



## Cotswold towns and villages

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## **Aldsworth**

Just off the Cirencester to Burford Road, some 3 miles from Bibury in good open Cotswold country. Large fields surround the small village with its many 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings. The church has a short spire and in the sloping graveyard the tombs of the Garnes, who pioneered the conservation of the Cotswold sheep breed.

## **Ashley**

Minute village 3 miles NE of Tetbury, not far from the course of the Fosse Way, with a fine 15<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century manor house dominating the modest Norman church close by.

## **Ampney Crucis**

Some 2 miles east of Cirencester, there are three Ampneys named after the brook of that name. Ampney Crucis is largest, boasts two former water mills and a riverside hotel. The Holy Rood church seems almost hidden by trees; more obvious is isolated **Ampney St Mary** church, all that remains of the lost village, now open farmland. The hamlet of **Ampney St Peter** is in a quiet cul-de-sac off the main road.

## **Ashton Keynes**

A large village with the still-infant River Thames running alongside the main street, 5 miles south of Cirencester and just over the county boundary in north Wiltshire. Nearby are **Somerford Keynes** and **Poole Keynes**, amongst the lakes of the Cotswold Water Park. **Leigh** is closer to Cricklade and is a scattered community, with its church split in two. The chancel remains but is redundant; the nave was moved half a mile to avoid flooding and remains in use.

## **Aston Magna**

Off the beaten track but just north of Moreton-in-Marsh and close to Blockley. A small village, its core around the tiny village green. Look for the stump of its 15<sup>th</sup> century cross, and two churches, both now converted into private houses. Nearby **Draycott** has some interesting houses and cottages, and a simple stone Mission Church of 1894 in the main street.

## **The Barringtons**

These two villages face each other across the river Windrush a little west of Burford. **Little Barrington** clusters around its sloping green, with the church off down the lane. This combination is one of the most attractive village scenes in the Cotswolds. On the hill, **Great Barrington** is dominated by Barrington Park; estate influence is clear in the uniformity (pleasing rather than repetitive) of the stone houses and farms, well set into the landscape. This area was extensively quarried for the famous Cotswold building stone.

## **Baunton**

In the Churn valley just north of Cirencester, Baunton is tiny – one street along the hillside with walks further on. The equally tiny Church of St Mary Magdalene boasts an impressive 14<sup>th</sup> century wall-painting of St Christopher.

## **Bibury**

William Morris called Bibury ‘the most beautiful village in England’ and it remains most attractive in its setting alongside the river Coln. Two communities (the other is **Arlington**) form the village proper, the 14<sup>th</sup> century Arlington Row providing the focal point; originally a wool store, then altered into weavers cottages and now restored by the National Trust. The low roofline and row of gables make its vernacular style true Cotswold. Opposite, Rack Isle is an open wetland meadow between the river and the millstream from Arlington Mill, now a crafts centre. Next door Bibury Trout Farm is a popular attraction, and Bibury church has a number of Saxon features. Just up the Coln valley is **Ablington**, enjoying its seclusion, with a fine example of a Cotswold manor house dating from 1590.

## **Birdlip**

Enjoys an elevated position on the Cotswold scarp and from Barrow Wake viewpoint there are fine views across the Vale of Severn and city of Gloucester to the Malvern Hills. Nearby Crickley Hill Country Park offers woodland walks and similar views from within the ramparts of an Iron Age hill fort, extensively excavated in recent years.

## **Bledington**

The large green with its stream provides a village focus in the heart of the Cotswolds dance tradition. St Leonard's church is a fine example of 15<sup>th</sup> century Cotswold perpendicular style. 4 miles SE of Stow-on-the-Wold, there are several options for walks, including the Oxfordshire Way. Nearby hamlets at **Foscote** and **Bould** on the road up to Burford consist of cottages and a farm or two – typical of the quiet Evenlode valley.

## **Blockley**

One of the larger Cotswold villages and largely unspoilt, midway between Moreton-in-Marsh and Chipping Campden. Once a main centre of the silk industry, which thrived in 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries but eventually collapsed. The evidence remains in impressive mills (all now converted into homes) along the Knee Brook, which rises in Dovedale Woods above the village.

