

# Winchcombe Welcomes Walkers

TO THE WALKING CAPITAL OF THE COTSWOLDS

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## Walk 15 Dunn's Hill and Monk's Hole walk

A circular walk from Winchcombe up to the Salt Way.

Distance: 4 miles /6.4kms

Duration: 2 hours

Difficulty: Strenuous - follow the Winchcombe Way out and return via the Gloucestershire Way.

Start/finish: Back Lane car park - £1 all day. Toilets 20p in car park.

Refreshments: Winchcombe

Ascent: 700 feet/215 metres

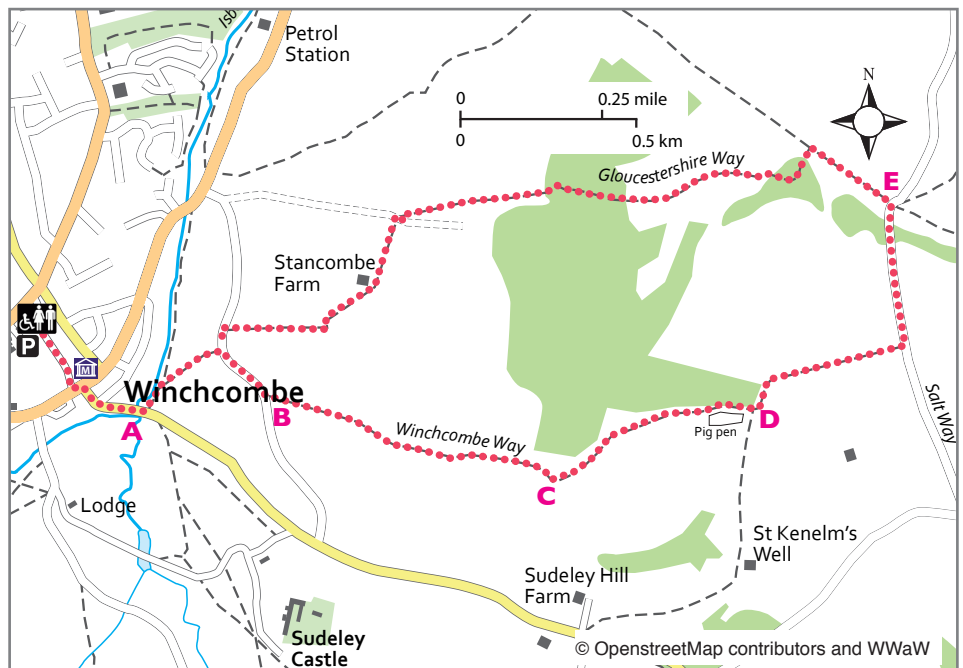
Park in Back Lane car park and exit via the steps signposted Town Centre. Turn left at the High Street and shortly after, carefully cross the road and enter Castle Street beside the White Hart pub. Follow the pavement down, across the bridge over the River Isbourne and shortly after turn left between some cottages signposted Winchcombe & Isbourne Ways **A**.

At the end go through the gate and bear 45° right across the ridge and furrow field to a gate in the far corner of the field.

Go through the gate and turn right along a lane for approx 120 metres, turn left at the Winchcombe Way finger post opposite a cottage **B**. Enter the field aiming for the telegraph post. From there towards a bridge on the right hand side hedge. Cross the bridge and bear left to a gate. Go through the gate and proceed straight ahead across the field to a gap in the field boundary on your right. Go through the gap and bear 45° left towards the external corner of the fence. (Many walkers follow the field edge). Follow the fence to a gate and enter the field.

Here the gradient starts to steepen, continue uphill keeping near the fence on your left and towards a waymarked post situated where the ground levels off. Here is a good place to take a rest and admire the views along the Sudeley Valley, Cleeve Common and Winchcombe nestling in the valley below.

