

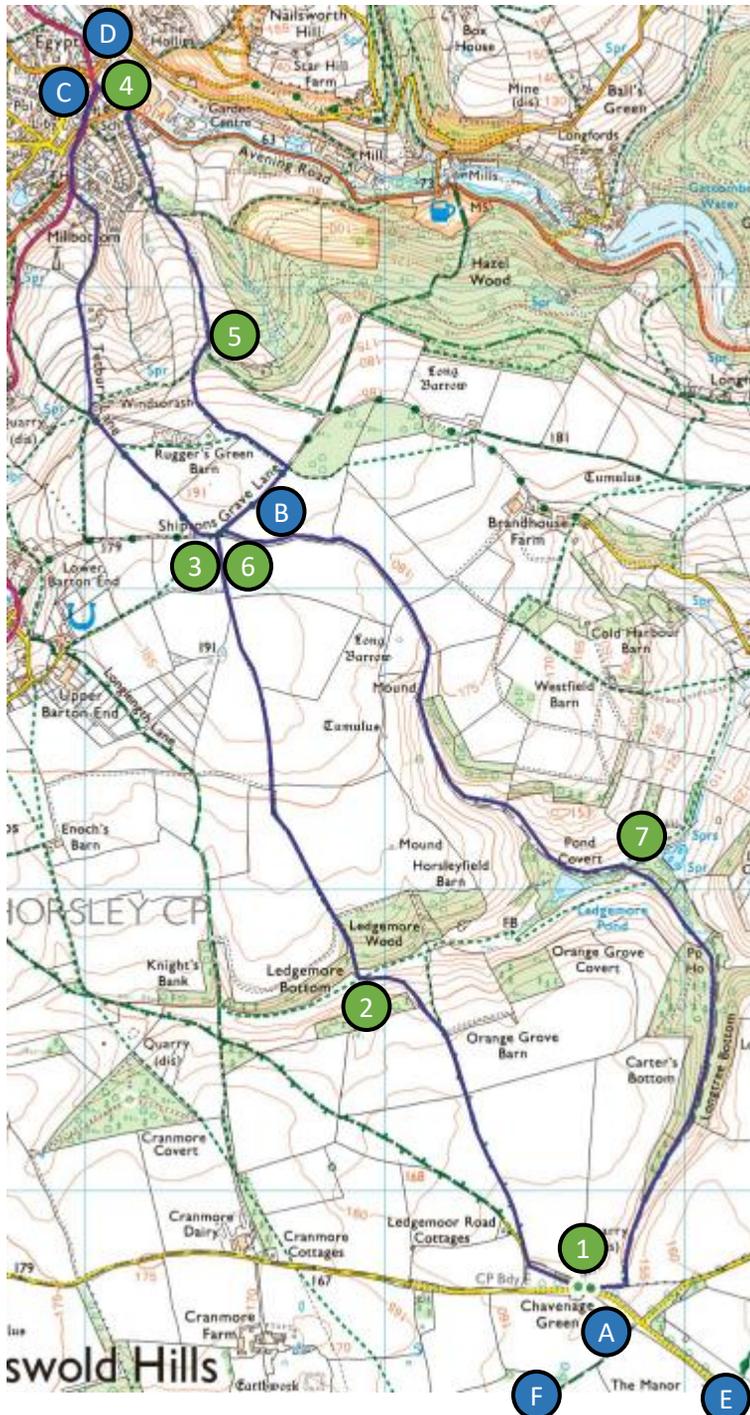
Lark Rise to Nailsworth

A walk from Chavenage Green, passing through wolds and woodland, to Nailsworth and back.

Distance 10.5km (6.5 miles), Walking Time approx 3 hours (Grade B/C on scale A = easy to D = hard)

Starts & finishes at Chavenage Green (GR 866956). Take B4014 (Avening) road out of Tetbury, after 300m branching left into Chavenage Lane. Continue for 3.3km/2 miles (passing Chavenage House) until the road divides at a triangle of grassland (Chavenage Green). Park in the lane that forks right.

