

Suggestions for the route of a proposed ‘Gustav Holst Way’ for ramblers

The Gustav Holst Way from Cranham to Wyck Rissington

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Section 1: Cranham Church (map ref: 891124) to Crickley Hill Country Park

3 Hours; 5.7 miles

The Gustav Holst Way starts at Cranham Church. The church is usually open and it is worth spending a few minutes there before commencing the walk. From the church go up the road to the school and just opposite the school take a gently sloping grassy path down to the left. This joins a track to go downhill past a car park to the Black Horse.

Holst's mother Clara is known to have played the harmonium in Cranham Church, and Holst, visiting Cranham later, most probably also played in the church on several occasions. 'There is a kneeler in the church which is embroidered with 'In the Bleak Midwinter' and 'Holst'.

Opposite the Black Horse is Midwinter Cottage, where Holst was staying in 1904 when he composed his now very famous carol "In the bleak midwinter", the hymn tune known as Cranham in The English Hymnal of 1906.

Go down beside Midwinter Cottage to the lower part of the village and turn right onto the main road. Walk approximately 50 metres and turn left onto the signposted footpath. Follow the footpath over the stream and into Buckholt Wood and in approximately 50 metres bear left and follow the path up the hill. The path twists a bit, but keeps to the same general direction and gradually gets steeper. At the T-junction in the footpath turn left and continue up hill following the yellow directional arrows marked on the trees. The footpath narrows and rises steeply towards the road. Cross the road and turn left and then past a large house, now called 'The Buckholt'.

This was the house that Samuel and Mary Lediard, Holst's maternal grandparents, lived in with their children, one of whom, Clara, was Holst's mother. It was then owned by David Whatley, Holst's maternal great-grandfather. The house was smaller then and known as 'Buckholt Cottage'. More recently Buckholt woods have been famous as the location of a sanatorium where amongst others George Orwell spent some time recovering. Buckholt is a name going back to the 11th century and means beech wood.

At the end of the garden wall, turn right off the road and take the right of two signed footpaths down beside the house. At the first opportunity turn right onto a forest track and continue going gently down until meeting the Cotswold Way, recognisable as a much wider well walked path. Turn right onto the Cotswold Way.

The walk now follows the Cotswold Way along the Cotswold escarpment and on a footpath which is well waymarked, wide and easy to follow. The path continues through Witcombe Wood and crosses the road just below Birdlip village and the Royal George Hotel. After crossing the road the footpath goes up hill in a north easterly direction. It is well worth following a short detour to 'The Peak' to experience the unobscured panoramic views. From The Peak the path turns back again to go past the Berrow Wake viewpoint and from here the

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footpath runs parallel with the main A417 road downhill to the Air Balloon public house. Be very careful crossing the busy road junction at the Air Balloon roundabout and into Crickley Hill Country Park. Follow the Cotswold Way signs through the park to the Crickley Hill visitor centre & toilets.

Crickley Hill is the site of a Late Bronze Age - Early Iron Age promontory hillfort, with two phases of construction, and a later Iron Age unenclosed settlement. [The] two main phases of hillfort defences were located during the 1969-1993 excavations on Crickley Hill. The earliest phase [...] comprised of timber-laced ramparts enclosing several rows of rectangular buildings, with clusters of small square buildings, possibly 7th century BC in date [...]. On the flat approach and the western tip of the hill, the ramparts had been constructed with a regular pattern of timber internal uprights, horizontal timber lacing. Elsewhere the ramparts diminished in both width and height to become a drystone wall. It is not known whether this defence was continuous around the promontory as landslips and quarrying have removed any evidence; for more information see www.pastscape.org.

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Section 2: Crickley Hill (map ref: 930164) to Holst Birthplace Museum

2½ hours; 7.15 miles

Leave Crickley Hill continuing on the Cotswold Way until you reach a road; this is Greenway Lane. At this point turn right on Greenway Lane which leads to the B4070 cross roads. Cross directly ahead along the minor road past the National Star College on the right hand side.

The National Star College is an independent specialist college working with learners who have physical, sensory or learning disabilities. The qualifications, courses and pathways enable the students to prepare for the best that adult life can offer. The college has undergone massive redevelopment in recent years (£15.4 million programme since 2007), which was completed in early 2011. The original building used by the college was Ullenwood House which was built in 1857 when the estate occupied 985 acres. Originally the land was part of 'Hallingwood Farm' and was mentioned in contemporary documents in 1777 & 1830.

