PUBS WORTH THE WALK · GLOUCESTERSHIRE

The Oak Pub Walk

Painswick - A taste of the Cotswolds Way above Painswick

DISTANCE	TIME	ASCENT	DIFFICULTY
4.5 miles	**2 hours**	**760 ft**	**Moderate**
7.2 km	approx.	235 m	some steep sections

OVERVIEW

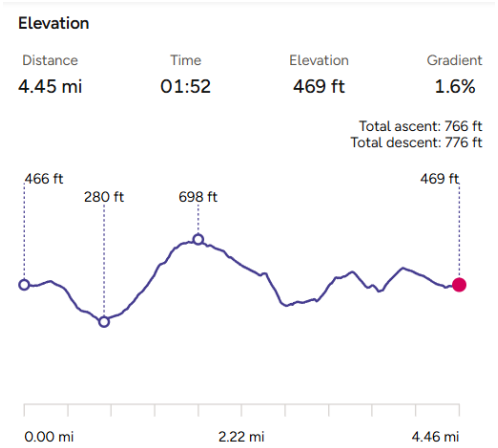
A rewarding Cotswolds circuit that combines a taste of the Cotswolds Way with some lovely, less-travelled paths through the countryside west of Painswick.

Expect a varied landscape of rolling, sheep-grazed hills, wooded valleys, streams and footbridges, with occasional glimpses of handsome country houses tucked into the folds of the countryside. There's a particularly satisfying sense of arriving back at Painswick after exploring the surrounding hills, with its distinctive limestone buildings and church tower providing a familiar landmark.

This isn't a flat afternoon stroll. The route has some testing climbs, particularly around Edgemoor, but the rewards are plentiful and the paths generally well established and signposted. Good walking country, with enough variety to keep you interested throughout.

And then there's Painswick itself. Allow time to explore the village and its remarkable churchyard before settling down at The Oak. You've earned that pint!

START / FINISH	**The Oak, St Mary's St, Painswick, GL6 6QG**
PARKING	On A46, Stamages Lane Car Park (GL6 6UZ).
GRID REFERENCE	SO 866 096 for the pub.
WHAT3WORDS	///almost.amphibian.sedated
PATHS / TERRAIN	Lanes, fields, woodland paths, damp under foot in places. Short distance along B-road. Gates, stiles and footbridges.
PUBLIC TRANSPORT	Well served from Stroud & Gloucester.
TOILETS	At Stamages Lane car park; Edgemoor Inn

