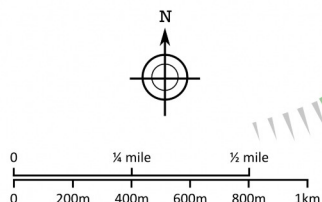


One of several attractive paths in the hilly and wooded country north and west of Swinbrook.



The isolated church of **St Oswald, Widford** is surrounded by the tell-tale humps and bumps of the deserted medieval village it once served. A Roman mosaic was discovered under the chancel floor in 1904, but is no longer on show.



**St Mary's Church, Swinbrook** has much of interest, inside and out. In the churchyard you will find several **bale tombs** – a Cotswold speciality – and the graves of four of the famous **Mitford sisters** – Nancy, Diana, Unity and Pamela – plus other relatives.



Inside the church are the famous **Fettiplace monuments**.



The church and manor house at **Asthall** form a memorable tableau when viewed across the water meadows of the River Windrush. St Nicholas' church has Norman origins.

## three circular walks from the swan inn swinbrook



### Widford Church & Swinbrook

2½ miles: Easy

Visit an isolated medieval church in a meadow and explore Swinbrook village in detail.

### Widford Church & Paynes Farm

4 miles: Fairly easy

A longer walk through wooded country with magnificent views to Asthall village.

### Asthall, Widford & Swinbrook

4 miles: Moderate

Three Cotswold villages and an extended exploration of the Windrush valley.

## the swan inn

Swinbrook, near Burford, Oxon, OX18 4DY  
tel 01993 823339  
website [www.theswanswinbrook.co.uk](http://www.theswanswinbrook.co.uk)  
email [info@theswanswinbrook.co.uk](mailto:info@theswanswinbrook.co.uk)

open 11am—midnight

food served Mon—Fri: midday—2pm  
Sat—Sun: midday—2.30pm



For a longer circuit of 6½ miles, follow steps **1–18** of the [Asthall, Widford and Swinbrook](#) route as far as Widford Church, then steps **7–21** of the [Widford Church and Paynes Farm](#) walk.

## Widford Church and Swinbrook

### 2½ miles: Easy

*Allow 1–1½ hours. Several stiles; paths may be muddy after rain.*

**1** From the front door of the Swan Inn, turn left. **2** Walk up the road into Swinbrook village, keeping left at a junction by a fine stone barn. **3** Keep left at the village green, and turn left by the postbox. **4** Pass below the church, then join a walled path to the left of the last house that leads to a gate into open fields. **5** Cross two fields and pass to the right of a walled cottage as you approach Widford Church. **6** Go through a gate to the right of a cattle grid and leave the track to the right to visit the church. **7** Retrace your steps through the gate by the cattle grid, then turn left to a field gate into the dry valley of Dean Bottom. **8** Walk up the valley for 600 yards, to a stile into a narrow lane. **9** Turn right along the lane for 300 yards before turning left along a hedged green lane that descends to a gate. **10** Turn right down another dry valley. **11** Towards the bottom, keep left of the marshy area and pass to the left of a spring into trees. **12** Ignore an overgrown stile on the right, instead climbing slightly to exit the trees, before turning right to descend to a stile at the corner of a stone wall. **13** Follow the path across boggy ground to the right of a cottage, crossing a plank bridge before bearing right to meet the road. **14** Turn right and walk down the road into Swinbrook, ignoring a turning on the right by the Old Forge. **15** Turn left onto a back lane, passing a small ford and passing The Bell House on your left, before turning right to the village green. **16** Retrace your steps to the Swan.

## Widford Church and Paynes Farm

### 4 miles: Fairly easy

*Allow 2–2½ hours. Multiple stiles; paths may be muddy after rain.*

**1** From the front door of the Swan Inn, turn left. **2** Walk up the road into Swinbrook village, keeping left at a junction by a fine stone barn. **3** Keep left at the village green, and turn left by the postbox. **4** Pass below the church, then join a walled path to the left of the last house that leads to a gate into open fields. **5** Cross two fields and pass to the right of a walled cottage as you approach Widford Church. **6** Go through a gate to the right of a cattle grid and leave the track to the right to visit the church, then retrace your steps. **7** Beyond the gate by the cattle grid, turn left to a field gate into the dry valley of Dean Bottom. **8** Walk up the valley for 600 yards, to a stile into a narrow lane. **9** Turn right along the lane for 300 yards before turning left along a hedged green lane that descends to a gate. **10** Ignore the valley on the right and follow the track half-right up the hillside opposite. **11** Walk along the edge of the wood on your left before