Continue down the road for approximately 200 metres and then turn left onto a track signposted 'Cotswold Way, Leckhampton Hill 1 ½ miles, 'Restricted Byway'. The track, which is a long, sometimes muddy, ascent, goes past the grounds of Cotswold Hills Golf Club on the right.

Continue up the track through a farm gate to a country lane (Hartley Lane). Note the unusual barn conversion to the right which was completed in 2010. Follow the Cotswold Way signs to the left down the road for approximately 300 metres and then turn right at the Cotswold Way sign. Follow the narrow track past the Wagoner's quarry car park on the left and climbing through trees and shrubs on the right.

As the path follows the escarpment, it eases along the scarp edge with fine distant views. After 700m or so, take a signed path on the left that goes downhill a short way to give a close view onto the Devil's Chimney (Grid Ref 946184).

The Devil's Chimney is one of the major landmarks of the walk with its craggy finger of rock projecting from the scarp face terrace below. In the 18th Century extensive quarrying was undertaken. The quarrymen trimmed the chimney as part of a hoax. In recent times repair work was undertaken to restrict the effect of erosion which threatened collapse. Climbing the chimney is now prohibited but for many years it was a popular challenge and the record stands at (an unlikely) 13 people perched on the top at one time.

Walk along the scarp towards Cheltenham and down the hill, which is very steep in places, past the old quarry buildings on the right hand side and down the old quarry incline to Daisy Bank Road. To the left is Daisy Bank Road car park.

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A bit further on is Tramway Cottage, which was built when the quarry owners attempted to enclose the hill in the 1890s – this deprived local people of their favourite open air promenade, and serious riots followed. For a history of the quarries, the Devil’s Chimney, and the riots, see David Bick’s book Old Leckhampton (1971).

The route crosses Daisy Bank Road, and continues through a gate and down some steps on the far side, then steeply down to the right to rejoin the line of the old incline. Continue down in a straight line, not so steeply now, at first through thick scrub and then across the open common – the masts on top of Cleeve Hill 6km or so away are a useful aiming point. The path dives down into woodland again (this short stretch can be very muddy, as you cross the spring line), and emerges at the back of a housing estate. After a few yards, the path resumes behind the houses to emerge on another estate road (Southfield Approach); a few yards further, and you can divert into and along the edge of the Old Patesians’ playing field; as you go round past the children’s playground and behind the clubhouse, a gate on the left leads to a footbridge across an old railway cutting (this was the Cheltenham to Banbury Line, closed in the 1960s). Continue in the same direction along Greatfield Drive, again going behind the houses to emerge at a junction of three more significant roads; you bear slightly left along Moorend Road.

After 300m or so, you come to some railings on the left, with a signed cycle route towards the town centre. This runs between the back of a housing estate and first the Lilley Brook, then the River Chelt. All of this area used to be part of the grounds of Charlton Park; the house (now a school) can be glimpsed through the trees.

The landscape opens out into a wide open space, which now forms a massive flood storage area, intended to protect central Cheltenham from flooding (it was nevertheless overwhelmed in the catastrophic floods of July 2007). The cycleway and path continue along the left of this to reach the A40 Old Bath Road. Cross the road at the pedestrian light, turn left briefly, and then right into Sandford Road. You are now entering the historic part of Cheltenham, inside its ring of modern estates. You pass the Hospital, and then Cheltenham College.

The traffic lights at the end of Sandford Road form a staggered junction, where you go right and then left to continue along Montpellier Terrace, past the birthplace of another of Cheltenham’s famous sons, the explorer Edward Wilson, who died with Scott in the Antarctic in 1912. When you come to Montpellier Gardens, turn right at the roundabout and you will pass the Montpellier Rotunda (now a bank) once a Spa and Assembly Room where some of Holst’s early work was first performed. Go in and make your way across to the opposite corner, where you bear right into the top of the Promenade, along the side of the impressive Queen’s Hotel. Continue down the Promenade along the side of Imperial Gardens; just inside the gardens is a fountain with a statue of Gustav Holst by Anthony Stones erected in 2008. Holst often had to conduct left-handed because he suffered from painful neuritis in his right hand.

