

A Classic Cotswold Walk

There are many beautiful walks in and around Bibury, but we have put together some directions for our favourite.

Directions

1 From The Swan Hotel cross the bridge directly in front of the hotel walking past Bibury Trout Farm and Arlington Mill. Continue to walk along the Cirencester road away from Bibury. Opposite the telephone box after the Catherine Wheel pub turn right along a lane and then keep left at a fork. Pass some cottages and go through a gate and two stiles into a field.

Walk on the same line across stiles and fields until you pass to the right of a house to a road.

2 Turn right and walk down to a junction. Turn right onto Ablington and cross the River Coln bridge. After 60 paces, turn left along a track with houses on your right and a stream to your left. Continue to a gate and then follow the

track, arriving at another gate after 0.5 mile (800m).

3 Go into a field and turn sharp right along the valley bottom. Follow a twisting route along the bottom of the valley. When you reach the next gate continue into a field, still following the contours of the valley. The route will eventually take you through a gate, at the far end of the field beyond pollarded ash trees, just before a barn and another gate immediately after.

4 Keep to the track as it bears into the right-hand valley and gently ascends a long slope, with woodland to your left. When the track goes sharp right just beyond the end of a conifer plantation, with a gate before you, turn left through a gate on to a track. Follow it all the way to a road.

5 Through a gate turn right. After 250 yards (229m), where the road goes right, continue straight on, to enter a track (the Salt Way). Continue along this via a gate for over 0.5 mile

(800m), until you reach the remains of Saltway Barn.

6 Do not walk ahead but, immediately after the barns, turn left into a field and then right along its right-hand margin. Walk on for just under 0.75 mile (1.2km), passing hedge and woodland and, where the track breaks to the right, turn right through a gate in a stone field wall into a field; keep the wall on your right.

7 Walk on to a pass to the left of Hale Barn after a gate. Enter a track, with the large buildings of Bibury Farm away to your left, and keep on the same line through gates where they arise. Eventually reaching cottages, you will descend to a drive which will, in turn, bring you to a road in Bibury. Cross the road to walk down between a row of cottages. At the end, near the church and school, turn right. Walk along the pavement into the village, passing Arlington Row and the river on your left.

Distance	6.25 miles (10.1km)
Minimum Time	2 hours and 30 minutes
Level of Difficulty	Moderate
Paths	Fields, tracks and lane, may be muddy in places, 5 stiles
Landscape	Exposed wolds, valley, villages and streams

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BIBURY

“prettiest village in the Cotswolds”



THE SWAN HOTEL

Bibury

Bibury is a typical Cotswold village that lies between the historic Roman town of Cirencester and the ever popular town of Burford.

The River Coln flows through Bibury sandwiched between the main village street and an expanse of watermeadow known as Rack Isle, owned by the National Trust. This small parcel of land is not accessible and only wildlife is free to enter.

The island was once used to dry the cloth from the weavers cottages at Arlington Row during the 17th century and is one of the most picturesque scenes you will find in the Cotswolds. Indeed the village was once described by William Morris as "the most beautiful village in England".

Bibury is actually two small villages separated by the river. On the one side is Bibury and on the other, Arlington. The history of these two villages date back to at least the Iron Age and there are remains of a hill fort above Bibury. Akeman Street, the Roman road from Cirencester to St Albans is close by and the ancient Salt Way from Droitwich to Lechlade can be followed just up the hill towards Burford. The local church, St Mary's, contains some signs of Saxon origins.

Bibury Trout Farm is a working trout farm where visitors can feed the fish and catch their own at the Beginners' Fishery. The Swan Hotel owns the fishing rights to a stretch of the river Coln, which is well stocked with plump, brown trout and to add to your pleasure, the kitchen team will be delighted to prepare and cook any catch, at your reasonable request.

