

# Walk Nine

## Villages of the Windrush Valley



**This is number nine in a series of walks from the Cotswolds Conservation Board designed to allow people to make their way to the start point using public transport.**

A Cotswold classic! A fascinating walk in the Windrush Valley past ancient burial mounds, Norman churches and manors. Beautiful villages hide interesting histories of landowners and literary figures.

**Distance:** 6.5km/4 miles

**Time:** allow 2 hrs

**Buses:** Take the Swanbrook 853 from Burford A40 lay-by and ask for the Asthall turn

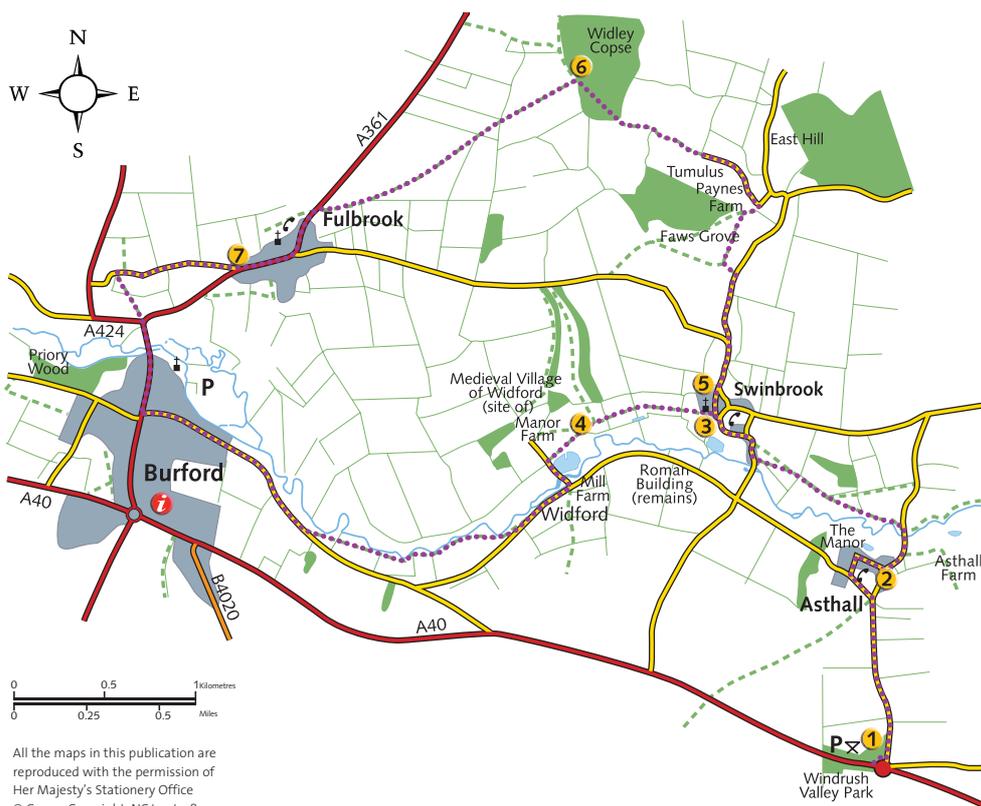
**Trains:** Rail Enquiries 08457 484950

**OS Ref:** SP289101, Explorer Sheet OL45

**1** Follow the lane down to Asthall, passing the picnic site. Take left fork at the junction by the green. Turn right to St Nicholas Church and the Elizabethan Manor House, once the home of the Mitford sisters. Turn right to the Maytime Inn, close to the course of Roman Akerman Street.

**2** Turn left and follow the lane past cottages over the River Windrush and turn left over a stone stile. Cross the water meadows to Swinbrook, emerging onto a lane. Turn right past the Swan Inn to St Mary's Church.

**3** For the short route back, go through the churchyard to a gate and follow the footpath between walls to point four. For a longer walk, (5.5 miles via Fulbrook) turn to point five. Cross the field to the deserted medieval village of Widford, reduced now to humps in the ground around the tiny tranquil church of St Oswalds, built over a Roman villa.



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**4** Continue on track, cross a cattle grid and turn left along the lane. Cross the river by Widford mill and turn right. After 100 metres turn right over stile and follow the path with the river on right to emerge onto a lane leading into Burford.

**5** Continue on, passing the church on left for 0.5 miles, ignoring a left uphill turn, to a stile on the left into a small Nature Reserve. Cross the spring to reach a stile on the right which takes you onto Handley Plain. Keep to the right hand hedge and head for the metal gate. Walk down the track and turn left up to Paynes Farm.

**6** About 300 metres into Widley Copse look for a path on the left and cross over fields for a mile to Fulbrook. Walk through the village and turn right up the lane to Westhill just before the second pub.

**7** Turn left onto a path opposite Manor Farm and walk down across two fields to a busy roundabout. Cross with care and continue over the medieval bridge into the town.