The Gustav Holst Memorial Fountain, by sculptor Anthony Stones, was a gift to the town by Cheltenham Civic Society in 2008. It was enabled by a bequest by the late Elizabeth Hammond together with generous local sponsorship. Seven plaques depicting the Planets are incorporated in the plinth

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The Promenade continues as a street of smart shops and was once full of smart houses in which Holst’s father’s pupils would give concerts and pass the Neptune Fountain. Eventually you reach the High Street, the original axis of the town, now full of not-so-smart shops. To the left used to be the old Pates Grammar School which Holst attended and to the right the Corn Exchange. Turn right and then left into Pittville St., which turns into Portland St. and continues past the Masonic Hall, Holy Trinity Church and an unedifying car park. At the north end of the car park, note the iron bollards, which mark the southern boundary of the Pittville Estate. This was established in 1824 by Joseph Pitt, a wealthy landowner, as a ‘new town’ on the north side of Cheltenham. Holst’s Birthplace (4 Clarence Road), built in 1832, was part of the Pittville Estate. At the top of Portland Street, at the traffic lights, you turn right into Clarence Road and arrive at the Holst Birthplace Museum.

Detour 1: All Saints Church

As you leave the Holst Museum after your visit, turn right out of the front door and then cross Clarence Street at the marked crossing place near the junction. In front of you are the gates which formed the original entrance to Pittville Park. Go through to the road behind the gates (Pittville Lawn), follow this until you come to the road ahead (Wellington Road). Here turn right and cross the roads at a roundabout taking the third exit which is Pittville Circus. Go across the centre of the circus and at a mini roundabout bear to the right. All Saints Church is on your left a little way down this road. Retrace your steps as far as Pittville Park and follow the main route.

All Saints' Church was established in 1868 by a group of local people anxious to establish a style of worship not generally found in Cheltenham, using the rich liturgy and colour of the 19th century Oxford Movement. Holst's father Adolph was an organist there and young Holst sang in the choir. The stained glass in the church was designed by Birmingham born Edward Coley Burne-Jones, who is closely associated with the Pre-Raphaelite artists.



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Section 3: Cheltenham, Holst Birthplace Museum (map ref: 935228) to Corndean Lane

3 hours; 7 miles

As you leave the Holst Museum after your visit, turn right out of the front door and then cross Clarence Road at the marked crossing place near the junction. In front of you are the gates which formed the original entrance to Pittville Park.

The Pittville Gates form the entrance to Pittville Park, and lead from Clarence Road into Pittville Lawn, with its fine early 19th-century houses. The Gates were erected in 1833; the six stone pillars and remaining cast-iron railings are original. The elaborate wrought-iron ‘overthrow’, with the Borough’s coat of arms, was added in 1897, in time for a visit by the Prince of Wales during Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee year.

Go through to the road behind the gates (Pittville Lawn), follow this and cross into Pittville Park. Continue walking in the same direction through the park until you reach the lake. Skirt the lake in either direction, and then walk across the park to the impressive building with a green domed roof. This is Pittville Pump Room.

Pittville Pump Room is perhaps the most famous example of Regency architecture in Cheltenham – a town that has an abundance of buildings from this period. The Pump Room is a monument to more than 100 years of fame which Cheltenham enjoyed as a Spa town. The waters were first discovered in around 1716 on a site now occupied by Cheltenham Ladies’ College. In 1788 George III and Queen Charlotte came to take the waters. A pump and fountain can be found inside the Pump Room now, but it is not recommended that walkers take the waters today! For more information see www.cheltenhamtownhall.org

The figures on the parapet of the Pittville Pump Room represent Hygeia, the Greek goddess of health, holding a serpent drinking from a saucer, with her father, Asclepius, on the left also holding a serpent and a large staff. The remaining figure is the physician, Hippocrates. The original stones were sculpted by Lucius Gahagan in 1827 and these replacements are the work of the local firm of R.L.Boulton and Sons in 1965.

