

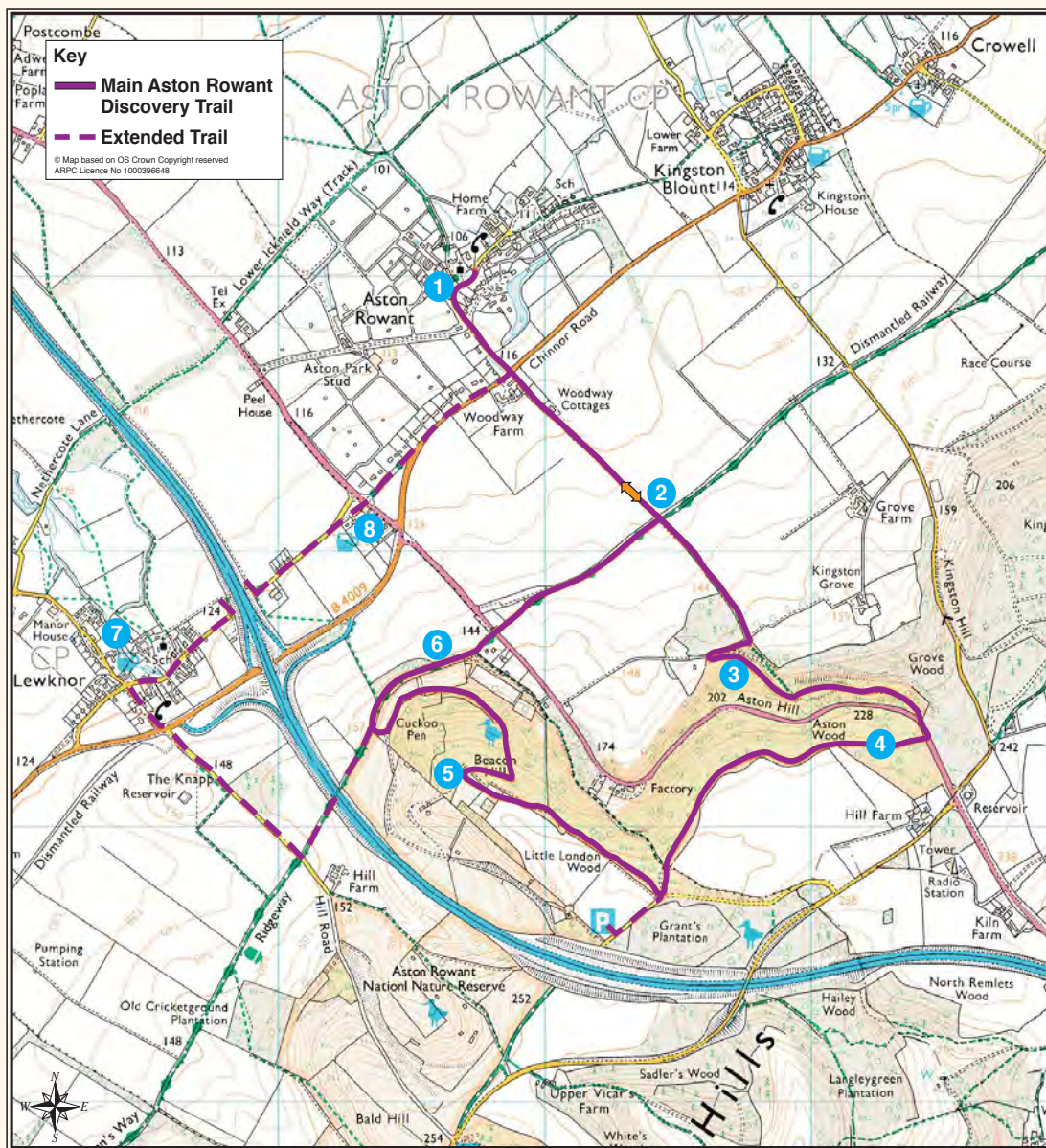
# Aston Rowant Discovery Trail

Aston Rowant  
Discovery  
Trail



The walk was developed by Aston Rowant Parish Council. The Trail is stile-free and fully way-marked. The circular route is 5.3m but with the extension to a pub and hotel 6.2m.

