

Dursley's Lantern Way



According to the Rev Kilvert's diary of 1873, couples on their way to evening services in winter followed a practical though unusual local tradition: "*My Mother says that at Dursley, when ladies and gentlemen went out together on dark nights, the gentlemen pulled out the tails of their shirts and walked before to show the way. These were called Dursley lanterns.*"

Follow the Lantern Way clockwise from Dursley Town Hall through Cam & Coaley to Uley and back to Dursley (about 14 miles)



1 **Starting point A** From Dursley Market Hall, follow the Cotswold Way sign along the pedestrianised Parsonage Street, left at the Pharmacy into May Lane, right at The Old Spot Inn into Hill Road, and uphill to a left hand bend. Here, leave the Cotswold Way by going right through a kissing gate, then down and back up via steps and stiles, ignoring the loop path to the left. This path can be muddy in wet weather and overgrown in high summer but it affords attractive views over the redbrick houses of one of Dursley's oldest suburbs, built for Lister's workers in the early 20th century.

2 When the path dips down to a broad track on the right by newer houses, go ahead to follow the path with a fence on the right. Keep to the lower edge of the wood for a while, but after 500 metres, just after a right-angle turn, bear left up to a permissive bridleway to avoid erosion on the lower path. The lower path will suffice with care. At the next junction go right, to drop steeply down to a road just above a busy road junction. Cross here with care to a path between the police station on the right and a sports field on the left. After about 250m ignore a path to the left, but go downhill to a wooden bridge, turn left without crossing it, then next right between houses to emerge on an estate road. Go left for 200m to follow a green waypost pointing right, opposite a postbox. Bear right down a grassy slope and turn left through a gap in an iron fence, to emerge between houses opposite another green way-post. Take this path over the former Cam-Dursley Midland Railway branch line, pass between houses, continuing across road on footpath to come out below an old chapel.



3 Go left on this road, past the entrance to the attractive St George's church, Upper Cam, and round to the left at a junction to find a footpath on the right along the front of cottages. Through the gate bear left across the middle of a large field to a hedge gap, then drop to a line of trees that marks the route of the Delkin Brook. Beyond the bridge take the right of two paths to stile in top corner, then immediately left over another stile to a gate almost opposite. Bear right across rising land to a stile in a fence in the far corner at the left hand end of a row of houses, then another stile on the left to go between houses to Upthorpe (a road). Go right along this road for a few yards to a path on the opposite side. After crossing a drive you will soon be walking with a wooden fence on your left. Pass through a small plantation and down the next field to a steel gate and kissing gate at a junction of 3 paths.



4 Only go left if you wish to visit Cam with its supermarket, cafe, pubs and bus stop. Otherwise, stay in the field you are in, by going right along the boundary. Stay on the same line through 3 fields and 3 metal kissing gates then at a wooden stile come to a broad track going left and right. This is called Halmore Lane. Cross it to a gate and stepless stile (unless you wish to go left to Cam & Dursley Station). Follow this path more or less straight ahead over a plank bridge, through two small fields, to another large field. Navigate between the right hand end of a farm, to the left of a dead tree, to find a gate, often open, then straight up the next field to the top right hand corner. At this stile go to the waypost and stile in the far corner, to emerge at the junction of a through road and a farm lane. You are now in Coaley. Turn right along The Street past school, church, villageshop, and the pub. At the time of writing, the pub serves no food and is not open midweek lunchtimes. The shop also has quite limited opening times. **You are now at point B on the map.**

100 yards after the Fox and Hounds pub, follow a green waypost to the left and take the right hand one of two paths from the stile, staying on the same line you were on, navigating by a distant white house/garage gable end. Nearing the left hand field boundary you can find a rusty gate with a tight gap at the side. Through this continue on the same line, navigating now between the aforementioned white



house and a newer one to its left. To the immediate right of the new house cross a lane to another green waypost. In this large field aim for the right hand pole supporting the second line of cables then find a stile and rough low concrete 'bridge' over an often flooded ditch. Take care, especially with wet or muddy footwear.

5 Having negotiated this, don't take the path along the right hand hedge but go diagonally across the field (there may be sheep fencing) navigating to a point slightly left of the large house to reach a gap in the hedge. Through this turn left along the hedge, follow the field boundary round to the right, ignore a bridge on the left, aiming for the large house, to arrive at a gate on your left with 3 waymarks. Go through this gate, turning right immediately, following the right hand field boundary to a stile next to the large house onto a lane known as The Ham.



St George's Church

Slightly to the right and opposite is a stile to the only serious climb since Dursley, but take a breather on it to turn and admire the view. Bear up left to the 4th large tree, a stile and gate. In the next field turn right, go straight over 2 stiles then bear right to a lane below cottages. Go up this lane into the wood and where a bridleway goes left, go right to follow a footpath along the bottom edge of the wood. After

about half a mile, climb steeply up to the left to the Cotswold Way. When it reaches a road, take a breather on the seat installed by the Cotswold Wardens to admire the view over the Severn Plain. You are at a favourite dog-walkers' and joggers' spot at the top of Crawley Hill and about to sample the delights of Uley Bury, an Iron Age hillfort.



