

Pewsey Vale Circular Walk in 13 stages - anti-clockwise directions

- AC 1 Ham to Froxfield**
- AC2 Froxfield to Great Bedwyn**
- AC3 Great Bedwyn to Wootton Rivers**
- AC4 Wootton Rivers to Knap Hill car park**
- AC5 Knap Hill car park to Bishops Cannings**
- AC6 Bishops Cannings to Marden**
- AC7 Marden to Upavon**
- AC8 Upavon to Milton Hill**
- AC9 Milton Hill to Collingbourne Ducis**
- AC10 Collongbourne Ducis to Hippenscombe Farm**
- AC11 Hippenscombe Farm to Oxenwood**
- AC12 Oxenwood to Linkenholt**
- AC13 Linkenholt to Ham**

AC1 Ham to Froxfield

[Updated in April 2025]

Maps: OS Explorer 158, OS Landranger 174

Distance: 5¼ miles, 8 km

Facing the Crown and Anchor pub, turn left, then immediately bear right along the road signposted to Inkpen and Newbury. Turn left onto a track to Field House, and when this very soon turns right to the house, continue ahead through a gap next to a field gate into a field. Walk through this, half of which may contain crops, then just beyond a gap through a line of trees, go diagonally right across two fields on a clear path uphill to a road.

Enter the driveway to Mount Prosperous via a kissing gate to the right of closed double gates and walk towards the house down a tree-lined tarmac drive.

Follow the drive round to the left and right into an open area. As you approach a wood to your left keep a look out for a low marker post, with the house now clearly visible in front of you. Fork left off the drive at the post and follow a clear path through the wood to a road (the A338).

Turn right along the pavement for 50m, then cross over carefully to take a short footbridge and stile into a field. Follow the clear gravel path half left across the field.

Go through a squeeze stile and straight across a small field to a stile onto a road. Turn right and walk gradually uphill. Just past a large, square, brick house called Upper Westcott, turn left onto a footpath. Follow this round the house's garden, then up into an open area to rejoin the road you have just left at a small triangular green.

Turn right beyond the green on the road through the hamlet of Bagshot, then turn right off it through a kissing gate down a green track. When this turns right at a pair of cottages, continue ahead through a kissing gate to the Long Walk (which is well named!). This passes through woodland and is mostly level. At a junction of tracks, turn left onto a byway, then soon right onto a bridleway. At a crossroads of paths, turn right onto another byway. When this reaches a road, continue ahead along it. Cross the Kennet and Avon canal followed by the railway to arrive at the A4, just to the west of the Pelican Inn in Froxfield.

AC2 Froxfield to Great Bedwyn

[Updated in March 2025]

Maps: OS Explorer 158 & 157, OS Landranger 174

Distance: 7¼ miles, 11.7 km

With your back to the Pelican Inn in Froxfield, turn right along the A4. Cross the A4 with great care, using the traffic calming islands, turn right along the pavement and climb steps on your left to a stile. This can be bypassed by going through a demolished fence to its right. Take the path which goes right and wanders through a small copse to a stile. Cross this and continue up the left-hand side of the field you have entered. When the hedge veers away to the left proceed across open ground towards a wood. Turn left at the wood and walk up a gravel path beside it to a road, joining a track which comes in from the right in the process. There are some lovely views along this section. At the road, kink left then right and walk up the side of two large fields with a wood to your right. Continue downhill on a dirt track to arrive at a Ramsbury Estate information board.

Turn left here along a track with trees now to your left. The surface soon changes to degraded tarmac. At a crossroads of tracks, where there is another Ramsbury Estate information board, turn left on a concrete track. When this arrives at a junction of tracks, turn left for a few metres, then right onto a wide, grassy track through a wood (Rudge Coppice). Follow the track round to the left, then go immediately right into a field. Walk down its left-hand side to a road. Turn left, and just after passing Rudge Farm to your left, turn right onto an enclosed bridleway. This descends gradually to a

fence. Turn right (the path is next to the fence) and walk parallel to the A4 to a road. Turn left up to the A4.

