

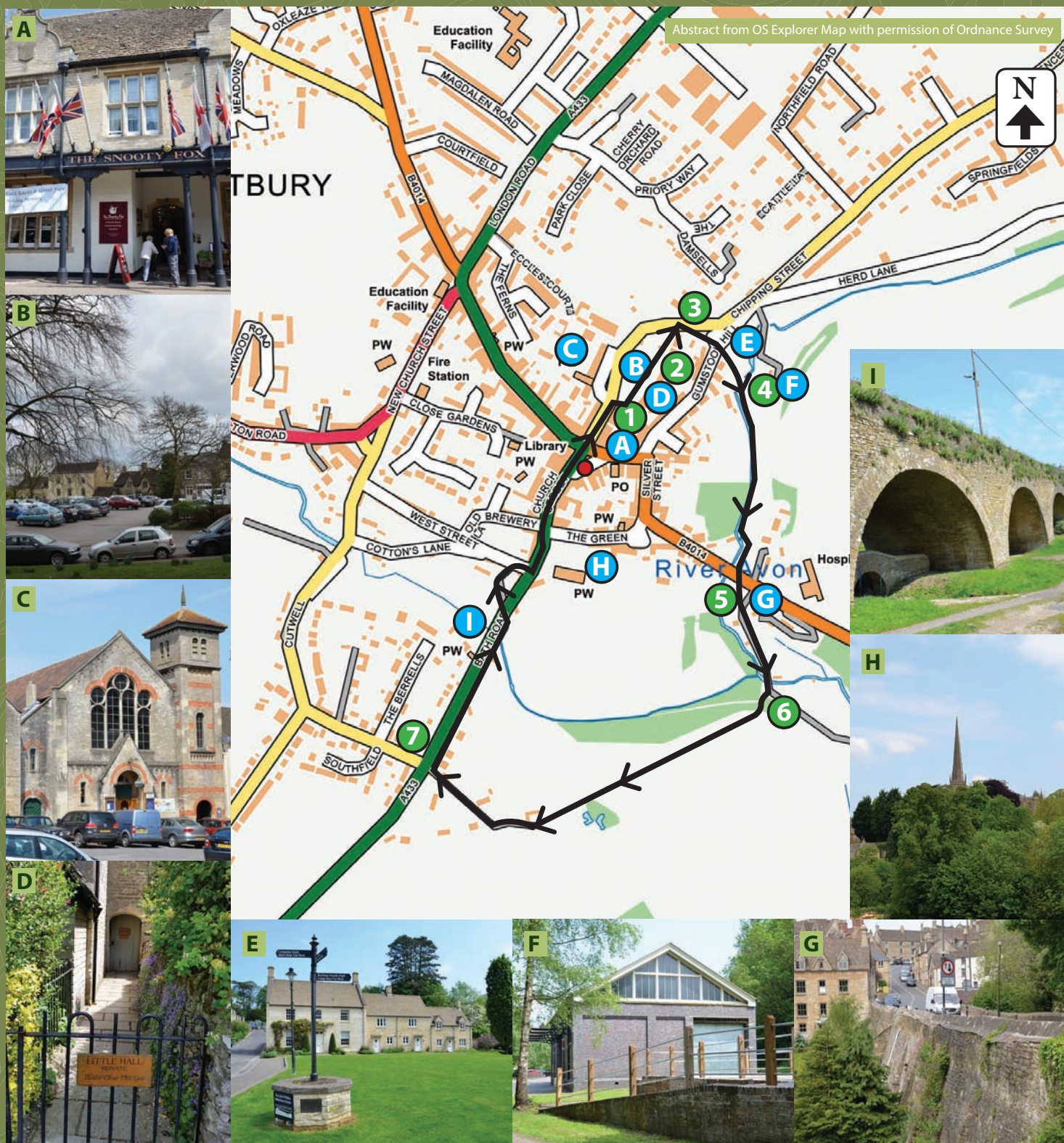


# Walks around Tetbury

-  Walk Route
  Points of Interest
  Route Instructions



## The Circle & District Line

See Tetbury in its setting

Distance: 2 km (1.25 miles)

Walking Time: 50 minutes

Starts and finishes at the Market Hall

Grade A/B on a scale where A is easy, and D is difficult.



## Description

Distance: 2 km (1.25 miles)

A circular walk in and around the town centre, taking in many of the town's historic features.

From the Market Hall cross to The Snooty Fox pub **A** and turn right along Chipping Street to The Chipping car park. **B** On the left side of The Chipping, notice firstly the Italian-style chapel -Christ Church; **C** then, a fine terrace of Georgian houses and, finally, a large 18th Century building occupying a dominant position (this is The Priory, which occupies the site of the mediaeval Manor House). Cross The Chipping car park **1** to the right side and look for an archway leading to a narrow passage between two cottages; a gate has a sign "Little Hall". **D**

Turn left **2** and take the picturesque Chipping Steps which lead out from the right-hand corner. At the very bottom of the steps on the right is the disused burial ground of a former Dissenting Chapel, the predecessor of the Church (C) in The Chipping. Go up the flight of stone steps to reach the road, **3** immediately turn right down a lane to what used to be the old Cattle Market, now the Millennium Green. **E**

Cross the road towards the Green (on the right is Gumstool Hill the scene of the annual Woolsack Races) and follow the path leading past the Millennium Green to the small stream (called The Splash). Cross over the bridge and ahead you will see the large Goods Shed. **F** Turn right **4** and follow the path beside the stream on your right, with a bank and then an old railway wall on the left. Fork left along a cinder track, up the slope and through a gate. Here you have reached the main road to Malmesbury at the end of the Wiltshire Bridge. **G**

Taking care, cross the road **5** and take the lane opposite and after passing the "The Tanyard" on your right cross the small bridge, turn right and go through the kissing gate and continue upward, beside the wall, for about 10 metres. Bear left and go over a wooden stile and turn right. **6** The path follows a wood on your right; keep to the bottom of the slope and carry on towards the house in the distance, ignoring a stile on your right; when you reach a stone wall ahead of you turn right. Follow the path towards the main road. At this juncture there is a splendid view of the Parish Church of St Marys' **H** which is the dominant landmark of the town.

