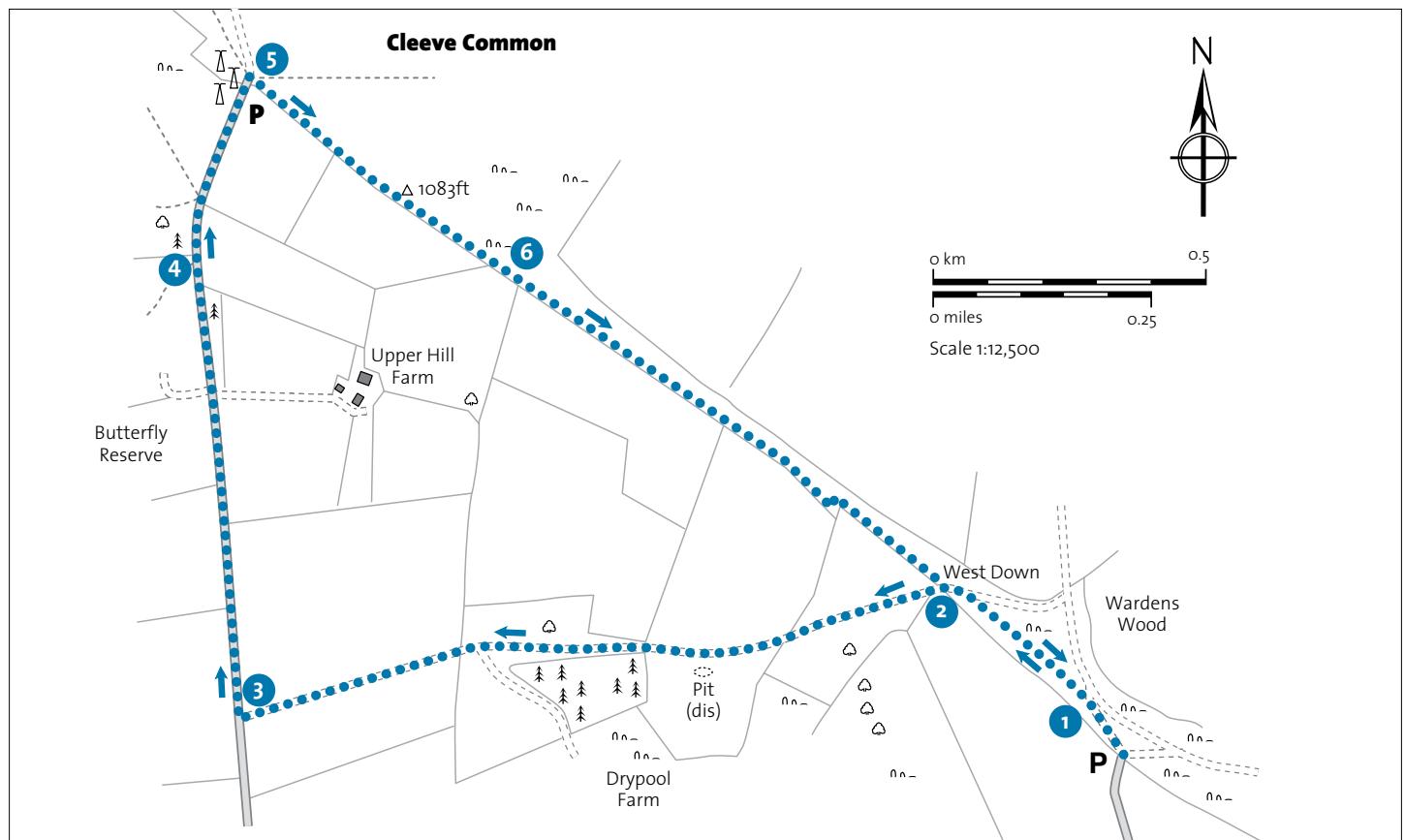


This invigorating circular walk offers stunning views from the highest point of the Cotswolds and opportunities to visit Cleeve Common and a nearby Butterfly Reserve.



Distance: 5 kilometres/
3 miles (2 hours)

Start: West Down Car Park,
2½ miles north of
Andoversford, approached
from Whittington to
Syreford Road or from
Brockhampton

Route:

Go through the gate on the left ① which brings you on to a narrow strip of Cleeve Common called West Down.

Walk on alongside the all weather horse gallop.

After 250 yards turn left through a gate ② onto a track. Follow the track for about ¾ of a mile descending into the top of the Drypool Valley and climbing up to the road. ③

Turn right on the road which leads you to another entrance to Cleeve Common beside the masts.

Halfway to the masts you pass the Bill Smylie Butterfly Reserve ④ on your left. You are at liberty to wander around the paths of the reserve with its stupendous views and its abundance of flowers typical of unimproved limestone

grassland. The best time to see butterflies is in the middle of a calm, sunny day in late spring and in July and August.

At the end of the road go through the gate ⑤ on to Cleeve Common and turn right

along the wall. This brings you to an Ordnance Survey pillar which marks the highest point of the Cotswolds - 1083 ft, 330 metres. This was the location of the first Cheltenham Racecourse at the beginning of the 19th century.

The return route follows the wall, ⑥ which eventually brings you to the top of West Down and along the narrow strip of land back to the car park.