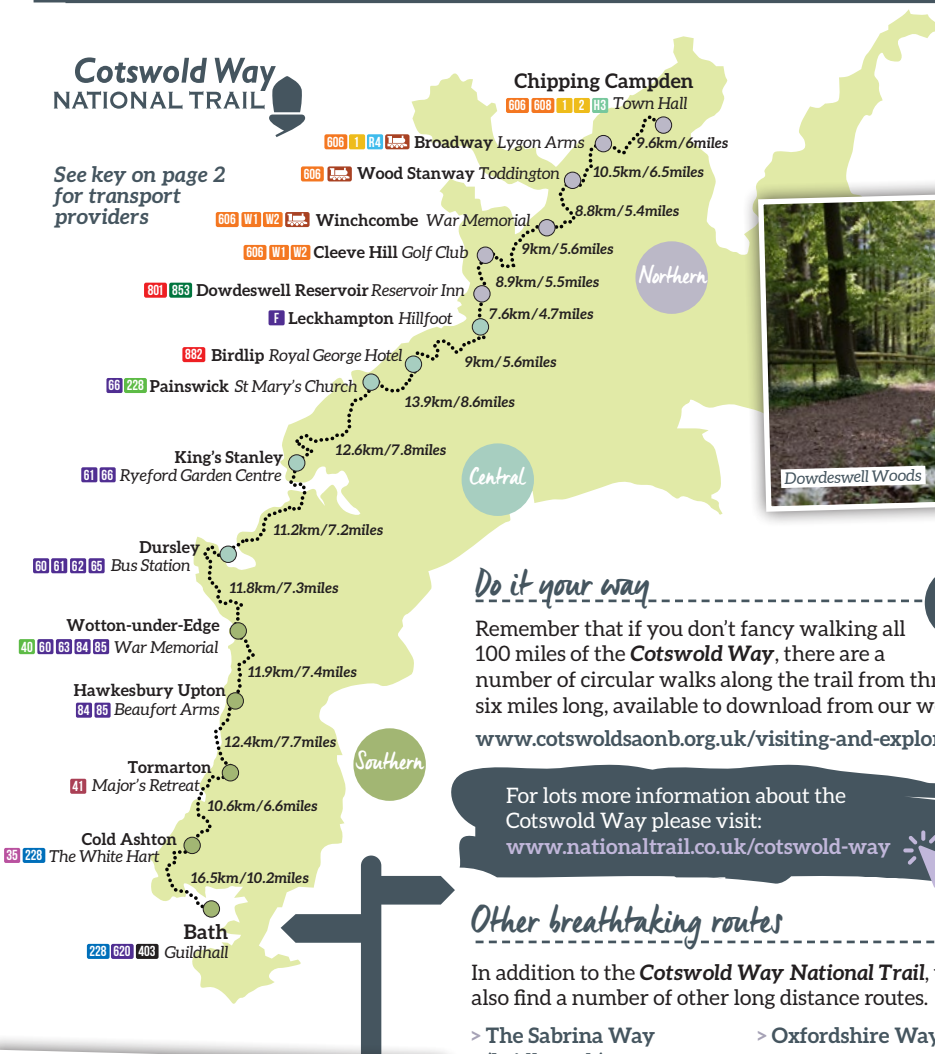


There are plenty of places along the Cotswold Way National Trail where you can use public transport to nearby towns and villages to start and finish a walk. For latest bus and train information: [www.travelinesw.com](http://www.travelinesw.com)



## Cotswold Way NATIONAL TRAIL

See key on page 2  
for transport  
providers



Dowdeswell Woods

## Do it your way

Remember that if you don't fancy walking all 100 miles of the **Cotswold Way**, there are a number of circular walks along the trail from three to six miles long, available to download from our website: [www.cotswoldsاونb.org.uk/visiting-and-exploring](http://www.cotswoldsاونb.org.uk/visiting-and-exploring)

For lots more information about the Cotswold Way please visit:

[www.nationaltrail.co.uk/cotswold-way](http://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/cotswold-way)

## Other breathtaking routes

In addition to the **Cotswold Way National Trail**, you'll also find a number of other long distance routes.

