

COMMONS

Walking – Activities – Animals – Scenery



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“*The Beauty of the Commons*”

Nestled in the heart of the Cotswolds, the Stroud district commons offer an enchanting escape for nature lovers, outdoor enthusiast, and anyone seeking a breath of fresh air. Whether you're tackling sections of the famous Cotswold Way or exploring the hidden gems of the districts landscape, every step unveils breath-taking views of rolling hills, quant villages and lush woodland. Not just a walkers paradise and dog-friendly haven, the commons offer unique thrill seeking activities like paragliding, mountain biking and glider planes as well some delicious food and drink options and historical sights. A perfect destination for outdoor lovers and families alike.



SELSLEY AND WOODCHESTER

Our first common to explore is Selsley, with large open spaces, stunning views and rare wildlife this spot is perfect for the photographers and adventure seekers. Offering superb views over the River Severn and Malvern Hills into Wales, it also features a Bronze Age long barrow, or burial mound, known as The Toots.

Its steep slopes are of national importance and designated a 'Site of Special Scientific Interest' for their plant and animal species. The limestone was formed 180 million years ago during Jurassic times. You may see fossils of coral, shellfish and snails which sank into the mud below the sea that covered the area at that time.

As you explore, keep an eye out for wild herbs and flowers such as Rock Rose, Birds' Foot Trefoil, Wild Thyme, Scabious, Harebell, and Blue Milkwort. Several rare wild orchids flourish in this habitat, including Bee, Pyramidal, Common, and Green Winged varieties.

Don't forget to visit Coaley Peak as well, another fantastic location for remarkable views. This spot is home to the Bristol & Gloucestershire Gliding Club, where you can often see glider planes and paragliders soaring above.



Woodchester

Through luscious woodlands you'll find the National Trust Woodchester Park and Woodchester mansion, a unique unfinished 19th century Victorian Gothic house known for its stone carvings, bat watching and film set, keen watchers of The Crown will probably recognise the mansion. Further down the valley you'll find the incredible Woodchester Valley Vineyard, who offer various tours, event nights, accommodation and of course their award winning sparkling wine. Please note that the vineyard is not open to the general public - all visits must be pre-booked.



**THERE IS PLENTY OF PARKING
ALONG SELSLEY COMMON OR YOU
CAN HOP ON A BUS FROM STROUD
TOWN, JUST WATCH OUT FOR THE
COWS!**

RODBOROUGH COMMON

The smaller of the commons, Rodborough links up to our next common Minchinhampton and has plenty to offer. With panoramic views of the District's secret valleys, it is also home to a number of wild flowers and butterflies. A limestone grassland with an abundant array of wild flowers, including rare pasqueflowers and orchids.

Take a peaceful stroll around and spot Rodborough Fort, built in 1761 for a garrison on an ancient site, it is now an unusual private home. Further round you'll find the dog memorial tree, where people leave tokens to commemorate their lost companions.

Fancy a pit stop on your walk then try the [Bear at Rodborough Hotel](#), a perfect dog friendly location to sleep, eat and drink, often surrounded by the friendly cows having their lunch. The village of Rodborough is also worth a visit, not only for its traditional pub options but for Rodborough church, which houses a Thomas the Tank Engine stained glass window.



THE STAINED GLASS WINDOW OF THOMAS IS AN HOMAGE TO ITS AUTHOR, REV. WILBERT AWDRY, WHO LIVED IN THE AREA FOR 30 YEARS AND IS BURIED AT THE CHURCH.



Ice Cream

No matter the weather, there's always a perfect moment for ice cream, and [Winstones](#) parlour is here to satisfy your cravings. As they celebrate their 100th anniversary in 2025, this family-owned establishment prides itself on using fresh, local ingredients to craft both classic and unique flavours. With drinks, hot Belgian waffles, and even dog ice cream, alongside dairy-free choices and gluten-free cones, there's truly something for everyone.

During the summer, you'll often see families and friends enjoying these delicious treats while soaking up the sun on the common, but rest assured, the shop remains open all year round, even offering Christmas trees in the winter.

MINCHINHAMPTON COMMON

Minchinhampton Common is often referred to as a "surprise" landscape, rich with stories that truly embody this title. Its Cotswold scarp top, which was once medieval woodland, served commoners in need of wood. As a vital part of the agricultural landscape, some earthworks remain, with the "Bulwarks" believed to be prehistoric. The "Standing Stone", a limestone formation standing nearly eight feet tall, features two large natural perforations along with several smaller ones. Ancient lore suggests that passing a baby's arm, hand, or foot through these holes can cure rickets or smallpox.

Additionally, the "Tingle Stone," located just outside Minchinhampton on Princess Anne's monitored land in Gatcombe Park, is rumoured to be charged with electricity. Local tradition claims that the stone runs around the field at midnight...

The common not only hosts a variety of cows but also offers numerous accommodation options, pubs, and cafes, all set against the backdrop of the charming village of Minchinhampton, which showcases traditional Cotswold allure.



Gifford Circus

Looking for fun for all ages, Giffords Circus is a Stroud staple. Running from April to September, this traveling circus calls Fennells Farm its home while also making appearances at Frampton-on-Severn, Minchinhampton Common, and various other locations throughout the south. Each year brings a new theme, ensuring a fresh and thrilling experience. Expect to be dazzled by acrobats, magicians, musicians, and clowns from around the globe. It's truly an evening filled with whimsy, wonder, and laughter, so be sure to book your tickets in advance.



THINGS TO DO INCLUDE WALKING, HORSE-RIDING, GOLF, GLIDING AND PARAGLIDING ON THE COMMONS. THE COTSWOLDS & SEVERN VALE 7-DAY CYCLE TOUR ROUTES ALSO PASS THROUGH THE VILLAGE.



Additional Tips

The commons are not the only breath-taking green spaces to discover in the district. Consider venturing toward Dursley to explore the [Sculpture and Play Trail](#) at Twinberrow Woods, or visit Cam Peak, especially beautiful in May when the peak and woodlands are blanketed in bluebells. Alternatively, head over to Tyndale Monument along the Cotswold Way or Stinchcombe for its scenic golf course and lovely views, which are said to have inspired Shakespeare.

Additionally, we are proud to feature several National Trust sites, including [Newark Park](#), [Haresfield Beacon](#), and [Standish Wood](#). [Rococo Garden](#) in Painswick is another must see and don't forget about [Stratford Park](#), short stroll from Stroud town. This park offers play areas, a museum, a leisure centre with a swimming pool, gym, and café, as

Walking:

well as a lake, arboretum, and sensory garden.

Accommodation:

Be sure to check the weather forecast before any of your walks and dress accordingly, remember hydration is key so bring snacks and water (there are plenty of local stops to help with this). Wear comfortable shoes, the commons can be uneven and hilly.

Although we recommend waking/cycling and public transport there are various car parks at our commons and in nearby towns if you are driving to the locations.

If you're staying in the area we have numerous great options including hotels, B&B's, camping, unique stays and caravan sites.

For hotels check out [The Stroud Hotel](#), [Burleigh Court](#), [The Bear of Rodborough](#), [Painswick Hotel](#), [Stonehouse Court Hotel](#), [Egypt Mill Hotel](#), as well as a Premier Inn and Travelodge.

For more accommodation check out:
www.visitstroud.uk/accommodation

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The Natural Beauty of the Commons

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