

Bicester and Islip Deanery

Route  
8

# Pilgrim Paths

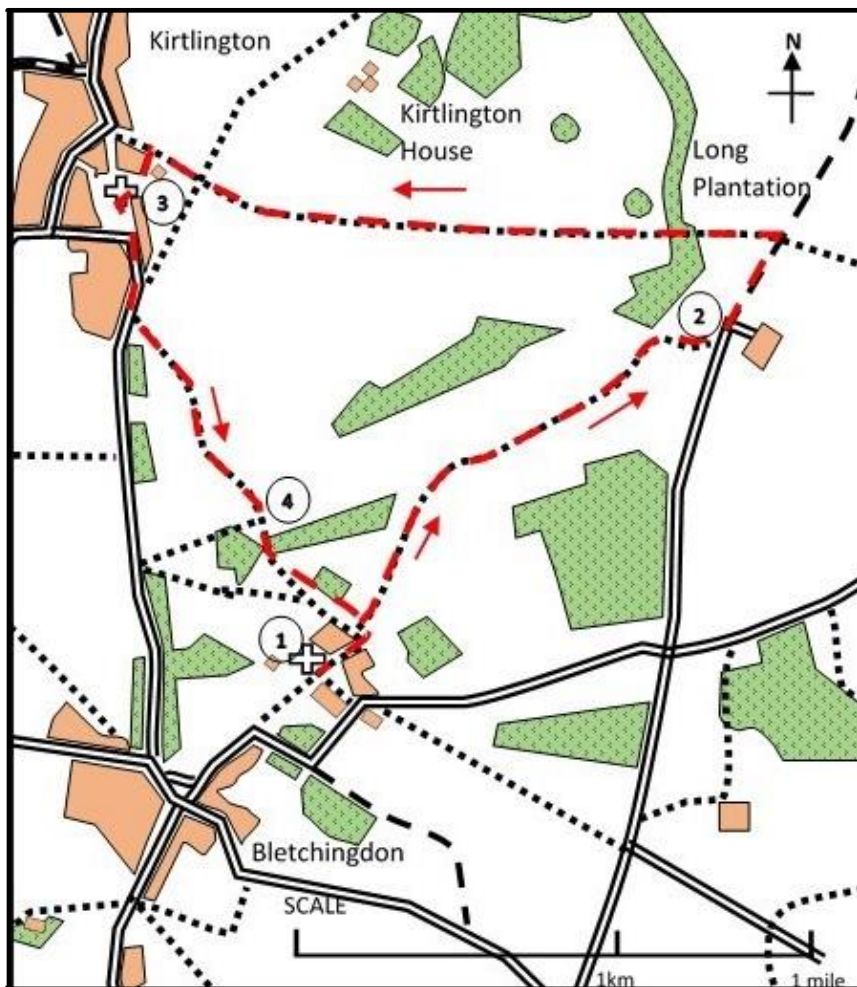
## Bletchington Kirtlington Circular Walk

Distance: 3.9 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.*





**KEY**

- |   |              |
|---|--------------|
|  | Pilgrim Path |
|  | Road         |
|  | Bridleway    |
|  | Footpath     |
|  | River        |
|  | Railway      |
|  | Station      |
|  | Village/Farm |
|  | Woods        |
|  | Church       |

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**FACEBOOK**  
at  
**Bicester and Islip Deanery  
Pilgrim Paths**

## START

**LOCATION:** Church of St Giles, Bletchington



### 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 Giles Bletchington is a Grade II listed building with a number of beautiful features contained in it. One of the oldest is the Norman lintel with a star in square pattern which can be seen on the outside of the south wall of the chancel. Below it on the exterior wall are three mass dials, each of a different period and design. The oldest reflects the Saxon system of time-keeping.*

*As a young man, Christopher Wren lived at The Rectory with his family after his father was deprived of his living by the Puritans, his sister having married the then Rector, William Holder. Dean Wren is recorded in the burial register for 1656 and is believed to be buried under the chancel floor.*



Photo: Andrew Thomas

From the churchyard gate (1), with your back to the church, turn left and follow the path, passing the old stables of Bletchingdon Park on the left (as seen here).

