



BRAKSPEAR

ESTABLISHED 1779

**PUB
TRAILS**

Silhouettes of two people walking. The person on the right is walking a dog on a leash.

**LEATHERN BOTTLE
LEWKNOR, WATLINGTON
OXFORDSHIRE**

**3 CIRCULAR WALKS
4.4, 4.6 & 6 MILES**






We're delighted to present three circular walks all starting and ending at The Leathern Bottle. The Brakspear Pub Trails are a series of circular walks.

We thought the idea of a variety of circular country walks all starting and ending at our pubs was a guaranteed winner. We have fantastic pubs nestled in the countryside, and we hope our maps are a great way for you to get out and enjoy some fresh air and a gentle walk, with a guaranteed drink at the end – perfect!

Our pubs have always welcomed walkers (and almost all of them welcome dogs too), so we're making it even easier with plenty of free maps. You can pick up copies in the pubs taking part or go to brakspearaletrails.co.uk to download them. We're planning to add new pubs onto them, so the best place to check for the latest maps available is always our website.

We absolutely recommend you book a table so that when you finish your walk you can enjoy a much needed bite to eat too. At the weekend, please book in advance, as this is often a busier time, especially our smaller pubs.

And finally, do send us your photos of you out and about on your walk. We really do love getting them.

   @BrakspearPubs

How to get there



Driving: Postcode is OX49 5TW with a car park for customers.



Nearest station: Princes Risborough is 8.3 miles away.



Local bus services: The Number 40 bus service from Carousel.



Brakspear would like to thank the Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment and the volunteers who helped make these walks possible. As a result of these walks, Brakspear has invested in TOE2 to help maintain and improve Oxfordshire's footpaths.

Reg. charity no. 1140563

Respect – Protect – Enjoy

Respect other people:

- Consider the local community and other people enjoying the outdoors
- Leave gates and property as you find them and follow paths unless wider access is available

Protect the natural environment:

- Leave no trace of your visit and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under effective control

Enjoy the outdoors:

- Plan ahead and be prepared
- Follow advice and local signs

For more info visit: www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-country-side-code



The Leathern Bottle
 Lewknor Nr. Watlington
 Oxfordshire
 OX49 5TW
 Tel: 01844 351482

- ▲ **Route 1:** Leathern Bottle – Aston Rowant Reserve – Leathern Bottle
 Distance: 7.1km (4.4 miles) Time: 2 hours
- **Route 2:** Leathern Bottle – Aston Rowant – Leathern Bottle
 Distance: 7.4km (4.6 miles) Time: 1hr 50 mins
- **Route 3:** Leathern Bottle – Pyrton – Leathern Bottle
 Distance: 10km (6 miles) Time: 2.5 hours



 Brakspear recommends that all walkers bring a copy of the Chilterns Hills West Ordnance Survey map. You can borrow one from the pub for a refundable £10 deposit.

Route 1

Moderate walk with
some steep hills.

Directions

Distance: 7.1km (4.4 miles) Time: 2 hours

- 01 On leaving the pub car park, go straight across the road and walk up the lane ahead. The lane narrows and becomes a path following steps up through a small area of woodland to reach the B4009.
- 02 Turn left on to the pavement and then cross over the busy road at the crossing point.
- 03 Turn immediately right on to a lane leading to Hill Farm. Walk up the lane for just over half a mile, about 1km, crossing the Ridgeway long distance trail and continuing towards the Chiltern Escarpment.
- 04 When you reach Hill Farm on your left, bear left through a gate into Aston Rowant Nature Reserve. There is an interpretation board with information about the reserve.

DID YOU KNOW?

Aston Rowant National Nature Reserve – Perched high on the Chiltern escarpment, the 159 hectare (392 acre) reserve contains flower-rich chalk grassland, woodland and juniper scrub. There are extensive views over the Oxford plain and it's a great place to watch red kites soaring overhead. One of over 200 NNRs in the UK.

- 05 The path starts to climb up the escarpment, following a hedge on the edge of a chalk grassland field.
- 06 Go through another wooden gate and keep climbing up the hill; note the numerous ant hills in the chalk grassland.
- 07 At the next metal gate, note the evergreen juniper shrubs in a small fenced off area to your left, once common in the Chilterns. There is a conveniently placed bench near here, perhaps a chance to take a rest and enjoy the view from the escarpment.

DID YOU KNOW?

Juniper – This slow-growing evergreen shrub produces a small fragrant berry used in flavouring gin. Many counties in southern England have lost more than 60% of their juniper populations. Conservation efforts are concentrating on improving regeneration and fencing off areas to allow young juniper plants to grow.

