

# Off-road cycle ride 5

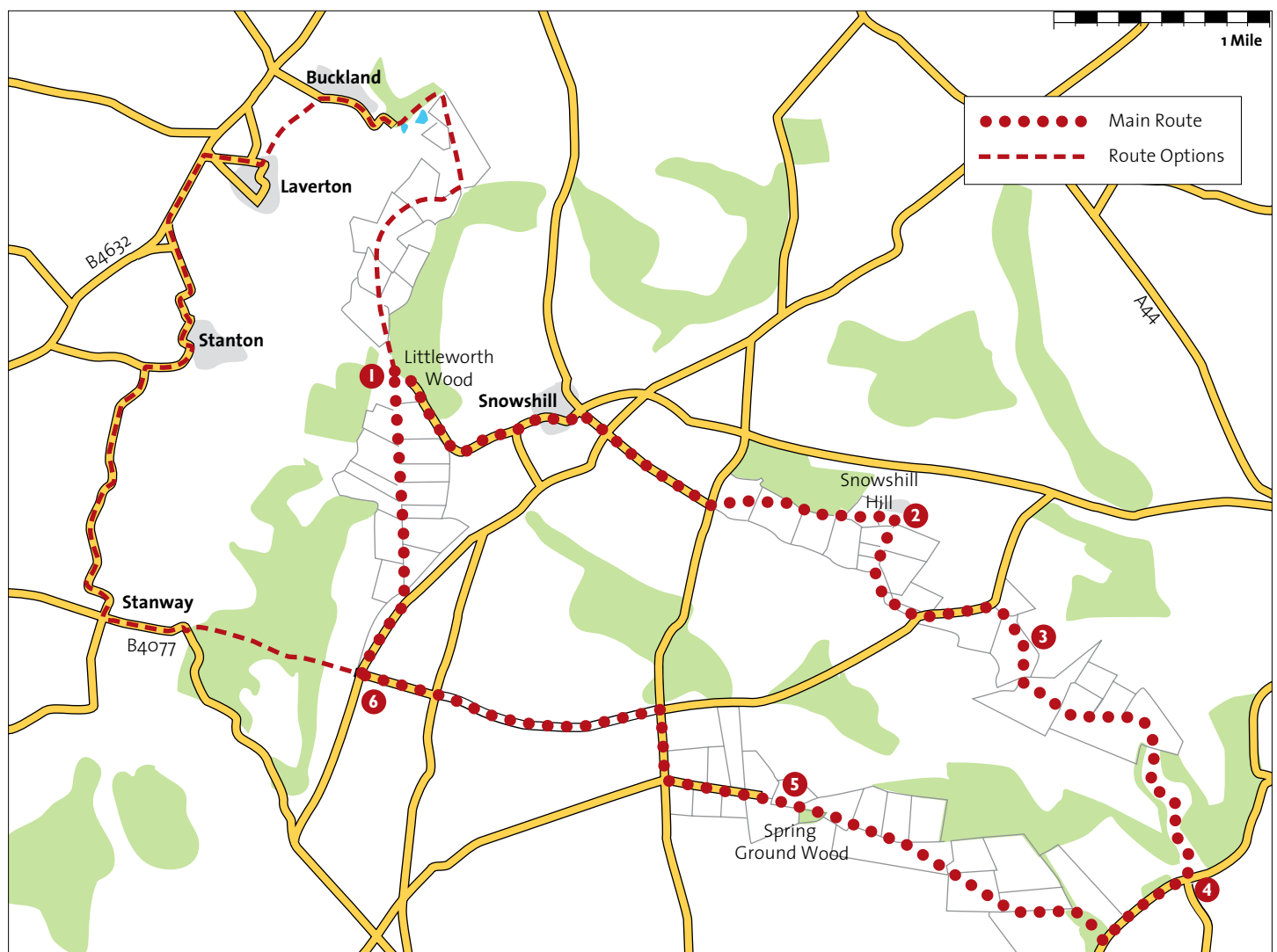
## Snowshill and Beyond

### 12 or 18 1/2 Miles



**Cotswolds**  
National  
Landscape

This ride shows you some of the Cotswolds many faces. It takes you across the high wold plateau, through the top end of the Upper Dikler Valley and, if you have the energy, down and up the Cotswolds scarp! Be aware, it involves a couple of lengthy arable field crossings. Good riding on a dry summer's day, but harder work when wet and recently ploughed. Still worth it though! You can start the ride at any point, please try to get to it on your bike if possible. If you do drive please park with consideration for the local community. Brackets indicate the wording of signs and the route is described in a clockwise direction. Enjoy!