6 Go through the gate onto the roadside parking area and immediately right through another wide gate. After a few yards the path splits left and right. Our route goes left but if you have time and energy it is well worth going right to do a circuit of The Bury (an extra mile). Assuming you go left, after about 400 metres the main circuit track swings right. You should go ahead on a path down the contours and through the gate directly ahead into wood. Ignore turnings to right and left, descending the narrow path to leave the wood at a gate and continue straight down a field to meet a churchyard wall. Go left only if you wish to: **a)** visit the lovely Old Crown Inn; **b)** view or visit the equally delightful St Giles Church; or **c)** take the infrequent bus to Dursley (mid-morning, midday and late afternoon only). Otherwise go right and take the first left to emerge at the community-run Post Office. Take refreshment here or cross the road to the right and go left along South Street for 100 yards to another Uley treasure, the Prema Arts Centre with its exhibitions and coffee room. **This is point C on the map.**

7 Continue ahead down a lovely footpath that leaves South Street opposite the corner of the Prema Centre and takes you into the even lovelier Millenium Field. Go ahead down the contours, to the right of 2 bridges over a stream. Thence go right along the stream and then away from it slightly to a wooden gate and onto a road near Stoutshill, a grand former school.



With caution go right for a few yards to take a turning on the left signed Shadwell and Elcombe. From this take the 2nd footpath on the right at the playing field sign where the road veers to the left. At the wooden fence take the left of two paths, going diagonally down to a wooden gate then a wooden stile. Go left here, back up the contours, and after 3 field boundaries emerge onto a road and go right almost to where the road ends. Here take a deep steep, often muddy, Restricted Byway to the left up into a wood. For the route through this wood, keep to a broad track, always preferring the right hand, or the middle when there are three ways. There is an unofficial narrower and drier path on the edge of the wood which will connect with the route. Whichever you use, after an iron barrier to the right, a little further on is a wooden stile into fields. Go steeply left here over tree roots: meet an unofficial bridle-way coming from the left. Bear right onto it – it is officially a footpath - and follow it for about half a mile past a chicken farm to arrive at the A4135 road a mile out of Dursley. You can chicken out (!) here if you wish by going right; a pavement appears before long.

8 To continue the trail, cross the busy road with care to a footpath opposite and slightly to the left, to the entrance of a water company plant. Go left up steps (not the concrete ones). The line of the footpath has changed here, so take the obvious track, looking out on your left for the back of an information board. Go up to it, and left, then right up wide wooden steps. All the route here is permissive, not public footpaths, and quite tricky, so look out for the orange Lantern Way markers. If you find yourself on a road, retrace your steps if it is the climbing A4135 crossed earlier. If it is a narrower lane, go left along it. Either way you should emerge where the 2 roads meet.

Go ahead, keeping carefully to the right of the main road, and go down the narrow lane marked 1 in 5. After 50 yards enter the wood to the right at a kissing gate and follow the waymarks for over a mile through what's known as Ashen Plains. At points there are paths off to the left. Avoid them - eventually, after a climb to the right, a waymark will lead you right again through trees to a kissing gate behind a large building in a field. Refreshments may be available here. Go through a kissing-gate onto a broad track and right, to emerge not far from where you were half an hour ago, on the Golf Course road, near the Sculpture Trail.



9

Either turn left onto the road or go into the wood opposite and find a path that follows the road, but for only about 150 metres when you will need to find the next track left off the road. Just before this meets a wood and a steep path down to Waterley Bottom, go right over a gate into a field, a permissive route bearing slightly left to a stile leading into Breakheart Quarry. The path through this Community Project area goes ahead for 400 yards, then right, curving round to a stile on the left leading back to the road you were on earlier.

**10**

Go left along the road, past a lane signposted Waterley Bottom. Follow the wall to find a track diagonally to the right that enters the wood by a vehicle barrier. Avoid going right, continuing 400 metres to a lovely clearing among large trees. From this there are 3 paths; take the middle one, bearing left, which will gradually, then steeply, drop to a stony route with a cottage on the left, newer houses on right, and a road ahead. You are on the edge of Dursley with a fine vista.

Go down the road ahead until you reach houses - turn left along Harrolds Close. Follow round to the right, then left onto the green below the houses. This was once the site of Dursley Union Workhouse. In the bottom left corner is a gap onto the tarmac path known as The Slade. Go left briefly and you will find everything you

need; for pessimists, a doctors' surgery on the left; for the weary, the bus station; for the hungry and thirsty, the famous Old Spot pub. If you do not recognise where you are, turn right past the bus station and library for the Town Centre, pharmacies, cafes and shops, and our starting-point, The Market Hall.