Leave the Pump Room by the road to the right, East Approach Drive, with a view of the Cotswold edge, and at the end of the road turn left into Albert Road. At the end of Albert Road, by the mini roundabout, cross the road and turn right, then take a public foot path off to the left a few metres from the junction. Follow this path between houses and over a stile until it meets the race course perimeter path. Here turn right, keeping the race course on your left. As you begin to reach the top of a small incline take the marked footpath to the right towards a stile and signposted Cheltenham Circular Path. Cross the stile into Park Lane and at the end of Park Lane cross diagonally by the post box to enter Shaw Green Lane.

After about 200 metres take a footpath to the right between the houses (marked Cheltenham Circular Path) and follow it across a field towards the church until you meet a road. Turn left onto the road (Mill Street) past The Plough and at the end cross the busy main road and continue on up Mill Lane. At a cross roads take the left turn into Queenwood Grove

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(Queenswood on some maps) and follow this. The road curves round to the right and approaches Cleeve Hill. At this point look up and you will see three large radio masts on the top of the hill; this is where you are heading. Ignore two footpath signs, one to the right and one to the left then at very nearly at the end of the tarmac, take a footpath to the left, by the side of a house named Highcroft.

Follow this path over a stile into a field and then continue up the hill bearing right to reach a stone stile. Go over the stile and walk between a small orchard of Christmas trees and a larger wood. Both are part of Queens Wood.

Follow the footpath up the hill crossing a stile into fields stretching up the hill beside the wood. Cross two fields and three more stiles and then turning right toward a small meadow reached by crossing a further stile.

Queens Wood and the meadows (known as Wheeler’s) are owned by the Adlard family. Philip Adlard (1927-2007) was a forester and a founder member of the volunteers and friends of the Holst Birthplace Museum. The wood is covered in bluebells in season.

This meadow is a site of special scientific interest because of its wild flowers: (there are many different orchids and cowslips in season). For information on SSSIs go to <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/conservation/designatedareas/ssi/default.aspx>

As you emerge from the meadow follow the path and after a few yards bear left until you come to a junction of several small paths. Bear left again up to a broad path across a grassy field. Follow this path to a gate you can see 100 metres or so ahead. Go through the gate onto Cleeve Common. On your immediate left is a small coppice planted in memory of a local chairman of CPRE.

Detour 2: Cleeve Hill loop.

For a longer walk you may prefer to follow the Cotswold Way around Cleeve Hill, in which case go straight on looking always for the Cotswold Way waymarks. This longer walk will take you about 2 hours to reach Belas Knap, but does have the merit of some excellent paths and a refreshment stop at the golf clubhouse which is open to the public.

At this point you turn right and make your way up hill towards the radio masts. When you have nearly reached them when the common plateaus out, bear left across the common going between or beside some patches of gorse until you meet a wide green path that has come from the left. This leads to the old Cotswold Way and is marked in places by signs indicating the Cotswold Way Circular Walk, although somewhat confusingly these signs only appear on the reverse side of the posts in the direction you are walking. Continue on the broad green path until you reach the edge of the common and go through a gate, again with a circular walk sign on the post the other side of the gate. Follow the path (which is the old route of the Cotswold Way) to the remains of Wontley Farm buildings, where you turn left. The new route of the Cotswold Way joins from the left in about half a mile. Then after another half mile or so turn right on the Cotswold Way towards Belas Knap.

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Belas Knap is one of the best preserved long barrows in the Cotswolds (although it has been heavily restored). Some 38 skeletons were discovered when it was excavated in the 19th century.

Leaving Belas Knap, you head north along the edge of the wood, still following the Cotswold Way, and then turn right steeply down through a field and then a belt of woods to emerge on Corndean Lane.

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Section 4: Corndean Lane (map ref: 020262) to Guiting Power:

3 hours; 6.9 miles

Walkers of the Cotswold Way turn left down the hill as they emerge from the small wood after coming down from Belas Knap. For the Holst Way you now turn right. Walk along the lane for about 500m (beware of traffic), and then turn left down a track at the side of a wood (with a sign saying ‘Private Road Footpath only’). After 100m or so, turn sharp right along a track passing below some cottages (Humblebee Cottages), and then a wood, with open fields and a view down to Sudeley Castle and Winchcombe on your left. The track goes over a small rise, and you come to a gate. After the gate, turn sharp left downhill along a grassy track, initially alongside a wire fence, then through another gate and bear left across an open field, to reach Newmeadow Farm.

