

WALKING IN THE COTSWOLDS

30 CIRCULAR WALKS IN THE AONB

by Damian Hall

CICERONE

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indicates a route which includes part of the Cotswold Way National Trail.

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Front cover: Views south along the Cotswold escarpment from Coaley Peak (Walk 18)



Looking south down the Cotswold escarpment from amid Coaley Peak's wild flowers, with Cam Long Down hiding Dursley (of Harry Potter fame)

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aka Supertramp, who penned the brilliantly timeless words: 'What is this life if, full of care, we have no time to stand and stare?' He lived in four houses in 'Nelly' over the years and despite being an amputee loved walking the hills and streets. Nailsworth has a growing reputation for both culinary excellence and football. If Football Conference team Forest Green Rovers, owned by radical eco-energy tycoon Dale Vince OBE (who's banned meat from the ground – a world first – and plans to make the club fully sustainable, organic pitch and all), ever get promoted, Nailsworth will be the smallest town ever to have League football. C'mon you Rovers!

*Searching for more
coy, shallow Cotswold
valleys near Avening*

From the car park, cross the **A46** with care, go right and slightly further uphill, then left up Tetbury Lane. Continue uphill past an Unsuitable For Motors sign at 0.5 miles. After the gradient flattens out turn left at a junction and soon after go straight ahead to leave the tarmac and go over a stile and into a field straight ahead, ignoring options to right and left.





Stick to the right as you follow the edge of three fields, gradually bending right and descending. Look for a yellow waymarker to go through a gap in a wall and carry on round to the right following the wall as you descend between trees, ignoring a couple of stiles and taking the one that goes directly through a hedge and into woods, briefly, before emerging by a house and onto a lane. (If in doubt, simply follow the stream to the lane.) Turn right and follow the lane as it bends left and goes downhill into Avening by The Bell. ►

Turn left on the B4014, pass some houses and turn left up steep Woodstock Lane. Go right at the first fork, going uphill, and right again at the second fork.

The lane flattens out and turns into a bridleway, then a grassy path, with lovely views to your right; of **Gatcombe Wood**, Princess Anne's Gatcombe House and Minchinhampton (Walk 20). It can be a riot of colour in autumn along here. And hilariously muddy in winter.

Pass through a couple of gates to the left of a farm and continue uphill. Go through a gate into woods and take the path on the right. Ignore forestry tracks and a kissing gate on the left. At a junction of paths turn left,

Beech woods above Avening offer up a red-brown carpet for walkers

Like Ozleworth, Avening has a circular churchyard indicating a pre-Christian site. It also celebrates Pig Face Day every two years, a feast commemorating Queen Matilda, wife of William the Conqueror, who consecrated the church in 1080.



The descent back to Nailsworth, at its best in autumn months

slightly uphill, between a wall and fence. At a junction of several paths, turn right into a field by a bridleway sign, and downhill past an old stone barn.

Go through a metal gate and back into the woods. Emerge from the woods and follow a fairly obvious path down the field, with promising views of Nailsworth ahead. Towards the bottom of the field head for the bottom left corner to take a track through a gate and out onto the road.

Continue in the same direction, past tennis courts. Turn left at a busier road, into the centre of **Nailsworth** and go left and uphill to get back to the car park.