## **Brailes**

In south Warwickshire, **Upper** and **Lower Brailes** form a large village around Brailes Hill, a few miles east of Shipston-on-Stour. Castle Hill was probably a motte-and-bailey castle of the Earl of Warwick. In medieval times, Brailes was a bustling market town with an important wool trade; the church of St George has an impressive perpendicular tower. Nearby Cherington on the river Stour is still Cotswold.

## **Broad Campden**

Close to Chipping Campden but quite small and separate, and with its own strong identity based around the influences of the Arts and Crafts movement. C R Ashbee, the architect who did so much for nearby Campden, lived here for a while early last century. There is an interesting mix of stone and thatch buildings, and a rare survival of a 17<sup>th</sup> century Friends Meeting House.

## **Broadway**

A famous Cotswold beauty spot, and popular throughout the year. Its main street runs down the scarp into Evesham Vale, and impressive stone houses line the route. St Eadburgha's church is tucked away on the Snowhill road but worth finding. To the north is **Willersey**, also just below the scarp, its houses around a long village green. **Childswickham** and **Bretforton** are typical Vale villages, the latter boasting the famous Fleece Inn, now in the care of the National Trust.

## **Broadwell (Glos)**

As Stow Hill descends to Moreton-in-Marsh, Broadwell is off down the lanes towards the **Evenlode**. A large village with a large green, it well repays exploration including St Paul's church. Nearby Evenlode alongside its river is in good Cotswold farming country with stone farmhouses and cottages.

## **Bruern**

5 miles north of Burford, the Oxfordshire way passes close to Bruern Abbey on its way between Bledington and Shipton under Wychwood.

## **Calmsden**

On the downs just north of Cirencester. A hamlet, beautifully sited around a bubbling spring, a rare 14<sup>th</sup> century wayside cross and a row of 19<sup>th</sup> century estate cottages.

## **Chalford**

A scattered community typical of the Stroud valleys, with houses clinging to the 'Golden Valley' hillside. Follow the jumble of paths to seek out its history, based on its fine mill buildings. Many survive.

## **Charlton**

Close to Malmesbury, the landscape is dominated by Charlton Park, family home of the Earls of Suffolk and a 'fantastical' building of various periods from the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries (now private apartments). The village has a handsome street with interesting buildings.

## **Chedworth**

Typically Cotswold and attractively spread out along the valley side, Chedworth is really several communities in one. The focus is the fine church of St Andrew, with a delightful waterspout nearby. In Chedworth Woods a mile north of the village (fine walk through the woods but road access via Yanworth Village) is the Roman Villa, one of the best preserved in Britain. There is a small farm trail at Denfurlong Farm.

## **Cherington**

This modest stone village is situated in the upper Stour valley between Brailes and Stourton Hill. Midway between Oxford and Stratford upon Avon, Cherington has a largely 13<sup>th</sup> century church, full of interest.

## **Clapton-on-the-Hill**

Its name tells all – high on the hill south of Bourton. A small community with an equally small but historic church – only six paces across and eight from door to altar. The churchyard gate is made from horseshoes.

## **Coates**

Small village on the high wolds with a neat perpendicular-towered church. 3 miles from Cirencester. Walk south and east from here along the course of the old Thames and Severn Canal to Thames Head.

## **Coberley and Cowley**

In the valley of the river Churn and only a few miles south of Cheltenham, these two villages are off the main Cirencester road and retain a sense of remoteness. Coberley church seems hidden behind barn doors; persevere as the church is rewarding, with memorials to the families of the great house next door, now vanished. Cowley still has its mansion, where the landscaping includes an artificial lake. Estate cottages form the core of the village from Sir James Horlick's time. Close by is Severn Springs, source of the Churn and arguably the real source of headwater for the Thames.

## **Cold Aston**

In the hills but just off the Fosse Way between Northleach and Bourton. Previously known as Aston Blank, perhaps referring to the absence of an east window in the Church. The small village green provides a focus.

## **Coln St Aldwyns**

Between Bibury and Fairford, in the quiet valley of the Coln, this is one of three villages close together – **Hatherop** and **Quenington** are the others. Good, easy walking country in a picturesque landscape of parkland, woods and water meadows.