Turn right along it on the pavement provided. When this runs out, cross the A4 and walk up a signed bridleway (Monk's Lane), with a red brick garden wall on your left, towards Noke Wood. The route ahead is just inside the wood on your right, however this can get very overgrown and walkers have made their own path (which is not a right of way) along the edge of the adjoining field. At the end of the wood, continue ahead on a path which follows the line of telegraph poles. At a fence, turn left for a few metres, then right at a field corner. A gentle rise takes you to another field corner, where you turn left towards Chisbury. Dip down, then up, with a pond to the right. At the corner of the field, go through a gap in the hedge. Walk along the right-hand edge of the field until arriving at a stile. Cross this and walk between fences to another stile. Follow the enclosed path past the back gardens of houses, keeping left at an open area, to a road junction in Chisbury.

Take the road up the side of the grass triangle signposted to Great Bedwyn, then after 50m, take a signed path on the right over a sturdy stile. Head for a field gate opposite, then go half right across the next field towards the corner of Park Copse / Chisbury Wood. Go over the stile and walk with the wood on the right for 250m. Ignore what appears to be a stepless stile chewed by horses into the wood after 200m or so. Go over a stile into the wood and follow the winding path. When it emerges into a field, turn right and go through a gap into the next field. Take the path diagonally left through the field. (If this has impenetrable crops in it, continue on the path uphill with the wood to your right, then turn left at the telecoms mast along the field boundary.) Cross a path which goes towards the telecoms mast, go down wooden steps into another field and continue in the same direction to a short, enclosed pathway to a road. Turn right along this to the main road through Great Bedwyn, with the Three Tuns pub to your right. Turn left downhill to the village square, where this stage ends.

AC3 Great Bedwyn to Wootton Rivers

Maps: OS Explorer 157, OS Landranger 174 & 173

Distance: 7 miles, 11.3 km

Head away from Great Bedwyn's village square along Church Street. When the road bends sharp left over a bridge, turn right along Hatchet Lane. At a junction of paths, bear slightly right (ahead). At another junction, with a house (and footpath) to the right, turn left along a straight track, which gradually bends to the right, with woods

to the left and Stock Common to the right. There is a T junction in front of a couple of houses. Turn left here, soon passing a London bus stop on the left!

Follow the track through more woodland and past the imposing St Katherine's church on the right. Eventually reach a wooden kissing gate. Go through this and across the access road to Tottenham House. The route now opens out and crosses fields, also passing through a copse. Cross another access road to Tottenham House, at which point look right to spot the Ailsebury Column a considerable way down Savernake Forest's Grand Avenue.

Soon after, arrive at a road, turn left and walk through Durley. Cross a bridge over a dismantled railway at the bottom of a slope. Continue across another bridge over the current Pewsey to London railway, then immediately turn right along a path, with an extensive property on the left (which used to be a hotel). Soon descend steps to go through a low tunnel under the railway. You join the Kennet & Avon canal here at the end of the Bruce Tunnel. Pass under the A346 at Burbage Wharf. Continue on the towpath past four bridges over the canal, each accompanied by a lock. At the fourth bridge, number 108, leave the towpath and turn right across the bridge to join Wootton River's main street. Walk along this for 250m past the village hall on your left to arrive at the Royal Oak pub on your right.

AC4 Wootton Rivers to Knap Hill car park

Maps: OS Explorer 157, OS Landranger 173

Distance: 7.3 miles, 11.3 km

Mud Lane (see below) is well-named and can be very unpleasant at its worst, which tends to be in the winter. As an alternative to slipping and sliding along it, it is possible to reach the **small car park** mentioned below by taking quiet country roads, which also provide good views of Martinsell Hill. To do so, go up the metalled road opposite the Royal Oak pub, and after 50 metres or so turn right (signposted Clench Common and East Wick). Follow this road for 0.8 miles (1.3 km), passing East Wick Farm to right on the way, to arrive at a junction to the left (signposted New Mill and Milton Lilbourne). Follow the road round to the right here (signposted Martinsell Hill and Marlborough) and after 0.6 miles (1 km) arrive at the **small car park** to the left, with Mud Lane to your right.

