

## 6. Dimmel's Dale and Rack Hill

### Where

Community Store, Chalford High Street – Dimmel's Dale – Coppice Hill – Rack Hill – Marle Hill – Lavender Bakehouse - River Frome – Chalford High Street

### Length

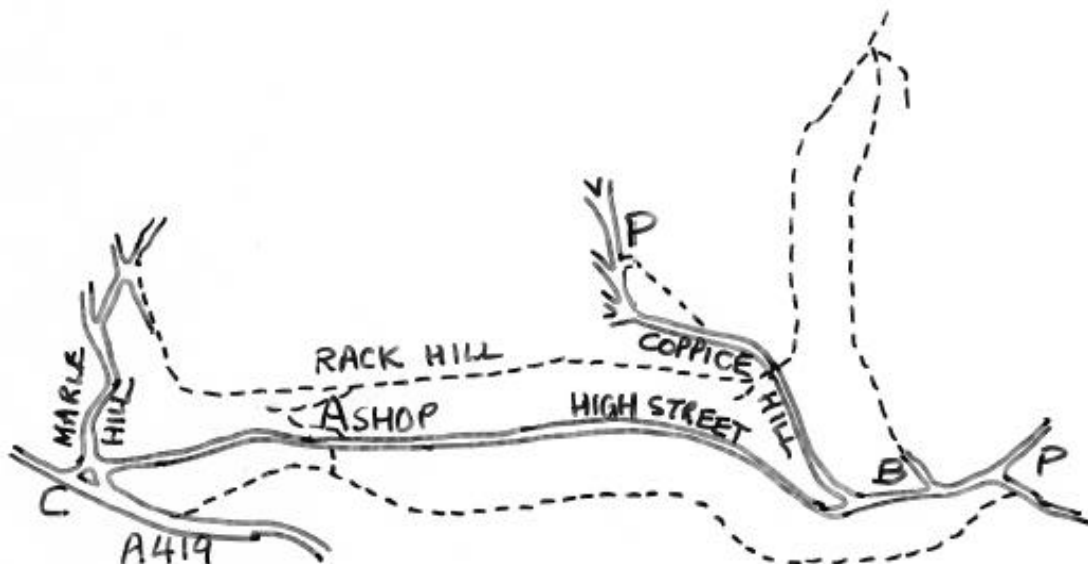
About 2½ miles, with shorter options

### About the walk

A 2½ mile stile free walk, fairly flat with one steepish descent [on tarmac]. This walk features woods, streams, views, the canal and the River Frome.

What more could you want from a ramble?

### The route



The route starts at Chalford Community Shop on Chalford High Street.

There is no parking on Chalford High Street. Suggested parking places are at Valley Corner and on Coppice Hill, marked **P** On the map.

**A.** Coming out of the **Community Shop**, turn left to walk along the **High Street**, with its attractive stone houses and glimpses of gardens. On your left you will pass Tankard Spring to which people used to come to collect their drinking water. At the junction with **Coppice Hill**, do not turn left but continue straight ahead .

**B.** You reach **Valley Cottage** and **Corner Cottage** on the left. Between them turn into the partly tarmac track which goes gently uphill alongside a stream, becoming a simple path along the way. You are in the lower reaches of Dimmel's Dale, recently acquired by GWT as a nature reserve, with mature trees and a babbling brook to keep you company.

Reaching a junction of three paths, cross the stream you have been following, go through the new kissing gate ahead [funded by Stroud Rambling Club] and turn left onto the clear path which takes you back along the other side of the stream.

The path reaches a road [**Coppice Hill**]. You are going to take the path directly opposite but may wish to make a small detour first. If you go left, downhill for several yards you will come to a low wall on your right, opposite the house 'Badgers Holt'. Here, looking over the wall you will have the view which has given Chalford the nickname of 'Alpine Village'. It is certainly a striking vista. Go back uphill and turn left just past '**White Rose Cottage**'.

Keep right at the immediate fork. Then continue straight ahead as this path stays fairly level, enjoying the views downhill and uphill as you go. You are on Rack Hill, where the cloth workers used to dry their cloth. This is a lovely, airy part of the walk where you feel as if you are on the balcony of Chalford Valley. There is a seat for you to enjoy the view. Walk on for some distance until you reach a distinct fork in the path.

**There are two options for the next part of the walk. The first one involves a steep descent of Marle Hill [a tarmac lane] but keeps you aloft for longer.**

**Option 1.** Take the upper fork. Eventually you will emerge onto a lane [**Marle Hill**]. Turn left; it goes quite steeply downhill to **C**.

**Option 2. If you are concerned about the fairly steep descent of Marle Hill,** take the lower fork, a sloping path, bordered on the right hand side with railway sleepers. Go down this and turn left at the bottom down shallow steps. You will arrive at a T junction. To continue the walk turn right and, when you reach the **High Street** turn right. You soon reach the grassy triangle at **C**.

**C.** You reach the main road, the **A419** at the grassy triangle and bus stop which mark one end of the High Street. You could turn left up the High Street to regain the shop.

But there are other treats in store if you turn left on the main road [there is a pavement]. Across the road, there is the **Lavender Bakehouse** for coffee and cake and the **Victoria Works Studios** which may be holding an exhibition.

If you stay on the left hand side of the road, you come to '**Wetpaint Gallery**' which also hosts exhibitions. Turning left straight after 'Wetpaint' you are on the canal towpath. For much of the walk along the canal you also have the River Frome on your left, shady trees above and the chance to see water birds and dragonflies. There is always something to see along the river and canal.

You could turn left at the sign for the **Village Shop** but you can extend your walk by keeping ahead on the towpath, going past canalside cottages.

You will reach a lane. Here turn left and left again and you will have the pleasure of retracing your steps along **Chalford High Street** to the beginning of the walk at the Village Shop.

**Route description by Tessa Wood, Stroud Rambling Club**

