



BRAKSPEAR

**PUB
TRAILS**



**BUTCHERS ARMS
SONNING COMMON
OXFORDSHIRE**

**3 CIRCULAR WALKS
1.8, 2.7 & 4.55 MILES**






We're delighted to present three circular walks all starting and ending at Butchers Arms. 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 RG4 9RS and there is a car park for customers.



Nearest station: Henley-on-Thames 5 miles away.



Local bus services: The 25 pink bus service (Reading Buses) stops just at the end of Blounts Court Road.



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



Butchers Arms
Blounts Court Road
Sonning Common
Reading RG4 9RS
Tel: 0118 972 1490

▲ **Route 1:** Sonning Common – Peppard Church – Blounts Farm
Distance: 2.9km (1.8 miles) Time: 45 minutes

■ **Route 2:** Sonning Common – Shiplake Bottom – Peppard Common
Distance: 4.35km (2.7 miles) Time: 1 hour 25 minutes

● **Route 3:** Sonning Common – Crowsley Park – Crowsley
Distance: 7.33km (4.55 miles) Time: 1 hour 45 minutes



Route 2

Route 1

Route 3



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

Half Kilometre
Quarter Mile



Route 1

A short walk through a quiet valley known as Stony Bottom.

Directions

Distance: 2.9km (1.8 miles) Time: 45 minutes

01 With your back to the pub, turn left and walk along Blounts Court Road past Churchill Crescent and after Home Farm Cottage and Home Farm Barn on the right, turn right on to a footpath marked by a finger post to Rotherfield.

02 Follow the footpath through a field and after entering some woodland follow the path downhill through the woods past Sedgheill Spring on your left.

DID YOU KNOW?

Sedgheill Spring was built by the Knollys family who bought the Blount's Court estate in 1841. It seems to have been fashionable in this area in the 19th century, for wealthy families to provide wells or water collection facilities for the locals, though this one seems a bit out of the way.

03 At the bottom of the hill the footpath splits. Take the right hand fork and walk straight up the hill.

04 As you approach the edge of the field follow the path through the gap on the right and then continue to the top of the slope.

05 Go through a metal kissing gate and follow the footpath between a horse paddock on the right and gardens on the left.

06 At the end of the footpath enter a lane opposite All Saints Church which is well worth a visit.

DID YOU KNOW?

All Saints Church has been extended and altered over the years. It originates from the Norman period and the churchyard contains some very old yew trees. Significant restoration of the church took place between 1870 and 1908. One of the three bells in the bell tower dates from the 14th century. The interior of the church is worth a visit, with a 12 century font, memorial stained glass windows and some unique wooden murguetry including the pulpit and a reredos depicting the Last Supper.

07 Turn right and walk about 100 metres and take the next footpath off to the right. Follow the footpath around the edge of the field until you come to a waymark post.

08 Follow the direction of the arrow on the waymark post along a farm track downhill around the edge of another field.

09 At the bottom turn right and follow the track up the other side of the valley toward Blounts Court Farm.



All Saints Church

10 When you reach the farm buildings, bear left and follow the access drive until you reach Blounts Court Road.

11 Turn right and walk along the road past Blounts Court on the right which is now the Johnson Matthey Research Centre, continue along the road until you arrive back at the Butchers Arms.

DID YOU KNOW?

Blounts Court dates from the 15th Century and was built by a member of the Blount family, probably John Blount. The estate was later acquired by the Stonor family and then sold by them c1705. The house and estate passed through the hands of a number of families including the Knollys, who acquired it in 1841. The estate was later sold off piecemeal culminating in the house sale in 1933. In 1960 the house was bought by American Machine Foundry Ltd and converted it into laboratories. Brook Bond Tea Ltd bought the site in 1964 and finally it was purchased by its current owners, Johnson Matthey, in 1975.



Blounts Court c.1862

Route 2

Easy walking through village streets, commons, woodlands and fields with a few short uphill stretches.