If you wish to stick to the **official route**, with your back to the Royal Oak pub, turn right up the metalled road. After 150m, fork left by a house named Martinsell up a green bridleway. Follow this until it enters a field, where you turn left along its edge, then right at the field corner to reach the well-named Mud Lane at the top. Here it is

worth making a small detour: if you turn right along Mud Lane for perhaps 15m you will see, carved onto the end of a tree stump at head height to your left, the lugubrious face of the Green Man. Now turn round and go west along Mud Lane, counting off three vast fields to your left, with a barn between the second and third, to reach a metalled road, on the other side of which is a **small car park**.

The Way now goes through access land so you can make your own way through it, but the recommended route is that taken by the Mid Wilts Way (MWW).

Go through the gate beyond the car park and walk to where the woods on your right end. Continue ahead, climbing to the top of the hill, with more woods on your left. Turn right, leaving the MWW, with fence to the left, and follow the path through another gate and onwards into woodland. At a signposted crossroads of paths, go straight on, in the direction of Oare Hill, still in woodland. At the next crossroads of paths, the White Horse Trail joins you from the left. Emerge onto a clear track, and turn right down it to arrive at the A345 Marlborough to Pewsey road.

Cross carefully and turn left along the bridleway, which is also the driveway of Huish Hill House. Veer left after the entrance to Huish Down Farm (to right) and then right to arrive at the point where the drive sweeps to the left, and there is a track which goes straight on. You are faced with the choice of taking the right of way, which departs from the drive to the right after 30m or so, or taking the track straight on. The right of way can get so overgrown as to be impassable, but the track can get extremely muddy in wet weather.

Pass through a bridle or field gate at the end, depending on your choice, into a field. Cross it, veering slightly right towards another gate (you rejoin the White Horse Trail at this point). The superb views of the Pewsey Downs enjoyed on the last section of the Circular Way are repeated here. Go through the gate, with a fence to the left, and walk along the edge of the large field beyond. Follow the fence round to the right, go through a gate and immediately turn left through another one. Walk gently downhill on a sunken track between earthworks until you reach a crossroads of paths beyond a gate, just to the north of Gopher Wood. (Here you leave the White Horse Trail again.)

Pass through a wooden gate beyond the crossroads and continue slightly uphill to a stile. Here go left then right round two sides of the field next to Gopher Wood to cross the stile at the top. Go half left here, aiming for the signpost in front of the left-hand tree in the distance, then right on reaching it to go along a ridge of hills through several more fields, with the route being clearly waymarked. More fabulous views of the Pewsey Vale open up to the left along this ridge. As you start to go downhill, arrive at a gate into the last field before the Knap Hill car park, with Knap Hill itself prominent to your left. Follow the path through the centre of the field to a gate in the far fence and turn right after this into the car park.

AC5 Knap Hill car park to Bishops Cannings

Maps: OS Explorer 157, OS Landranger 173

Distance: 7 miles, 9.7 km

The route continues to follow the Mid Wilts Way. Crossing the Alton Barnes to Lockeridge road from the Knap Hill car park. Go through a metal bridle gate, then a metal kissing gate immediately to the left. Follow the well beaten track through two more metal kissing gates. Turn half right, with Adam's Grave and Walker's Hill to your left, to join an obvious path beside, or on top of, a low earthwork. The White Horse Trail comes in from the left just beyond Walker's Hill. Continue on this path along the contour line for 700m to arrive at the top of the Alton Barnes White Horse.

