

# OLVESTON PARISH WALKS

WALK 4

About 2½ miles

OLD DOWN AND TOCKINGTON



An attractive and varied walk with lots of interest and some superb views. The walk takes in woodland, and grassland rich in wildflowers, and passes close to the old waggon wash. Easy to navigate but with two steep slopes.

At the end of a high wall on the left, turn left over a cattle grid 9 and follow the left hand side of the drive to Sheepcombe.

On reaching the entrance to houses keep left and follow a footpath with a hedge on the right hand side. Turn right after 50 yards (there is a footpath sign) and then left onto a clearly defined track 10 which runs for just over half a mile to reach Hazel Lane 11. In the days before good road transport, this was an important track carrying goods from small barges unloaded at Sheepcombe. Along the way you pass the waggon wash used to clean the mud off waggons in the winter and swell the wooden wheels onto their iron tyres in the summer.

Turn right onto Hazel Lane and follow the lane downhill for 200 yards. Turn left through a gate immediately opposite Hazel Cottage 12. Keep hard right following the fence line. You are now on a bridleway which goes uphill through woodland (full of bluebells in the spring).

On emerging from the woodland 13 turn hard left and follow a well-trodden path (not a public right of way) for about 500 yards through wild flower rich pasture, ignoring any cross paths and a stile on the right in a hedge. Cross a stile at the far end of the field (on the left) 14 back on to Hazel Lane. Turn right. After about 400 yards, turn left into The Inner Down and back to the start of the walk at The Fox Inn.

This walk can also be started from the car park at the Queen Alexandra Pavilion or from Tockington.

## Walks in the series

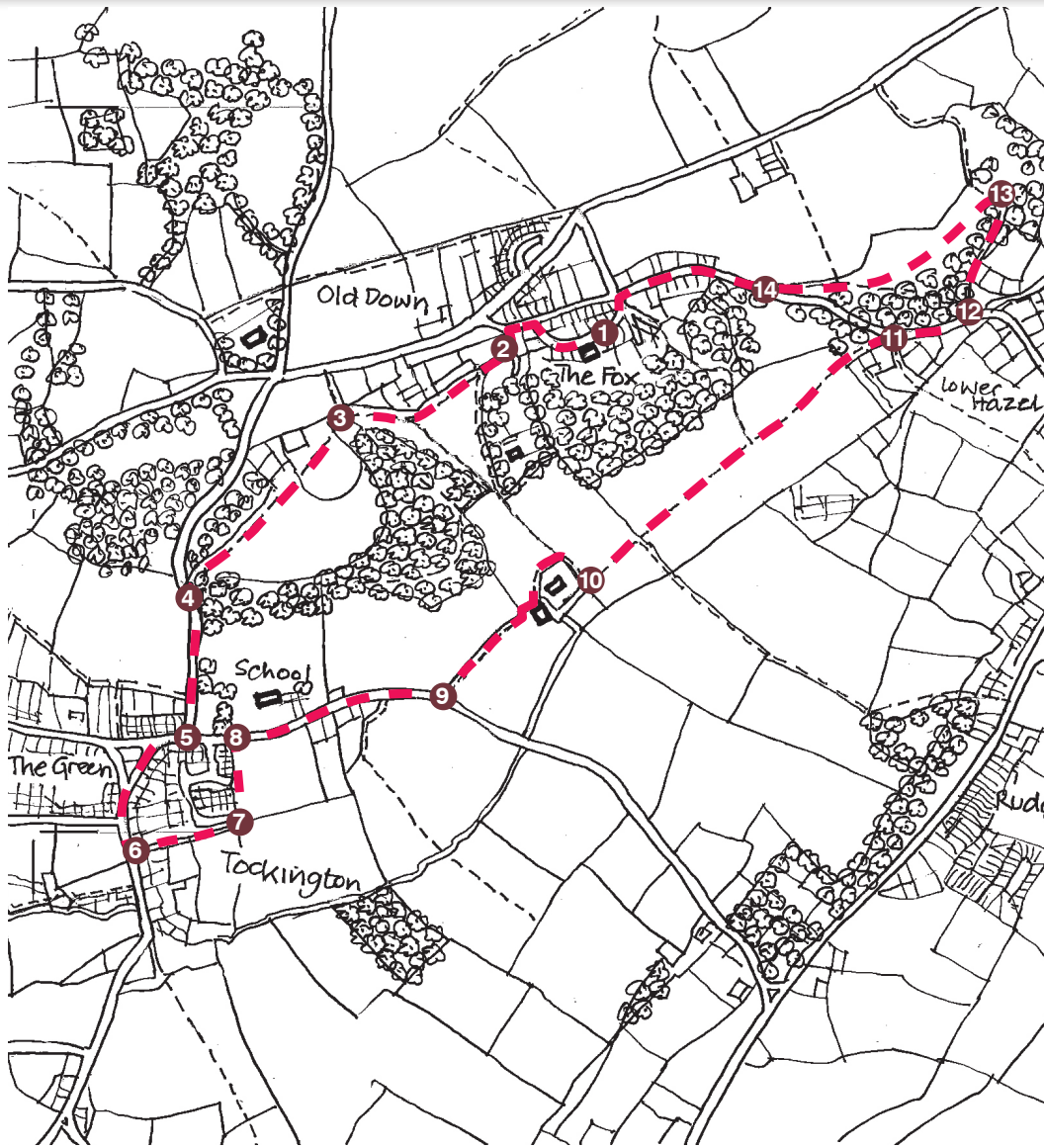
1. Round Olveston
2. Olveston and Old Down
3. Old Down and Rudgeway
4. Old Down and Tockington
5. Between Olveston and Tockington
6. Down to the Motorway



