

I. Chipping Campden and Dover's Hill

This delightful short walk leads you from the charmingly English market town of Chipping Campden, through shaded woodlands and past breathtaking views. A wonderful introduction to the Cotswolds, and a perfect start to the Cotswold Way.

Distance:

4½ miles or 7.2km (Shorter route 3 miles or 4.8km)

Duration:

2½-3½ hrs (Shorter: 1½-2½ hrs)

Difficulty:

Moderate, some steep sections (Shorter: Easy, avoids climbs)

Public transport:

No. 1 (Johnsons) or 606 (Pulhams) from Broadway. No. 1 and 2 (Johnsons) from Stratford upon Avon (Visit www.travelinesw.com)

Start/Finish:

Grid reference SP 151/392 (OS Explorer sheet OL45) Postcode GL55 6HB

Refreshments:

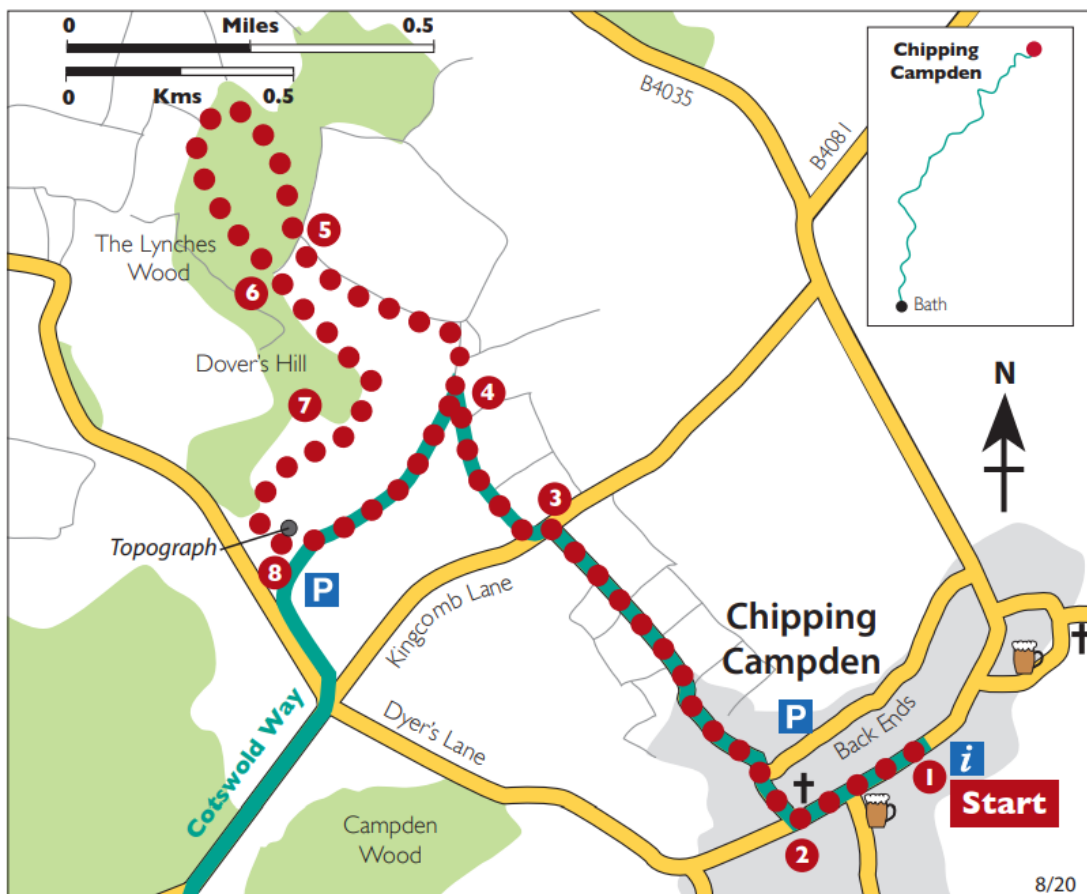
Numerous cafés and pubs in Chipping Campden. Check opening hours. Public toilets in Sheep Street.

