

# Winchcombe Walkers are Welcome

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



## Walk Number 8 To the source of the River Isbourne

A circular walk from Winchcombe up to the source of the Isbourne.

Distance: 6 miles /9kms

Duration: 3 hours

Difficulty: Moderate - a steady climb to beyond Dryfield Farm then gently downhill.

Start/finish: Back Lane car park - £1.00 all day Toilets 20p in car park.

Refreshments: Winchcombe

Ascent: 616 feet/ 188 metres

point look for a stile on your left **A** 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 cattleshed on your right. The track now runs up 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) **B**.

Turn left and descend gradually to a metal gate, go through and follow the Cotswold Way. Bear right downhill on the Cotswold Way towards the 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



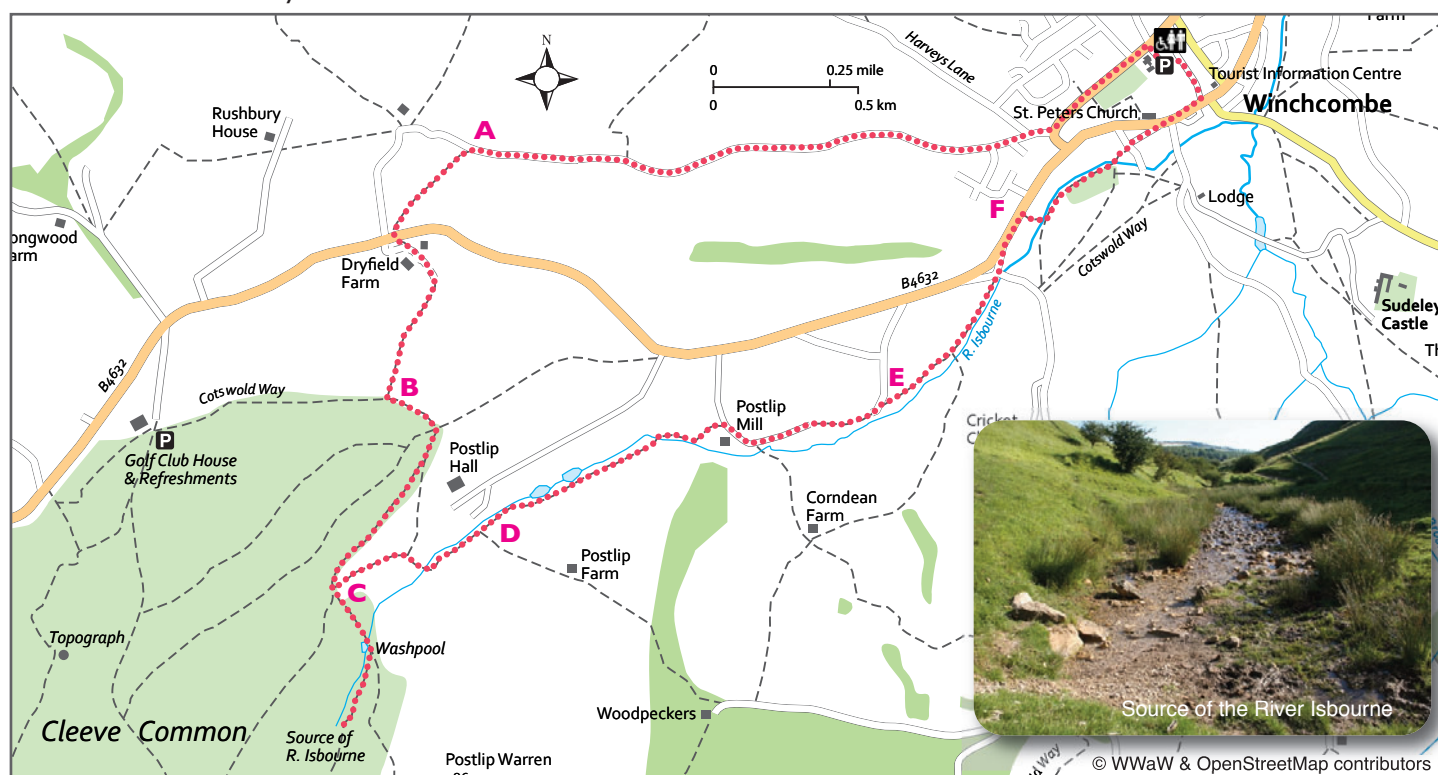
continue along the (now grassy) track. The Washpool comes into sight: it was used at one time as a sheep dip. Take the path to the left to the far side of the pool then follow the lower path alongside the River Isbourne to its source which is approx. 200m upstream.

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

Pass over a second stile by a high wall bordering Postlip Hall, signed 'Isbourne Way' and go through three gates, keeping the wall on your left. After a fourth gate

Park in Back Lane car park and leave via the entrance into Back Lane. Cross the road and turn left, go past Abbey Fields Community Centre and at the junction continue straight ahead into Langley Road. The Winchcombe Way goes up Harvey's Lane; however, this walk continues along Langley Road.

Walk along the road for about 1½ miles, ascending gradually until you pass under some overhead electricity cables. At this



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you reach a metalled lane **D**, continue straight on over a stile 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.



View from the Washpool

The path leads to another stile into a large field. Continue in this direction for about ½ mile, passing some attractive, restored pools on the river. At the end of the field, turn left through the kissing 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, continue on a short gravelled path and turn right at the next access road (signed public footpath), turn left passing the storage areas. Follow the concrete track, passing some settling ponds on your right and where the main track bears left, go straight on and rise up to a gate ahead **E**. Pass through and follow this footpath, with a hedge on your right, to reach a road.

Continue straight ahead to the junction with the main road, then on further 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 kissing gate and then through a field with the river on your left. Proceed through another kissing 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 Lloyds Bank turn left up Cowl Lane to the rear pedestrian entrance to Back Lane car park.

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## 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'.



The sheep dip or Washpool