bearing right to a gate in the corner. **12** Follow a stony track downhill to meet a metalled road. **13** Turn right and walk down to a grass triangle in front of some stone cottages. **14** Turn right to another junction, where you turn left, signposted to Fordwells and Leafield. **15** Walk up the lane with woods to left and right. **16** About half a mile from the junction, shortly after the woodland on the right gives way to open fields, turn right onto an obvious track signposted “BRIDLEWAY LEADING TO BYWAY”. **17** Follow this track for three quarters of a mile, to meet a road at a junction. **18** Take the descending lane (Ninety Cut Hill) opposite, signposted to Asthall. **19** Pass the driveway to a farm on the left, then take a footpath over a stile on the right signposted “Swinbrook ½”. **20** Follow the right-hand hedge to a gate, and then a stone wall to a second gate with a slab stile. **21** Bear left to another slab stile opposite the Swan.

## Asthall, Widford and Swinbrook

### 4 miles: Moderate

*Allow 2–3 hours. One moderate climb and multiple stiles; paths may be muddy after rain or impassable in times of flood.*

**1** From the entrance to the pub, turn left for a few steps, cross the road and go over a stone slab stile to the left of the house opposite. **2** Cross the field to another stone stile next to a gate and follow the wall beyond, before heading across the field to a wooden stile left of a large tree. **3** Keep towards the right-hand side in the next field, to emerge on the road by the bridge over the river. **4** Turn right and walk into Asthall village, ignoring the left-hand turn to Asthall Farm. **5** Turn right in the village and walk past the Maytime Inn to the parish church. **6** Follow the road round to the left. **7** At a T-junction, turn left down an avenue of trees. **8** At the next junction, turn right onto a farm track. **9** Go through a couple of farm gates then, when the track bends right around a copse, take an unsurfaced track straight ahead. **10** Skirt another copse on your left then walk up the field edge to the A40. **11** Cross the road carefully into Burford Road and go through the gateway on the right. **12** Turn left along the field edge. **13** At a stile on the left, just before the path rejoins the road, turn right and walk across the field to another stile. **14** Walk through a series of horse paddocks beyond, separated by gates. **15** Beyond the buildings, enter a triangular field and walk along the left-hand fence to a stile into a hedged track next to a sand quarry. Turn right and walk out to the A40. **16** Cross over and go through a metal field gate; cross four fields separated by gates to descend to Mill Farm. **17** Walk out to the road and cross over, passing the mill and crossing the Windrush. **18** Shortly afterwards, turn right and follow the track across the field to Widford Church. **19** Go through a gate next to a cattle grid and follow the footpath to the left of an isolated cottage. **20** Follow the path beyond through fields, with the River Windrush down to your right, to join a walled path that emerges in Swinbrook village below the parish church. **21** Turn right and walk back through the village to the Swan.

## Nearby attractions

The Kings Head, Bledington



Our sister inn, in a picturesque village-green setting in another stunning Cotswold village. Described by the *Sunday Times* as “The classic English country pub that one always hopes to find but seldom does.”

Satnav: **OX7 6XQ (11 miles)**

Burford



Picturesque Oxfordshire town with its famous High Street, lined with historic buildings, sloping down to the church and river. Museums, antique shops and galleries, tea-rooms, pubs and a magnificent Cotswold church.

Satnav (car park): **OX18 4DN (2 miles)**

Cotswold Wildlife Park



One of the UK’s largest zoological collections, featuring birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians. Star exhibits include Asiatic Lions, Oryx and White Rhino, in gardens and parkland surrounding a Victorian mansion.

Satnav: **S33 8WS (5 miles)**

Cogges Museum, Witney



Farming and rural life museum near Witney, housed in a 13th-century manor house set among 17th-century farm buildings. Cooking and craft demonstrations, farm animals, café and farm shop.

Satnav: **OX28 3LA (7 miles)**

Bourton-on-the-Water



Popular Cotswold “honeypot” on the River Windrush, with multiple tourist attractions including Birdland zoological gardens, the Cotswold Motor Museum and a 1930s-era Model Village, a replica of the larger village.

Satnav (car park): **GL54 2BN (12 miles)**

Blenheim Palace



One of England’s largest country houses, the seat of the Dukes of Marlborough and birthplace of Winston Churchill, set in grand parkland with an ornamental lake. Palace and gardens, Churchill exhibition, model railway and more.

Satnav: **OX20 1PP (17 miles)**



Text, mapping and photography

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