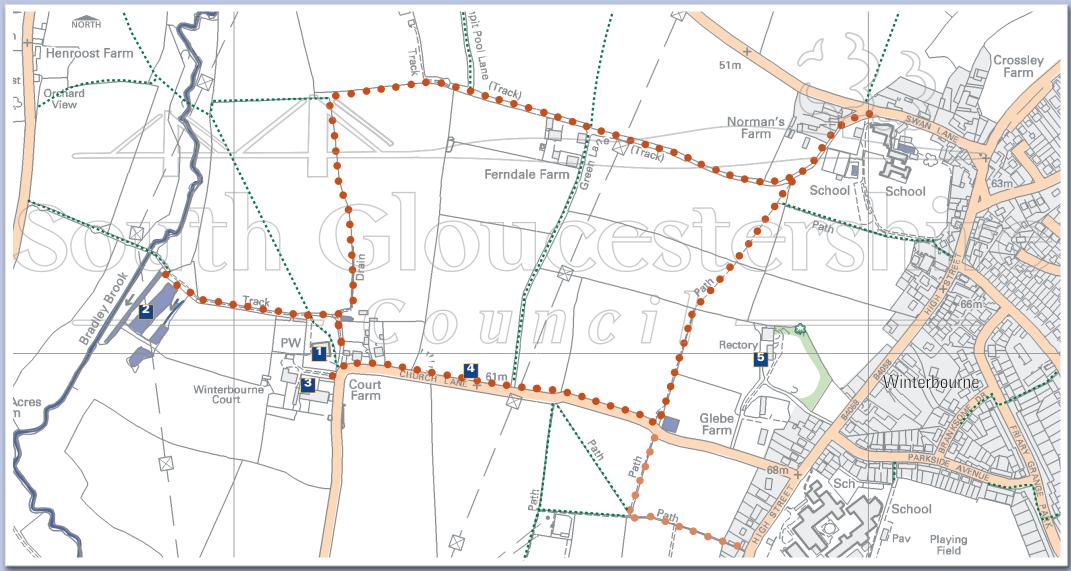


Winterbourne



The name of the village probably derives from the Bradley Brook, which runs to the west of the present village, and which at one time often dried up in the summer months, hence 'winter-bourne.'

There is evidence of people living in the area for over two thousand years. The western slopes from High Street down past St Michael's Church to Bradley Brook were almost certainly farmed in the iron age, where there was good soil, a warm climate, and a water supply. This walk takes us through this area.



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2 Monks Pool

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3 Medieval Barn





References to 'Winterbourne' in medieval times will be to a series of hamlets around the area, probably the most important being the area around the church where the medieval manor house once stood, on the site of what is now Winterbourne Court.

The walk starts in the centre of what is now the village.

The modern village, based on and to the east of High Street, is almost certainly only about two hundred years old.

Directions

The walk starts at Swan Lane and follows Green Lane (bridleway), this then becomes Masonpit Pool Lane and continues west past Ferndale Farm. As Masonpit Pool Lane veers right continue straight on the public footpath and cross into the field at the kissing gate. Continue along the field boundary, first west then south towards St Michael's Church (1).

The walk then continues west along a bridleway known as the Monks Walk, down to the Monks Pool. Here the walk enters the **Monks Pool area** (2), now a nature reserve run by the Parish Council, there is an interpretation board just inside the entrance. Upon leaving the nature reserve the walk doubles back up Monks Walk back to St Michael's Church.

When re-passing the church onto Church Lane, look to the right at the interesting group of buildings adjacent to the church. Winterbourne Court is not the original Manor House but stands on the Manor House site. Behind Winterbourne Court is a large dovecote, dating from the early medieval period. Next to Winterbourne Court stands one of Winterbourne's treasures, the Medieval Barn (3).

For those interested in the local flora there is much to look out for along Church Lane (4).

Continue east along Church Lane past the bridleway, turn left at the kissing gate and walk north behind the **Rectory** (5). This path takes you back to Green Lane.

Alternative start from Winterbourne High Street (involves crossing 2 stiles)

From High Street walk along the marked right of way known locally as Donkey Walk, with the village allotments on your left. You soon reach pasture land, and take the waymarked footpath that runs north parallel to High Street, this meets Church Lane.



Points of Interest

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1 St Micheals Church. The architecture dates the church to the 1190s although the first written record is a hundred years later. It is worth taking a few minutes to walk round the church and churchyard. There is much to see inside, including some 14th century wall paintings of the Bradeston family, the lords of the manor; and outside, recent work on the churchyard makes it truly a place of rest.

Monks Pool local nature reserve. There is in fact no evidence that a monastery existed on the site, and the fishponds that make up Monks Pool were probably either for the benefit of the Manor House, or for travellers between Bristol and Gloucester.

Winterbourne Court. This was built in 1342 and at the time was one of England's largest barns. It was built using green timber construction methods; the latest technology at the time. Although now having only seven bays rather than the original eleven, it is still breathtaking to walk inside. It is of national importance and is a grade II listed building which was rescued and purchased by South Gloucestershire Council in 1998.

One of the sandstone walls in the churchyard has pennywort and rusty-back fern growing in the crevices. In Monks Pool reserve there is old willow and sedge fern in amongst the ponds, wet grassland, hedges, and wild and planted trees. The mud-mortared stone wall in Church Lane has stonecrop, ivy-leaved toadflax, and short lived grasses growing on it. The pasture landscape is hedged by hawthorn and blackthorn bushes, with patches of elm.

The Rectory. This building dates from 1834, and further along is what is now a private school, formerly Winterbourne House, dating from at least 1698.

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