## **Compton Abdale**

Tucked away in a deep valley only 4 miles west of Northleach. Approach over the hill on the Whiteway from the south and enjoy the descent – almost on top of St Oswald's church tower. The focal point is a delightful stone water spout in the shape of a crocodile. Not many of those in the Cotswolds!

## **The Comptons**

**Little** and **Long** Compton in very south Warwickshire east of Moreton-in-Marsh. Gently undulating countryside on the Cotswold edge with winding roads and two interesting village churches.

## **Cricklade**

The only Wiltshire town on the River Thames, and mid-way between Swindon and Cirencester. Now by-passed, its High Street is worth exploring with its range of fine houses behind the facades. The town has Saxon origins, and there is a tiny museum. The church looks like a mini-cathedral, its tower visible across the vale.

## **Crudwell**

Just in Wiltshire on the Malmesbury road from Cirencester, All Saints' church has box pews and is well worth a visit.

## **Daglingworth**

Just outside Cirencester and the first of the villages along the Duntisbourne valley. Turn off for the village church which is alongside the square, imposing Daglingworth House. Inside, a fine group of late Saxon carvings adorn the church walls. At Lower End a circular medieval dovecote. On the hill, ltlay clusters together enjoying fine views.

## **Didmarton**

In the gentle Beaufort country south and west of Tetbury, the village straddles the Bath road and boasts two churches. The perfectly preserved Georgian St Lawrence's has recently come back into use, and the Victorian church converted into a house. Nearby **Oldbury on the Hill** is a farming hamlet, with its fine but redundant church still open to visitors.

## **Donnington**

On the hill a mile or so north of Stow, with extensive views over the Evenlode valley. In 1646 this was the site of a famous battle in the English Civil War, when Lord Astley and 3000 Royalists were defeated by Parliamentary forces. Donnington Mill is the home of a country brewery which has given its name to a well-known local ale.

## **Dorn**

Tiny farming community just outside Moreton-in-Marsh and close to Batsford, but feeling quite separate. Old farmhouses seem to have been here forever. There are Roman origins to Dorn, linked to the nearby Fosse Way from Cirencester to Leicester.

## **Down Ampney**

Forever associated with the Ralph Vaughan Williams hymn tune of the same name, Down Ampney was the composer's birthplace in 1872. There is a fine church, redolent with memorials from the nearby airfield, from where Dakotas – often with gliders in tow – flew in support of the D-Day invasion of World War Two. There is another memorial on the old airfield.

**Draycott** – see [Aston Magna](#)

## **The Duntisbournes**

A string of attractive villages along the valley of the tiny Dunt stream. The valley is a joy to visit, hidden away but just north of Cirencester. **Duntisbourne Abbotts** is the largest but still intimate in scale. Lots of stone walls line the lanes and paths. **Duntisbourne Leer**, **Rouse** and **Middle Duntisbourne** are hamlets, the church at Rouse being one of the glories of Cotswold church architecture, beautifully sited on the steep-sided valley. Look for the date, 1587 on the tower.

## **Dursley**

Busy market town beneath the Cotswold Edge, to the south west of Stroud. The town is centred upon a delightful 18<sup>th</sup> century market house, which also acts as the Town Hall. Good walking opportunities, and on the course of the Cotswold Way.

## **Driffield**

Small village with duck pond, 3 miles east of Cirencester. St Mary's church, set behind a small green and war memorial, was re-built in 1734 and restored in 1836.

## **The Eastleaches**

**Turville and Martin** – face one another across the little River Leach, their Norman churches merely a couple of stone throws apart. Two bridges connect the villages – a road bridge and a long footbridge of large flat stones, known as Keble's Bridge.

## **Ebrington**

Stone and thatched cottages and old farmhouses give this long village its character in the gently folding hills east of Chipping Campden. 'Under the Oaks' is the name of the village history, these three trees on their tiny green being one focus of the village, the other being the church of St Eadburgha with its fine monuments to local landed families.

## **Elkstone**

Close to the main Cirencester-Gloucester road but well hidden away, this hill-to village boasts some fine views across the broad valley of the Churn. The jewel in the crown is the Norman church, one of the best examples anywhere in the country, and attractively set in its wooded churchyard. Several country inns nearby.

