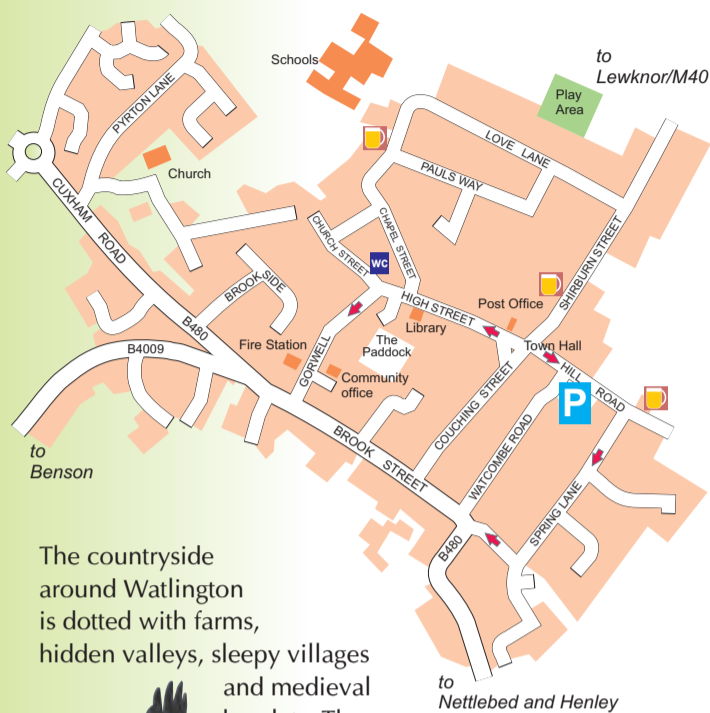


Watlington.. a really attractive market town

Lying at the foot of the Chiltern Hills, Watlington is an attractive rural market town. It is first recorded as a Saxon settlement in the 8th century and has many historic buildings. The town is skirted by the Icknield Way (part of The Ridgeway National Trail) making it a popular stop-off for walkers, naturalists, cyclists and horse riders. There are several pubs in the town and a number of shops offering a range of speciality foods and goods.



The countryside around Watlington is dotted with farms, hidden valleys, sleepy villages and medieval hamlets. There is a wonderful network of rights of way offering many possibilities for walking. You can either stick to the flatter routes in the Vale or climb up into the Chiltern Hills for magnificent views of surrounding countryside - the perfect place to watch red kites soaring overhead.



This Walk.. Lewknor and Pyrton

There are several stiles on this route. It is a relatively easy walk with no steep climbs taking you through the lovely villages of Lewknor and Pyrton at the foot of the Chilterns escarpment.

This walk starts at the car park in Watlington and takes you north towards Aston Rowant and its beautiful nature reserve special for its chalk downland, beech woodland and carpets of scented wildflowers in the summer. This circular walk is approximately 6 miles long and you should allow at least 3 hours to complete it. The map shows an extra spur of about 3 miles (return) to the village of Cuxham.

You will pass through Lewknor, a typical Chilterns village. People have settled here since prehistoric times because of the availability of water, fertile land and woods. At the centre of the village are the remnants of Town Pond which used to produce watercress which was transported to London daily by train. St Margaret's Church in Lewknor is well worth a visit. It is a Grade 1 listed church dating back to the 12th century.

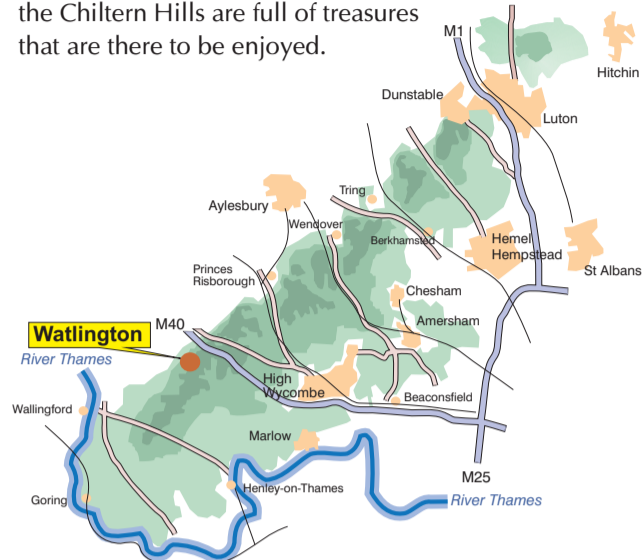
Model Farm was built by Lord Macclesfield in 1857 and so called as when it was built it was one of the most technologically advanced farms in the country. It is of considerable historical interest as an early example of the mechanisation which revolutionised modern agriculture.