- 08 The path continues straight ahead, crossing a field to a metal five bar gate with a wooden pedestrian gate beside it.
- 09 Go through this gate and turn right onto an old tarmac lane, and then turn immediately left up a narrow path. This path goes between shrubs and then opens out with a field on your left, before reaching a wooden gate which leads on to a road.

- 10 Cross the road and bear slightly left and then right onto a tarmac drive. You are now entering the Wormsley estate; go through the metal gate and follow the tarmac drive past Upper Vicar's Farm and down through beech woods and into a quiet valley with pastures on each side.
- 11 Follow this drive for about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile/1.2km until you reach Lower Vicar's Farm. Follow the drive round to the right, past a pond on your left.
- 12 Walk slightly up hill, going past a wooden gate with a path going to the left, and then take the next footpath on the right; this path is slightly hidden; you need to go through an archway in the hedge to reach the wooden kissing gate, so keep an eye out for it.
- 13 Walk straight up the hill across a pasture, then through the next wooden gate and again walk straight on up the hill towards the trees on the skyline.
- 14 You will reach another wooden gate at the top of the hill on the edge of a woodland. You are now leaving the Wormsley estate and entering Cowleaze wood which is managed by the Forestry Commission.
- 15 Shortly after entering the wood the path forks; follow the white arrow straight ahead ignoring the path on the right.
- 16 After about 300m just past where the path bends to the right and just before a fallen conifer on the right hand side of the path, there is a small path off to the right and 50m away at the end of this path is the stone RAF memorial.
- 17 Carry on along the main path in same direction, ignoring a footpath off to the left, until you reach the entrance to the car park.
- 18 Turn right here and walk to the end of the car park where you will find a small path on the left leading the short distance to the road.
- 19 Cross the road (take care here, the visibility to the right is a little limited) and then head straight on down the rutted track ahead.
- 20 Follow this track right down to the bottom of the escarpment; after about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile/1.2km it will bring you back to Hill Farm.
- 21 Retrace your steps down Hill Lane and back to the village of Lewknor.

Route 2

Easy walk
with no hills.

Directions

Distance: 7.4km (4.6 miles) Time: 1hr 50 mins

- 01 On leaving the pub car park turn left, passing a large interpretation board on your left with a helpful map of the area and showing the local rights of way.
- 02 Walk along the pavement, past Church Lane on your left. When you reach a gate to the school, turn left and walk through a recreation ground and past the school on your right, heading towards the church.
- 03 Take the path round to the left of the church, which leads to a gate in the far left hand corner. Go through this gate and the next one, that leads to a path running between two wire mesh fences.
- 04 Go through the next gate and follow the path diagonally across the corner of a meadow to a metal kissing gate.
- 05 Go straight and slightly to the right across the next meadow (don't follow the more obvious path round to the left), where you will find a small stile and a gap in the fence line. (Note; you might need to take care regarding livestock in the field)
- 06 Again go straight on, walking parallel to the hedgeline on your left; you will see another small wooden stile ahead.
- 07 Cross the stile into a damp marshy meadow; walk straight ahead towards a metal five bar gate with an adjacent stile.
- 08 Cross the stile and turn right into Nethercote Lane. The path follows the edge of a woodland and after about a quarter of a mile/400m the path goes through a tunnel beneath the motorway.
- 09 Keep walking straight on, through a narrow strip of woodland where the path goes under a long natural tunnel of trees, leading to quite a busy road, the A40.
- 10 Cross the A40 carefully and turn left onto the pavement, walking past the Blue Cross animal charity. Turn right at the next bridleway.
- 11 You are now following the route of the lower Icknield Way keep going straight along the wide grassy path beside fields for almost a mile/about 1.4km.

DID YOU KNOW?

Lower Icknield Way – The Icknield Way claims to be Britain's oldest road, extending from Dorset to Norfolk. Today's Ridgeway trail (see below) follows some of this route along the springline of the Chiltern Hills. In this area the Lower Icknield Way follows a parallel route slightly further away from the escarpment and is thought to date back to the Roman period.

- 12 When you reach a junction with another bridleway, fork slightly to the right, and then right again on to a track, heading towards Aston Rowant village.
- 13 The track becomes a lane, passing attractive thatched cottages on your right hand side, and then reaching the church on your left.

DID YOU KNOW?

Aston Rowant village – the Parish stretches from the wooded slopes of the Chilterns to the Oxfordshire plain and is perhaps best known for a successful cricket club and point to point racing. The village has a 12th century church, St Peter and St Paul, a lovely country church set in an idyllic countryside setting. The real interest here is the wonderful memorials, from the 11th century to the 17th century. The church is usually open daylight hours and is well worth a visit.

