



along the way.

Look out for this symbol to help guide you



This ten-mile route follows public footpaths and roads and takes around five hours. The terrain is variable – there are steep sections to the north of the town and some parts can get muddy after rainfall. Stout footwear is advised. The canal towpath is flat and generally good underfoot. The route has been designed so that it can be walked in either direction, and starting at any of the 16 marked points.



the Five Valleys.

The Five Valleys have long provided good walking for many people. Wooded valleys and hills, high grasslands, small Cotswold stone villages clinging to the hillsides, the heritage of a once-great textile industry, fed by coal delivered along the Cotswold Canals. The *was* Way encompasses all of these, without ever losing sight of Stroud, the gateway to



now an official waymarked trail, following the parish borders and offering something for everyone. The *was* Way was first trialled by Stroud Town Council in the 2007 Stroud Walking Festival. It is



A waymarked trail around the parish boundaries of Stroud, gateway to the Five Valleys

Walk Around Stroud



The *was* Way... So much variety

The history of Stroud and the Five Valleys is so much a part of this walk – a history intrinsically linked to the nature of the landscape around the town. A landscape of river valleys, of high commons grazed by sheep, of textile mills using wool and water, of canals and railways cutting through the built-up valleys, of clusters of Cotswold stone cottages clinging to the valley sides.

This walk explores the valley and the hillsides, mixing wide open views with closer, more intimate experiences. Here are just a few highlights of the walk:



The fast-flowing waters of the River Frome provided power for the early textile mills that sprang up along the Golden Valley and on towards Stonehouse and the Severn Vale. In the photograph above, it tumbles over the remains of a weir at Capel Mill, site of a 19th century dyeing works. The river is a good place to see kingfishers and dippers.



Stroud's Old Cemetery is no longer used for its original purpose. It is now a Local Nature Reserve with a rich diversity of wildlife similar to the local commons.



Descending or ascending Claypits Lane, take some time to enjoy the stunning views beyond Stroud and Doverow Hill, to the River Severn and the hills in the distance.

The Lake at the Lawns and the surrounding land is the focus of a restoration project to create a green space for the public and for wildlife.



As it enters the Fromebanks Nature Reserve the walk is hidden beneath the line of trees in the foreground as it follows the River Frome – a green corridor within yards of the town centre. The canal and the railway run parallel.