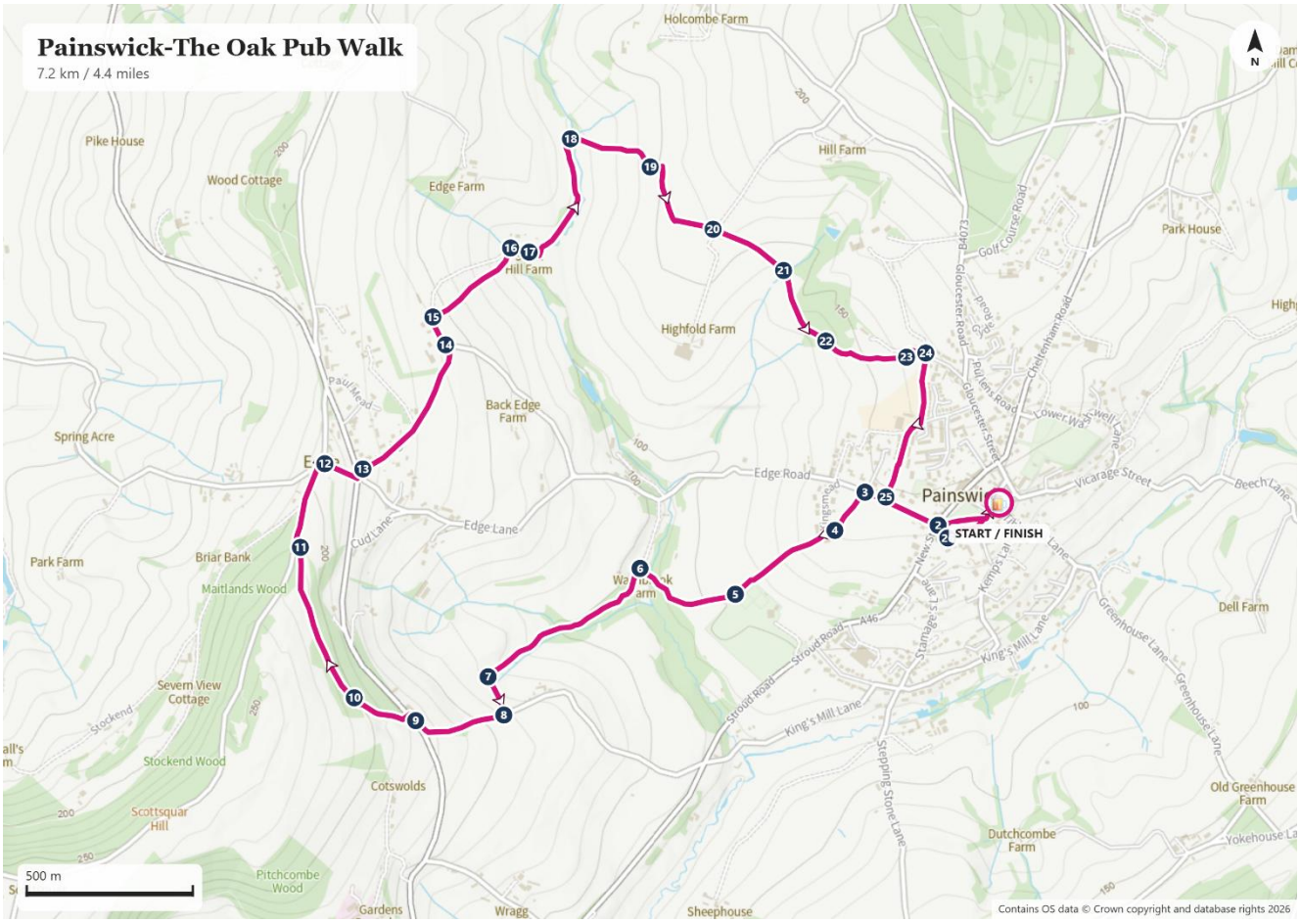


ELEVATION PROFILE

OTHER PUBS NEARBY

This route passes the **Edgemoor Inn**, Edge around halfway; **Falcon Inn**, Painswick; **Butchers Arms,** Sheepscombe; **The Woolpack** at Slad is classic Laurie Lee Cotswolds; Check out the **Black Horse** Pub Walk in Cranham.

THE ROUTE



Numbered waymarks on the map match the badges in the directions below. Not every waymark is mentioned in the text.

The Oak (GL6 6QG) is located in on St Mary's Street, one of the streets to the side of St Mary's Church, off the A46 in the centre of Painswick.

DIRECTIONS

Part 1 · From the centre of Painswick to The Edgehill Inn *steps 1–7*

1 Starting at The Oak with your back to the pub, turn left towards St Mary's Church, one of the great historic treasures of the Cotswolds. Identify The Falcon on the main road (A46) opposite the Church and cross over towards it. Take a right hand turn just beyond The Falcon where the main road starts to narrow, onto Edge Lane (map reference **#2**)

2 The route follows the Cotswolds Way (CW) for the first part and is well signposted. Proceed gently uphill to a CW signpost guiding left to cross a small field. **#3**

3 Across the field the path approaches detached houses and continues between a neatly clipped beech hedge to a driveway. Cross straight over in front of the driveway of the house to the left to continue along a narrow path to the right-hand side of the house.

4 Cross into the field **#4** and follow CW signpost guiding downhill through the field. The Cotswolds, and Painswick particularly, are famous for wool and you'll likely see plenty of sheep in the fields we pass through on the walk. Pass the sports fields of Painswick RFC & Sport Club to your left. **#5** The path bears right here towards woodland, passing horse enclosures on the right and continuing downhill slightly.

5 The routes crosses a stream in front of a fine Cotswold stone cottage on its driveway, the once beyond it, a number of footpath markers provide options left and right. Go to the left. **#6** The path proceeds to the side of the cottage and after c.50 metres, the CW enters woodland to the left on a clear path. Cross the footbridge, follow a brook, to eventually break out into a field.