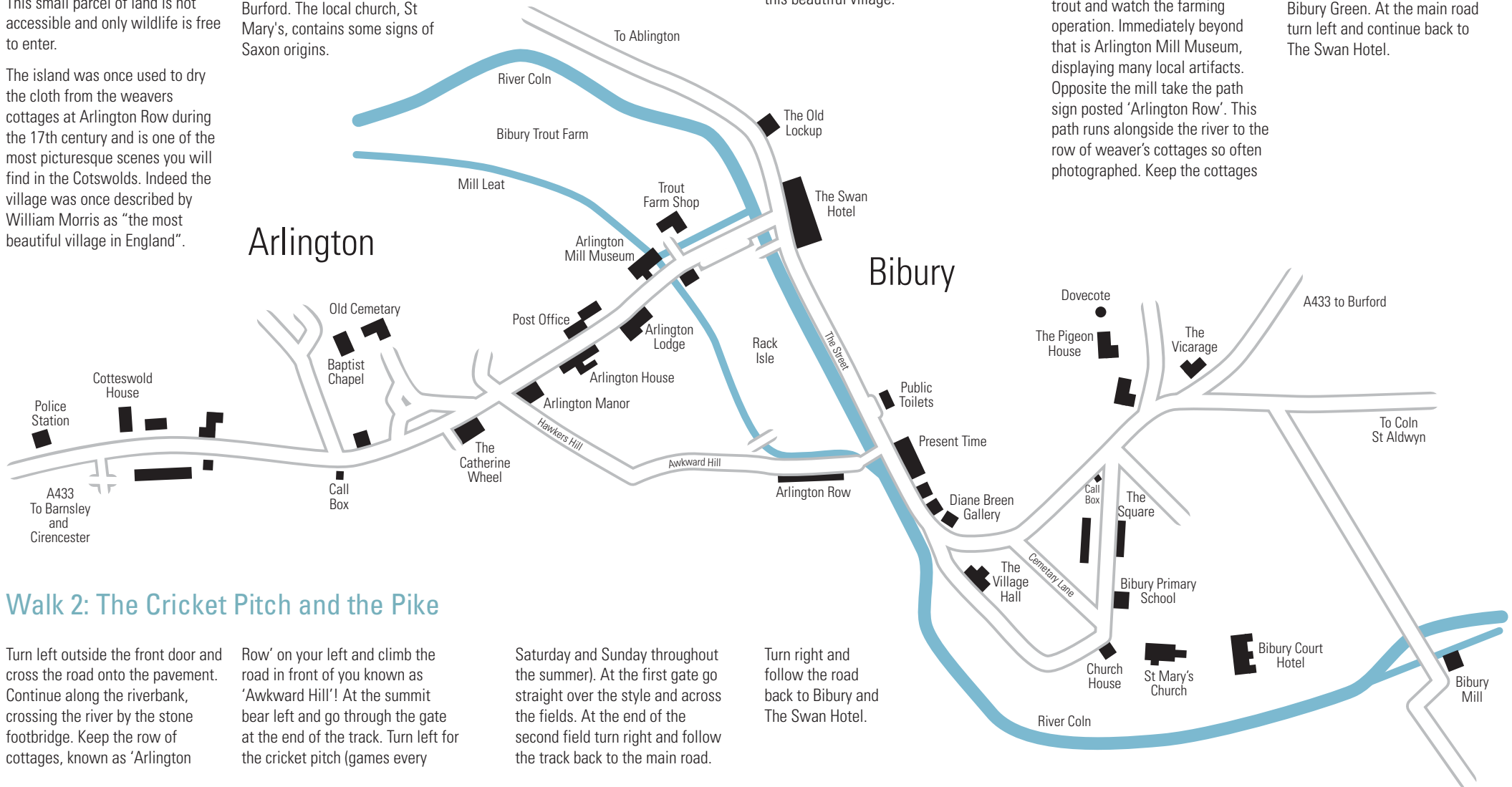
Arlington Mill dates back to the 17th Century and the history of the mill can be traced through photographs and documents at the Arlington Mill Museum where you can see working machinery illustrating milling and the Victorian way of life.

There are plenty of other things to see in Bibury and we have put together a couple of short walks that will take in the sights and sounds of this beautiful village.

Walk 1: Around the Village

Turn left outside the front door and cross the road onto the pavement. Cross the River Coln by the footbridge. Skirting the car park you will find on your right the Bibury Trout Farm (reduced admissions on production of your key card) where you can feed the trout and watch the farming operation. Immediately beyond that is Arlington Mill Museum, displaying many local artifacts. Opposite the mill take the path sign posted 'Arlington Row'. This path runs alongside the river to the row of weaver's cottages so often photographed. Keep the cottages

on your right-hand side and re-cross the river by the stone footbridge. Turn right along the riverbank and head for the church. There are many interesting headstones in the graveyard, the interior of the church is also worth a visit. One of the stained glass windows featured on the Christmas postage stamps in 1992. Leaving the church behind, take the right-hand road and walk past Bibury Green. At the main road turn left and continue back to The Swan Hotel.



Walk 2: The Cricket Pitch and the Pike

Turn left outside the front door and cross the road onto the pavement. Continue along the riverbank, crossing the river by the stone footbridge. Keep the row of cottages, known as 'Arlington

Row' on your left and climb the road in front of you known as 'Awkward Hill'! At the summit bear left and go through the gate at the end of the track. Turn left for the cricket pitch (games every

Saturday and Sunday throughout the summer). At the first gate go straight over the stile and across the fields. At the end of the second field turn right and follow the track back to the main road.

Turn right and follow the road back to Bibury and The Swan Hotel.