

# Roald Dahl's Countryside Trail

A family activity walk



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## Activities



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### Mini World

Mark out a small square of ground with sticks or other objects and look really closely at it. Imagine you've had a small dose of George's Marvellous Medicine Number Four and you've shrunk to the size of a pin head.

You're now a mini-explorer in a strange and dangerous world. What giant bugs and monsters can you find? Tell other people about your mini-world and point out the best (and the scariest) bits. Draw a map to take home.

### Nature Words

Find an animal or plant you recognise and use the letters in its name to write a mesostic poem about it, like this:

Speedy  
ANimals  
AlwAys  
Impress  
ChiLdren

Write your poem down and draw the thing you've written about next to it. Later you can put the pages together to make your own book of illustrated poetry.



### Ranger's Radio

Decide who will be the Ranger. The Ranger then clicks their fingers to turn on the radio. Everyone stands absolutely still and silent and listens intently until the Ranger clicks the radio off again. How many different sounds could you hear? What were they? Try it again with your eyes closed. Is it any different? How has the sound changed in the last hundred years? How will it sound here in a hundred years' time?

### Woodland Bingo

Find one natural object for each of these adjectives: shiny, smooth, rough, soft, cold, round, hard, jagged, furry, damp. Only pick things up if you know what they are and don't damage living things. The first person to get all ten objects shouts 'Bingo!'. Look at everyone's objects together before returning them to their proper homes. What other words could describe them? You could make words up like the BFG did.

### Wild Windows

Find four sticks and hold them in front of you to make a frame for what you can see. Find your favourite view, frame it and either sketch or take a photo of it in its frame. You may need several hands for this! Make a note of why you picked that view and how it makes you feel. Later you can paste the image into a scrapbook or diary.



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More on the Chilterns at [www.chilternsaonb.org](http://www.chilternsaonb.org)

Route and activities by Outdoor Culture

THE ROALD DAHL  
THE MUSEUM AND  
STORY CENTRE

The Roald Dahl Museum and Story Centre  
Great Missenden Buckinghamshire

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[www.roalddahlmuseum.org](http://www.roalddahlmuseum.org)

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Road Dahl loved the Chiltern countryside around his home here in Great Missenden and it features in many of his stories. We hope you enjoy the walk in this Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Don't forget to bring appropriate clothing, some water and a snack, and to follow the countryside code:

- Be safe, plan ahead and follow any signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants and animals and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under close control
- Consider other people



Look out for Red Kites with their long wings and distinctive forked tails, re-introduced to the area 20 years ago and now flourishing.

## Directions

The walk is unsignposted; signposts you may encounter are for other walks. It is stile-free with short sections of steep, rough ground, and may be muddy. Allow at least an hour, longer if you stop along the way. You'll need notebooks and pencils for some of the activities (see reverse).

- 1 Coming out of the Museum, turn left onto the High Street. Turn right down a narrow alleyway just before the George Inn.
- 2 At the end of the alley, turn left onto an unmade road. After 20 metres, turn right into Twitchell Road. A public footpath at the end of the road leads under the railway line to another unmade road.
- 3 Turn right here, and then turn left in 40 metres onto a track, signposted as a public footpath.



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4 When you reach a gate, go straight ahead into the field on a path following a fence on your left towards the woods.

5 At the end of the field, go through a wooden kissing gate

and straight on into **Angling Spring Wood**.

Follow the path in front of you along the valley bottom all the way through the wood.

6 Leave the wood through a wooden kissing gate, following a path gently rising through the field.

7 Upon reaching the tarmac road (Green Lane), turn left on the road and left again after 80 metres onto a lane leading to **Andlows Farm**.