Refreshments: choice in Nailsworth, café near Chavenage House (check opening times)



- A** Chavenage Green: meeting place (or Court) in Saxon times of the Longtree Hundred, on land owned by Princess Goda (sister of Edward the Confessor, wife of Earl Godwin; Godwin's son, Harold, died at the Battle of Hastings). Three secondary Roman roads passed through Chavenage Green, and later it was on an old direct road from Nailsworth to Tetbury.
- B** Shipton's Grave Lane: old coach road named from a local man buried at the crossroads following his hanging for sheep stealing to feed his starving family.
- C** St George's Church: parish church of Nailsworth built in the Early English style and consecrated in 1900, it originally comprised only a nave, aisles and south porch due to lack of funds to provide chancel and tower. In 1939 the chancel, Lady Chapel and vestries were added as a WW1 memorial, but the tower was never built due to continuing finance issues.
- D** Egypt Mill: the unusual name of this Nailsworth building is said to refer to one of its wealthy clothier owners 'Pharaoh Webb.' Built in the 16th Century on the banks of the River Frome as a cloth mill, it later became a corn mill. Now a hotel and restaurant.
- E** Chavenage House: (just off map) built around 1400 as a monastic residence, the estate was taken by the Crown during the Dissolution of the Monasteries, then bought by the wealthy Stephens family in 1551. A major reconstruction made it into the classic 'E' shaped Elizabethan manor house. It has had a long and colourful history, being a base both for Parliamentary troops in the Civil War and Eisenhower in WW2. More recently, it has featured in film and tv productions such as Poirot, Lark Rise to Candleford, Wolf Hall and Poldark.



F Beverston Castle: (just off map) dating from the 13 century and owned for centuries by the Berkeley family (of Berkeley Castle), the castle was initially held for Charles I in the Civil War but fell to the Parliamentarians in 1664. After being ravaged by fire, it was purchased in 1842 by RJ Holford of Westonbirt and the banqueting hall and other sections were remodelled to form a residence, but the remainder fell into decay. It is now a private residence but the ruined walls, crooked roofs and battlemented towers make an intriguing picture viewed through the opening of the Gate House.

Description

- 1 Continue down the lane where car has been parked. Bear round to the right and, after 100m, take the right hand fork when the track divides. Continue for 800m to a wooden gate, ignoring a farm track turning right.
- 2 Pass through the gate and follow the sunken path veering left into the valley below and pass through a wide metal gate into Ledgemore Wood. Continue climbing up through the wood and after emerging from the wood proceed along the open track for 1.5 km with the field boundaries always on the right. Towards the end of this open stretch the track becomes enclosed by hedges on both sides and eventually runs onto Shipton's Grave Lane.
- 3 Turn left and, after 50 metres, turn right into Tetbury Lane, which drops down to Hilltop Cottage and bears right. Ignore two lanes on the left and one lane on the right and continue down to the A46. Turn right into Nailsworth passing the church of St. George. It's worth taking time to explore this attractive Cotswold town and also Egypt Mill, an impressive old mill (now a hotel, restaurant and pub) on the right further down the hill just beyond the town centre
- 4 The return journey starts from the former Lloyds Bank (now a dental surgery) just below the church. Take the road to Avening (Tabram's Pitch). A few metres after passing Church Street turn right into Wood Lane (bridleway) and climb upwards, passing a children's play area and playing fields on the left. The path continues upwards and becomes rougher. Go through a wooden gate and, ignoring a path to your left, carry on along a sunken pathway to reach open rough pastures. As you climb upwards towards the far wooded boundary straight ahead, fine views of typical Cotswold countryside can be enjoyed behind.
- 5 At the top of this pasture, on reaching the wooded boundary, aim for the gate in the right hand corner which gives access into the woods. Ignoring a path immediately left, continue upwards to a field. Go through the gate and keep to the right hand boundary until reaching the top right hand corner. Here turn right onto Shipton's Grave Lane until reaching the crossroads passed on the outward journey.
- 6 At this junction a footpath sign on the left indicates the route for the return journey. Pass by the side of a gate, and keep alongside the right-hand edge of the field to a stile. Continue, still keeping close to the right-hand stone wall boundary, through two further fields and then into a fourth. The path now bears slightly right and descends gently into the valley. Continue, keeping fairly close to the boundary on the right until eventually arriving at a wooden stile that stands out from the wooded field edge (before the large wooden gates that can be seen straight ahead).
- 7 Go over the stile and through the gate ahead into the pasture beyond. Turn left and keeping to the lower ground, head for the far left corner where a gate and stile give you access into Longtree Bottom. A path now leads through the woods for a little more than 1 km. When it leaves the wood keep close to the field boundary on the left and go through a gate in the corner. Now cross the field bearing left and upwards to reach the road. Turn right to return to the start point. Chavenage House and Beverston (castle, church and village) are nearby for further exploration.