**Evenlode** – see [Broadwell](#)

**Ewen** – see [Kemble](#)

## **Farmington**

Stone abounds in the village buildings, and Farmington stone is a famous Cotswold product. Its quality and durability are obvious. There is a fine green with a wonderful veteran sycamore and an attractive octagonal pump house built in 1874. Along the lane is Farmington's contribution to the 1951 Festival of Britain, an equally attractive bus-shelter, also octagonal. The church has recently been completely re-roofed with stone tiles.

## **Fifield**

Together with **Idbury**, close to the Westcotes and enjoying the same extensive views across the Evenlode Valley from just off the high road between Stow and Burford. Small and quiet villages offering an escape from the rush. Idbury church preserves some ancient woodwork and The Countryman magazine was founded in the tall Idbury Manor in 1927.

## **Ford**

Hamlet on the slopes of the upper Windrush, less than 2 miles below its source above Taddington. Good walking country – up the valley to Cutsdean and Taddington, or down to Temple Guiting.

## **Frampton Mansell**

The small village is small attractively sited above the steep 'Golden Valley' of the Frome between Chalford and Sapperton, its church a prominent feature. Good walking area, including the old canal towpath in the valley below.

**Great Barrington** – see [The Barringtons](#)

**Great Rissington** – see [The Rissingtons](#)

## **Great Wolford**

Site of a small Iron Age settlement, this modest village stands less than 400 feet above sea level. Destroyed by fire in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the medieval church was replaced by a broad building.

## **Guiting Power**

In the heart of the north Cotswold country in the upper reaches of the Windrush valley. There is a small village green, with a pub at either end and excellent walking along paths and lanes into Guiting Wood and over the hills. Cotswold Farm Park is nearby. Seek out the village church down a lane.

## **Hawling**

Quiet village 4 miles south east of Winchcombe. The church, situated next to the fine Elizabethan Manor House, has an unusual set of 17<sup>th</sup> century brass plaques.

## **Icomb**

Hill-top village south east of Stow with good views all round. Icomb Place is ancient, dating from about 1420. There is a village green, a water pump and St Mary's church at the end of the lane. Good walking country.

## **Ilmington**

Large and impressive Cotswold village on the very northern Cotswolds and well worth wandering around. Access to the Norman church is by footpath. The stone here is orange-brown, quarried from the hill behind.

## **Inchbrook**

On the Nailsworth road south of Woodchester and 2 miles from Stroud, the houses of the many hamlets along the valley cluster on the hillsides. Nearby is the extensive Woodchester Park, preserving a hidden environment based around the gaunt and fascinating Woodchester Park, abandoned unfinished in the 1860s.

**Itlay** – see [Daglingworth](#)

## **Kemble**

5 miles south-west of Cirencester and best known for its railway station on the main London line, itself now a fine and listed example of a country junction station. The heart of the village around the church retains its rural atmosphere. Nearby **Ewen** is on the upper reaches of the still-infant Thames.

## **Kempsford**

Large village close to Fairford and alongside the River Thames, which is on the Gloucestershire/Wiltshire county boundary. At one end the large and impressive St Mary's church. John of Gaunt, son of Edward III and lord of the manor is credited with building the tower between 1386 and 1399.

## **Kingham**

Another well known railway station and former junction on the Oxford-Worcester Cotswold Line, and in the valley of the Evenlode. The large village is a mile away, attractively grouped around its church and a green.

## **Latton**

In true upper Thames valley open countryside, the village stands along and back from the road (which is itself now by-passed). Turn at the simple by elegant village cross to explore the one street leading to the church and then away into the fields. The restored towpath of the nearby Thames and Severn Canal provides an excellent way to explore this region.

**Leigh** – see [Ashton Keynes](#)

**Little Compton** – see [The Comptons](#)

**Little Rissington** – see [The Rissingtons](#)

**Little Wolford** – see [Todenham](#)

## **Longborough**

Well-sited on the hill slopes above the Evenlode valley just north of Stow-on-the-Wold. Quite a large village and the source of one of the original Cotswold Morris Dancing traditions.