Pyrton is a tiny remote village of some fifty houses, mostly brick and flint with a little stone and some thatched roofs. The 16th century manor house, hidden within the park, was the home of Elizabeth Symeon, who was married to John Hampden in Pyrton church in 1619.



The Chilterns.. an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The Chiltern Hills stretch from the River Thames in south Oxfordshire through Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire to Hitchin in Hertfordshire. The area contains some of the finest countryside in the UK, recognised by its designation as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). From quiet valleys with medieval villages to dramatic viewpoints on the hilltops, leafy green woodlands to flower-covered meadows, the Chiltern Hills are full of treasures that are there to be enjoyed.



For more information visit www.chilternsaonb.org or call 01844 355500.



This Walk.. try this and our other Walks

This leaflet describes and illustrates one of 4 walks produced by Watlington Parish Council with the support of the Hidden Britain Project, funded through the Rural Enterprise Scheme, administered by Defra.

These walks start from the car park in Watlington

Walk 1 Watlington

A 2 mile walk through this historic market town

Walk 2 Cookley Green and Swyncombe

7 miles - discover hidden valleys and medieval hamlets

Walk 3 Watlington Hill

4-5 miles - a hilly walk with magnificent views

Walk 4 Lewknor and Pyrton

6 miles - a level walk through open countryside

Refreshments: There are a number of pubs and cafes in Watlington and a pub in Lewknor. You can also get food and drink if you take the spur to Cuxham.

Parking: There is free parking available in the Hill Road car park, Watlington, where you start your walk.

Toilets: There are public toilets in Church Street (at the bottom of High Street).

Accommodation: Visit www.watlington.org

Watlington.. how to get there



By car: Leave M40 at Junction 6; in Watlington take the first turning on your left into Hill Road. The free car park is on your right.

By bus: X39 hourly from Oxford. The Oxford Tube travels between Oxford and London every 10 minutes and stops at Junction 6 (Lewknor).

Countryside Code:

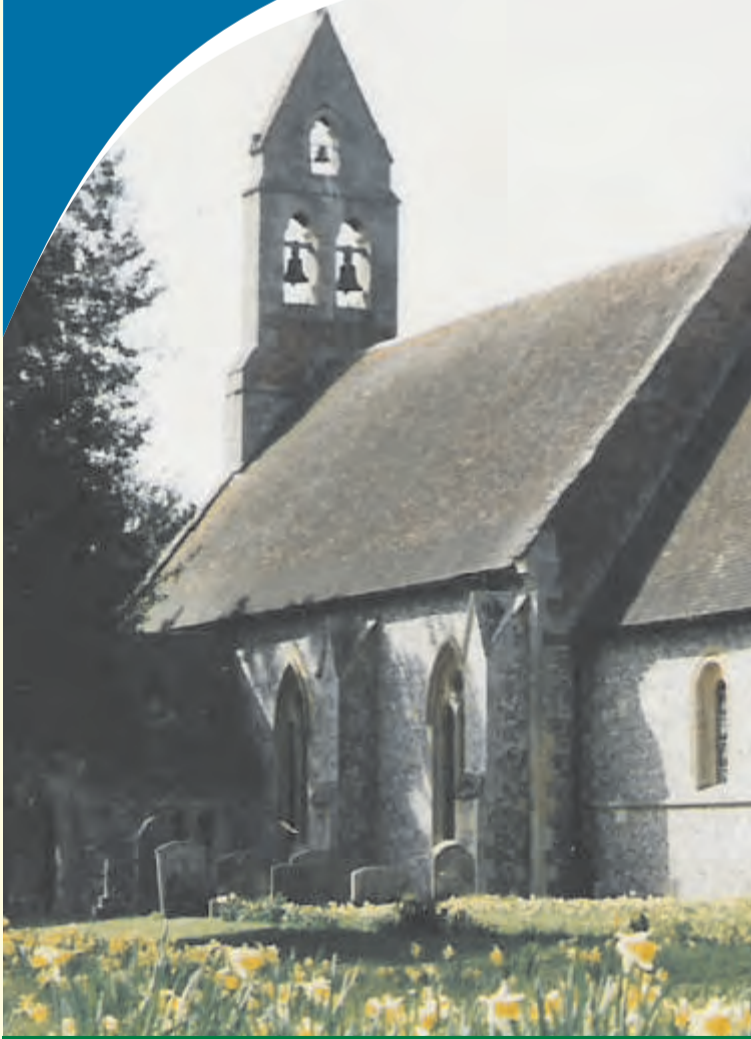
- Be safe - plan ahead and follow any signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants & animals, and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under control
- Consider other people

