

Colston Basset, Kinoulton and Cropwell Bishop



This is attractive and varied countryside walk with diverse countryside including open fields with fine views, and a long canal stretch along the Grantham Canal. It's dog friendly with only one style which has a dog sized gap. It is not strenuous with no significant

inclines. There are three pubs on the way – The Martins Arms at Colston Bassett, The Neville Arms at Kinoulton and The Wheatsheaf in Cropwell Bishop. There are also three churches – one in each village. The spot on the Grantham Canal called the Devil's Elbow is particularly beautiful. The route can be started at Colston Bassett, Kinoulton or Cropwell Bishop.

It is 8.4m (13.2km) and takes about three hours. These directions start at Colston Bassett however, and there are a number of places where the route can be shortened by taking a short cut.



Start

Saint John the Divine, Church Gate, Colston Bassett, Nottingham NG12 3FE (SK 69995 33268)



1. Start at the church in Colston Bassett called [St John the Divine](#). At the church gate go back down the main road toward the cross in the centre of the village, outside [The Martins Arms](#). Take the road going past the cross and the with the pub on your right.

The Cross was established in the 1200s when Edward I granted permission for a weekly Wednesday market on the spot

The Church of St John the Divine was consecrated in 1892 to replace the defunct and derelict St Mary's Church. It was decided at the time to build a new church rather than restore the [old Parish Church of St Mary's](#) due to the distance of this building from the current location of the village. The new church was built by Robert Millington Knowles in memory of his wife and of his son John Knowles, who was drowned having taken up the offer of a day's fishing aged 21. The Church was built to a grand scale in white using the early perpendicular style but was not thought to be ostentatious for the time it was built in and has subsequently been described by Pevsner as one of the most beautiful village churches in England.



St John The Divine is situated on Church Gate, with the tall steeple visible from most points of the village. There is a memorial plaque on the wall inside the church to those villagers who fell in defence of their country during the 1914-18 War and another memorial in the church grounds commemorates those who fell in the 1939-45 conflict. Most villagers are not buried at St Johns, but rather take their final rest up on the hill overlooking the village in the grounds of the now-derelict St Marys - accessed off New Road about 200 metres on a decent hard track

For more information, see:

- <http://www.wivertoninthevale.co.uk/saint-john-the-divine-colston-bassett/>
- <http://southwellchurches.history.nottingham.ac.uk/colston-bassett-st-john/hintro.php>
- <http://www.colstonbassettparishcouncil.co.uk/st-johns-church>
- <https://www.themartinsarms.co.uk/>



2. At the end of the houses, by the School House on the right where the road bears left, there is a bench and a footpath going off to the right. Carry straight on. Shortly after the end of the houses, go through the gate and follow the footpath sign. Ignore the stile to the left which leads to a long footpath towards Hickling. Carry straight on with the hedgerow your immediate left. It will take you about half an hour to get to Kinoulton.

3. After a short while you pass a small wood to your right. (695325). Go through the gate in front of you and carry on over a small bridge. The water to your left is the small **River Smite**. Behind you can be seen the spire of the church in Colton Bassett.



4. The footpath continues to follow the river and there is a left-hand kink just as you see the gap ahead of you. It's best to follow the path, with the advantage of hearing the trickling water to your left. Cross the small footbridge through the hedgerow and carry straight ahead of you following a wide track that is left unploughed.

5. Continue past Hall Farm on the right and then pick up a tarmac drive which carries on ahead of you past a beautiful cottage on the bend.



6. At the end of the road by Manor Cottage go left or right, it does not matter, as they are only a few meters apart.

7. Left takes you to the centre of the village. Right, straight to the pub, [The Nevile Arms](#) at [Kinoulton](#). (Notice the single "l". There has been a pub here since at least 1860.

8. Go right, along **Owthorpe Lane**, the main road and go past Hyde and Fern cottages on your left. Immediately at the end of the line of houses, take the footpath on the left and follow the waterline and faint path on the far left. The last house of which has quite a beautiful garden.

9. When you come to a metal kissing gate, carry straight on through it. Near the end of this field there is another kissing gate on the left. Go through that and follow the road (which is called **Pinfold Lane**) between the houses up to a T-junction and turn right and walk along the road on the right side.



10. Go past the church and graveyard called [St Luke's Benefice](#) which is an usual modern design with a lovely clocktower. (NG12 3EN) (**SK 67640 30733**).