At the end of the gravel path, do not follow the tarmac road but continue straight ahead to a stile. Cross the stile into a paddock (as shown here). Turn diagonally left across the paddock to a stile over the fence, about half way along the right hand side of the paddock (shown below).



Photo: Barbara Walton



Photo: Barbara Walton

Cross the stile and follow the path, as indicated by the footpath marker, as it continues slightly downhill to the bottom of the field. At the bottom of the field, you will cross a ditch and into the next field. Turn right and continue along the edge of the field, with the hedge on your right.

At the end of the field, continue through a gap in the hedge and into the next field. Continue in the same direction along the edge of the field. At the end of this field go through a gap in the hedge to a track. Turn right and follow the track to a metal gate, with a stile to its right. Cross the stile and continue to a road.



Photo: Anni Foley

As you reach the road, turn around and look at the horizon to admire the view of Bletchington Park. In front of you depending on the time of year you may see beautiful oilseed rape fields of gold.

Turn left along the road. Do not follow the road as it bends right into the farmyard, but continue straight ahead, following the bridleway through a gate (2). Follow the bridleway for 340m where you will see a bridleway marker on the right.



Photo: Barbara Walton



Photo: Barbara Walton

Continue for a further fifteen meters to a gap in the hedge on the left. Go through the gap and follow the

footpath through the middle of the field towards Long Planation. On leaving the spinney through a wooden gate, cross a farm track.



Photo: Barbara Walton

and on entering another wooden gate opposite, continue on the Oxfordshire Way, with a small plantation on the left. When this plantation / hedgerow ends (shown), go left into an open field continuing diagonally across the field on the Oxfordshire Way. You will shortly have



Photo: Barbara Walton



Photo: Andrew Thomas

a view of Kirtlington House to your right. Carry on past a small wood on your right and into a grass field, crossing diagonally left to a gate leading into Kirtlington Park. Do not go into the park but continue following the Oxfordshire Way, keeping the hedge on your right all

the time until you reach Kirtlington Village Hall (3). Go to the right of the Village Hall and take the footpath skirting the playing field to visit the Church of St Mary the Virgin, Kirtlington.

**LOCATION:** Church of St Mary the Virgin, Kirtlington



Photo: Andrew Thomas



The earliest known record for the parish church of St Mary the Virgin is in the Domesday Book of 1086 although almost nothing survives from this stage. The church has gone through various additions and rebuilds, with one in 1877 by Sir Henry and Lady Dashwood who had the chancel restored by Sir George Gilbert Scott. During rebuilding the mediaeval south window, the priest's door, the double aumbry and double piscina were discovered. At the same time the organ was installed in the Dashwood Chapel, obscuring a 1724 memorial to the first three Dashwood baronets and other members of the family. Take an opportunity to look at the beautiful Victorian stained glass window dedicated to Sir Henry's grandmother in the chancel.



## Pause, Reflect & Pray

As you gaze at the reflection of the window, meditate on  
*1 Corinthians 13:12*

For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror;  
then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part;  
then I shall know fully even as I am fully known.

Turn left on leaving the church to the gate and continue down the path, with the playing fields on your left. On reaching the road continue straight ahead, until you reach the stone gate posts that form the entrance to the driveway of Park House (shown here) on the left. Ignore the first footpath by the Park House entrance but continue a further 40 metres to take a footpath on the left (signposted 'Bletchingdon Park ¾'). Cross the double stile into a small paddock,



where you bear slightly right across the paddock to reach another stile. Cross this stile and enter a field (shown on the next page), following the footpath down to the bottom right hand corner of the field (as marked by the arrow).



On reaching the bottom corner turn left and continue along the track with a hedge on your right towards a wood. After approximately 250 metres turn right off the track, following

the footpath through a gate in a wall. After going through the gate turn left to follow the path to a gate between two plantations (4). Continue straight ahead up a slope, following the permissive path, with a fence on your left, and into a small paddock alongside the converted stables of Bletchingdon Park. We have already been through this field on the way out but are now approaching it from the other side. Bear right across the paddock to the stile in the far right hand corner, following the permissive path. Cross the stile and continue past the old stables and back up the gravel drive to the Church of St Giles, Bletchingdon and your vehicle(1).

## 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.