At Newmeadow Farm, go through the gate under the trees, and turn right (signed as a restricted byway), and through a gate. The track crosses a small stream, and bends left and then right as it joins the Winchcombe Way (formerly Windrush Way) coming in from the left.

Continue following the track up the valley, and then around to the left as it crosses the stream. You continue to follow the Winchcombe way (formerly Windrush Way), ignoring two turnings off to the right, and go up a slight rise under trees to arrive at the derelict buildings of Waterhatch. Continue steadily uphill along the track for about 2km, past Spoonley Farm, to reach a tarmac road (the Salt Way). (Take care not to deviate left at the junction of tracks below Spoonley Farm – you want the middle of the three tracks meeting here, going straight uphill).

Detour 3: Spoonley Wood

Enthusiasts with time on their hands might like to take an alternative route from Waterhatch to Spoonley Farm, via Spoonley Wood. There are the foundations of a Roman Villa in the wood (excavated in the 19th century), but they are quite hard to find – it’s easier in the winter when the undergrowth is low. To take this route, which is about a kilometre longer, as well as being rather slower walking, take a field path left as you leave Waterhatch. You cross a stream, turn right at a junction of paths, and follow the path uphill and into the wood, recrossing the stream. After you’ve found the Villa (or not!), the path continues steeply up through the wood to emerge on a track. Turn right here and follow the track, which contours across the hillside to rejoin the main route at the junction below Spoonley Farm, referred to above, where you turn sharp left uphill to reach the Salt Way.

Turn left (north) to follow the Salt Way. This is part of an ancient route from the salt mines at Droitwich towards the south coast. There are superb views towards Winchcombe and the Malverns beyond – but do watch out for traffic. After 1.4 km a bridle path comes in from the left; this is the Wardens’ Way. Shortly afterwards you turn right to follow the Wardens’ Way alongside a wall, and then a wood edge, to reach another surfaced lane (the road from Winchcombe to Guiting Power). Turn left along the lane for a short distance, and then right to follow the path downhill along the edge of Guiting Wood, just to the right of the driveway to a new house.

After about 900m along the woodland edge, you come to a four-way junction, where you go straight across and fairly steeply uphill, into the interior of the wood (leaving the Wardens’ Way). The path (which can be muddy) climbs for a bit, and then levels off. You need to keep straight on at the various intersections with forest tracks, following the waymarked right of

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way. After 800m or so, you can see the edge of the wood ahead; here you need to leave the rough track you are on (which veers left), and follow a short path leading out of the wood into an open field. (There is a stone marker which says ‘No Public Road Here’).

On leaving Guiting Wood, you turn left, following the edge of the wood gently downhill. After 800m, the descent steepens and the path bends left, following a fence towards the buildings of Guiting Manor. When you reach a tarmac drive (the service entrance to the Manor), turn right and follow it down to a lane. Turn left along the lane, through a gate into the beautiful park, signposted ‘Kineton Public Road’. You soon reach a crossroads (where there is a car park); turn right along a track which goes briefly downhill and then across fields for 700m (notice the racing stables across the valley), to reach a T-junction in front of a house.

Turn left at the T-junction and then bend right to follow the track to emerge in the centre of Guiting Power, by the square and the green.

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Section 5: Guiting Power (map ref: 095248) to Wyck Rissington (map ref: 192216)

4 Hours (without stopping in Bourton-on-the-water); 8.15 miles

From the village green opposite the old post office in Guiting Power take the road that leads to the village hall and St Michael’s church. This is the Wardens Way. When you reach the church take the footpath going through two gates. Continue down this footpath until you come to another gate. Go through and bear left across a large field. (If the path is unclear the direction is towards the left hand end of the farm buildings on the horizon). Towards the end of this field the path drops down through a gate and crosses a stream. When you have crossed the stream go up to a gate at the top of a narrow path that has some useful steps cut into it. Over the stile you now cross another large field. Continue until you meet a road. As you emerge onto the road there is a lane directly opposite. Take this lane, continuing in the same direction as before for a few hundred yards uphill and then take the footpath off to the left. The path goes beside a small wooded area for a short way and then continues in the same direction across another large field. The path is well way marked and leaves the field by way of a gate and stile to cross a grassy field above a valley. At a gate you reach a road. Turn left onto the road and follow it down to Naunton.

