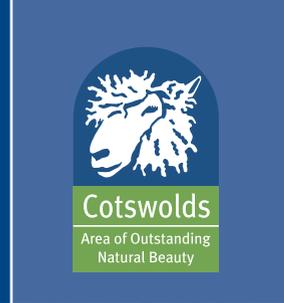




STEP INTO THE COTSWOLDS WALK SIX

Finstock



Points of interest

Finstock Village

Finstock is a small village, surrounded by farmland and woodland that overlooks the Evenlode valley. The name Finstock literally means 'place of the woodpecker'.

Wychwood Forest

At the time of the Domesday Book in 1086, the Royal Forest of Wychwood covered much of what is now West Oxfordshire. In 1854 an Act of Parliament was passed to clear the forest for agricultural land. In a period of only 18 months, thousands of trees were cut down and areas of woodland and heath were cleared, leaving only the present rump of woodland around Cornbury Park to the north east of Leafield. In 1997 the Wychwood Project was established to raise awareness of the history and identity of the area, and to work with local communities to restore its rich patchwork of landscapes and habitats within the forest boundaries.

Finstock Trinity Church

The church has connections with Sir Arthur du Cros, inventor of the pneumatic tyre, founder of Dunlop tyre company and some-time resident of Finstock Manor. The famous poet, T.S Eliot is also linked to the church; it was here that he was received into the Church of England in 1927.



The Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

The Cotswolds is considered by many people to be one of the most beautiful areas of England – the quintessential English landscape. It is also a very special area: one of only 38 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) in England and Wales, it is protected by Government as being of great value to the nation. This ensures the very features that attract people are there for future generations to enjoy.

The natural qualities of the AONB are unique. Limestone gives the Cotswolds its distinctive, unified appearance, visible everywhere in buildings, walls, towns and villages, which subtly blend with their surroundings.

The Cotswolds is a place of immense diversity: rolling landscapes with breathtaking views and open skies contrast with intimate valleys, villages and pastures. Ancient beech woodlands, rare flora and limestone grasslands alternate with broad swathes of arable fields. Pre-historic hill forts are found close to the fine craftsmanship of manor houses and stone cottages.

'Step into the Cotswolds' & the Cotswolds Conservation Board

This walk, and others in the series, has been funded through money raised by the 'Step into the Cotswolds' Visitor Payback Scheme, where visitors make voluntary donations to local access and conservation projects.

The scheme is run by the Cotswolds Conservation Board in partnership with West Oxfordshire District Council and supported by Oxfordshire County Council's Countryside Service. The scheme has also been supported financially by the European Community West Oxfordshire Network Leader+ 2000-2006 programme and the Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment and the Waste Recycling Group through the Landfill Communities Fund. For more information about the Visitor Payback Scheme, the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the work of the Cotswolds Conservation Board contact:

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Summary

A circular walk of 2 miles that starts and finishes in Finstock village centre. The route takes you in the general direction of Ramsden, exploring the surrounding countryside along the way.

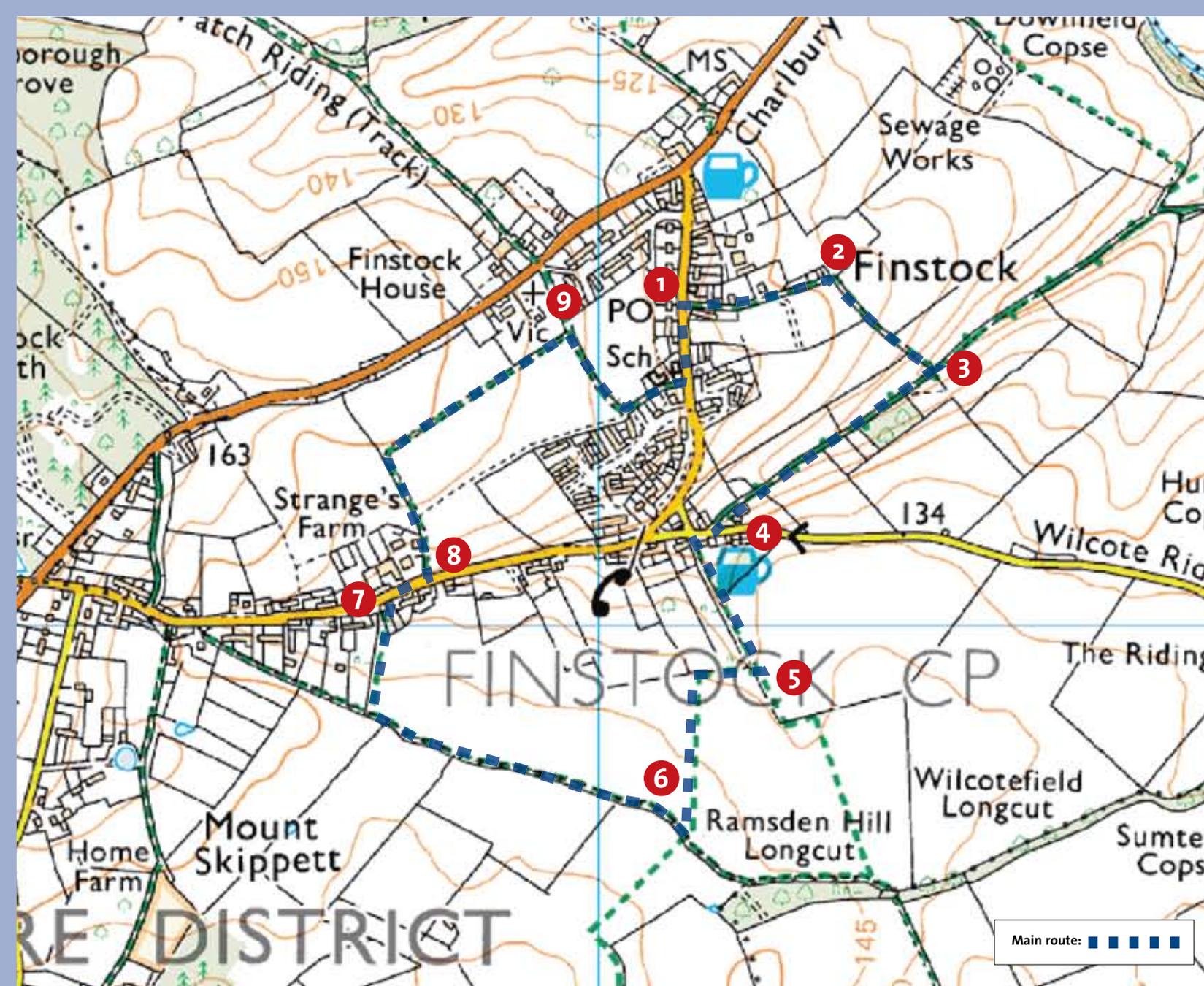
This walk is part of a visitor payback scheme called 'Step into the Cotswolds' and has these waymarkers along the route.