Continue through the gate beyond and follow the contour of the hillside. There are tremendous views of the Pewsey Vale to the left on this section, and to the right is Milk Hill, the highest point in Wiltshire at 295m (968ft). Go right in a tight semi-circle round the stunted trees and bushes on the shoulder of Milk Hill to pass through a gate beyond. Follow the ridge in a broad semi-circle to the left, passing through a second gate, then turn right through a third one. Shortly after this, arrive at a wide track, where the Wansdyke Path comes in from the right but the Pewsey Downs Nature Reserve is left behind. Cross the track and go over a stile onto the Iron Age fortification known as the Wansdyke. Turn left along it to a cross track. (This section gets badly overgrown in the summer, in which case turn left down the track.) After a few metres downhill on the cross track, rejoin the Wansdyke via a small wooden gate to the right. It will be your companion for several miles. **Try not to walk along the top of the Wansdyke where possible to help prevent erosion.**

After approx. 1¼ miles (2 km) walking along the Wansdyke, enjoying the superb views on both sides, and passing through two gates in the process, arrive at a third gate on the right in the corner of a field. Go through this. The official route continues immediately to your left beside the Wansdyke, but is often too overgrown to follow. If this is the case, go down the track beyond the gate for 20m and through a field gate to join a stony track parallel to the Wansdyke. Go left down this to arrive at a T junction after 100m or so. Turn left towards a gate leading to Manor Farm, then almost immediately right through another gate to return to the top of the Wansdyke.

Descend and continue, to arrive at two barns after just under 1 mile (1.6 km), going through two gates and a stile in the process. As you pass the first barn, go over a stile, then turn right over the track leading to it, then left past the second barn to rejoin the Wansdyke after yet another gate. Cross a track where the equestrian route goes left and continue ahead. On arriving at another track, turn left along it and slowly descend to meet a road opposite the entrance to Easton Farm house. Go right along the road for 25m then left through a kissing gate.

Follow this footpath through several pedestrian and kissing gates. After crossing two footbridges in quick succession, turn right and walk along the right-hand edge of a field, ignoring a pedestrian gate to the right. Soon reach a wooden gate and signpost, where you turn left towards Horton. Cross another footbridge and continue across the field to come out on a road in Bishops Cannings. Turn left for a few metres to another road (The Street), where this stage ends. If in need of refreshment, continue down Church Walk and through the graveyard, with the church to the right, to arrive at the Crown Inn.

AC6 Bishops Cannings to Marden

[Updated in November 2025]

Maps: OS Explorer 157 & 130 (north sheet), OS Landranger 173

Distance: 7½ miles, 12.1 km

Starting from the Crown Inn, walk through the churchyard and down the alley and lane beyond to arrive at The Street. Turn right along the road, and when it turns right continue ahead on a concrete track to the Kennet & Avon Canal. Cross it via the swing bridge. Continue on the other side along a tree-lined path. Cross a concrete track and maintain direction across the field. At the hedge corner to the left, go through a gate, turn right and follow the path round the paddock edges to the front of the house, which is Hopton Mill Farm. Turn right down the drive to a road.

Turn left, pass Townsend Farm on the left, then both entrances to stately Townsend House on the right. Proceed uphill towards the bridge over the K & A Canal. Rather than crossing it, bear right onto the canal tow path. Accompany the canal for just over a mile (1.6 km), passing the remains of a swing bridge and going under the Allington bridge. 350m after the bridge, look for a footpath going off at 2 o'clock towards All Cannings church. Cross a large field on this path and enter All Cannings on an enclosed path which crosses a rusty metal footbridge over a stream and enters a small paddock. Follow the track in the right-hand corner of the paddock, with a wooden fence on your right. This is Drewitts Lane, which doglegs to the right and left to arrive at the main road through the village (Chandlers Lane).

