

Miles Without Stiles

Guiting Power and Castlett



This easy route follows drovers' trails and quiet lanes through woodland and along the Guiting Stream. A good family walk at any time of the year, with much to see on the way.

Distance: 7.2 km / 4.5 miles with an up and down of 140m/460 ft

Time: 2 ½ hours

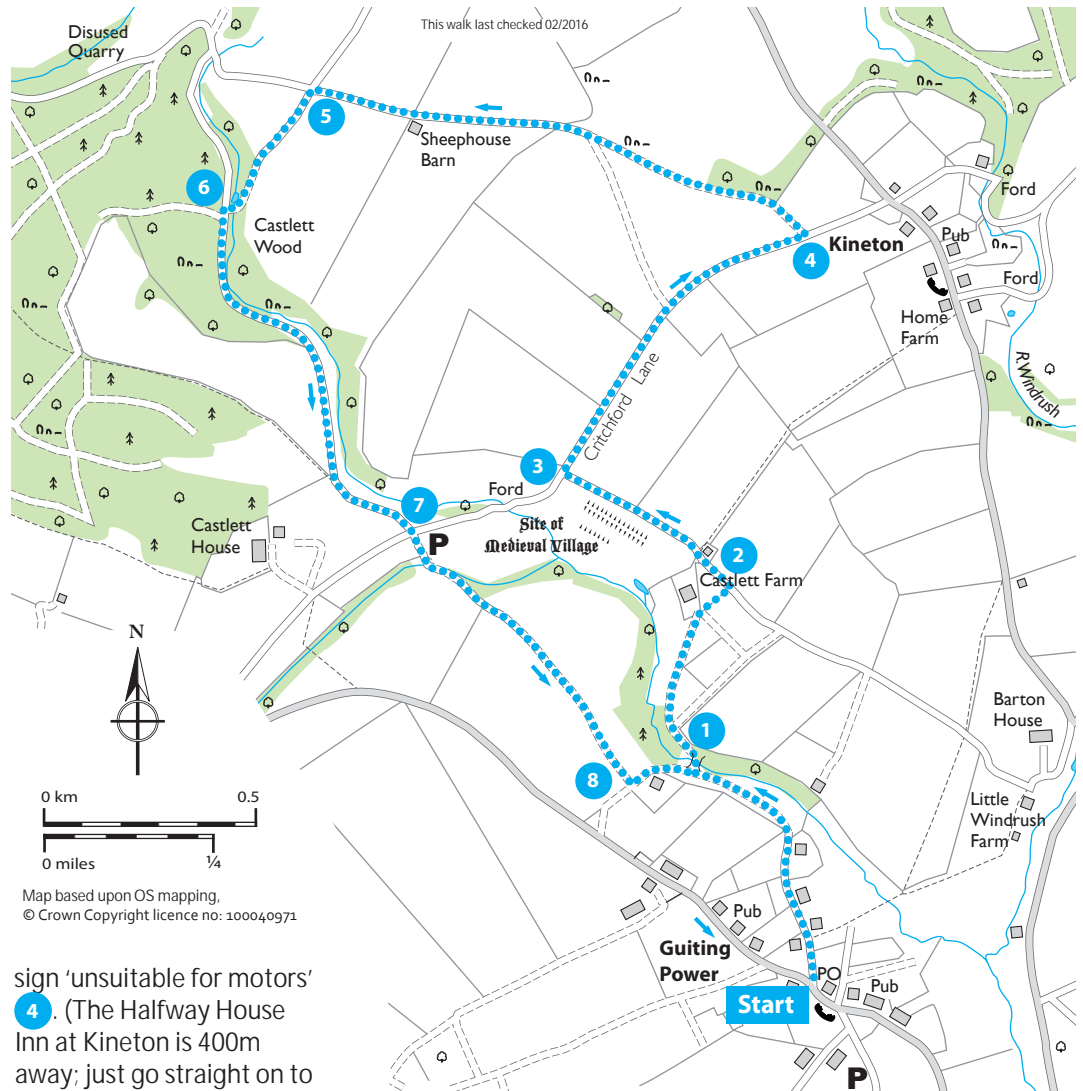
Start: Guiting Power (near Stow on the Wold) village hall car park (50p), signed from the village green SP095/246. Shop and pubs in Guiting, also a mid-way pub at Kineton.

Route:

Walk back to the green, cross to the post office and turn left. Go carefully round the corner and fork right onto a lane (Wardens' Way) leading to a path down to the Guiting Stream.

Here **1** turn right over a small stone bridge (or ford the shallow water). Climb to a gate and take the grass path ahead alongside horse paddocks, with good views on the left, to reach a lane **2**. Turn left along the lane and look out for 'polo mint' stones in the wall ahead. *Read about those on the next page.*

Carry on past more paddocks to a T-junction **3**. Just before you get there look left to see bumps and hollows in the last field: all that remains of the deserted village of Castlett. Turn right uphill on the lane (you may hear buzzards or skylarks) and once over the crest turn left onto a track at a blue



Map based upon OS mapping, © Crown Copyright licence no: 100040971

sign 'unsuitable for motors' **4**. (The Halfway House Inn at Kineton is 400m away; just go straight on to the village and turn right).

Walk past several signs of badgers to your summit then carry on downhill past Sheephouse Barn. For centuries this was an overnight stop for drovers and their animals walking to Banbury market.

Three minutes further on, at a cross roads **5** look half-left for two boulders in the hedge. One is roughly

carved as a toad. Walk between the stones and down into the valley (more signs of badgers) past a lake on your right. At the bottom turn right below the earth dam (this can be muddy) and out onto another quiet lane **6**.

Turn left downstream through beautiful woodland, out into parkland and to a crossroads with a car park

7. (You could start a shorter walk from here).

Carry on along the track ahead for five minutes. At a cottage and barn look over your right shoulder for more polo-mints in the wall **8**.

From here bear left down a short stony path to point **1** and retrace your steps back to the village and the Farmer's Arms.