For further information on Watlington visit www.watlington.org

Other Watlington Walk leaflets can be obtained from the Community Office, Library and the Paper Shop. Photography by © Catherine Pinney and the Chilterns Conservation Board



Watlington to Lewknor and Pyrton



Watlington
Oxfordshire Chilterns Country



Watlington to Lewknor and Pyrton

6 miles - visit a typical Chilterns village

- 1 Leave the car park through the main entrance and turn right. Pass the Carriers Arms and walk uphill to reach the Ridgeway crossing. Go left and follow the Ridgeway National Trail, which is also here the ancient Icknield Way and Swan's Way. In about half a mile cross a metalled road, part of the Oxfordshire Way.
- 2 Continue along the bridleway, with views of the Chiltern escarpment to the right. An area of Shirburn Hill is now designated as Open Access land; the track skirts the base of the hill. With the M40 motorway in sight, pass a footpath joining from the right. In about 300yards go left along a footpath (marked L13) then turn right with the path to join a road.
- 3 Go left and shortly, taking great care, cross a main road to a lay-by. A concrete footpath with steps descends from the lay-by and joins a road into the village of Lewknor. Go ahead to a cross-roads at Ye Olde Leatheren Bottel public house. A short diversion to the right here will take in the parish church. Continue forward along Weston Road. Shortly pass some farm buildings and the Manor House on the left and, at a bend in the road, the moated Moor Court.
- 4 Following a quiet stretch of country road and with the spire of South Weston church ahead, go left at Rectory Lane, passing cottages on the left. The path now bears right to pass a large country house with gardens, a lake and tennis court, and continues along the edge of a field.
- 5 Go left across a footbridge and stile and turn right along the field edge. Go left at an opening in the hedge ahead, the path here joining the Oxfordshire Way, (waymarked), with the hedge on the left. Go right at the corner of the field, then left through a farm track and immediately right again to cross a stile. The buildings to the left are, although industrial in appearance, Model Farm. Go along the right edge of the field. Cross a lane to a stile and then diagonally left across a field. Cross to another stile and diagonally across the next field to the far corner.

- 6 Go right at a lane (part of the ancient Lower Icknield Way) and, at a crossing of tracks, ahead to cross a stile and continue to reach Pyrton. Turn left through the village, still following the Oxfordshire Way. Pause at the church; the churchyard is a sea of daffodils in the spring and Daffodil Sunday is a special day.