St Luke's is a Grade II* listed building, dating from 1793 and replaced a church dedicated to St Wilfred which was located to the north of Kinoulton Lane but fell into disrepair. The Earl of Gainsbourg stepped in and built St Luke's Church in 1793 using bricks from the local brick yard.

For more information, see:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St_Luke%27s_Church,_Kinoulton

Although the building was demolished, the churchyard remains and contains a group of 34 headstones dating from the 1700s. If you have time, look through the graveyard at the headstones where you can see several generations of the same families - the Gardeners in particular.



11. Stay on the right side of the road and just after the church you come to the [Grantham Canal](#) which is very attractive, if overgrown. At this point you have a choice of two paths along each bank of the canal to the right. Cross over the canal and take the left bank through narrow hedging rather than the first, wider cycle track.



The path on the left bank of the canal is more rugged than the one on the right which is a formal path suitable for walking, running and cycling which gets busier. There is a stile a little further on but it has a gap wide enough for a dog to get through. Go through a gate and follow the canal path for some time – in fact until you come to Cropwell Bishop. It's hard to imagine that this now overgrown

waterway was once a busy waterway for carrying coal from the River Trent at West Bridgford to Grantham.

For more information on the canal, see:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grantham_Canal

<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/enjoy-the-waterways/canal-and-river-network/grantham-canal>



The **Grantham Canal** runs for 33 miles from Grantham through 18 locks to West Bridgford, where it joins the River Trent. It was built primarily for the transportation of coal to Grantham. It opened in 1797 and its profitability steadily increased until 1841. It was then sold to a railway company, declined, and was finally closed in 1936. It was used as a water supply for agriculture, and so most of it remained in water after closure. ([wikipedia.org/wiki/Grantham_Canal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grantham_Canal))

12. There are a number of bridges, all numbered. After a short while you come to a bridge (27) over a track to **Vimy Ridge Farm**, take the steps up to the track to the road.

13. Before you carry on, enjoy the canal view and have a seat on the bench by the memorial to the Sherwood Foresters in the First World War. (SK 66985 31337).



The parish planted a row of Poplar Trees as a memorial to the 60 soldiers who died on the Somme, France, in World War I. There is a War Memorial plaque in St. Luke's Church. 29 names are listed, five of whom made the ultimate sacrifice. There is also a **Vimy Ridge Farm** Plaque dedicated to the memory of the fallen servicemen of Kinoulton. It appears to focus on the Sherwood Foresters

For more information on the Sherwood Foresters, see:

<https://www.nam.ac.uk/explore/sherwood-foresters-nottinghamshire-and-derbyshire-regiment>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sherwood_Foresters



14. Go down the steps on the left bank of the canal to re-join the track on the left. This is a long and beautiful stretch that bends right at Devil's Elbow. At Wild's Bridge (26) the path crosses the road between Owthorpe and Kinoulton and carries on the other side but it now appears a bit more indistinct having been ploughed. At this point it is worth crossing over and taking the path on the right of the canal for the rest of the section. The footpath shortly crosses a road that leads between Cropwell Bishop and Kinoulton. Cross the road and continue to follow the canal path.

15. At Spencer's Bridge, number 24, (SK 68170 32837) cross the **Owthorpe Road** and follow the canal path.

Optional Shortcut 1

Here you can shorten the walk by turning right and taking the Owthorpe Road back to **Colson Bassett**.

16. Shortly after crossing Owthorpe Road, the church spire at Colston Bassett comes back into view on your right. Follow the canal path around the bend to the right until you get to a road coming from Cotgrave to the left and back into Colston Bassett on the right (SK 68209 34173).

17. Carry on the canal footpath to bridge 23 (SK 68201 34205). Follow the pathway bearing right onto the road and cross over and pick up the path again to your left by the 7.5 T sign.

Along this stretch, the canal appears to be dry.



Optional Shortcut 2

Here, you have the option of turning right along the tarmac road back into **Colston Bassett** which slightly shortens the route but there is no footpath for much of the 1¼ miles before you get back to Colston Bassett.



18. Eventually, the path begins to run parallel to the road as you see some buildings coming to view just ahead of you which appear to be industrial units including **The Old Mill**. Just beyond on the bend the track reaches the road at bridge 22. The canal path continues ahead but we are leaving it here.