Detour 4: Naunton village

Naunton is a typical Cotswold village hugging the side of a valley. It is very peaceful as it is off the main road. For an extended look at Naunton and perhaps refreshment in the Black Horse Inn, turn left instead of following the Wardens’ Way. You pass the path up to the church which is well worth a visit. Naunton has an annual music festival and attracts some interesting names. Returning to the road go on up bearing right past the church. There is a Chapel on the right; the grounds give an excellent view down to the river. As you walk through the village look for fossils along window sills and garden paths. Look also for the old bread oven on the end of a cottage before you get to the Black Horse. Near a junction where a road comes down from the left, go through an opening and across a bridge over the Windrush then step over a stile and walk along the river bank until the valley opens out and you see the small square dovecote where the Lord of the Manor kept his pigeons. At this point turn left to rejoin the Holst Way.

As you come into Naunton you will see the signpost for the Wardens Way taking you along a cul-de-sac beside some houses. The tarmac road soon becomes a grassy path. Beyond the gate marked ‘gated road’ keep left through the valley. To the left is Naunton up on the ridge and soon you will see a dovecote on the left. This is usually open for visitors. At this point turn right up a steepish path and bear left where it joins a wider path. Continue up to a road and cross over to take the marked bridle path straight ahead beside the golf course. Continue on this path past tees 15 and 17 and then descend towards a valley through which runs a small stream, tributary to the Windrush. As the path reaches the bottom of the valley, cross the stream and bear left through a gate (or over the stile). Follow the valley floor until you come to a road and continue over the road on the path now running through meadows beside the Windrush.

These meadows are the site of a medieval village known as Lower Harford. The mounds at different levels and the long ditch running across the path are evidence of the former settlement, most of which was up the hillside on the other bank of the river.

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Continue on the well defined path, the Winchcombe Way (formerly Windrush Way), as it crosses the meadows. Take the right-hand gate to leave the first meadow. To your right are the banks and bridges of a disused railway and to your left the River Windrush. Soon the path ascends, entering some scrubby woodland. At the top of the incline turn right and walk along the edge of a field until entering woodland again. Follow the path through the wood and look out again for the disused railway. When you emerge from the wood make across a field towards farm buildings (Aston Farm) and go through the yard to reach a road. Turn left onto the road and go down to Little Aston Mill. For a short section the Holst Way is now following the confluence of paths that is made by the Gloucestershire Way and Macmillan Way coming in from the left and the Wardens' Way and Winchcombe Way (formerly Windrush Way) that we have been following. At Little Aston Mill you cross the Windrush and walk beside a well planted garden. The road ascends, soon becomes a track and at the top divides. The Gloucestershire Way goes off to the left while you continue to the right on the Winchcombe Way (formerly Windrush Way). A well defined path enters woodland then continues between the wood and a field. When the path turns again into a wooded area it runs for a few yards along the disused railway we have seen before. There is a nice vantage point for a view over the Windrush here. A very short detour back along the railway bank gives a view down to where the river goes under the railway bank and allows you to walk through some beautiful natural woodland.

The disused railway we have been seeing was The Banbury and Cheltenham Direct Railway. The railway was built and opened in stages. The Chipping Norton Railway opened in 1855, linking the town of Chipping Norton with the Oxford, Worcester and Wolverhampton Railway at Kingham in Oxfordshire. The Bourton-on-the-Water Railway between Kingham and Bourton-on-the-Water opened in 1862.

By 1881 two further sections of railway had been completed: one between Chipping Norton and King's Sutton near Banbury and the other between Bourton-on-the-Water and Cheltenham. Together these four sections of railway formed a complete line between Cheltenham and King's Sutton.

The BCDR Company did not operate services on the line: it contracted the Great Western Railway to do so in return for a share of the receipts.

As you emerge from the wood the line of trees shows the route of the old railway towards Bourton while you keep to the grassy path ahead between a hedge and a field. After a gate the path is firmly enclosed between two fences until it reaches the very busy Fosse Way (A 429). Cross the road and walk on the paving on the right hand side of the road beside the river. Look for the footpath sign that takes the Winchcombe Way (formerly Windrush Way) to the right and follow this path along the river, then across a small common and out between houses to a road. Turn left on the road and proceed to the centre of Bourton. At the War Memorial turn right and keeping the river on your right walk along the green to the far end. Then go forward on a road between a fish and chip shop and the post office. In a few yards opposite the post office you will turn left towards the Baptist Church, but first go forward for about 50 metres to see the Old New Inn.