Pass between two cottages and climb over the stone stile onto the main Tetbury - Bath Road. **7** Turn right, but instead of following the main road, go down the small lane to the right of it, to cross the stream by an old packhorse bridge.

Pass under the last arch of the Bath Bridge, **I** and climb steeply up the path. On reaching the top turn right (into West Street) and, after a few metres, turn left into Church Street and pass the Tourist Information centre to return to the Market Hall.

### POINTS OF INTEREST

#### **A** THE SNOOTY FOX PH - grade II listed building

Originally called "The White Hart", the name was changed by previous owner, industrialist and entrepreneur, Maxwell Joseph. Joseph wanted to ride with the local Beaufort Hunt. The hunt was rather disparaging about his industrial background (even though they were happy to meet in the bar of his pub) and black-balled him. Joseph responded by kicking them out and renaming the pub The Snooty Fox.

#### **B** THE CHIPPING

This was, in medieval times, a market and gathering space for 'Mop Fairs', when locals would hope to find employment as domestic staff or agricultural labourers. At the far side of the Chipping is a row of old weavers' cottages on a small cobbled lane. A series of steps called the Chipping Steps descend the lane. Whilst now a car park, The Chipping is still used for occasional fairs.

#### **C** CHRIST CHURCH

Built in an Italianate style as a Congregational Church in 1862, the cost being £3,000 including the purchase of a Manse. The schoolroom (at the rear) was used as a rest and recreational centre for unemployed men during the depression of 1932-33, and during WWII as accommodation for British and American troops. It was inaugurated as a "Local Ecumenical Partnership" (a coming together of the URC and Methodist churches of the town) in 1992.

#### **D** THE ARCH

The screen passage of a mediaeval Hall-house (Little Hall) was built in 1275 and but partially rebuilt in the 19th century; it incorporates two ancient doorways, the oldest architectural features in the town. The passage leads to a courtyard, on the left of which is the old Malt House which served as the top-secret headquarters of an American map-making regiment, where plans and scale models were prepared for the American landings at Omaha Beach in Normandy, as part of the invasion of Europe in June 1944.

#### **E** THE MILLENNIUM GREEN

Work began early in 1999 on an ambitious redevelopment scheme to provide a new amenity area for the town involving the creation of a car park, and the refurbishment and landscaping of the area around the Cattle Market and sheep pens, the old station, the railway yard and The Splash.

'The John Phillips Millennium Green' (named after one of the town's Feoffees) was officially named on November 10, 2000 by HRH The Prince Of Wales "for the benefit of the inhabitants and to be used forever as an area for informal recreation play or other leisure time occupations a meeting area or place for community events and for any other lawful purpose". NB. *The seven Feoffees were influential townsfolk who ruled Tetbury for over 250 years until reformations of local government in the 20th century. Even today they are responsible for maintenance of the Market Hall and several areas of local parkland.*

#### **F** THE TETBURY GOODS SHED

This is all that remains of the once busy Tetbury railway station which served as the terminus to the Great Western Railway branch line from Kemble. It opened in December 1889, ran increasingly quietly for seven decades and was one of the first victims of "Dr Beeching's axe", closing in April 1964. Fund raising is enabling its transformation into an arts and entertainment facility for the town.

#### **G** WILTSHIRE BRIDGE

The fine Wiltshire Bridge, or causeway, built of Cotswold limestone towers above a tributary to the Tetbury branch of the river Avon and was built to reduce the gradient of a route used as the main access to the town for those travelling from Malmesbury to Minchinhampton from medieval times. The bridge originally spanned the Gloucestershire/Wiltshire county boundary (until 1935), hence its name.

#### **H** ST MARYS' CHURCH

The current church of St Mary the Virgin and St Mary Magdalen replaced the medieval church, said to be in a sad state of disrepair. It was designed by Francis Hiorne of Warwick, and opened in 1781. Only the tower and spire of the old Church were retained, until they, in turn, became unsafe and were rebuilt in 1891 at the expense of the previous owner of Highgrove House (now the country home of HRH The Prince of Wales) from where a clear view of them can still be seen. It is one of the earliest and best examples of Georgian Gothic churches in the country. The church sits on the site of an Iron Age hill fort and is thought to have been later occupied by a castle or Manor House built by Robert of Gloucester and taken by Stephen in 1144. The remains were levelled and transformed into a 'pleasure ground' in 1779. This is also thought to be the site of an ancient burial site or 'bury' which gives the town its name.

#### **I** BATH BRIDGE - grade II listed building.

Before the bridge was built, this steep little lane was the main road out of Tetbury to Bath. The path is called Blackhorse Hill after the pub of that name which once stood there. In 1774 the turnpike commissioners employed a local mason, Thomas Webb, to build a new bridge; the bridge was completed in April 1776. The bridge is built of coarse rubble sloping up the hill into town and all the arches are of different sizes.