## **Lower Slaughter**

There is some difference of opinion about the origins of the name Slaughter but it is generally accepted as being derived from the Anglo Saxon word "sclostre" (slough) meaning a hollow, muddy place. Considered to be one of the prettiest villages in the Cotswolds and probably one of the most photographed, it attracts visitors from all parts of the world. The village has been used frequently as the setting for both commercial and fictional film and television productions. Artists are to be seen regularly either painting scenes of the village or displaying their wares during the summer months at the frequent artist's exhibitions held in the recently restored village hall.

The main features of the village are the honey coloured Cotswold stone houses nestling alongside the river Eye, some "listed" and dating from the 18th and 19th centuries, and the 13th century Parish Church of St. Mary the Virgin. The church was rebuilt in 1866 but with a very recently restored spire and peal of six bells. An early 19th century corn mill, two imposing hotels, one converted from the 15th century former Lower Slaughter Manor House, the other from 17th century cottages all contribute to the charm of this idyllic village. The shallow river is lined with well-kept grass banks and trees and is crossed by several attractive footbridges as well as a road

bridge. In a corner of the grounds of the Manor Hotel stands a 16th century gabled pigeon loft, reputed to be the largest in Gloucestershire. The village stands at the cross roads of several long distance footpaths and is a frequent starting point for walkers, although car parking in the village is very limited.

### **Malmesbury**

Market town built on a hill in a bend of the river Avon (the Wiltshire one). A Saxon settlement with a distinguished history, claiming to be the oldest boroughs in England. Medieval defences and street plan, with a large open market place and a 15<sup>th</sup> century market cross. Magnificent abbey, even though what remains is little more than nave and porch of its medieval predecessor. Georgian houses line the streets around the town centre.

### **Maugersbury**

Just outside Stow-on-the-Wold and a little down the hill off the Fosse Way, this older hamlet is self-contained, looking over the valley to Icomb Hill. There are no less than six fine 17<sup>th</sup> century farmhouses.

### **Meysey Hampton**

Between Fairford and Cirencester and another Cotswold village grouped around its village green. Look for the unusual water pump on its stone base, complete with a flight of steps. Down the lane is St Mary's Church with good 13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century detail. The village has some well-preserved stone farmhouses.

### **Mickleton**

Mickleton is 3 miles north of Chipping Campden on the Stratford road. Here are thatched as well as stone houses. On the hills to the east are two fine gardens: Hidcote Manor and Kiftsgate Court, which attract thousands of visitors each year.

### **Minchinhampton**

A small town with a long history on the hills above Stroud, with the extensive 580 acre Common to the west. Fine views all around, especially into the Golden and Nailsworth Valleys. In the days before mechanisation, this was a centre for woollen cloth production using domestic hand looms. The Market House of 1698 is a reminder.

### **Miserden**

Together with **Edgeworth** just down the road, this is attractive and wooded countryside above the western valleys of the Cotswolds. This small village surrounding the church, its manor house a little distance away and high above the valley of the Frome. Edgeworth is scattered around the hillside and **Sudgrove** is a farming hamlet between the two.

### **Nailsworth**

A mini-version of Stroud, where several valleys meet. The town hugs the hills around and fills the valley bottom, providing hidden places to explore. Seek out the old mill buildings, now converted to a variety of uses and some fine merchants' houses. Well placed for access to Tetbury, the south Cotswolds and Bath.

### **Naunton**

The river Windrush flows through the village and its water meadows, making it as picturesque as any of its neighbours in the hills between Stow and Cheltenham. Mentioned in the Domesday as Niwetone. Climb the hill for a really good view of church and village.

**Nether Westcote** – see [The Westcotes](#)

### **Oaksey**

A small village situated mid-way between Cirencester and Malmesbury close to the Cotswold Water Park. Oaksey Woods and the unique, organic meadows nearby, provide year-round pleasure for walkers and nature-lovers. All Saints Church dates from the 13<sup>th</sup> century and is particularly notable for its 14<sup>th</sup> century wall paintings.

### **Oddington**

There are two – Upper and Lower – just off the A436 east of Stow. Together they make a long and attractive village with an isolated but much-loved old church half a mile down the track to Bledington Heath. Inside, marvel at

the enormous Day of Judgement wall-painting from the early 15<sup>th</sup> century, and the splendid pulpit and fittings – a wonderful interior, straight out of an earlier age.

