



Circular walks

in Oxfordshire



*More downloadable leaflets available for free from
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/walksandrides*

Two walks along the
Windrush, taking in:

- * Asthall
- * Widford
- * Swinbrook
- * Worsham
- * Minster Lovell
- * Crawley



The Windrush

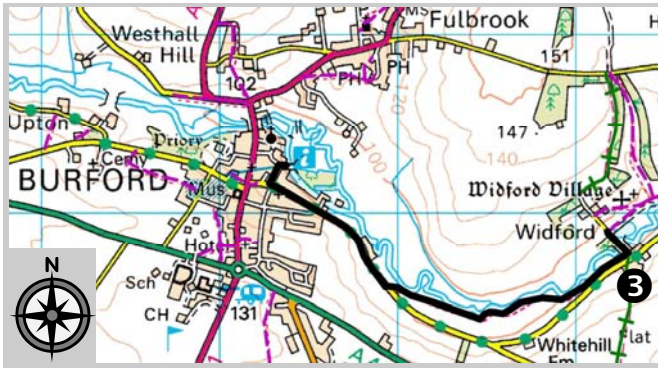


**OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL**

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk

Getting to the start

The first walk starts in Asthall village. If you are travelling by car, there is a small amount of parking in the village. Alternative parking is available in Burford.



From Burford main car park, cross the river bridge and turn left up Guildenford. Turn left into Witney Street and follow this towards Widford. As you leave the houses of Burford behind, look for a footpath in the meadow on the left. Follow this path next to the River Windrush to join the circular route at Widford (point 3). This adds 1.7 miles (2.8km) to the route each way.

Public transport

For timetable enquiries, please call Traveline on 0871 200 22 33.

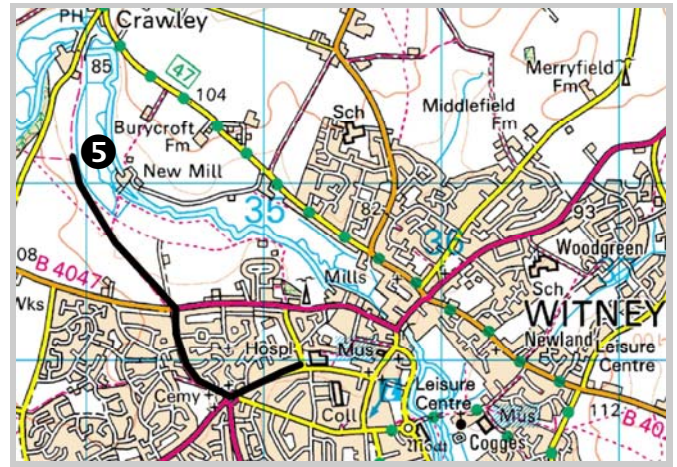
You will also find information and Oxfordshire County Council public transport timetables in most Oxfordshire libraries and Tourist Information Centres. Alternatively, write enclosing an A5 stamped addressed envelope to: Oxfordshire County Council, Public Transport, Speedwell House, Speedwell Street, Oxford OX1 1NE.

Easy-to-follow routes

Each walk is marked with metal signposts where the path leaves the road, and with waymarks on gates and stiles at every change of direction.

The appropriate Ordnance Survey maps to use on these routes are Explorer OL45 and Explorer 180.

The second walk starts in Minster Lovell, where limited parking is available near the church. Alternative parking is available in Witney public car park.



From Witney, head west along the road past the fire station to the roundabout. Follow the pavement of the A4095 towards Woodstock. At the junction with the B-road to Minster Lovell take the brideway opposite and follow this to join the circular route at point 5. This adds 1.3 miles (2.1km) to the route each way.

When out walking, it is always wise to let someone know where you are going or, if possible, have someone with you. Take your mobile with you, and make sure it is fully charged. If you use your car to access the route, please park with care – do not block farm gateways or village facilities, and do not leave valuables in view.

Please 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

Points of interest



Route
1

Pollarded willows line the Windrush near Asthall. Willows used to be an important crop for farmers, the branches being used for gate hurdles and the thinner ends for thatching pegs.



Route
1

Uneven ground in the field surrounding the tiny church is all that remains of the 14th century village of **Widford**. Perhaps the desertion was because of the plague. The Church of St Oswald's dates back to the 13th century and there are interesting 14th murals on the interior walls. The church was built on the site of a Roman villa – note the fragment of mosaic flooring in the chancel.



Route
1

On the hillside between Widford and **Swinbrook**, you'll notice the remains of the Italian terraced gardens of the wealthy Fettiplace family mansion. The great house was demolished in the early 19th century, but in St Mary's Church you will find spectacular Fettiplace monuments – Tudor and Stuart gentlemen reclining on shelves. One set was erected in 1613, the other by the Oxford sculptor William Byrd in 1686.



Route
1

The slate roof of **Kitesbridge Farm** is made from stone quarried locally at Stonesfield. Roof slates were made from the 16th century onwards when it was realised that the mined stone could be split by pouring water on it during winter. The frost between the layers caused the slates to cleave apart. The slates were then trimmed and hung on roof lathes with short oak pegs.



Route
1

The highly recommended **Maytime Inn at Astall** is open from 11-3 and 6-11 and serves main courses, lunches and sandwiches.



Route
2

Crawley Mill, like many other mills in this area, was used in some part of the manufacture of the famous Witney blankets. The 18th century mill is now part of an industrial estate.



Route
1

Akeman Street, the **Roman road** from St Albans through Alchester to Cirencester, runs across the route $\frac{1}{4}$ mile east of Kitesbridge Farm and through Asthall Farm. The whole of this part of the Windrush Valley was farmed in Romano-British times.



Route
2

Several unfortunate legends are told of the ruins of **Minster Lovell Hall**. One is that, in 1708, some workmen found a secret chamber containing the skeleton of a man seated at a table, his dog at his feet. The skeleton is said to be that of Francis, the last of the Lovell family. After Richard III was killed at Bosworth Field in 1485, Lovell returned with an army intent upon ousting Henry VII and replacing him with the pretender Lambert Simnel. The uprising ended in defeat at the battle of Stoke Field in 1487. The story goes that Lovell, by then a fugitive, returned to Minster Lovell Hall and, with the help of his trusty servant, hid in a secret place within the walls. However, owing to the sudden death of his servant, Francis died of starvation.



Route
2

The Lamb Inn at Crawley is open 11-3 and 6-11 Monday to Saturday and 11-3 on Sunday. It serves a lunch menu and sandwiches.

If you would like to give us feedback about these walks, you can complete a route review or upload your photos online at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/countryside Alternatively, call 01865 810226 or write to: Oxfordshire County Council, Countryside Service, Holton, Oxford OX33 1QQ.