This walk uses public rights of way and permissive paths across private land. Please:

- clean up after your dog and keep dogs under effective control
- keep to the path
- take your litter home





Start at the Fox Inn, Old Down **1**. Turn left out of the pub entrance. On reaching Down Road turn left. After about 50 yards turn left again into Merryhole Lane. After a further 30 yards turn right (at a waymarker) **2** and through two kissing gates into a field. Go straight ahead along a path which follows the field boundary

Continue straight ahead steeply downhill. Behind the fence on the right is the face of the former Tockington Quarry, now a nature reserve owned by the Parish Council. Pyramidal orchids can be found in the quarry bottom in the early summer (CAUTION: no access from this path!).

fence on your right, past the back of Windmill House and past a paddock with stables.

At the point where the fence turns sharply right carry on straight ahead to a metal gate into Old Down cricket field **3**. Follow the path around the right hand edge of the cricket field with the Bowls Club behind it. Exit through a metal gate. You are now on the top of Tockington Hill. This was a Deer Park for Tockington Manor.

Go straight ahead with a fence on the right hand side passing a splendid group of Austrian pine trees on your left planted sometime after 1890 by the Salmon family. At this point there is a magnificent view across to Almondsbury and the Severn Vale.

At the bottom of the slope leave Tockington Hill via "the snicket", a path between two walls which emerges towards the bottom of Old Down Hill at a kissing gate **4**. The word "snicket" is northern English for an alleyway between walls. On hot late summer evenings glow worms have been seen here.

Continue down Old Down Hill on the pavement towards Tockington (care is needed as there is a break in the pavement part way). Cross the road ahead at the T junction **5** and turn right and then bear left at The Green, passing Tockington Methodist Church and the Swan Inn. The Green is said to owe its triangular shape to its origins as an area of forest cleared to act as a pound for the protection of domestic animals from predators. The Church was previously a school room built sometime after 1812 but had become a Wesleyan Chapel by 1840.

After passing Hardy Lane on the right, take a left turn into a gravelled lane between stone walls **6**. Known as Kennel Lane, it led to kennels for Tockington House, which was renamed Tockington Manor by Col. Henry Thomas Salmon after he bought it in 1890. It is now a school. The kennels were converted to five dwellings during the second half of the 1800s but were demolished when Manor Park was built. Continue to the end of the lane, which has become a grass path.

Go through a field gate **7** into the field and turn almost immediately left through a kissing gate. Walk straight ahead along the edge of Tockington Manor School playing field and through a kissing gate onto Washingpool Hill Road **8**.

Turn right and follow Washingpool Hill Road for 500 yards (care is needed here as there is no pavement).