### **Owlpen**

Manor House, church, farm and a few cottages make up this small community almost literally below the hills of the steep-sided valleys south and west of Stroud. The House is open to visitors, a charming example of Cotswold vernacular, almost relishing its isolation.

### **Painswick**

One of the gems of the Cotswolds and really a small town on the Stroud to Cheltenham road. Seen from the hills to the east, Painswick sits perfectly on its hill-slope, the elegant church spire a commanding feature. Nearby Edge enjoys a similar situation. The wool trade made the town wealthy, as with so many other Cotswold communities. Painswick Beacon is at the centre of 250 acres of common recreation land.

### **Perrotts Brook**

Small community in the Churn Valley to the north of Cirencester well located for easy access from the Gloucester and Cheltenham roads.

**Poole Keynes** – see [Ashton Keynes](#)

### **Poulton**

Between Cirencester and Fairford, the village is in an open farming landscape with long views across the fields. A small village green adjoins the main road outside the village pub. St Michael's is a good Victorian church by Butterfield of 1873/4. **Ready Token** is a small community at the meeting of several minor roads, and named after an inn where ready cash, or tokens, were required.

### **Preston**

Tiny village, 1 mile south east of Cirencester. The small church has a 14<sup>th</sup> century triple bellcote and cylindrical Norman font.

### **Rendcomb**

Out of sight from the Cirencester to Cheltenham road in the Churn valley below, Rendcomb enjoys the seclusion of a village off the main road. Its major feature is Rendcomb College, founded by the Wills family in 1920 around the imposing Victorian house built in 1867 for the Goldsmid banking family. The grounds are well landscaped and incorporate St Peter's church, a fine example of 16<sup>th</sup> century rebuilding in the Perpendicular style, typically Cotswold. Down the valley towards Cirencester is **North Cerney**, also set back off the road but with a perfectly-sited church in the valley.

### **The Rissingtons**

Once there were three, now there are four: the new village of Upper Rissington emerging from the former Little Rissington RAF base along the hilltop between Windrush and Evenlode valleys. Great and Little Rissington are good vernacular Cotswold on the hillside with some fine cottages and farmhouses. Wyck Rissington on the Oxfordshire Way enjoys a large open central green and a church where the composer Gustav Holst was organist a century ago.

### **Rodmarton**

An estate village between Cirencester and Tetbury, and focused on the Manor, the last flowering of the Cotswold Arts and Crafts Movement. Built between 1909-26 in meticulous detail, the house is open to visitors in summer months.

### **Sherborne**

Another Cotswold estate village, now largely owned by the National Trust. Sherborne Park dominates, the house now converted into apartments, the parkland accessible to visitors. Almost part of the house is the church with some fine memorials to the Duttons, who spent their wealth in this valley just east of Northleach.

## **Shipton Oliffe and Solers**

Really just one village, tucked away from the nearby A40 west of Northleach. An historic settlement with two churches, two manor houses and farms.

## **Shorncote**

Reputed to be the smallest village in Gloucestershire, Shorncote is 3 miles from Cirencester and a short walk from the Cotswold Water Park.

## **Siddington**

Virtually a southern suburb of Cirencester, but still with its own character. Seek out the old locks of the Thames and Severn Canal and wander the towpath. The tall spire of St Peters acts as a focal point.

## **The Slaughters: Upper and Lower Slaughter**

They share a fascinating name, which derives from 'miry place' which it certainly isn't now! The link (and the fascination) is the tiny river Eye, tributary to the nearby Windrush! Upper Slaughter is much smaller than Lower but is equally as attractive with its old cottages and farmhouses.

## **Snowhill**

This charming and unspoilt village is a short distance by car from Broadway. There is a striking church and a row of much photographed cottages. Opposite is Snowhill Manor, given to the National Trust by its eccentric owner Charles Paget Wade and filled with the spoils of a lifetime of collecting.

## **South Cerney**

A large village conveniently placed for access to Cirencester 4 miles away and the nearby Cotswold Water Park, over 30 square miles of lakes zoned for specific forms of recreation. Here you can be active or passive, lively or contemplative. Visit All Hallows church during your stay and walk along Bow-Wow – it's as good as its name!