Continue ahead and walk past the village green containing a children's play area, then the primary school, both to the right. At the T junction of roads by the cemetery, turn right. Ignore the drive to Manor Farm to the right, and a gated drive on the left. Just past the road to Etchilhampton on the right, turn left up the drive to South Farm, signposted Little Owls Camping. The farmhouse is on the left, and barns are on the right. The right of way crosses the field to the right, starting at a point around 75m past the barns, but unfortunately it has been obstructed by a row of substantial mounds. It is possible to gain access to the field by walking through overgrowth next

to the barns. Aim for the corner of a hedge ahead, which hides a track. Turn left along this track, then right very soon after joining it. Pass through a large gap into another field and walk ahead on a slightly raised field divider.

Cross an unusual stone stile beneath the road which approaches Patney railway bridge. To cross the railway, turn right down the track beyond the stile, and then turn sharp left onto the road over the bridge. Continue through the village. Keep a look out for a (often very muddy) bridleway to the left, opposite house no. 31 and follow this to a road. Turn left for a short distance then turn right into a field through a kissing gate. The path is parallel to a hedge with a substantial house on the other side. At the end of a small copse, turn right through a gate and head half left to a wide concrete bridge across a stream. Turn half left again to arrive at a right-hand bend in the road you left earlier.

Continue ahead along the road. Just after the first houses of Chirton on the left, turn right and walk round the back of the houses into a field. Follow the path round the left-hand side of the field at the back of the church. The right of way passes through a field gate which gives access to an enclosed footpath along the back of the churchyard, but there is a kissing gate further to the right which provides easier access to the churchyard. Walk through the churchyard, with the church to your left, to a road. Turn left along this, but when it turns sharp left by The Corner House continue ahead along a bridleway with a concrete surface. Cross a track (used by the Pewsey Vale Circular Ride) and enter a field through a gate with stone supports. Cross a stile in the field corner ahead onto a wide unsurfaced lane which is initially partially blocked by vehicles in a stable yard, but eventually brings you out onto the main road through the village of Marden. The village hall is some 45m to the left (north), with the Millstream pub approx. 150m further on.

AC7 Marden to Upavon

[Updated in November 2025]

Maps: OS Explorer 130 (north sheet), OS Landranger 173

Distance: 5.9 miles, 9½ km

The start is approximately 200m south of the Millstream pub, and 45m south of the village hall. Go down a path between two walls opposite the road running down the side of Marden Grange. Pass through a metal kissing gate and two fields with a kissing gate between them to a third kissing gate. Go through this, across a small field, over a stile and footbridge, across a second field and over another footbridge. At a cross tracks immediately after, turn right onto a slightly elevated path. Follow this to the A342, keeping ahead at another cross tracks.

Cross this with care and take the bridleway on the other side. This soon begins to climb steadily, veers to the right after some 400m and at the top emerges into an open area. Veer to the right again, with Marden Cowbag (woods) to the right, and follow the path to meet the military road which runs along the edge of the Salisbury Plain Training Area. Turn half left onto a byway, passing to the right of a square enclosure. The byway is initially parallel to the military road.

Follow this undulating, deeply rutted terrain past a byway, then another bridleway, both of which disappear off to the left. Turn left onto the next track, which is a byway. Pass a group of barns over to the left (which are clearly visible from the byway and military road), after which the track becomes a metalled road. Pass the turn off for the Chalk wedding venue (Rushall Hill Barn) on the right and continue, past Rushall Manor on the left, to meet the A342 just south of Rushall. Cross it (slightly right) and continue ahead along the edge of a large green field, keeping the line of trees to your left. Two thirds of the way along it, turn right onto a path across the field which takes you to the edge of Upavon. Continue ahead down a narrow lane between houses. At a junction with a wider road (Jarvis Street), turn right along Chapel Lane (name sign hidden in hedge on the right!). At the T junction with the main road, turn left past the Antelope pub to the centre of Upavon, where this stage ends opposite the Ship Inn.

AC8 Upavon to Milton Hill

[Updated in November 2025]

Maps: OS Explorer 130 (north sheet) and 131 (north sheet), OS Landranger 173

Distance: 5.9 miles, 9.5 km

Milton Hill is most easily accessed by road by taking the minor metalled road from Milton Lilbourne.

