

A circular walk from Charlbury through west Oxfordshire countryside and the villages of Taston and Spelsbury.

Distance: 8km/5 miles with an up and down of 95m/312 ft.

Time: 2½ hours

Start: Co-op Car Park, Enstone Lane. SP357/195

Toilets available at the Co-op and the shop is open 7 days a week.

Route:

Walk towards the Community Centre on the right side of the car park. At the cycle shelter you will see a footpath going between two walls. Take this path leading to Nine Acres Lane. Cross the road and take the footpath opposite (Taston).

1 Follow the footpath bearing right, go through a gate into the cemetery, cross and through another gate into a field.

Walk down the field bank, through a gate in the bottom of the valley. Cross the bridge, and through a second gate. Walk diagonally right to the gate near the top of the field. Walk to the left across the corner of the field to the next gate. The path branches here, take the path to the right and cross the field. At the far side of the field make for a gap in the hedge, this leads onto a path between two hedges. Turn left. **2**

Walk through the gate and turn right to walk towards some buildings keeping the hedge on your right **3**. Go through the gate at the end of the field; follow the hedge across the next field and through the next gate. Follow the track past the farm buildings and leave the track where it curves to the right before the farmhouse. Follow the footpath signs

straight ahead, until you reach a hedge on your left. Follow this hedge to the opposite side of the field.

At the end of the field turn left and walk a short distance to a cottage, then turn right along the track towards the houses ahead in Taston. Turn left onto the road. Pass the fountain and old Schoolhouse before reaching the cross in the centre of the village. **4**

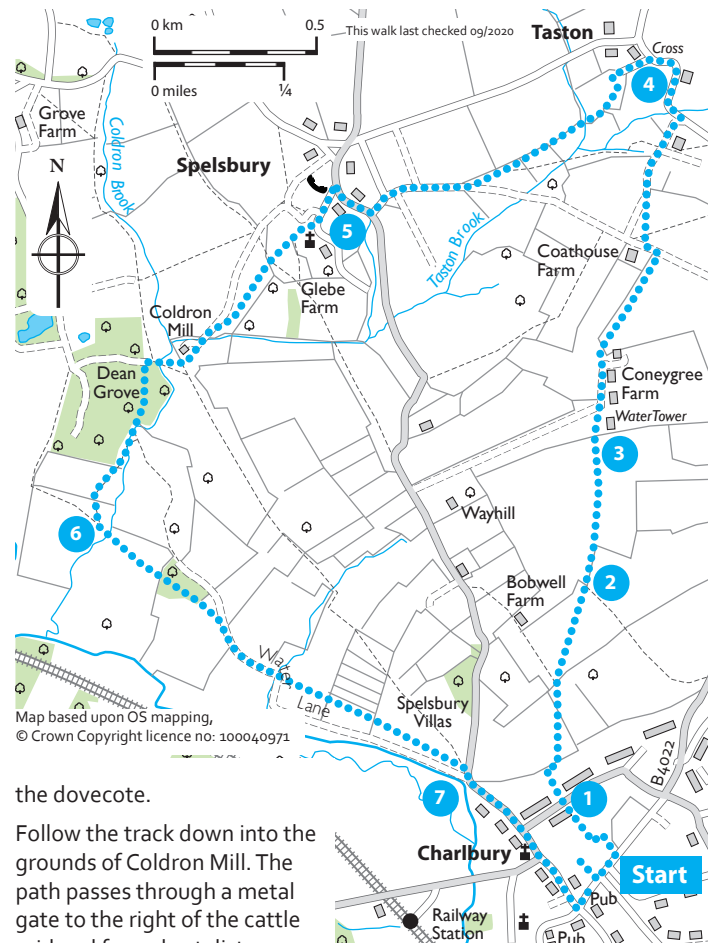
The large stone on the right beyond the Cross is the remains of a Neolithic tomb. There was no church in the village, visiting priests used the cross to preach.

Pass the Cross and take the track to Spelsbury, turning left after 100 metres. After a further 50 metres take the path through a gate on the right and follow the wall behind the cottage to another gate. Continue down the field and through a woody area to Taston Brook and over a bridge.

Continue along the path through a gate which leads through a tree plantation. Take the metal gate out of the plantation and walk along the top of the field, which turns into a track leading into Spelsbury.

Turn left onto a lane, at the main road, turn right and follow the road to Charlbury, taking care as there is no footpath.

At the memorial follow the no-through road to the Church. Take the footpath before the church signed Charlbury making for the wooden gate ahead after the last house **5**. Follow the track for a little way and take the gate on the left signed as a footpath. Walk ahead across the field making for the field gate to the right of



the dovecote.

Follow the track down into the grounds of Coldron Mill. The path passes through a metal gate to the right of the cattle grid and for a short distance follows the drive. Turn left over the lawn and walk in front of the house, passing the millrace, making for the willow hedge (diamond pattern). Take the right fork to a stone bridge crossing a brook.

Cross a narrow wooded area, a gate, a field and another gate into Dean Grove. The path bears left and passes through the wood. Do not cross the stream, but continue through two gates near the bottom of the wood. Follow the side of the field and the stream and go through the gate. Turn left and walk diagonally across the corner of the field to a gate to join the Oxfordshire Way. **6**

Cross the bridge over the stream here. Follow the path through several gates between fields. **7**

Both routes reach Pound Hill, either:
a. Follow the track to the right along Water Lane. (Can flood when wet), or
b. Cross the track, pass through the gate and straight ahead across a field, gate and another field making for Charlbury ahead. The final gate leads onto the road. Turn up Pound Hill and continue to the Rose and Crown pub at the crossroads in the village centre. Turn left into Browns Lane to the Co-op.