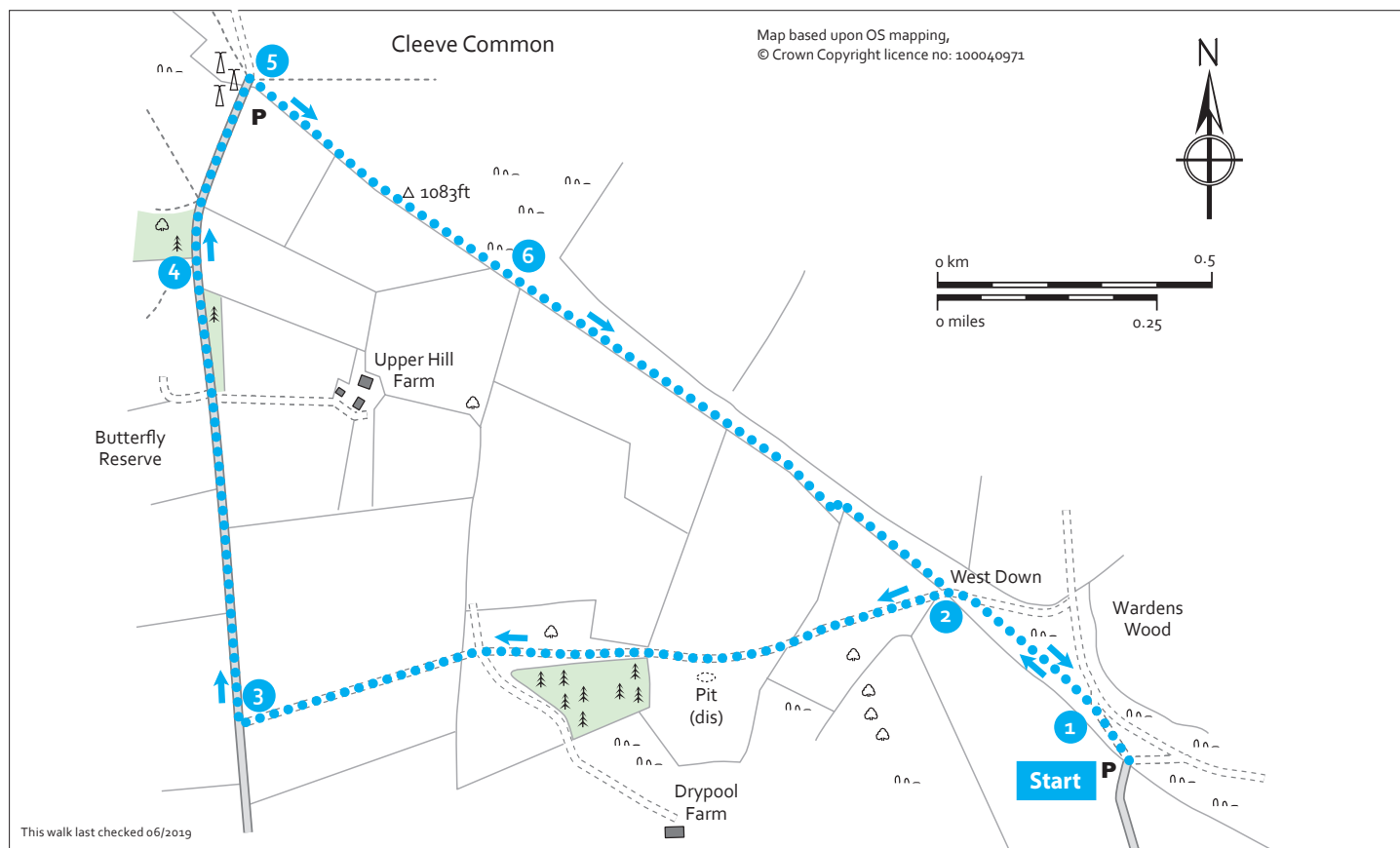




This invigorating circular walk offers stunning views from the highest point of the Cotswolds and opportunities to visit Cleeve Common and a nearby Butterfly Reserve.



Distance: 5 km/3 miles with ups and downs of 73m or 240ft

Time: 2 hours

Start: West Down car park, 2½ miles (4km) north of Andoversford, approached from Whittington to Syreford Road or from Brockhampton SP010235

Route:

Head up the track and go through the gate on the left which brings you on **1** to a narrow strip of Cleeve Common called West Down.

Walk alongside the wall on the left hand side.

After 350 metres turn left through a gate just before a power transmission mast, signposted bridleway and 'The Sabrina Way' **2**. This is just before the power lines.

Follow the track for about ¾ of a mile (1.2km) descending into the top of the Drypool Valley and climbing up to the road. **3**

Turn right on the road which leads you to another entrance to Cleeve Common beside the masts.

Halfway to the masts you pass the Bill Smylie Butterfly Reserve on your left. **4** You are at liberty to wander around the paths of the reserve with its stupendous views and its abundance of flowers typical of unimproved limestone grassland. The best time to see butterflies is in the middle of a calm, sunny day in late spring and in July and August. After visiting the reserve return to the road and turn left.

At the end of the road go through the gate **5** on to Cleeve Common and turn right along the wall.

This brings you to an Ordnance

Survey pillar which marks the highest point of the Cotswolds - 1083 ft, 330 metres. This was the location of the first Cheltenham Racecourse at the beginning of the 19th century.

The return route follows the wall/fence, **6** which eventually brings you to the top of West Down and along the narrow strip of land back to the car park.