From the Antelope pub, cross the road to the Ship Inn and take the alleyway bearing to the left. Turn left along the road pavement, signposted Everleigh. Cross a bridge over the Avon, and where the A342 turns sharp right, with a minor road going off to the left, continue ahead on an enclosed footpath. There follows a steady ascent up Upavon Hill on an enclosed path. When you emerge at the top, turn right for 10 yards, then left onto a footpath coming in from the right. Walk along the edge of Upavon golf course on your right, where there are several tumuli. At a T junction of paths turn right on a wide, grassy bridleway, with the golf course still on the right. You are now in open countryside, with glorious views on both sides. Go past the Trenchard Lines barracks and continue through open land (Bohune Down), slowly converging with the A342.

When you are only a short distance from the road, turn sharp left onto a grassy byway. Follow it through a wood called Grant's Firs, then go in a gradual arc to the right, away from the trees, on the same grassy track. The ruts are very deep here but there is plenty of room to walk beside them. At another T junction of tracks, follow the track round to the left. Pass between fields covered in pig pens (and pigs). At a junction of byways, turn right, with pig huts now only on your right. Pass Down Farm and arrive at a surfaced road (between Pewsey and Everleigh).

Cross the road and walk on a solid track towards Milton Hill Farm. Keep ahead when the track turns right towards the farmyard. Finally, some 1¾ miles after leaving the surfaced road, and after a steady descent, arrive at a three-way junction, marked as Pump House on the OS map. This is the end of this stage.

AC9 Milton Hill to Collingbourne Ducis

[Updated in October 2025]

Maps: OS Explorer 131 (north sheet), OS Landranger 173

Distance: 5.4 miles, 8.7 km

Milton Hill is most easily accessed by taking the minor metalled road from Milton Lilbourne

If continuing straight on from the last stage, turn sharp right at the three-way junction. If arriving from Milton Lilbourne, continue ahead. The lengthy diversion to the north the PVCW has taken is necessary to avoid going through a MoD danger area, and we are now travelling broadly southwards.

Walk on a byway which is enclosed and deeply rutted for most of its length (2.6 miles, or 4.3 km), very soon passing a couple of barns on the left (but don't take the track which bears left past them). On the way you arrive at, and walk down the side of, another MoD danger area. After a while you join another byway and gradually ascend, to arrive at the metalled road (between Pewsey and Everleigh) which you crossed on the previous stage.

Walk alongside the road for 75m, then turn left onto the surfaced road to Summer Down Farm, which is also a tank track. When the road bears left to the farm, keep ahead on an earthy track, which is a byway.

On arriving at the strip of trees ahead, turn right, then left roughly half-way along them. Go through several field gates, and after the second one the path again becomes deeply rutted. Walk between the extensive buildings of the Oldlands Piggery / West Hill Farm to reach a surfaced road. This is Chick's Lane; turn left along it, ignore another road which bears off at a narrow angle to the right, then walk past the

village hall and primary school of Collingbourne Ducis to finish this stage at the A346.

AC10 Collingbourne Ducis to Hippenscombe Farm

[Updated in July 2025]

Maps: OS Explorer 131 (north sheet), OS Landranger 173

Distance: 6.25 miles, 10.1 km

Head east in Collingbourne Ducis, away from the A338, with the post office on your left, and walk through Cadley to a crossroads presided over by The Shears Inn.

Go straight on. When the route divides, take the left-hand fork, which is a bridleway, at which point the surfaced track becomes unsurfaced. Walk along a bridleway at the bottom of a shallow valley. (The last 150m or so of the bridleway differs from what the OS map shows, as it continues along the stony track rather than veering right across a field.) At a T junction of tracks, turn right onto a byway, and ascend through woodland. Pass Gammon's Farm and continue down its driveway to a minor road.