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#### The Route

- 1 At the end of the byway turn right to join the lane. Stay on this lane past Littleworth Wood ignoring the turning on your left. At the T junction, turn left. Turn right before the church then right at the crossroads to climb out of Snowhill. Straight across the first crossroads (your right of way). Turn left at the next junction (single track road with passing places) ignoring the bridleway through the white metal gate leading straight on. Take the bridleway through the first metal gate on your right and continue through the next metal gate.
- 2 At Snowhill Hill carry straight on through the buildings and turn right onto the concrete track which soon turns into a tarmac downhill lane. This tarmac stretch doesn't last long. At the valley bottom turn left to join a track just as the tarmac returns. Leave this track to join a road through the metal gate on your right. Turn left onto the road. When the road bears sharp left leave it to join a bridleway on your right.
- 3 When this bridleway forks carry straight on. When you emerge from the wood follow the bridleway along the valley bottom. Stay on the bridleway as it switches to the other side of the fence. This happens before you reach the belt of trees on the right hand side of the valley. You go through a short wooden gate on your right and turn left straight away to go through a metal gate. Continue to follow the valley bottom only now with the fence on your left for a bit before it ends. Pinch yourself to make sure that you are in fact not dreaming but actually riding through such a stunning place. Through the metal gate at the bottom and diagonally across the last field to join the road by the buildings.
- 4 Turn right at the road (Ford 4, Tewkesbury 18). After a climb take the public bridleway on your right through the woods (Public bridleway, Gloucestershire Way). Ignore the footpath leaving the wood on your right. The bridleway takes you out onto the plateau. Stay on it as it cuts through a hedge to cross an arable field heading towards some conifers. At the trees ride through them ignoring the footpath to your left & track to your right. Again follow the bridleway across the field. Once across bear left with the hedge on your right. Through the red gate and straight on.
- 5 Through another red gate at the end of the wood on your left. Straight on when the track forms a tarmac lane. Right at the road (Snowhill 2, Broadway 5). Leave the road, turning left when a wood starts on your left to join a track for a lovely long descent. Straight on at the road (Stanway, Tewkesbury).

- 6 Turn right when the road bears left at the top (unsuitable for motors). Turn left to join a byway through double metal gates just before the road curves to the right (public bridleway arrow on a post). Follow this byway all the way back to 1. Don't be tempted to stay on the well surfaced bridleway by bearing left. The byway goes straight on through the fields with lots of gates, but also offering great views of Broadway Tower and Snowhill Lavender.

#### The Stanway Stanton Scarp Extension – 6 1/2 Miles

This extension gives you a longer ride with great views and beautiful villages; you can also have a great 'mini ride' by combining it with the byway and lane between 1 & 6.

At 6 carry straight on to join a bridleway through the double metal gates. Stay on this bridleway for a lovely descent through the woods; carry straight on when tracks cross. At the tarmac and cottages bear left towards the road. Turn right at the road to follow it down the slope. Turn right at the crossroads (Stanway, Stanton 1 1/2). Right again at the T-junction (Stanton 1/4). Stay on the road as it winds through Stanton. Right at the B4632 (Stratford) then take the first right (Laverton). In Laverton take the first bridleway left (by the no through road sign).

When you emerge onto a lane turn right to follow it through Buckland. Stay on this lane as it turns into a roughly tarmaced byway for a long climb (remember that nice descent through the woods? You knew there would be a price!). Carry on when you get a good view of Broadway Tower as you reach the brow. At the farmyard on your left turn right to follow the Cotswolds Way. Stay on the Cotswolds Way as it follows a byway to a brow where tarmac starts. Leave the Cotswolds Way at this point to follow the lane to 1.

#### Maps

This ride straddles the Ordnance Surveys Landranger maps 150 Worcester, the Malverns & surrounding area, 151 Stratford-upon-Avon & surrounding area and 163 Cheltenham and Cirencester area. It can also be found in its entirety on the Explorer Map OL45 The Cotswolds.

#### Further Information

The Cotswolds National Landscape website contains more information about cycling, including downloadable routes, maps and places to hire bikes. Visit [www.cotswolds-nl.org.uk/cycling](http://www.cotswolds-nl.org.uk/cycling).

**Words by Simon Smith**