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The Old New Inn of 1714 originally had an Assembly Room attached. Here the village choral society gave a performance of John Farmer's Oratorio Christ and his Soldiers in April 1893 conducted by the young Holst. It is recorded that 'A feature of both chorus and orchestra was the precision and promptitude with which they responded to the conductor's baton [...] great praise is due to the talented young Holst'. Some in the choir sensed something very special about the young man.

Retrace your steps to the corner by the post office and now go towards the Baptist Church. Continue along this road (Station Road) past the Baptist Church and The Manor until it bears left at which point you turn right into Roman Way and then right again into the track which is Moor Lane.

A little way along Moor Lane, look out for a footpath sign up some steps on the right. Go up the steps and over a stile and continue beside the hedge parallel to the track. Cross another stile and bear right. Follow this path now over a stream to a gate. Here bear left and continue until you come to a kissing gate at the junction of paths. Go straight over on the Oxfordshire Way. There is a helpful board here explaining features of the Greystones Nature Reserve. Now follow the way marked footpath. The path passes another information board then crosses two bridges before coming out in a wide field. Make for a gate in the hedge and, through the gate turn left to follow the path between a field and hedge. Continue straight on until you meet a road where you turn right toward Wyck Rissington. You enter the village across the well kept green, pass the village pond and arrive at the church for the end of the Gustav Holst Way.

From May 1892 to May 1893, Holst was organist at St Laurence Church, Wyck Rissington. It was his first paid appointment, for £4 a year. He also had piano and organ pupils in Great Rissington nearby. The single-manual organ built in 1871 bears a commemorative plaque to Holst presented by his many friends in the locality. He used to stay the night at what was the Old Bluecoat School in the village and often returned to Cheltenham on foot!

Suggestions for the route of a proposed ‘Gustav Holst Way’ for ramblers

Gustav Holst Way: Transport links

Cranham

Cranham village is only served by two buses a week (Cotswold Green 232 / 256). There is an hourly service from Cheltenham or Stroud (Stagecoach route 46) along the nearby A46; if you alight at Cranham Corner (Grid Ref. 882131) it is about a 1.5 km walk through the lanes to the start of the Gustav Holst Way at Cranham Church.

For a timetable, see www.stagecoachbus.com/GetUpload.ashx?Id=3679

Birdlip

Birdlip village and the Air Balloon pub are both served by Swanbrook route 852 between Gloucester and Cirencester. There are 3 or 4 buses a day, except on Sundays.

For a timetable, see <http://www.swanbrook.co.uk/busServices>

Shurdington

Shurdington village is served by Stagecoach route 46 between Cheltenham and Stroud, and Stagecoach route 10 between Cheltenham and Gloucester. From the south end of the village it is a walk of about 2 km uphill along Greenway Lane to join the Gustav Holst Way and Cotswold Way at the top (Grid Ref. 934175).

For a timetable, see www.stagecoachbus.com/GetUpload.ashx?Id=3679

Cheltenham

Cheltenham is a regional hub, and is well served by national rail and coach services.

For rail services to or from most UK stations, see www.nationalrail.co.uk.

For coach services to or from London (route 444), Heathrow airport (route 222), and other destinations, see www.nationalexpress.com.

Cheltenham metro bus services run to just below Leckhampton Hill (Metro F) and to Prestbury (Metro A or N).

See <http://www.incheltenham.co.uk/Cheltenham-Bus-Timetables.htm> for links to Cheltenham metro bus timetables.

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Cleeve Hill

Cleeve Hill is served by Castleways route 606 between Cheltenham and Willersey; the service is approximately hourly, and does not run on Sundays or Bank Holidays. Alight at the stop for Cleeve Hill golf club (Grid Ref. 989275), at the highest point of the road, and walk up the lane to the common to join the Cotswold Way (the Stockwell Lane or Rising Sun stops provide equally good alternatives). You can then follow the Cotswold Way in either direction to join the Gustav Holst Way; the more westerly route along the scarp edge gives marvellous views.

