

The Oak Walk

Above Painswick, a jewel of the Cotswolds.

OVERVIEW

This walk combines a section of the Cotswolds Way with a visit to the quintessential Cotswolds village of Painswick.

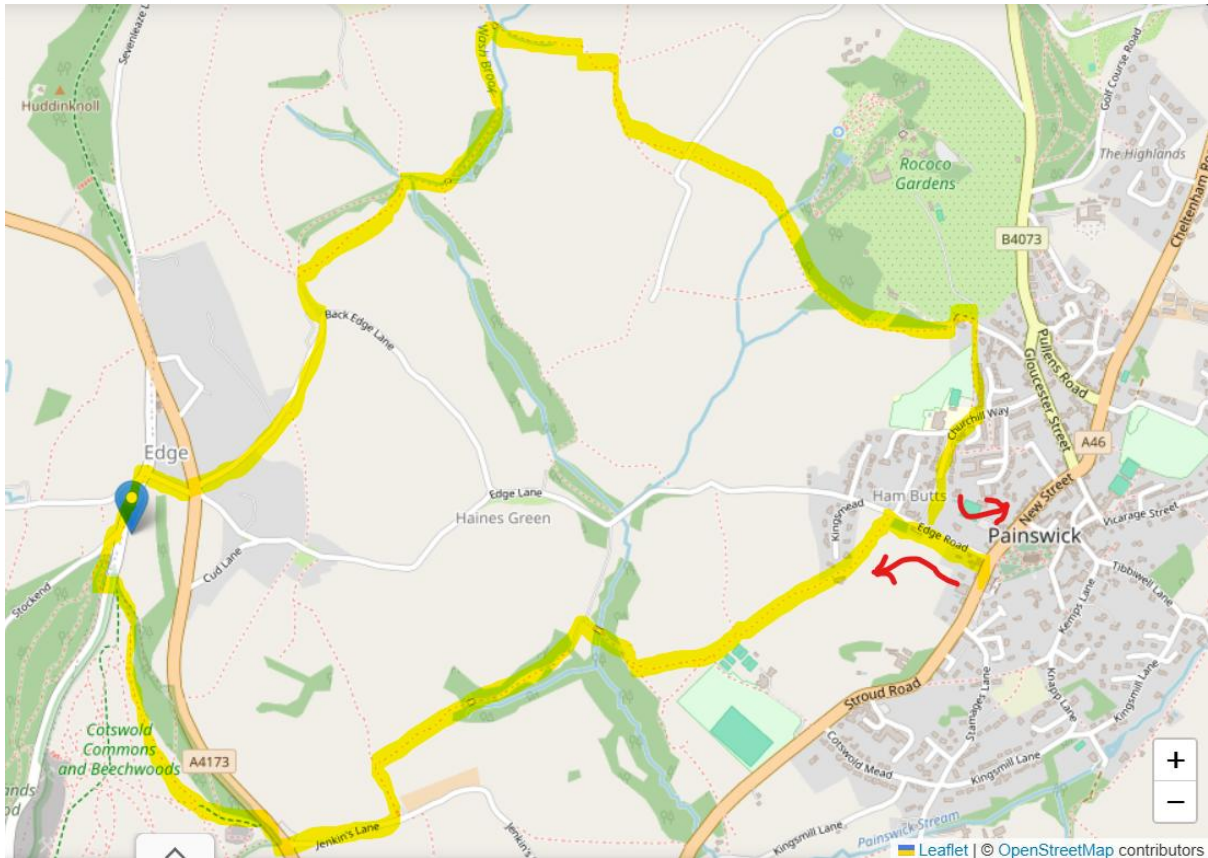
As is inevitable in this area, finding a level route is hard to come by, so walkers need to be prepared for the ups and downs of a Cotswolds walk.

As a plus, paths are well signposted and well used, so options abound to adjust routes to suit.

Part of the beauty of this walk is the journey to Painswick itself, passing through stunning countryside no matter the approach.



Start/Finish	The Oak, St Mary's Street, Painswick, GL6 6QG. 01452 813129
Parking	Stamages Lane Car Park is the main Painswick Car Park, a short walk from the centre. It's off the A46 Stroud Road, south of the village. No parking at The Oak.
Grid Reference	SO 865 095 for car park, the start of the walk.
What3Words	///countries.exits.squeaks is the car park, the start of the walk.
Distance	4.5 miles / 7 km Time 2 hours Ascent 800 ft / 250 m
Paths/Terrain	Lanes, fields, woodland paths, damp under foot in places. Short distance along B road. Gates, stiles and footbridges.
Difficulty	Moderate.
Public Transport	Painswick is well served from Stroud and Gloucester.
Toilets	Toilets at Stamages Lane Car Park. Walk passes Edgemoor Inn.
Other Pubs Nearby	Edgemoor Inn, Edge; Falcon Inn, Painswick; Butchers Arms, Sheepscombe; Woolpack, Slad; Black Horse, Cranham.