- 1 Aston Rowant 11th Century Church with two Romanesque Windows. Church Lane is thought to be part of the London Wey - a route to Oxford used in the Middle Ages. The future Queen Elizabeth 1 passed this way in 1554 when released from the Tower of London and banished to country confinement in Woodstock.
- 2 Princes Risborough to Watlington passenger and goods railway was opened in 1872 and finally closed in 1961. Some trains ran through to London.
- 3 National Trust Juniper Bank. The area is riddled with loggers routes. The original London to Oxford Turnpike (1718 Stokenchurch to Wheatley Turnpike Trust) took a steep route down the Chiltern Escarpment here.
- 4 National Trust Aston Wood. Watch out for Red Kites, Buzzards, Fallow Deer, Muntjac and Bluebells in the Spring. Beech woods planted for the local furniture trade and firewood. Materials were used for house and road building from the flint and chalk pits.
- 5 Natural England Aston Rowant National Nature Reserve. Juniper Trees, more Red Kites, Buzzards, Nuthatches, Common Spotted Orchid, Chiltern Gentian and many butterflies including the Chalkhill Blue.
- 6 The Upper Icknield Way, which doubles as The Ridgeway National Trail, has been a drovers route for over 3000 years.
- 7 Leathern Bottle for meals and refreshment and 8 Lambert Arms has accommodation as well.



Sponsored by Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment TOE2, Oxfordshire County Council, Chilterns Conservation Board, and Aston Rowant Parish Council. Help also provided by The National Trust, Natural England and Chiltern Society.



Please follow the country code

- Take litter home
- Clean up after your dog

*Please dress appropriately and walk safely with OS Explorer Map 171 Chiltern Hills West.*

From Aston Rowant Church, follow the road out of the village to reach the B4009.

Cross (carefully), and take the gate to the left of the large gate, signed "Racehorse Gallop Ahead". A long straight track takes you towards the woods and the escarpment. You pass Woodway Farm on the right, and Woodway Cottages on the left.

The first crossing you meet is the Ridgeway. Keep straight ahead, between the hedges and into the wood. The path becomes narrower and sunken. After a short while you come to a fork in the path with the sign "National Trust – Juniper Bank"

Turn right and follow the track almost to the grounds of a private house.

The track continues sharp left and ascends a steady slope.

Continue until, at the top of the hill, you come out alongside the A40 road. Turn left and continue along the pavement for a short way until you are opposite a lay by and the entrance to the National Trust Aston Wood.

Cross the road carefully and enter the wood to the left of the big gate. Follow the white arrows along a wide track for about ¾ mile. Then ignore the public footpath sign to the right. The track veers slightly left to reach a minor road. (Information here about the "Talking Trail" and its sculptures).



Just before reaching the road, turn right and follow the path alongside the edge of the wood, passing sculptures 1 and 2. Eventually you come to a fork.

Take the left fork. The path rises to go close to fields on the left. Continue to a gate which takes you out of the wood.

Sculpture 3 is immediately after the gate, on your right. Keep to the path across the open grassland, bearing right slightly, close to the trees. Later the path slopes gently downwards to give great views and to sculpture 4.

Halfway here – good opportunity for drink or a snack maybe. Then turn right alongside the fence and soon you'll come to sculpture 5, just before a gate.

Once through the gate, the track starts to descend steadily down the escarpment. When you reach a T junction, take the sharp left turn.

Follow this path gently down for some way, through two gates until the M40 can be seen clearly ahead. Just before the path bears left towards a gate, turn right, on a wide grass track, aiming for a pair of double gates.

Pass through both sets of gates and you are back on the Ridgeway again. Now comes the time to choose whether to take the shorter walk back to Aston Rowant, or the longer one via Lewknor.

To head straight back, follow the Ridgeway wide track RIGHT, cross the A40 and eventually you'll meet the path where you crossed the Ridgeway earlier. Turn left and retrace your steps to Aston Rowant.

To continue on the extended route, turn LEFT along the Ridgeway and follow the track until you reach a minor road.

Turn right here and take the very straight road (Hill Road) which leads to the B4009.

Cross carefully at the bollards and turn left. Go right down some steps and onto a minor road into Lewknor.

Follow this a short way until you arrive at The Leathern Bottel.

Turn right into the village, past the Church and school until you reach the playing fields on the right. Here the road ends so you need to take the path to your left via the underpass to reach the old road again.

Follow this until you reach the A40. On the corner is the Lambert Arms – another possible place for refreshment.

Cross the A40 to Butts Way. After a short while the B4009 joins from the right. Continue along the pavement until you reach the "Village Only" sign, pointing left to Aston Rowant. Turn left here and you reach the Church where you began.



Bluebells in Aston Wood



Aston Rowant Church



Approaching the Ridgeway National Trail



Red Kite Sculpture on Natural England's Talking Trail



Leathern Bottel, Lewknor

**Aston Rowant  
Parish Council**

[www.astonrowant.org.uk/amenities](http://www.astonrowant.org.uk/amenities)