19. Join the road and turn right toward **Cropwell Bishop**, to pick up the foot path you see just ahead of you on the right on the bend. There is a stile here, but dogs can walk under the barrier. Follow the footpath on the left-hand edge of the field close to the hedgerow on the left.



20. After a while, the path bends left over a stile that is easy for a dog to walk through.



21. Take the diagonal path across the field to a gate towards the houses of Cropwell Bishop and the Methodist Chapel – which you can see the back of and which opened in 1842. Go through the metal kissing gate and take the footpath just to the left towards another gate and a row of houses. Go through this gate and follow the narrow path with a fence on the right into Cropwell Bishop and at the

road turn right.

22. Walk through the village, past the Co-op past the **The Wheatsheaf** pub and towards the church of **St Giles**, built in 1215. Carry on down this road to the gate you eventually see ahead of you and turn right down the lane. This is called Pasture Lane It's actually a wide farm track with hedges on either side.



21. At the end of the track turn left across the diagonal footpath through the fields to the post you can see just beyond below the telegraph pole in a gap in the hedgerow. Go through the gate and follow the

path along the hedge row to the left, where there is a beautiful panorama to the right.



22. At the end of the first field the path goes through the hedge and on the left you see Home Farm ahead of you and to the right a wood called **Blanche's Gorse**. Follow the path past the farmhouse up to the Tarmac track and go right. Go past four cottages on the left built in 1905 and 1908.

23. At the end of this track you meet a road, called New Road and you can see ahead of you the ruins of the original church of **St Mary's**. Cross the road and go through the gate ahead of you towards the church. The trees along this path which is called **Jubilee Walk** was planted for the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth in 2012.



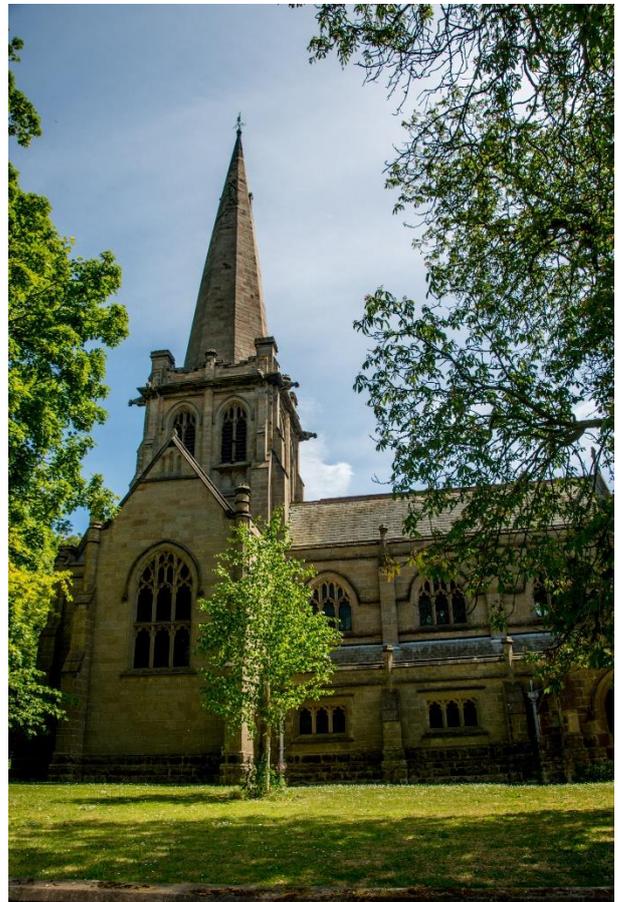
24. The church is well worth a visit as is the graveyard where current residents of Colston Bassett are buried. There is even an Isaac Newton in the cemetery. It is a scheduled Ancient Monument and Grade I listed building.



25. Carry on past the church actually get to the end of the next field and a concrete bridge over a small stream and to take the path that goes ahead of you towards a white building which is the cricket pavilion carry on behind the building And follow the narrow rather indistinct path that follows the hedge row to the left.



26. Shortly the spire of St John's church comes back into view. Shortly the road path goes slightly left over a bridge through a gate, over a bridge and along the narrow path.



27. Follow the brick wall and as you get to the road turn right to get back to the church and the starting point at John's church.

