

3. Stanton, Snowhill and the Edge

This beauty of a walk leads you between two of the most picturesque villages in the Cotswolds; over hilltops, down valleys and through shaded woodlands. Whilst slightly more challenging than others in the series, your efforts will be rewarded by invitingly warm pubs and some of the most splendid views in the country.

Distance:
6 miles (Shorter route 2½ miles)

Duration:
3½-4½ hrs (Shorter: 1½-2½ hrs)

Difficulty:
Moderate, some steep sections and stiles

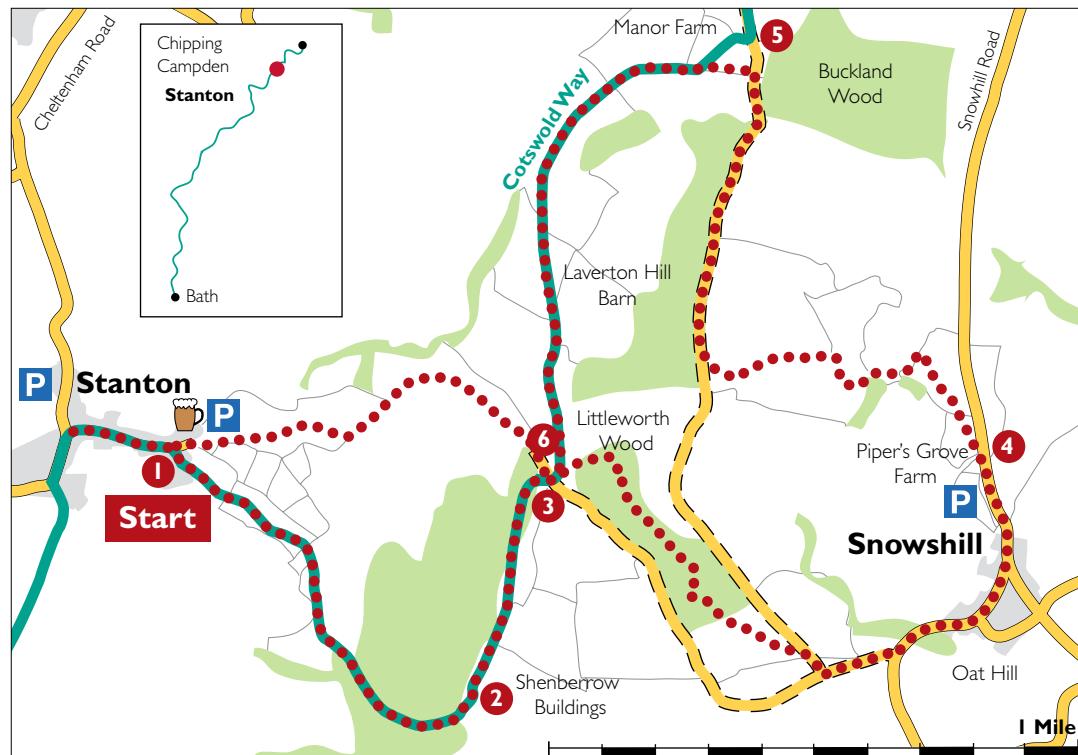
Public transport:
No. 606 bus from Cheltenham and a short walk (See Cotswold Way public transport leaflet, or call Traveline on 0871 200 2233)

Start/Finish:
Grid reference SP071342
(OS Explorer sheet OL45)
Postcode WR12 7NE

Refreshments:
Excellent pub at Stanton.
Further pub at Snowhill and café at Snowhill Manor.

Parking
Parish Council car park next to the cricket ground on main road out of village. Parking also available at the Mount Inn for customers only. **Please do not park in village centre.**

1 Start at the Cotswold Way signpost towards the top of the village, just down from the Mount Inn. Look for the old lamppost on the triangle of grass and follow the Cotswold way up the road to the right, past the thatched cottage. Just before the water station, which may be hidden by trees in the summer, turn right at the marker post as the Cotswold Way leaves the track to



follow a footpath down to the right and through two gates. After you pass the small pond on your right, watch your footing and climb steeply up the track beneath tall beech trees until you reach the way-marker posts at the top.

2 Continue on through the kissing gate to the left of the house, and follow the track across the field for half a mile until you reach a cattle grid at the end.

3 At this point you leave the Cotswold Way for a while (For the shorter route, skip forward to point 6 and turn left to take the track downhill back towards Stanton, ignoring the Cotswold Way signpost). Turn right along the road to Snowhill and head down the first footpath on your left, opposite the turning circle. Head through the kissing gate at the bottom and follow the track through this peaceful little woodland, owned and managed by the National Trust, until you reach the gate at the end. Continue down across the next field towards the kissing gate at the

far left corner; turning right along the road and left at the T junction. Take another left turn and continue down into Snowhill. Pass through the delightful village between the pub and the church, past the carpark and at the entrance to Snowhill Manor you will see a kissing gate into the field.

4 Pass down through this field past a line of magnificent Ash trees. Head through the next field and pass through the kissing gate at the far side, turning left to follow the fenceline downhill. Go through the gate at the bottom and veer left up through the woods, turning right just before the next gate. Continue up along the edge of the woods with the fence on your left, watching for muddy patches after wet weather, and cross over the stile at the top. Walk steeply left up the narrow field towards the line of trees until you reach an old iron kissing gate. Turn right and follow the farm track for half a mile until you reach a field gate between the two woodlands.

5 After pausing for a few minutes to catch your breath, cross over the stile on your left and follow the footpath down across a field to the track at the bottom. Turn left to rejoin the Cotswold Way and continue up the trail for about a mile, past a house and old quarries on your left, until you reach the waymarker post at the top next to where you left the Cotswold Way nearly four miles earlier.

6 Turn right along the track down towards a field gate, and continue downhill along the steep-sided path. Be careful to watch your footing along this track, but also not to miss the awe-inspiring views over Stanton and across the Severn Vale into Wales that open up below you – once tasted, this slice of Cotswolds will never be forgotten. Passing through the last gate at the bottom of the track, you emerge next to the Mount Inn. Continue down to the left of the pub towards the start point, or take the chance to rest tired feet at a warm and welcoming Cotswold inn – the perfect end to a perfect walk.