Cross to the house opposite (Scot's Poor) and take a path down its left-hand side. A gentle descent brings you to the floor of Hippenscombe, a long, sinuous valley overlooked by verdant hills. Turn right. The enclosed path soon opens up, affording fine views of the rural idyll around you. Eventually arrive at Hippenscombe Farm, where this stage officially ends. However if you are using your own transport to get to and from the start/finish points, it is advisable to park in the small layby at Goudyses Gate, which is an extra 1.6 miles (2.6 km) approx. (see next stage).

AC11 Hippenscombe Farm to Oxenwood

[Updated in July 2025]

Maps: OS Explorer 131 (north sheet), OS Landranger 173

Distance: 4.85 miles, 7.8 km

Continue along Hippenscombe Bottom for another 1.6 miles (2.6 km) approx., to come out on a minor road at Goudyses Gate. Turn left past the house and take the path going up its right-hand side. Ascend steadily along the field edge, with ever-improving views of Hippenscombe Bottom to your left, and Oakhill Wood to your right. At the top of the field turn left, keeping the wood to your right, and turn right through the wood at the field corner. Cross a stile and maintain direction through a smaller field.

The path through the woods (an outcrop of Oakhill Wood) in the top right-hand corner of the field is indistinct. According to the OS map, you leave the grassy track to clamber up a stony bank, then keep ahead round a depression (to right) and the remains of a drained pond (to left) before entering the next field. Here you pass to the left of a misshapen dead tree when crossing the field to arrive at the stile in its corner. In practice it is easier to walk close to the fence on the right after leaving the grassy track and continue round the depression (to left) before entering the field and passing to the right of the dead tree.

After crossing the stile keep ahead for 20m, then turn left onto a wide, stony track. The track descends steadily through more woodland but then bursts into the open, yielding fine views to the right (north-east). Arrive at Fosbury Farm after a further descent and continue ahead (ignoring Turnbull Lane to the right). At the bottom of a slope, where there is a crossroads of tracks, turn right onto a bridleway. This descends steadily, gently at first but more steeply later. At a fork, continue ahead. The bridleway takes you all the way to Beacon Farm, where you continue on its drive to the road at Oxenwood. Turn right to a staggered crossroads.

AC12 Oxenwood to Linkenholt [Updated in July 2025]

Maps: OS Explorer 131 (North sheet), OS Landranger 173

Distance: 4.9 miles, 7.9 km

Take the road out of Oxenwood from the staggered crossroads which is signposted to Fosbury and Vernham Dean. Pass a row of cottages on your left. Not far past the gated entrance to the imposing Fosbury House, on your right, cross a stile on the other side of the road into a field containing Oxenwood's war memorial. Bear half right and pass to the left of a single enclosed young tree, and well to the left of the fenced war memorial, then keep close to the woods on your left. Oxenwood's church is ahead and to the right. Cross a stile and keep ahead, passing several grand old trees. Go through a gate in the corner of the field onto a wide, enclosed track, which goes gently downhill.

Emerge into a field at the bottom and bear left, then right through a gap in the hedge. Do NOT follow the vehicle track to the right but instead turn left for a few paces, then right into a field, with a hedge/fence to your right (the right of way has been moved from the other side of the fence/hedge). Walk up the field and through a gap in its corner to reach a road. Take a few steps to the right and continue on a bridleway which goes along the divider between two fields and directly under a pylon to a (broken) metal bridle gate. Walk along the right-hand field edge, go through a field gate and walk down to Henley Farm.

Turn right onto a road and proceed up a gentle hill to a T junction with another road. Go a few paces to the left and continue on an often muddy/waterlogged, very straight, track. This is an “other road with public access” (ORPA). After $\frac{3}{4}$ mile arrive at a crossroads at the corner of a metalled road and turn right on a continuation of the ORPA. At a crossroads of tracks after a gentle descent turn left towards Winterside Farm. Bear slightly left and right past the farm and continue on a tarmac road down into the charming hamlet of Little Down. Fork left where the route divides and walk uphill between houses to a T junction with a road. Turn left for 20m, then right onto the road signposted to Linkenholt. The road descends then bears left uphill. Ignore a track forking off to the left to be presented with a view of Linkenholt’s majestic Manor House to the left. This is the end of this stage. To continue the Circular Walk, turn left onto a track just before Manor House comes into view, which passes to its left.