8 Before you reach the farm buildings, turn right at the end of the hedge on your right to go through a small gate.

9 Bear left here on a grassy path, with a building on your left and a fenced orchard on your right.

10 Go through a metal gate and follow the public footpath along the left hand edge of the field.

11 You soon enter **Atkins Wood**, where you take the smaller path to the left.

12 Eventually, go through a metal kissing gate and turn left on a bridleway.

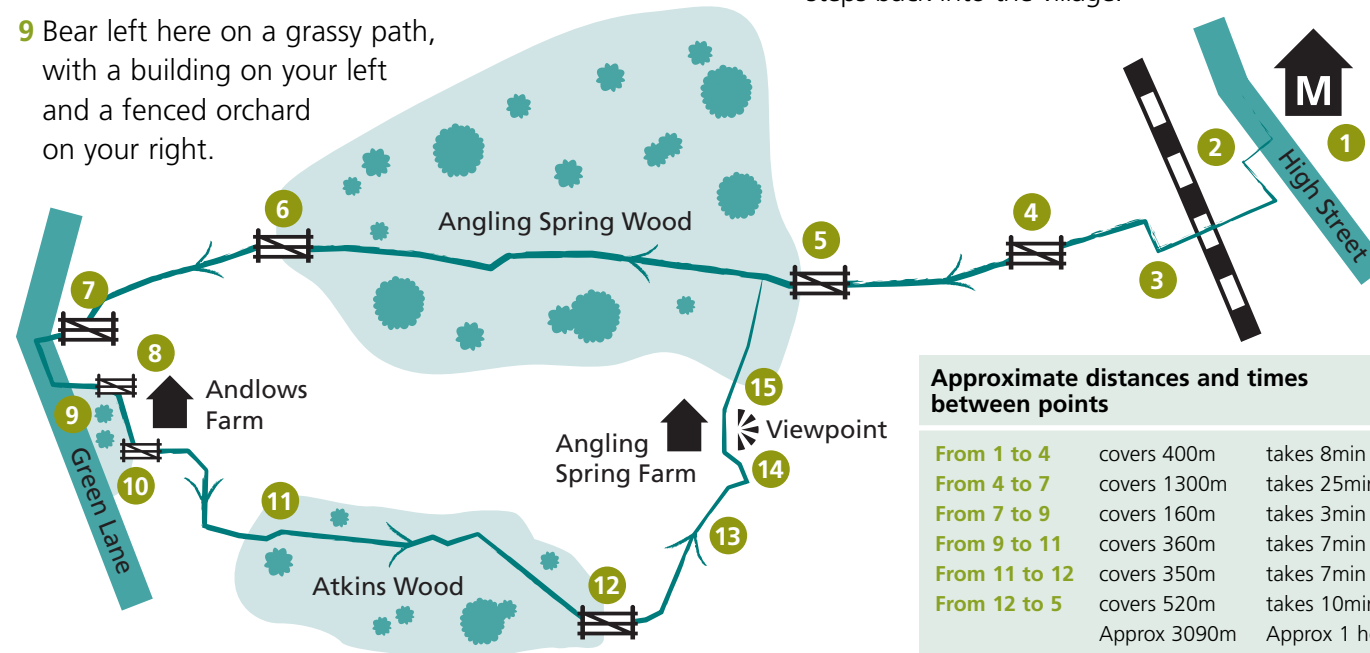
13 When you reach a tarmac lane, go straight on, past Angling Spring Farm on your left.

14 Just past the farmhouse, when the road bends right, take the path on your left and pause to admire the view over the valley.

15 Passing in front of the house, turn right onto the public footpath back into Angling Spring Wood. Follow the path downhill. At the bottom of the hill, turn right to leave the wood by the same gate you entered and retrace your steps back into the village.



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## Angling Spring Wood

This ancient woodland is now managed locally for the benefit of its wildlife and provides a beautiful pedestrian route between the villages of Great Missenden and Prestwood. The wood is said to have been the inspiration for Roald Dahl's **Fantastic Mr Fox**. It is also home to some rare yellow slugs!

## Orchard at Andlows Farm

Apple trees were once far more common in this part of Buckinghamshire. Roald Dahl's own garden boasted 70 fruit trees when he first moved to Great Missenden, and in contrast to the mean Farmer Bean in **Fantastic Mr Fox**, every October he invited the local children to come and help themselves to a basketful each. He was saddened that in his later life, children lost interest in picking apples: *'I believe they have too much pocket money and prefer to buy crisps'*.

## Atkins Wood

This is a classic Chiltern beech wood. Beech trees are common in South Bucks because they were planted in the nineteenth century for the chair-making industry in High Wycombe. The towering trees and dark forest floors typical of local woods provide the setting for the pheasant poaching scenes in **Danny the Champion of the World**:

*'I flattened my body against the ground and pressed one side of my face into the brown leaves. The soil below the leaves had a queer pungent smell, like beer'*.

**"I have never lived in a town or city and I would hate to do so"**  
Roald Dahl, *My Year*