For a timetable, see www.castleways.co.uk/timetable4_1.html

Winchcombe

Winchcombe is also served by Castleways route 606 between Cheltenham and Willersey. To reach the Gustav Holst Way, alight at Winchcombe Hospital (Grid Ref. 018278), from where you can climb along the Cotswold Way to meet the Gustav Holst Way below Belas (about 1.5 km).

For a timetable, see www.castleways.co.uk/timetable4_1.html

Guiting Power

Guiting Power has a limited weekday bus service (Pulhams 804 from/to Cheltenham, once daily; and 819 from/to Stow, one bus on Fridays only). A more frequent service (Pulhams 801) runs along the main A436 Cheltenham to Bourton-on-the-Water road, about 3 km to the south (alight at Westfield, near Notgrove – Grid Ref. 088217).

For timetables, see www.pulhamscoaches.com/#/timetables/4539355309

Bourton-on-the-Water

Bourton is served by a number of Pulhams routes. The most useful are the 801 between Cheltenham and Moreton-in-Marsh, which runs 8 times daily, with a much more limited service on Sundays and bank holidays; and the 855 between Kemble, Cirencester and Moreton-in-Marsh. Other routes run more rarely, and mainly serve the surrounding villages.

For timetables, see www.pulhamscoaches.com/#/timetables/4539355309

Wyck Rissington

No buses serve Wyck Rissington. Pulhams 802 links Little Rissington, 2 km to the south, with Bourton-on-the-Water; but Bourton is barely 3 km away in any case.

Suggestions for the route of a proposed ‘Gustav Holst Way’ for ramblers

Gustav Holst Way: Access points and Car Parks

Cranham: start of the route

Car parking is available on the common not far from the Church.

Birdlip, Cotswold Way and Crickley Hill

In Birdlip you can park in The George if you ask permission. Between Birdlip and the Air Balloon roundabout there is a public car park reached by turning towards Birdlip from the A417 then taking first right. At Crickley Hill there is ample parking.

Leckhampton Hill and Devil’s Chimney

Public car parks can be found in two quarries towards the top of Leckhampton Hill

Cheltenham

Adequate town parking. For the Birthplace Museum park in North Place.

Cleeve Hill

You can park at the radio masts or if you take detour number 2, at the golf club.

Corndean Lane (near Belas Knap)

You can park on the roadside opposite the signs up to Belas Knap. To reach this follow the road signs to Belas Knap leaving the Cheltenham – Winchcombe road just before reaching Winchcombe.

Deadmanbury Gate

It is possible to park on the wide lay-by near to where the Warden’s Way crosses the road from Winchcombe to Guiting Power.

Guiting Manor – Critchford Lane

Public car parking is available just off Critchford Lane near the Manor House.

Guiting Power

The best parking in Guiting is by the village hall near the church and on the route as you leave Guiting for Naunton.

Suggestions for the route of a proposed 'Gustav Holst Way' for ramblers

Bourton-on-the-Water.

Plenty of public and private parking grounds nearly all costing a reasonable amount of money in this tourist town.

Wyck Rissington

No parking is allowed on the green, but presumable roadside parking is possible.

Suggestions for the route of a proposed ‘Gustav Holst Way’ for ramblers

Gustav Holst Way: suggestions for accommodation

Cheltenham Tourist Information Centre
77 Promenade, Cheltenham, Glos. GL50 1P
Tel: 01242 522878; Fax: 01242 255848; Email: info@cheltenham.gov.uk
www.VisitCheltenham.info

Bourton Tourist Information Centre
Victoria Street, Bourton on the Water, Glos. GL54 2BU
Tel: 01451 820211; Fax: 01451 821103;
Email: Bourtonvic@cotswold.gov.uk; or tourism@cotswold.gov.uk

Gustav Holst Way: Public houses on or near the route

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Cranham | The Black Horse |
| Birdlip | The Royal George The Air Balloon |
| Shurdington | The Cheese Rollers |
| Cheltenham | Various |
| Cleeve Hill | Cleeve Hill Golf Club The Riding Sun |
| Guiting Power | The Hollow Bottom The Farmers Arms |
| Naunton | The Black Horse |
| Bourton-on-the-water | Various |