Parking

There is free parking along the High Street and other locations. Walkers are asked to use the free parking in Back Ends. Dover's Hill car park belongs to the National Trust.

1 Beside the Market Hall is a hand carved marker stone for the start/end of the Cotswold Way. Before you start take a minute to look upwards at the fascinating roof structure of the 1627 building. Standing on the stone and facing the road, turn right past the war memorial and follow the pavement.

2 Turn right just after the Catholic church, past the first of many oak signposts along the Cotswold Way, and on up Hoo Lane. This becomes an un-made



track, leading in half a mile (0.8km) to an opening onto Kingcomb Lane.

3 Watching for traffic, turn left and walk along the lay-by for 100 metres. Turn right opposite a Cotswold Way signpost, entering a footpath to a kissing gate leading onto Dover's Hill (owned and managed by The National Trust) and a taste of the spectacular views to come.

To take the shorter route and avoid the steep sections, turn left here and follow the Cotswold Way directly to the viewpoint at the end (point 8) - just breathing in the incredible views and freshest of winds is unforgettable enough!

4 For the full route, leave the Cotswold Way to follow the bridleway to the right. Follow the fenceline to a gate on your right and go through into a small windswept woodland. Take the left track and follow it as it turns left

downhill towards two gates. Take the left hand kissing gate which emerges onto the hillside and then straight on, keeping the fence on your right, to the woods at the bottom.

5 Pass through another kissing gate into the leafy calm of Lynch's Wood, with the area's finest show of bluebells in May. A boardwalk has been installed where the track can be very muddy. Near the bottom of the woods, curve to the left and carry on uphill taking the long flight of steps. At the top of the steps, turn right and follow the path through a kissing gate back into the fields.

6 Follow the wide grass track ahead keeping the fence to the wood on your right. Keep following this track as it bends to the right and along the side of the hill (there may be muddy sections here).

7 Pass a small pond amongst

trees on your left. Stay with the track as it bends left up the last bit of hill to the stone topograph on Dover's Hill.

8 Take a few minutes to catch your breath and enjoy the stunning views. If you were here in spring, you might witness the annual 'Olimpick Games' which have been played on the hill since 1612, and continued on and off to the present day. The games involve painful-sounding sports such as 'shin-kicking' and 'pike-tumbling'. Finally, follow the edge of the hill back to point 4, and retrace your steps back to Chipping Campden for a well-earned rest.

Congratulations, you have just started the Cotswold Way

Points of Interest



The Market Hall

Built in 1627 by the town's wealthy benefactor, Sir Baptist Hicks, this landmark of the town was built to provide shelter for traders. Back then townsfolk would trade goods like cheese, butter and poultry. In the 1940s it was almost sold to an American, but local people heroically raised the money to buy it first. They gave it to the National Trust so that people young and old can continue to cherish this delightful building.

For more information visit: nationaltrust.org.uk/market-hall (opens in a new window)



Lynches Wood

Provides a fine show of bluebells in May.



Dovers Hill

Stands at 230m above sea level. The lower slopes of the hill indicate past Roman activity and are now wooded with native trees such as Sweet Chestnut and Larch. The expansive views from the hill enhance the sense of space and feeling of extensive rolling countryside.

For more information visit: nationaltrust.org.uk/dovers-hill (opens in a new window)

Dovers Hill is home to the Cotswold Olimpick Games, an annual celebration held at the hill on the Friday after Spring Bank Holiday, these are thought to have begun as early as 1622. The Olimpicks traditionally include events such as shin-kicking, morris dancing and tug-of-war, although in the past there would also have been sword-fighting and horseracing events. A temporary wooden castle used to be constructed, called Dover Castle, from which ceremonious gunfire was sounded throughout the Games. Robert Dover, a local lawyer, started the Games with the approval of King James.

For more information visit: olimpickgames.co.uk (opens in a new window)



The Cotswold Way National Trail is managed and maintained by Cotswolds National Landscape and the Cotswold Voluntary Wardens
www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk

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