This leaflet has been produced by Dursley Welcomes Walkers. For more information contact www.dursleywelcomeswalkers.org.uk

The Countryside Code - **Respect, Protect, Enjoy**

Respect other people

- Consider the local community and other people enjoying the outdoors
- Leave gates & property as you find them, follow paths unless wider access is available

Protect the natural environment

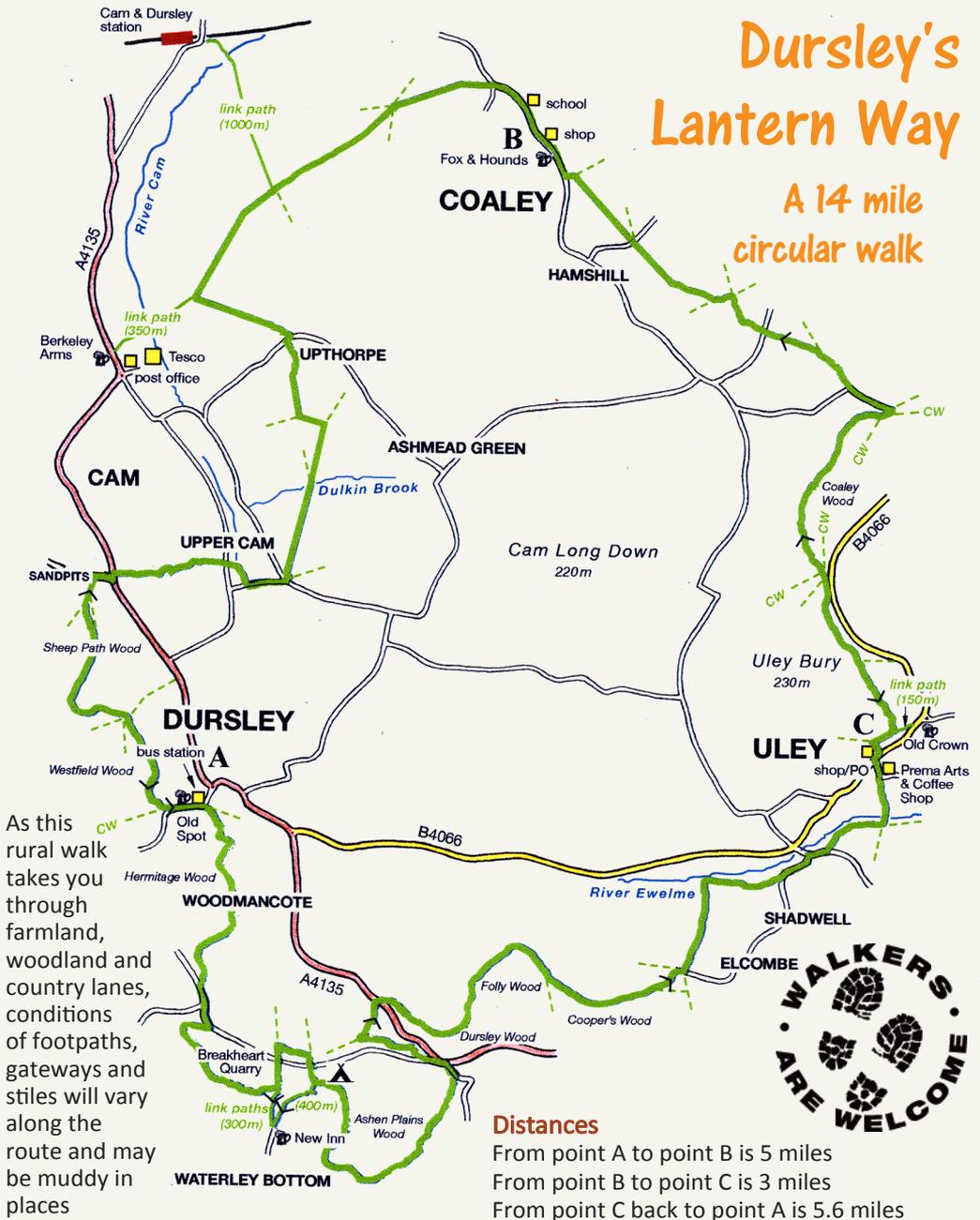
- Leave no trace of your visit and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under effective control

Enjoy the outdoors

- Plan ahead and be prepared
- Follow advice and local signs

Dursley's Lantern Way

A 14 mile circular walk



As this rural walk takes you through farmland, woodland and country lanes, conditions of footpaths, gateways and stiles will vary along the route and may be muddy in places

Distances

- From point A to point B is 5 miles
- From point B to point C is 3 miles
- From point C back to point A is 5.6 miles

Our thanks to Dave Ashbee for the text and to Fional Press for the map
(for more Cotswold walking maps, visit fional-press.co.uk)

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