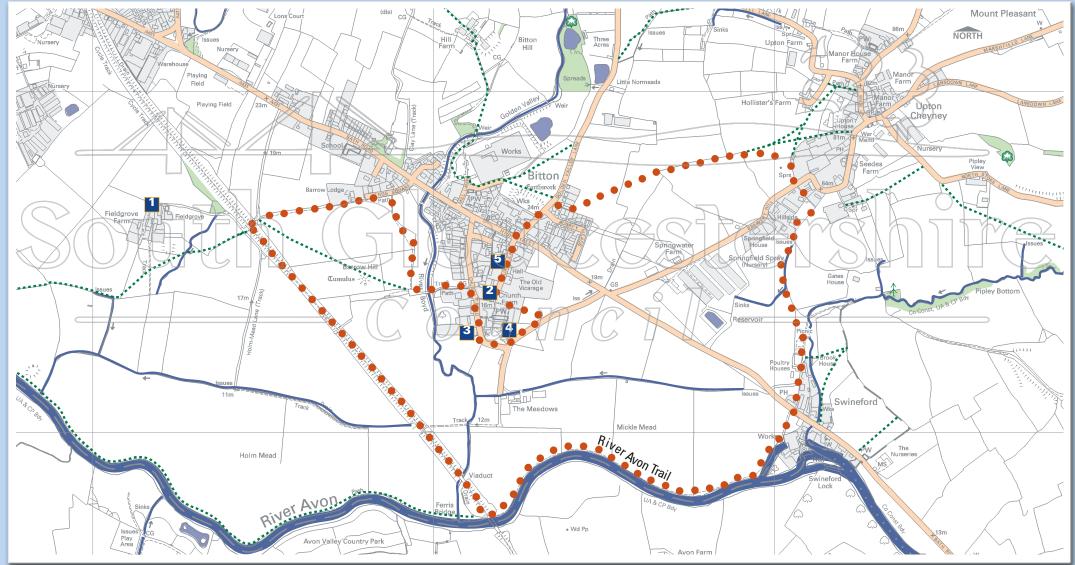




This is a circular route and can be joined at Swineford picnic site (parking provided), Bitton (park at the lay-by in Golden Valley Lane, opposite Aubrey Meads) or Upton Cheyney (park in Wick Lane).

This description starts from Swineford picnic site, off the main A431.

If you are in need of sustenance before starting out, try the Swan Inn on the A431 at Swineford which serves food and ales.



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- Fieldgrove House
- 2 Church Farm
- 3 The Grange

- St Mary's Church
- The Old Rectory





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## Directions

From the Swineford picnic site follow the track beside
Pipley Brook towards the main road. Just before the
cattle grid take the footpath to the left through the yard.
This will bring you out to the A431. Take this footpath,
through the kissing gate opposite, to the River Avon.
Turn right along the river-bank and walk through the
water meadows, where there is an abundance of wildlife.
Follow this route until you meet the Bristol/Bath cyclewalkway, which passes over the old railway bridge.
Pass under the bridge and turn right. Take the steps
or slope up on to the cycle-walkway and turn left
towards Bitton Station. Continue for about 1km until you
reach a flight of steps (see alternative route) on your left,
just before a wooden bridge parapet. Nearby is
Fieldgrove House (1).

From the cycle-walkway, descend the steps and walk under the bridge. Take the footpath on your right and follow the field boundary east and then south past the paddocks, noticing the ancient Bronze Age tumulus half way along on your right. When reaching a track, bear left. Cross the bridge over the River Boyd and continue until you reach Church Road.

Opposite you is **Church Farm (2).** Turn right and follow the road around in a semi-circle, looking at all the old houses and cottages as you pass **(3 The Grange).** Continue until you reach a footpath on your left with a metal gate and a squeeze gate of three stones. Walk across the Croft or Glebe Field, through an avenue of trees, into **St Mary's Churchyard (4).** 

Follow the path, turn right through the lych-gate erected in memory of the second Canon Ellacombe, Vicar of Bitton from 1850 - 1916, and into Church Lane. This road is lined with listed buildings including the **Old Rectory (5)**.

Cross the main A431 and continue up Golden Valley Lane to Aubrey Meads, named after two local physicians, the Doctors Aubrey, father and son. To your left is the Pound Field which contains the remains of a Roman station on the Via Julia (the road from Bath to the Severn now the A431). Just beyond the turning, take the footpath on your right, across the fields to Upton Cheyney. Near the top, turn back and enjoy the view towards Keynsham and the Mendip Hills.

Turning to face Upton Cheyney again, bear right and cross the field onto Brewery Lane. From here you can turn left into the village where you will find many old buildings of interest including Upton House (the original Manor House for the village) and the War Memorial. If you are weary, walk a little way into the village to find the Upton Inn, a hostelry since the 16th century.

Cross over Brewery Lane and continue straight on along a narrow passage at the end of this turn right to walk down the hill, taking in the magnificent view. This footpath will take you back down the hill to Swineford picnic site.



## Points of Interest

- Fieldgrove House. This the home of Sir John Harrington, a godson of Elizabeth I. He and his brother Francis of Kelston Towers invented the W.C. Water from the gutters of the house was channelled into a tank to which a rope was attached. When the rope was pulled, a small amount of water was released.
- Church Farm. The oldest house in Bitton, given by Henry II to Robert Fitzharding of Berkeley in 1151.
- The Grange. Before the Reformation, this was the home of the clergy and was given with much land to the brother of Jane Seymour, third wife of Henry VIII, by the Abbot of Westminster. In 1758 the house was let to John Wood the Younger who built Bath Assembly Rooms, Royal Crescent and Kelston Park.
  - St Mary's Church, is on the site of Roman remains. The Lady Chapel was built in memory of Sir Robert and Lady de Button by their son Eustace, Vicar of Bitton and Bishop of Exeter in 1299. The tower was added in 1370. In the porch is a list of vicars from 1273. The church contains two stone coffin lids, reputed to be among the best in the country, dating from circa 1277. The church is normally open on Sunday afternoons during Spring and Summer.
  - The Old Rectory and Church Lane. The Old Rectory was once famed for its garden kept by Canon Ellacombe. Both Kew Gardens and the Botanical Gardens in Bath were both stocked with plants from this source. The Freres Almshouses on your left date from 30 November 1854 and were built in memory of Edward and Mary Anne Frere who desired to provide homes for poor families in the areas now within the parishes of Bitton, Oldland, Hanham Abbots and Siston. These homes, being too small for modern family living, are now occupied by residents who are either retired or near to retirement age. On your right is the old Church School, built by voluntary subscription in 1830 and now used as a church hall and community facility.