6 Follow the field boundary on the left, gently uphill initially, then a little more steeply. Cross into the next field at a gate **#7**, and bear left towards steep steps out of the field onto Jenkin's Lane **#8** .

7 Take care on the lane. Turn right to proceed uphill, the steepest part of the walk. Eventually reach the main road (A4173 Gloucester - Stroud) at the Edgemoor Inn. Lovely views back to Painswick from their rear garden. **#9**

Part 2 · Edgehill Inn to Painswick, The Oak *steps 8–18*

8 In front of the main pub building, cross the busy road to follow a footpath into Rudge Hill Nature Reserve. *(This route allows us to make progress to the right without using the main road).* Upon entering the Nature Reserve, follow a track uphill to the right, and continue until the top where the route levels out on a wider woodland path that runs parallel with and above the main road. **#10** Go right, and continue ahead until you exit the reserve at a small, informal parking area **#11** .

9 Cross the busy B-road into woodland – a large green-coloured storage tank in the woods is the spot to aim for. Follow the narrow path to the right, parallel with the road (we're using this path to avoid walking along the road for as long as possible). This path exits the wood at a small junction. Follow the B-road straight ahead, slightly downhill, to pass a row of houses on your left – the little hamlet of Edge - and cross over. Take great care here - the goal is a lane on the other side of the road, just beyond the parking area for these houses. **#12**

10 In front of the imposing Rudge Hill House, take the lane downhill that passes the entrance to the house. Note that this is a one-way street, with cars coming up towards you. This lane arrives back at the A4173. Cross here to start the route back toward Painswick. **#13**

11 Follow the lane downhill until an informal junction **#14** . Go left passing Packhurst Farm on your left. Slightly beyond the farm, pass through a gate to the right and immediately identify a footpath that leads sharply down the slope into a field. I nearly missed this, and had to chop some ivy back that had covered the sign! **#15**

12 Drop down through the field on an evident route. Eventually emerge onto a lane at Wash Brook, in front of a beautifully renovated house, called Stark Hill Farm. **#16** Turn right in front of its entrance, and continue through a gate to pass a cottage on its left.

13 The route seems to fork ahead. Bear left into woodland and over a footbridge - you're passing to the rear boundary of Stark Hill Farm here. **#17**
Follow this lovely, wooded path that soon opens out into an area of recently planted trees, then back into woodland, towards the brook. Take the footbridge on your right to leave the woodland. **#18**

14 Follow a narrow uphill path. This pebbled path looks like a field drain so would be very wet after rain. Continue until you reach (what feels like) the top, where a footpath sign offers a route into a field on the right. **#19**

15 Take this path, onward through the field near its left-hand edge boundary towards a farm gate. A footpath gate will come into view on the left. Pass through the gate to cross the next field diagonally, following a distinct path, to another footpath gate onto a quiet lane. **#20**

16 Go straight across the lane into the next field, following its hedge boundary downhill. Hidden in the trees to the left, is Painswick House. You'll follow its woodland boundary as you drop down **#21** and then up the slope on the other side, with the path curving round and the houses of Painswick coming into view. **#22** *Painswick House was built in the 1730s by Charles Hyett as a country retreat from the polluted air of Gloucester. It is (apparently) an elegant expression of Georgian ambition.*

17 The path emerges onto a driveway through a kissing gate in front of a house with a lovely conservatory, called Park Lodge. #23 Bear left here on the lane to loop around to the other side of the house, passing an entrance to Painswick House on the left. Soon see a footpath sign pointing right, downhill off the lane. **#24** Follow this to pass a school into a residential area. Continue downhill, crossing slightly right, follow to the end of the cul-de-sac. A footpath for this final section leads you back onto Edge Road. **#25**

18 Turn left to return to Painswick – cross to explore St Mary's Church then return to The Oak for well-earned refreshments.

Don't walk past, go in....before it's not there anymore.

More pubs worth the walk across England and Wales, with a GPX download and OS Maps link for every route, at

pubsworththewalk.co.uk