AC13 Linkenholt to Ham

[Updated in May 2025]

Maps: OS Explorer 131 (North sheet) and 158, OS Landranger 173

Distance: 7½ miles, 12.1 km

This is a fitting finale to the whole walk!

Pass to the left of Manor House, following the waymarked Test Way, but soon leave the track to go down the right-hand side of a field. In the bottom corner, go through a narrow gap in the vegetation and cross a stile. Proceed downhill through scattered trees and bushes and turn left onto a track at the bottom by an isolated cottage.

This footpath is very soon joined by a bridleway coming in from the right by another isolated dwelling. Follow this bridleway along the valley floor (which is like a more open version of Hippenscombe Bottom), passing mostly through open land.

Enter Combe Wood. Ignore a signed byway which goes off to the right, and not far after this emerge into a glade, where there is a crossroads of tracks and a signpost festooned with waymarks.

Continue ahead. When the track emerges into open land, turn right onto a wide track and climb steeply uphill (this is Sheepless Hill). When you are more or less at the top look for and go through a gap in the hedge on the right, leaving the Test Way as you do. After a few metres, turn left onto a bridleway. When this meets a byway coming uphill from the right, turn left through a wide gap into a field. Follow the grassy vehicular track through it, forking right (straight on) when it splits in the middle of the field.

When you are almost at the end of the field, fork right to a gap in the hedge, where a bridle gate used to be, and turn left onto a byway. After some 40m on this enclosed grassy path, the byway continues ahead across a strip of grass and goes through a gate (which is left open). Follow this enclosed and often stony path downhill, quite steeply as it approaches the bottom, where it passes to the right of Combe's Church of St Swithun (note the curious spelling). Emerge onto a wide circular tarmac area, at the pointed end of a hairpin bend, with Combe Manor on the left.

Fork left along the road (Church Lane) and descend gently into the village of Combe. When the road goes left, turn right along a surfaced lane, and pass two houses on the right, the second of which is Lowe Farm. The lane loses its metalled surface beyond the second one and soon veers right. Here bear left through a gate, and begin a relentless climb, probably the longest of the whole route, on an enclosed path. At the first signpost you come to, bear left (bridleway), as you do at the second one too (footpath). On reaching open fields, bear left past a field gate and follow the path as it bears right, then left, still climbing. Reach your objective soon after, which is a kissing gate onto the byway across the top of the downs.

Turn left, rejoining the Test Way in the process but going in the opposite direction this time, and walk along this byway for almost 2¼ miles. On the way, pass through Walbury Camp, an Iron Age hill fort, join a road for a short distance, continue past the Combe Gibbet on Gallows Down (on the right), then the Test Way coming in from the left. Finally, after a gentle descent, go through a bridle gate on your right. Follow the obvious path half left quite steeply downhill (care needed), through a second bridle gate and then through a third one in an "empty" fence into the next field. Maintain direction downhill to a gate on the edge of a line of trees.

Go through the trees onto a field and turn left along its edge. At the corner, go right for a few metres, then left through the gap in the hedge. (This is not the official right of way as the landowner has diverted it to the west, presumably to avoid having to leave a gap for it through crops in the field you have just left.) Turn right across the (second) field (the landowner leaves a broad path to follow through any crops) to arrive at a wooden post next to an information board about the Ham Estate.

Turn left onto a wide, stony track to arrive at a metalled road after half a mile (0.8 km), at the end of the second field. Turn right here and follow the road into the village of Ham, where the Pewsey Vale Circular Way ends outside the Crown and Anchor pub.