DIRECTIONS

1. Turn right out of the car park towards the village. Cross over to turn left up Edge Road, just before arriving at the village centre, as it narrows.
2. The route follows the Cotswolds Way (CW) for the first part and is well signposted. Proceed uphill until CW sign guides you left to cross a small field.
3. The path leaves the field, close to some very nice houses, and continues between a beech hedge. Cross straight over in front of the left-hand house's driveway, to continue the narrow path along its boundary.
4. Again, follow CW signs down through the field, passing tennis courts at Painswick RFC & Sport Club to your left. The path bears right here to join woodland, downhill slightly, to cross a stream and pass in front of a house, using its driveway for a short distance. There's a CW marker offering options left and right. Go LEFT.
5. The path proceeds behind a cottage and enters some woodland to the left. Cross the bridge, follow a brook, to eventually ascend into a field.
6. Follow the field boundary on the left, up to a gate, then left into the next field, onward to Jenkin's Lane via some steep steps.
7. Turn right onto the lane, proceeding uphill, the steepest on the route, to eventually reach the main road (A4173 Gloucester/Stroud) at the Edgemoor Inn. Lovely views back to Painswick from here.

8. Go right, in front of the pub, then cross the busy road by the main pub building to follow a Footpath sign into woodland. This is Rudge Hill Nature Reserve. This route allows us to go right without using the main road. Follow the track uphill to the right upon entering the woodland and continue until the top where you join a wider woodland path. Take that (now level) path to your right, continuing until the exit to the Woodland where there are a few parking spots.
9. Cross the B road into woodland on the other side, near an old, large, green-coloured storage tank. Follow the small path to the right. Again, we're using this to avoid using the B road for as long as possible. The path exits the wood at a small junction. Follow the B road slightly downhill - your goal is a lane on the other side of the road, just beyond the car parking area for the houses you'll need to pass on your left as you head down the road.
10. Take the lane downhill that passes the entrance to the imposing Rudge Hill House sitting on this corner. The lane arrives back at the A4173, which you'll need to cross again to start the route back toward Painswick. As you look across, you're aiming for the lane on the left, called Back Edge Lane.
11. Follow the lane downhill until an informal junction. Go left towards Packhurst Farm, on your left. Just beyond the farm, and the other side of a gate to the right, you're looking for a footpath sign to take you down the slope into fields. I had to chop ivy back which had covered the sign!
12. Drop down through the field, eventually to emerge onto a lane at Wash Brook, in front of a lovely house, Stark Hill Farm. Turn right into front of the entrance, and through the left-hand gate soon in front of you past a cottage. Signposts ahead.
13. Bear left, into woodland, over a foot bridge at the rear of Stark Hill Farm, and now follow this lovely, wooded path. It opens out into a fenced area of recently planted trees, then back into woodland, towards the brook. Take the bridge on your right to leave the woodland.
14. Follow a narrow 'track of pebbles' uphill until, at what feels like the top, a footpath offers a route into a field on the right. Take this, onward through the field near the left-hand edge boundary towards a farm gate. A footpath gate will come into view on the left.
15. Through the footpath gate to cross the next field diagonally along a distinct path, to another footpath gate. Straight across the lane into the next field, following its hedge boundary downhill. In front to the left, hidden in the trees, is Painswick House. You'll follow its woodland boundary as you drop down and then up the other side, back towards the houses of Painswick.
16. The path emerges through a kiss gate in front of Park Lodge and its conservatory. Bear left to loop around to the other side of the house. You'll see a footpath sign downhill bearing off from the lane. Take this and follow past the school towards housing. Continue downhill, slightly right to the end of the cul-de-sac. A footpath

for this final section leads you back onto Edge Road. Turn left to return to Painswick.

17. At the junction with Stroud Road (car park is to the right), turn left in front of the Falcon Hotel opposite St Mary's Church. Then turn right into Victoria Street, with the church now on your right. Join St Mary's Street at the end of this street. Continue, in front of the lane running downhill called Tibbiwell, towards The Oak.
18. Follow St Mary's Street back again. It takes you through the church yard, past the Church entrance, and back towards the Stroud Road and the car park.

Elevation