- > The Sabrina Way (bridle path)
- > Monarch's Way
- > Macmillan Way
- > Heart of England Way
- > Oxfordshire Way
- > Gloucestershire Way
- > Diamond Way
- > Thames Path National Trail

For more information about long distance routes, visit

[www.cotswoldsاونb.org.uk/visiting-and-exploring](http://www.cotswoldsاونb.org.uk/visiting-and-exploring)



Market Hall - Chipping Campden



## Guided Walks



There are lots of options for guided walks across the Cotswolds. Cotswold Voluntary Wardens and The Ramblers both offer regular walks which are open to the public. Search online for other local groups that are happy to welcome people onto guided walks. Most groups can cater for a range of abilities so there's plenty of choice.



Credit: Anthony Paul

## Pedal Power



Two wheeled adventures in the Cotswolds! Cycling routes and options are abundant in the Cotswolds – from mountain biking, road routes, even e-bike hire, there are plenty of choices for cyclists around the Cotswolds.

Visit [www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk) as a start point for finding routes. The region has a fantastic range of terrain: from winding country lanes, to steep hills, to fantastic off road cycle paths.



Credit: Nick Turner

## Saddle Up



The Cotswolds has always been popular with horse riders – and many stables and schools offer hacks that will take riders out across the landscape and through the charming villages the region is famous for.

Check out routes and riding centres listed by the British Horse Society [www.bhs.org.uk](http://www.bhs.org.uk)



Credit: The Picture Taker

# 6 of the best



1



### Westonbirt, The National Arboretum

An historic, Victorian picturesque landscape and internationally important tree and shrub collection.

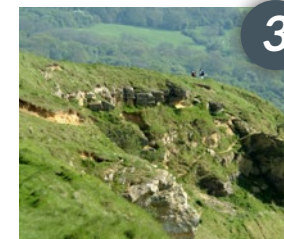
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### Woodchester Mansion & Park

A Grade I listed 19th Century Victorian Gothic mansion which was mysteriously abandoned mid-construction in 1873.

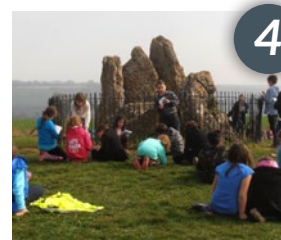
3



### Cleeve Hill & Common

At 330 metres, Cleeve Hill and Common is the highest point of the Cotswolds and designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

4



### The Rollright Stones

An ancient Neolithic and Bronze Age site located on the Oxfordshire/Warwickshire border.

5



### Stroud Farmers' Market

Multi-award winning and well known as one of the biggest and most popular farmers markets in the UK.

6



### Cotswold Limestone

The Jurassic oolitic limestone that lies beneath the Cotswolds and gives the area its distinctive character.



For latest bus and train information:  
[www.travelinesw.com](http://www.travelinesw.com)



Great value bus and rail travel – across the Cotswolds!

# Discover

the beauty and attractions  
of the region with a one day  
Cotswolds Discoverer Pass

  
**Cotswolds  
Discoverer**  
ONE DAY PASS

Enjoy hop-on/ hop-off bus and rail travel around the Cotswolds – one of the UK's most beautiful landscapes\*. Tickets can be purchased at UK mainline train stations and on board participating bus services. \*Not valid on rail services before 08:50, Monday to Friday.

[www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/visiting-and-exploring](http://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/visiting-and-exploring)



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Always check your travel plans and destinations with transport operators and/or businesses before setting off as information is subject to change and can vary at different times of the year. Whilst every care has been taken to ensure that the information contained in this booklet is correct, the Cotswolds Conservation Board cannot accept responsibility for any errors or inaccuracies. Maps contained within this publication are for illustrative purposes only and should not be used for navigation. We recommend checking online via [travelinesw.com](http://travelinesw.com) for the latest information for all routes.