Walk Information

Start/End Point:	Wards Lane, Finstock
Grid Reference:	SP362164
Distance:	2 miles (3.2 km)
Terrain:	Mainly gentle and undulating. Stony, uneven ground in places.
Parking:	On street
Public Transport:	Details of bus services can be found in the 'Explore the Cotswolds by Public Transport' leaflets available from the Cotswolds Conservation Board (Tel: 01451 862000). You can download the leaflets from: www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk . They are also available at most Tourist Information Centres and libraries.
Public Toilets:	None
Refreshments:	'The Crown' and 'The Plough' public houses, village shop/post office (next to The Crown)

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Route Description

- 1** On School Lane in Finstock, look for an unmade road called Ward's Lane (opposite the post box). Proceed down Ward's Lane past houses and allotments. After zoom, the lane ends. At the waymark post, take the footpath signed to the right.
- 2** The footpath takes you along the side of a field, with a mature hedgerow on your right. Follow this path into the corner of the field at which point you should keep straight on, leaving the field and descending a short, steep hillside.
- 3** When you reach the bottom of the hillside, at the waymark sign, turn right along the track which will take you back towards the village.
- 4** The track becomes Dark Lane and ends at a road called The Bottom, opposite The Plough public house. As you face the front of The Plough, take the signed footpath on its right, which rises by the side of its rear car park. This footpath takes you through a wooded area till you reach a gate. Go through this gate and into a field; proceeding along the right side of the field until you see a second gate.

- 5** Go through this gate, into the field and follow the waymark sign that points to the right. This takes you along a footpath by the side of the field, with bushes/trees on your right. After about 250m, the footpath bears left. Follow the footpath across the field.
- 6** On reaching the far side of the field, you will see a waymark post. Take the footpath signposted to the right. You will now be walking along the side of the field with bushes/trees on your left. This footpath, after about 500m, leads to a wooden gate. Go through this gate and proceed straight on towards to a second wooden gate. However, instead of going through this second gate, bear to the right and proceed along the path that takes you past the garden boundaries of village houses. These are on your left, with open field to your right.
- 7** At the end of the field, go through the wooden gate by the metal field gate. Continue on the path (now a track) as it bears downhill to the left. The track leads you to the upper part of Finstock High Street. Turn right and head down the street for about 100m. You will then see a footpath sign on the opposite side of the road.

- 8** Take that footpath which leads you up a gentle gradient along the side of a field. As you follow this path, take the second signed footpath on your right; this will guide you across the field. As you walk along, enjoy the open views of farmland, rolling hills and distant woods.
- 9** On reaching the end of the field, pass through two gates alongside a cemetery, until you reach a broad track. Turn right and head down that track towards the village. The track bears to the left, takes you past an impressive children's playground, and when you reach the village school, you are back on School Lane. Turn left along the road, and you will soon be back at Ward's Lane, your starting point.

This walk is part of a visitor payback scheme called 'Step into the Cotswolds' and has these waymarkers along the route. →