## **Stretton-on-Fosse**

4 miles north of Moreton-in-Marsh and as its name implies alongside the Fosse Way. A good base, in gently rolling countryside, for exploring the north Cotswolds and south Warwickshire.

## **Stroud**

Built on steep slopes at the junction of five valleys, this busy market town has retained considerable character despite the industrialisation in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. At the height of its prosperity, there were at least 150 cloth mills in the valleys centred upon Stroud. Many light industries have replaced most of these, and Stroud and its surrounding countryside continue to thrive.

**Sudgrove** – see [Miserden](#)

## **The Swells: Upper and Lower Swell**

They are on the banks of the river Dikler, down the hill 1 mile west of Stow-on-the-Wold. Lower Swell is grouped around its triangular village green with a war memorial by Lutyens. Upper Swell on the Broadway road has an old water mill.

## **Temple Guiting**

Small village situated in the Windrush Valley. The church has a fine 18<sup>th</sup> century tower and Georgian classical windows. Good walks through the wooded valley.

## **Todenham**

On by-roads in the countryside between Moreton-in-Marsh and Shipston, the village remains remarkably unspoilt with a dignified manor house and a fine tower and octagonal spire to the church. Nearby **Great Wolford** and **Little Wolford** are equally attractive, one has a tall church spire as a landmark and the other a fine 16<sup>th</sup> century manor house.

## **Turkdean**

2 miles north of Northleach, this small village is pleasantly sited on a hillside, with the hamlet of Lower Dean in the valley below. A glance at the Ordnance Survey Landranger sheet 163 will indicate a good circular walk from Turkdean, taking in the village of Notgove.

**Upper Oddington** – see [Oddington](#)

## **Upper and Lower Quinton**

These twin villages nestle below Meon Hill, the last outcrop of the Cotswold range. Good views from the top of Meon Hill on a clear day across the Vale of Evesham as far as the Malvern Hills. The church, with its tall steeple, is dedicated to St Swithen, and is a landmark for miles around and represents many styles of architecture.

**Upper Swell** – see [The Swells](#)

## **Welford on Avon**

To be found not surprisingly in a bend of the river Avon and a few miles west of Stratford. Timber-framed and brick cottages, many thatched, stand around the green with its tall maypole, a rarity these days.

## **The Westcotes: Church Westcote and Nether Westcote**

On the ridge route between Stow and Burford but secluded from the main A424 road, seek out **Church Westcote** and **Nether Westcote**. Good views across the Evenlode valley. Small church of St Mary.

## **Westonbirt**

Home of the National Arboretum – the finest collection of trees and shrubs in Europe spread throughout 600 acres of glorious Cotswold countryside.

## **Weston-sub-Edge**

Together with Aston-sub-Edge, lies below the escarpment on the edge of Evesham Vale near Broadway. Fine 17<sup>th</sup> century stone farmhouses and cottages around the square and up the hill. At Aston an impressive old manor house and an interesting little church.

## **Whichford**

5 miles north of Chipping Norton and in rolling hill country, the village has a wide green and attractive old buildings. Open the church door for the sense of history within.

**Willersey** – see **Broadway**

## **Winchcombe**

Largely unspoilt market town with a long history serving the countryside around. Market place and town centre streets are well worth a wander; visit the Town Hall right in the centre with its museums. The enormously influential Winchcombe Abbey has now gone, but the fine Perpendicular wool church of St Peter's remains – look out for its collection of gargoyles. Nearby is Sudeley Castle with its own impressive history. Up on the hill is tiny Farmcote with some of the best views from the Cotswold scarp and a small and simple chapel-church.

## **Withington**

Large village on the river Coln with six converging lanes, making for an almost secret layout amongst the trees. The church attracts attention – there has been a building here since the late 7<sup>th</sup> century. Good walks, including parts of the old railway line, now alas nothing more than a memory.

## **Woolstone**

Amongst the broken Cotswold hills just north of Cheltenham, the village is small and has a pleasant mix of stone and timber-framed houses. A peaceful setting for exploring the region.