Things to know...

a) Colston Bassett

Colston Bassett is a small village of around 200 people in the Vale of Belvoir. The village itself also took its name from the estate land owners. **Colston** dates back to before the Domesday Book when the tun or settlement belonged to a Saxon or Scandinavian named Col. **Bassett** refers to a wealthy Norman family. Ralph Basset was Lord Chief Justice of England in 1120 when King Henry I awarded him the manor. (2)

Established since the Norman conquest, it has been shaped by the various owners from Ralph Basset, who was awarded the village by William the Conqueror, through to the Le Marchant family, who acquired the village in the late nineteenth century. The original Market Cross at the centre of village was erected in 1257 when Henry III granted Ralph de Basset and his heirs the right to hold a weekly market each Wednesday, as well as an annual three-day fair, but these rights are no longer exercised. The village was one of the first villages in Nottinghamshire to acquire full conservation area status in the early 1970's (1).

Records show he purchased Colston Bassett Rectory in 1605 about the same time as a terrible outbreak of the plague wiped out half the population. There were 83 burials between July 1604 and March 1605. Just like the outbreak at Eyam, Derbyshire, the villagers cut off all communication with anyone from outside. (2)

The website Notts Villages (2) has a considerable history of Colston Bassett as well as some fantastic photographs

1. <https://www.colstonbassettparishcouncil.co.uk/>
2. <http://nottsvillages.blogspot.com/2016/07/colston-bassett.html>

b) Kinoulton

The name Kinoulton probably has Saxon origins and Cynhildestu (Cynhilds Farm) is a suggested Kinoulton. (2)

The name Kinoulton indicates the village was originally a tun or farmstead. It belonged to a wealthy woman named Cynehild. The Domesday Book records it as Chineltune, no church is recorded and it had very little value, being worth only 2s 8d. At the 2011 census the population was 1050.

Kinoulton is famous for the avenue of Poplar trees at Vimy Ridge, which runs between Owthorpe Lane and the Canal towpath. Sadly, these had to be felled in Feb 1998 as they had been upright far longer than their natural life expectancy would suggest, and had become a safety hazard at over 90ft in height. The original avenue of 184 Lombardy poplar trees were planted by Sir William Jesse Hind in memory of his son Lt. Francis Montagu Hind who was killed in action at the Battle of the Somme on 27th September 1916. The trees also commemorated the 187 other officers and men of the 9th Battalion The Sherwood Foresters Regiment who died between 7th July (when the battalion entered the battle) and 30th November 1916 (the official end of the battle). The Parish Council has funded the planting of Poplar saplings and it is hoped that over the years to come this majestic sight will be restored for all to enjoy. There are plenty of pictures of the trees in the gallery, as well as a stop motion animation of a walk along the canal to the Poplars (1).

The website Notts Villages (3) has a considerable history of Kinoulton as well as some fantastic photographs

1. <https://sites.google.com/a/kinoulton.com/kinoulton-village/home/about-kinoulton>
2. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kinoulton>
3. <http://nottsvillages.blogspot.com/2016/10/kinoulton.html>

c) Cropwell Bishop

Mentioned in the Domesday Book in 1086, Cropwell Bishop, then called Crophille was composed of 12 households. The name is derived from a round hill between the villages of Cropwell Bishop and Cropwell Butler. Cropwell means "with a crop or hump". The Cropwell part of the village name comes from Crophille, known now as Hoe Hill. The Bishop part derives from the fact that the Archbishop of York was Lord of the Manor from 956 (1).

The population taken at the 2011 Census was 1,853. During the 20th century the employment came from agriculture and gypsum working with a number of small ancillary businesses. As the village moved into the 21st century the old gypsum works site beside the Nottingham to Grantham Canal is now home to a small business park hosting 13 of diverse business ventures from a large bus company through to a specialist cheese maker. Cropwell Bishop's other major employer is Cropwell Bishop Creamery one of a select six creameries that produce Stilton Cheese which is sold worldwide (<https://shop.cropwellbishopstilton.com/>). (1).

The website Notts Villages (3) has a considerable history of Cropwell Bishop as well as some fantastic photographs.

1. <https://cropwellbishop-pc.gov.uk/history/>
2. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cropwell_Bishop
3. <http://nottsvillages.blogspot.com/2016/05/cropwell-bishop.html>

There is a YouTube video of this walk at <https://youtu.be/5B5YF9a14zo>