Continue ahead for approx 50 metres and



Looking towards Sudeley Castle

turn left through a gate **C** and continue walking uphill beside the fence on your left to a plantation of trees. Go through two gates and the path bears right. Keep straight on towards the field boundary ahead. Keeping the boundary on your left proceed to a gate. (At this point avoid following the farm track bearing right towards a gate to leave the route). Follow the way markers to the gate, continue beside the pen, sometimes containing Gloucester Old Spot pigs to another gate at the far end of the pen. The path turns left up a track to a field gate with a gate on the left hand side. **D** Enter the



Gloucester Old Spot pigs

next field and continue along the track ahead. The countryside changes from pastureland to open arable fields and the gradient levels out.

Follow the track keeping the drystone wall on your right until you reach a field gate by a lane (Salt Way).

Turn left (following the Winchcombe Way sign and follow the lane to Little Farmcote Farm; continue along the lane to a fork in the road and take the left fork to a gate. (if you are lucky you might have a view of the Stanway fountain ahead.) Approx 25 metres after the gate on the left is a path by a field gate **E**. Turn left through the gate and you will follow the Gloucestershire Way back to Winchcombe.

Cross the field to the gate, go through and across the next field to another gate with glorious views looking towards Toddington, the Malverns and Winchcombe railway station below.

Go through the field gate and turn left up a short steep slope to a stile. Cross and continue up to a gate in a wood. Follow the path through the trees before it starts to descend down a steep path to another gate.

WWaW hope you enjoy the walk, however the walk is undertaken at your sole risk and WWaW have no responsibility for loss, damage, injury or interpretation. Every possible care has been taken to ensure the information given was accurate at the time of creation.

Go through to leave the scrubby area and follow the right hand field boundary to the far side of the long field and look for a gate on your right. Go through and turn left to follow the path down to some trees. (There is a fine view of the Malvern Hills from here). Continue down through the trees and take care as the path can be slippery in places.

At the bottom of the slope bear left and join a track which eventually leads towards a field gate. Before you reach the gate as the track turns left, fork right down to a gate in some trees. Go through and follow the path to a gate; go through the paddock to meet a gate by a lane.

Turn right and then immediate left to go through another gate to cross the field to the far side with a large sign 'PATH'. Go through the gate and turn right towards another large sign 'PATH' and head to the left of the farm buildings to leave the field via a gate slightly hidden from view in the corner.

Go through and turn right to follow the fence on your right before striking out across the field in the same direction to a gate on the far side.

Go through and take care emerging from the hedgerow to join a lane (Rushley Lane), turn left to shortly meet a gate on your right, passed through on your outward journey.

Go through and bear left across the field towards the houses and back along the path to Castle Street. Turn right and follow the road back into the centre of Winchcombe.

### **Salt Way**

These ancient routes radiated from Droitwich in varying directions and the salt ways predated Roman roads and drovers routes.

A route for the distribution of salt is believed to have been from Worcester via Toddington, Hailes and Winchcombe on through Lechlade and on to the coast in Hampshire, Winchcombe was very much a crossroads for trading routes.

The Latin word salarium linked salt and Roman soldiers. The salarium paid to

Roman soldiers has defined a form of work-for-hire ever since in the Western world, and gave rise to such expressions as "being worth one's salt".

### **Monks Hole**

One winter with snow falling, a monk from Winchcombe was visiting his brethren at Hailes. On his return journey as darkness fell he reached the summit of the hill. Snow had driven into the hollows and hidden all trace of a path, the monk fell into one of the snow drifts, never to rise again. He was not found until the snow had melted.

### **Ridge and Furrow**

In the Middle Ages each strip was managed by one small family, within large common fields, and the location of the ploughing was the same each year. The movement of soil year after year gradually built the centre of the strip up into a ridge, leaving a dip, or "furrow" between each ridge.

Traditional ploughs turn the soil over in one direction, to the right. This means that the plough cannot return along the same furrow.

The ridge and furrows you see today are evidence the land became grassland and has not been ploughed since.

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Views looking back near the Salt Way