



EVENLODE CATCHMENT PARTNERSHIP PROJECT WALKS

Our vision is of an Evenlode with improved water quality, better flood management, more wildlife and greater community engagement

Charlbury – Slowing the Flow

Why we want to slow the flow

A slow flow takes energy out of the stream to prevent erosive damage. It also allows sediment and nutrients to 'drop out' rather than being swept downstream where they can cause damage to the land and impact local wildlife. Allowing this sediment to fall to the bottom also improves water clarity, allowing aquatic plants to grow.



What the landscape used to look like

Our river landscape has been drastically altered by humans. A bird's-eye view from centuries ago would reveal many sprawling wetlands, the "pearls" of the landscape, connected by many streams, like a tangled pearl necklace. These wetlands and river systems largely emerged from the work of beavers. This project aims to help restore the river environment using natural methods to slow the flow.

Leaky woody dam

A leaky woody dam is a man-made structure designed to mimic the function of a natural beaver dam. This technique creates extensive, deep pools above the dam (providing additional aquatic habitat) and slows the flow. Below the dam, the water runs slightly faster, creating gravel riffles suitable for different aquatic insects and animals. The picture shows the finished dam.



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Follow our walk on the next page



Discover the project on this self-guided walk

Accessibility

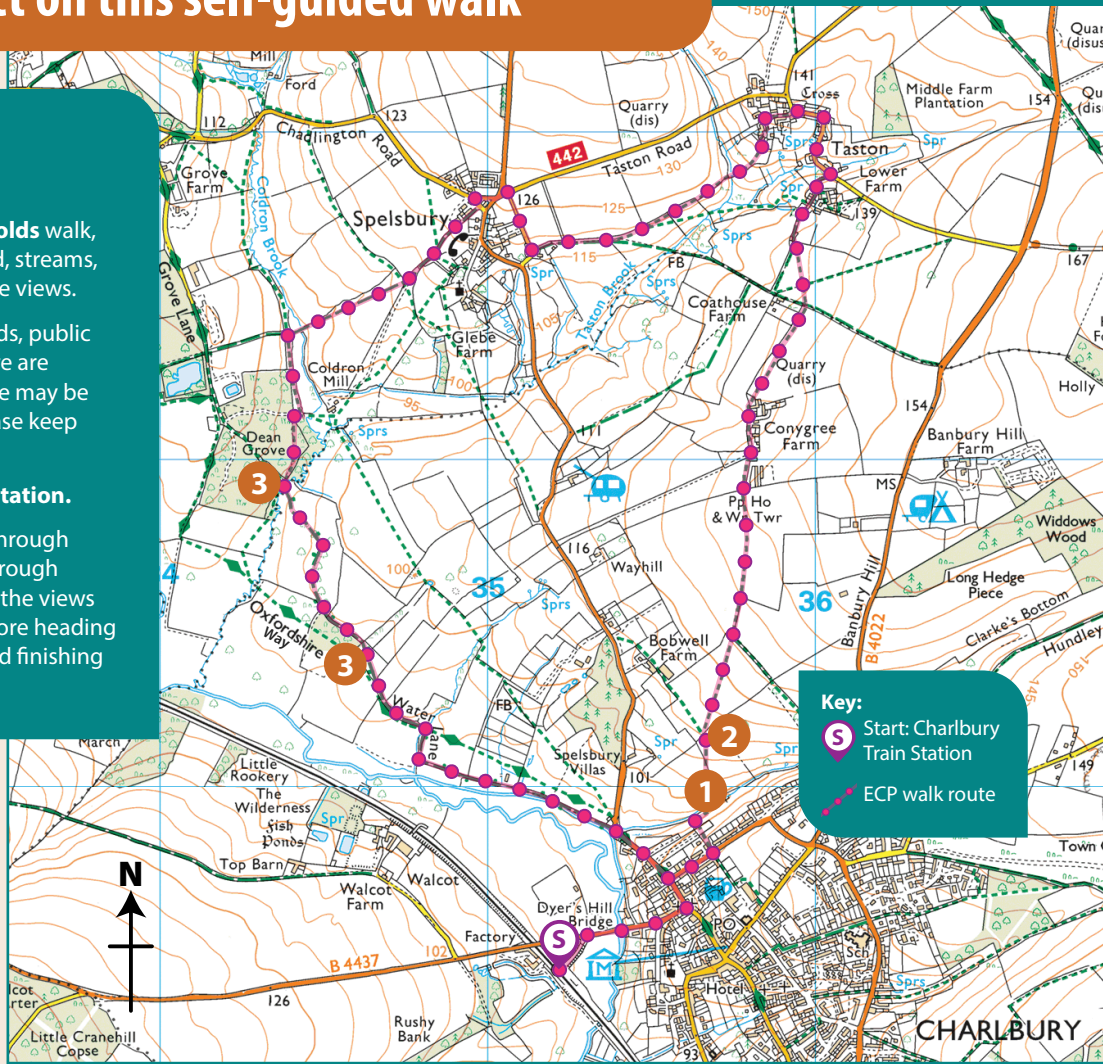
Route: 5 miles (8 km)

Enjoy a mix of settings on this **Cotswolds** walk, including peaceful villages, woodland, streams, farmland and scenic open countryside views.

This uses a combination of minor roads, public footpaths, and permissive paths. There are stiles and kissing gates en route. There may be livestock in some of the fields, so please keep dogs on a lead.

Start and finish at Charlbury train station.

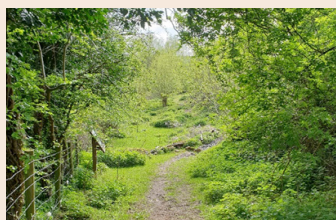
The route goes up Oxfordshire Way, through Dean Grove Forest, along the river, through pretty Spelsbury village. Then take in the views across the landscape from Taston before heading through **Wigwell Nature Reserve** and finishing at Charlbury train station.



1

Community leaky woody dam

Here you can see the leaky woody dam created by the **Wychwood Forest Trust** and Friends of Wigwell volunteers. The overgrown trees and shrubs that were shading the river were cut back. These cuttings were then used to create the dam. As well as slowing the flow, this allows light to get to the riverbed and creates pools and riffles to create a healthier river habitat.



allowing the summer flowers to thrive and set seed. The marshy habitat pockets created by the stream are great for biodiversity. Plants such as the marsh marigold and ragged-Robin can be seen here.

2

Wigwell Nature Reserve

Ecologically, Wigwell's grasslands are significant on a county-level scale and as such, this is a designated Local Wildlife Site. In summer, the steep slopes are carpeted in vibrant wildflowers which are well worth seeing. To maintain a species-rich grassland, grazing takes place during autumn and winter, controlling dominant grass species and

3

Woodland pockets

Dean Grove Forest is a delightful pocket of ancient woodland. You can enjoy this walk all year round, but in springtime, also look out for bluebells in the small woodland along Oxfordshire Way.

*This route was inspired by the **Alltrails: Charlbury and Spelsbury Circular walk** by Cotswold National Landscape which can be found in the **All Trails app**.*

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