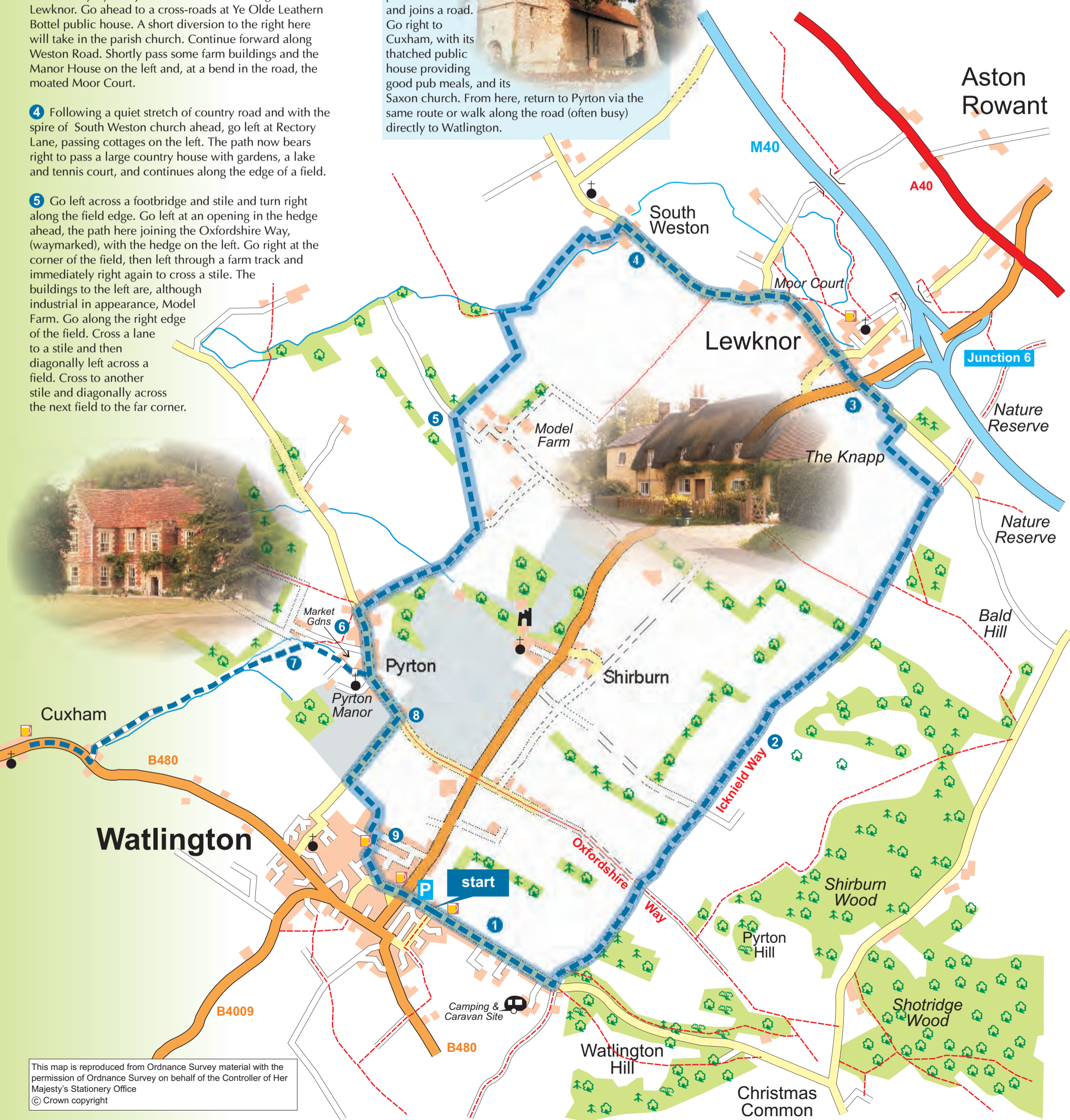
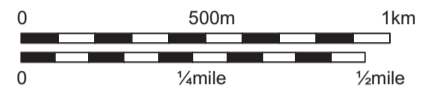
For the energetic walker, there is a diversion here to take in the village of Cuxham.

- 7 The track to the right of the church leads to a meadow with a stile. Go across the meadow to a field gate, follow the line of the hedge, a clearly marked path passes a farm and joins a road. Go right to Cuxham, with its thatched public house providing good pub meals, and its Saxon church. From here, return to Pyrton via the same route or walk along the road (often busy) directly to Watlington.

- 8 Alternatively, from Pyrton church continue along the road to a right turn. Here the route leaves the Oxfordshire Way. Go right along the road to reach a footpath sign on the left. Turn left, with a hedge on the right and the school sports field on the other side.

- 9 The path bears right, then joins a road with allotments on the left and the school on the right. Go right along the road to pass the Chequers public house, turning left and then right to return to the cross in the centre of Watlington. Go up High St. past the town hall to return to the car park.

Now explore Watlington



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