- 14 Just past the church, turn right and follow this road round to the left and then straight on to reach the B4009.
- 15 Go straight across the B4009 and through a metal gate; you are now on the route of the Aston Rowant Discovery Trail.
- 16 The path opens out and crosses a large field heading towards the Chiltern escarpment. There are fine views of this densely wooded stretch of the Chilterns.
- 17 When you reach the Ridgeway long distance trail, turn right and follow the wide trail, enjoying views up to the Chilterns on the left.
- 18 After half a mile/800m you will reach a cottage on the right and a main road, the A40; cross with care and continue straight on along the Ridgeway.
- 19 The trail skirts around the edge of Aston Rowant National Nature Reserve and then heads towards the motorway which cuts straight through the Chiltern escarpment.
- 20 Walk through the tunnel under the motorway and stay on the Ridgeway until you reach a lane.
- 21 Turn right and follow the lane for about half a mile/400m until you reach the B4009. This is a busy stretch of road; use the crossing point to the left. Once over the road, turn left along the pavement.
- 22 After a short distance, there is a path on your right heading down some steps (which can be slippery when wet and covered in leaves) and into the village of Lewknor.
- 23 Walk along the lane past a few houses and you will soon see the Old Leathern Bottle ahead of you.

Route 3

A pleasant and fairly long walk over flat terrain.

Directions

Distance: 10km (6 miles) Time: 2.5 hours

- 01 On leaving the pub car park turn sharp right and immediately right again into Weston Road and continue along this road for approximately 1.5km.
- 02 At Weston, opposite a wooden notice board and post box, turn left into Rectory Lane, a cul-de-sac, walk to end of the lane and then bear left through a gap between a hedge and a metal gate.
- 03 Stay on the same path for about 500m, (ignoring what looks like a footpath forking to the left around a garden boundary fence), the path then turns left onto a wooden footbridge over a small stream.
- 04 Cross over the bridge and a stile then turn immediately right and follow the path along the edge of a large field.
- 05 After about 200m go through a boundary hedge and turn immediately left following the hedge along a broad grass path by the edge of another field.
- 06 At the corner of this field turn sharp right and follow the boundary hedge along the edge of the same field for 250m, then along an enclosed fenced section of path with views of farm buildings on the left.
- 07 Exit over a stile, cross a concrete farm track, and enter the field opposite using another stile.
- 08 Walk diagonally across the field to a stile by a large oak tree. Cross over the stile and enter the next field via a second stile. Continue diagonally across the field in the same direction as before.
- 09 Exit the field via a stile and turn right and walk along a track for about 150m.
- 10 Where the track bends round to the right carry straight on over a stile and follow the path for about 400m where the footpath meets a gravel access drive.
- 11 After a further 50m the drive meets the public road turn left here and walk through the centre of Pyrton, past the Village hall, built in 1895, and then shortly afterwards on the right, the Church of St Mary's and the main entrance to Pyrton Manor.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Church of St. Mary's in Pyrton is a Grade II* Listed building. Parts of the building date back to 987. In 1115, William Fitznigel, granted the church to his foundation, the Augustinian priory at Runcorn, Cheshire. When the priory was dissolved in 1546 the church, parsonage and about 115 acres of land was granted to Christchurch College Oxford. The church was rebuilt in 1856 by J.C.Buckler, but parts of the 12th century building still remain, including the south doorway and the chancel arch, and these include decorations rarely found in Oxfordshire.



© Des Blenkinsopp, Wikimedia Commons

Pyrton Manor

DID YOU KNOW?

Pyrton Manor is a Grade II* listed Elizabethan house built around 1610, close to the moated site of the medieval manor. The house is not visible from the road but the old Manor Lodge is.

- 12 Leave the village and walk in same direction along the road until you reach the junction with the B4009.
- 13 Cross the main road with care into Station road opposite, shortly afterwards you will pass the large house on your left, this is site of the old Watlington Railway Station.
- 14 Continue straight ahead for 1100 metres until you reach the junction with the Ridgeway long distance trail turn left here.
- 15 Follow the Ridgeway trail, the track runs between hedgerows and for much of the way is beneath trees, offering glimpses towards the Chiltern escarpment.
- 16 After about 2km you emerge from the trees onto a broad grassy track, and you will see the motorway up ahead where it cuts through the Chilterns.
- 17 When you reach a small lane (Hill Lane) turn left and follow the lane for about half a mile/400m until you reach the B4009.
- 18 This is a busy stretch of road; use the crossing point to the left. Once over the road, turn left along the pavement.
- 19 After a short distance, there is a path on your right heading down some steps (which can be slippery when wet and covered in leaves) and into the village of Lewknor.
- 20 Walk along a lane past a few houses and you will soon see the Old Leathern Bottle ahead of you.

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