

Pilgrim Paths

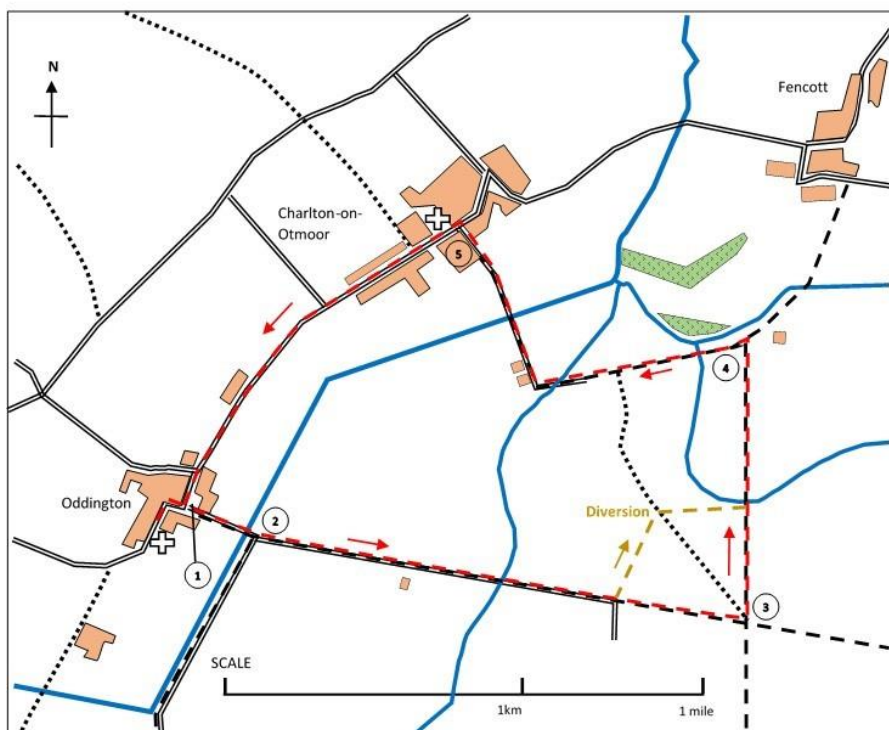
Oddington to Charlton-on-Otmoor Circular Walk

Distance: 3.65 miles

A pilgrimage is a spiritual journey to a sacred place.

This leaflet offers Bible passages and reflections to accompany your journey, with suggestions of places to pause. Please allow much more time than you would usually spend on a walk to be able to contemplate the journey.

The circular walk may include road walking through villages, footpaths through woods and fields and negotiating some stiles. You may also encounter sheep, cattle or horses grazing in the fields.



START

LOCATION: Church of St Andrew, Oddington



Pause, Reflect & Pray

Be with us, Lord God, as we set out today. Open our eyes to see the beauty of your creation and open our hearts to receive your love.
Amen.



The Church of St Andrew occupies a site on the edge of Oddington, in the area of the former medieval village. No other buildings from this period remain, but their outline can be seen in the field behind the church. The fishponds which were in the grounds of the houses still remain. The church can trace its origins to the 10th century and a Cistercian Monastery that was founded in Oddington, with the interior of the current church stemming from the Anglo-Catholic period in the 20th century.



Pause, Reflect & Pray

From the churchyard there are magnificent views across Otmoor to the hills of the moor beyond.



Photo: Nigel Lambert

These lands were enclosed in the 19th century as part of the Enclosures Act, having a devastating effect on the poor in the area who could no longer graze their animals freely.

Pray that God would soften your heart to the world's injustices.

On leaving the church turn right and walk through the village. On reaching the telephone kiosk (now a defibrillating station) (1), go straight onto the track to the right of the kiosk, leading to the moor and crossing Oddington Bridge (2). Ahead are two options: in good weather the bridleway (the left hand track) is the more pleasant route, with an abundance of wildflowers in spring and summer. The alternative is the permissive path (on the right), running parallel with the bridleway, which has a hard surface. Both routes go to bridges over the Glebe Brook. If you have come along the permissive path, the path goes slightly left after the bridge to a kissing gate, where you join the bridleway. On your right is the Otmoor Nature Reserve, with its year round abundance of wildlife.



Photo: Nigel Lambert

From there continue on the bridleway until it reaches a wide track going off to the left (3). This is the Roman road from Dorchester-on-Thames to Alchester. Turn left, following the Roman road.



Photo: Barbara Walton

If the rifle range on the moor is in use this route will be barred, with a signed diversion across the fields before you get to the barred gate.



Photo: Nigel Walton

Diversion: If you are following the diversion, follow the sign left into the field. Walk to the top right corner where you will see a red flag indicating the firing range is in use (similar to that shown at the barrier above). Cross the small bridge on the left and turn right into the field, heading towards the next flag. Go through the kissing gate and turn left, joining the Roman road and the path you would be on had the diversion not occurred.

The route now continues along the Roman road. Where the path bends right, take the unmarked path left (4) towards Charlton. This leads to Charlton Bridge, over the Ray. Follow the road as it bends right and you will see the church ahead on the left. Walk straight ahead, over a second bridge, to



Photo: Nigel Walton



Photo: Nigel Lambert

enter Charlton-on-Otmoor from the rear of the Crown Public House (5). Turn left to arrive at the Church of St. Mary the Virgin.



LOCATION: Church of St Mary the Virgin,
Charlton-on-Otmoor



Photo: Nigel Lambert



The Church of St Mary the Virgin is Grade 1 listed and originates from the 13th century. The splendid rood screen dates from the early 16th century and survived the Reformation and the instruction given by Edward VI in 1547 that all such screens were to be removed.

On May Day flower bouquets and garlands made of greenery are hung at the top of the rood screen. All year round the cross above the rood screen is covered in greenery.



Photo: Nigel Lambert

Pause, Reflect & Pray

As you gaze at the rood screen reflect on all the divisions in the Church of England and the church denominations around the world.

Lord Jesus, teach us to love others as you have loved us. Help us to foster unity instead of division, hope instead of despair and love instead of evil. May our hearts reflect your heart for the world.

Amen.

On leaving the church, turn right and walk along the High Street. Admire the stone houses on both sides of the street which, up until the 20th century, were occupied by the craftsmen and tradesmen who made up this vibrant, commercial village.



Shown here are a selection.

On leaving Charlton – on – Otmoor, the route follows the road to Oddington, a distance of about half a mile. The road is not too busy but care should be taken.



Pause, Reflect & Pray

We have come to the end of our walk, taking the experience with us ...

May the raindrops fall lightly on your brow.

May the soft winds freshen your spirit.

May the sunshine brighten your heart.

May the burdens of the day rest lightly upon you
And may God enfold you in the mantle of his love.

Old Gaelic Blessing

END

PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU FOLLOW THE COUNTRYSIDE CODE.

LEAVE GATES AND PROPERTY AS YOU FIND THEM AND WALK ONLY ON
DESIGNATED PATHS.

