Downton Abbey is an acclaimed British television drama created by Julian Fellowes depicting the lives of the upper and lower classes in post-Edwardian England. It first aired in the United Kingdom in 2010 but by the third series it had become one of the most-watched TV dramas worldwide. The series is set in the fictional Yorkshire country estate of Downton Abbey but many of the locations are in the Oxfordshire Cotswolds. This is such a beautiful area that it was no surprise that the producers chose to film some of the most memorable moments of the series here, particularly Bampton, which doubles as the fictional village of Downton. The rights to broadcast Downton Abbey have been acquired in over 220 territories and are viewed by an estimated global audience of 120 million people.
BAMPTON

The area around St Mary’s Church may seem oddly familiar to many visitors for this is where the village scenes in the series are filmed and where many dramas have been played out in the streets.

- Churchgate House, the old rectory in Bampton, is used for the exterior shots of Isobel Crawley’s house.
- The old Grammar School building, which now houses Bampton Community Archive, is where Downton Cottage Hospital scenes were filmed. The Archive has a small selection of Downton Abbey memorabilia including cards, mugs, pictures and a town map.
- St Mary’s Church, renamed as St Michael and All Angels, has hosted a number of dramatic ‘Downton’ events including weddings, funerals, christenings and even a jilting at the altar!
- Church View has appeared regularly throughout the series and is home to two fictional pubs – The Grantham Arms and The Dog & Duck – both featured in various episodes. It was also the site of Downton Fair.

* Please note that access to the Downton filming locations is not suitable for large vehicles and there is little parking. Please visit the Find Us page of the Bampton website www.bamptonoxon.co.uk for drop-off and parking information.

SHILTON

Lying two miles south of Burford and close to the Roman road known as Akeman Street is the picturesque village of Shilton. It is here that the Old Forge, beside Shill brook, was transformed into The Red Lion public house, where Mr Bates went to work after he left Downton Abbey in series 2. Across the Shill brook, which eventually feeds into the River Thames, is a very pretty 18th century stone hump-backed bridge which also featured.

DID YOU KNOW?

Bampton has for generations been renowned for its Morris Dancing traditions which are still celebrated today.

SWINBROOK

Two miles east of Burford is the beautiful village of Swinbrook, quintessentially English and situated alongside the River Windrush – at one time it would have been on the edge of the Wychwood Forest.

The Swan Inn, an idyllic Cotswold pub, is where Lady Sybil and Branson stayed whilst planning their elopement to Gretna Green, a controversial storyline in series 2.

COGGES

Close to Witney and nestling on the banks of the River Windrush is Cogges, a 13th century manor house and now a heritage site. Its historic farm buildings are used for the fictional Yew Tree Farm, which played host to many of the farming scenes in series 4 and was home to Mr Drewe, the tenant farmer. In series 5 the farm house has featured regularly as it is here that Marigold, Lady Edith’s illegitimate daughter, is being brought up. The kitchen had to be shot in such a way as to make it look smaller than it actually is to reflect Mr Drewe’s working class status.

RURAL ENGLAND AT ITS FINEST

The Oxfordshire Cotswolds is steeped in history, rich in heritage and awash with natural beauty, all found within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Close by are a network of national and international road, rail and air links – London Heathrow, London Oxford and Birmingham Airport.