

This spectacular walk shows you first the raw stone and then what men have done with it over the centuries to create such a harmonious landscape. Beware, bits are steep!

**Distance:** 5.6 km/3½miles with a big down and an up of 192m/630ft.

**Time:** 2 hours

**Start:** Broadway Tower Country Park on minor road off the A44 above Broadway. SP113359 near WR12 7LB. Car park (Pay & Display), café and toilets. Public toilets at Fish Hill picnic area on A44.

**Route:** Walk up past the café towards the entrance gates and go through a high gate on the L to the tower ahead. On the right of the tower go through another high gate and a smaller gate facing you **1**.

Follow the Cotswold Way signs ahead (not downhill) winding through some old small quarries, now covered by grass. Carry on through a gate and at a way marker, continue down the gully towards another gate in the trees ahead **2**.

Before the trees turn R up the short slope to the boundary fence of Broadway Quarry and a great view of Cotswold stone. Now turn R and follow the fence back towards the tower and to the gates at point **1**.

Turn R downhill on the Cotswold Way towards Broadway, through a series of gates. After the fourth gate (wooden benches on the L) the descent gets steeper, in an old quarry with 24 steps alongside the wall. Carry on to a waymark post **3** before the next gate.



Extracting the last stone at Broadway Quarry in 2009. It is now restored.

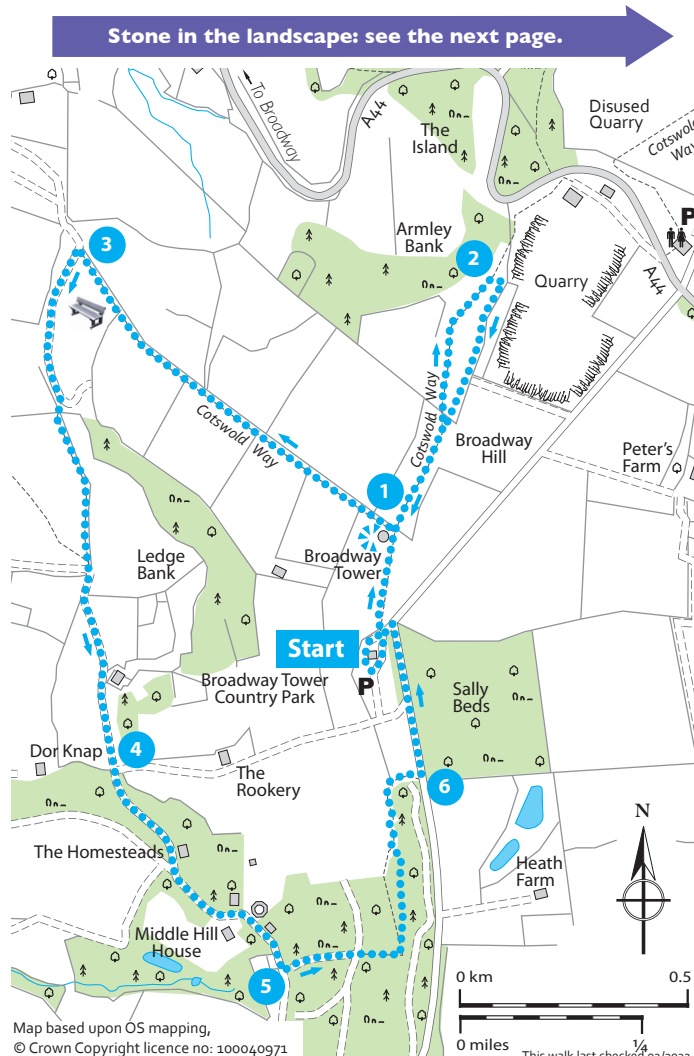
Turn L on a sunken track across the hill to a double gate into a large field (often cattle). Walk alongside the deeply rutted track ahead, (this can be very muddy after rain) dropping to a gate before meeting a track between trees coming up on your R.

You now climb ahead to a gate then passing a small stone house on the L, to admire the residence at Dor Knap, tucked into the hillside on your R. It was once four cottages.

At a wide gateway with stone pillars **4** take the level drive through the wood and passing cottages on L before the magnificent Georgian mansion of Middle Hill House is revealed, then its octagonal stable block and Pump House, all carefully renovated.

After the Pump House the easy walking stops **5**. At a yellow waymark turn L off the drive up a steep woodland path, and plod up for five minutes to cross a muddy drive. The path ahead soon bears L and levels out as you walk through pheasant woods which disguise a very old quarry.

The track bears L to a wide gateway out of the wood where you turn R onto grass with views on your L. At the end of the wood follow the yellow arrows R and up to a high stile onto a narrow lane **6**. Turn L and walk to the Country Park gates and your start.



## A landscape dressed by stonemasons

Cotswold stone is the colour of the seaside. That's where we were 200 million years ago — it was like the Bahamas, just sun, sea and sand.

Over many centuries warm tides ebbed and flowed over the region. Successive layers of sand, mud, seashells and fossils created the amazing sandwich-cake of stone that you'll see at a quarry on this walk.

Cotswold stone is often described as honey-coloured, and indeed honey can be white (as at Bath), golden (at Broadway) and a rich brown further north. Some quarries even have varied seams of different colours.

Once it's cut from the ground the stone hardens, the colours change and slowly the lichen adds its own coloured jacket.

In prehistoric times the soft limestone could be crudely worked to make



Middle Hill in midwinter

entrances to the long barrows where the dead were buried on the hilltops. Then the Romans brought their skills and tools, followed by the Normans intent on building stone churches over Saxon foundations. The medieval prosperity that came with wool made much use of the limestone in raising churches, manors and farms in the distinctive Cotswold style.

In the 21st century local quarrymen are still working to provide building stone and tiles which the masons shape to punctuate the landscape in harmony with the bedrock below.

So the Cotswolds should really be known as an Area of Outstanding Natural and Man-made Beauty.

## Along the way you'll see

- > Broadway Tower, a beacon for the Earl of Coventry to light on his way home to Croome Court.
- > A big modern quarry, now worked out and to be restored for educational use.
- > Stone stiles (not sheep-proof).
- > Dry stone walls rebuilt by the Cotswold Voluntary Wardens.
- > Dor Knap: four 18thC cottages that grew to become a "classic" Cotswold house.
- > Middle Hill, built 1725, rebuilt 1779, changed in 1872, part demolished in 1977, given a new face in 1990. Magnificent!
- > Behind, an octagonal stable block as big as the big house:
- > Then climb through a very old quarry, now a pheasant wood.

## A thousand years of craftsmanship in Cotswold stone



Font, Southrop  
1198 AD



Lodge Park, Sherborne  
1634 AD



Stairs, Stow on the Wold  
2004 AD