Directions

Distance: 4.35km (2.7 miles) Time: 1 hour 25 minutes

- 01 With your back to the pub turn left then walk along Blounts Court Road, pass Churchill Crescent, and after another 80m take the narrow hedge lined footpath between two houses on the left hand side of the road.
- 02 Where the footpath ends at a public road (Peppard Road) cross over the road and walk up towards the entrance to St Michaels Catholic Church.
- 03 Continue up the slope keeping to the right of the church and take another footpath that links with Sedgefield Close.
- 04 Walk along Sedgefield Close and after a right hand bend, turn left in Newfield Road and carry on until you reach Woodlands Road.
- 05 Turn right and walk along Woodlands Road until you reach a cul-de-sac, then continue on in same direction into the woods.
- 06 Walk a few metres along the footpath with a wire fence on the left. At the end of the fence there is a waymark post, carry straight ahead for a few more metres and at the second waymark post bear right.
- 07 Stay on this footpath (ignoring the path off to the right at the third waymark post) heading in a northerly direction for about 300m after which you will emerge from the woods, a little further on you will reach a public road (Shiplake Bottom), cross the road and take the footpath almost opposite. Note the path is very narrow and the finger post is almost hidden by a hedge.
- 08 Continue along the footpath until it emerges at the intersection between Stoke Row Rd and Gallowstree Road, cross over Stoke Row Road and then Gallowstree Road walk past the fourway road sign and pick up a footpath that leads through some bushes to Peppard Common.
- 09 Carry straight on following the same footpath across the Common until you reach a track, turn right along the track for about 150m then bear right off the track on to a footpath that takes a windy route downhill.
- 10 Keep to the same path and bear left when other paths come in from the right then walk up to a minor road (Colliers Lane).
- 11 Turn right and walk along the lane then up a steep but short stretch of road and just as the slope lessens turn left into another lane.
- 12 Follow this lane for about 500m and on the left you will see a large brick house called Peppard Cottage.



Peppard Cottage

DID YOU KNOW?

Peppard Cottage was used as the setting for the Oscar winning film *Howards End* starring Anthony Hopkins and Emma Thompson.

- 13 Continue on past the Red Lion Pub (where you might like to slake your thirst) and on to the main road (B481).
- 14 Cross the main road, turn right and then immediately bear left into a lane, then follow this lane past the Peppard Primary school and continue on until you reach All Saints Church.
- 15 Turn right on to a footpath opposite the church and walk along this footpath with a field and a horse paddock on the left and gardens on the right.
- 16 Go through a metal kissing gate and follow the footpath downhill in the same direction into a little valley when you reach the bottom continue in same direction uphill through a wooded section past Sedgehill Spring on the right.

DID YOU KNOW?

Sedgehill Spring was built by the Knollys family who bought the Blount's Court estate in 1841. It seems to have been fashionable in this area in the 19th century, for wealthy families to provide wells or water collection facilities for the locals, though this one seems a bit out of the way.

- 17 At the top of the hill the footpath leaves the wood and continues through a field, stay on the footpath until you reach a public road (Blounts Court Road).
- 18 Turn left and continue along the road until you reach the Butchers Arms.

Route 3

A medium length walk through undulating farmland and the BBC's Crowsley Park.

Directions

Distance: 7.33km (4.55 miles) Time: 1 hour 45 minutes

- 01 With your back to the pub, turn right and walk along Blounts Court Road, past the Johnson Matthey Research Centre at Blounts Court on the left, then immediately after Blounts Court Farm, turn left and follow the farm access road round to the rear of the farm buildings.
- 02 Turn right and follow a gravel track alongside a wooden panel fence, continue along this track for about 0.5km until the track turns left at the bottom of a hill.
- 03 Leave the track at this point and turn right along a bridal path until you reach the corner of the field.
- 04 Turning right leave the bridal path and go through two kissing gates into a wood.
- 05 Follow the footpath through the wood until the path intersects with another path, turn left on to the other path and follow it uphill.
- 06 At the top of the hill continue along the footpath until you reach a track (Chiltern Way Extension), turn right and follow the track past a large house called the Old Place.
- 07 When you reach the public road turn left and walk a short distance, about 60m, along the road. At the finger post, turn right and leave the road and go through a metal kissing gate, then follow the footpath up a slope into Crowsley Park.

DID YOU KNOW?

Crowsley Park is owned by the BBC and is the site of a BBC Receiving Station that provided radio signals for the BBC Monitoring Station at Caversham Park before it closed in 2018. Although the BBC Monitoring Services have moved to London, the BBC still requires the receiving station and it has recently received planning permission to install more smaller satellite dishes on site. Crowsley Park House is a Grade II Listed building located within Crowsley Park and is a private residence.

An interesting footnote for Sherlock Holmes fans; in the 19th Century a previous owner of Crowsley Park was one Henry Baskerville, whose family had an association with fierce dogs. It appears this was the inspiration for The Hound of Baskervilles. If you look at the main gate as you leave you will notice a stone dog mounted on top of each gate pillar.

- 08 After about 300m look out for a waymark post where the path splits. Take the right fork and if you look to your right you should be able to see the tops of three large satellite dishes.
- 09 Continue walking in the same direction and exit the field via a kissing gate in front of a small oak and a clump of large horse chestnut trees.



Crowsley Park House

- 10 The path continues on along the side of Crowsley Park House and you then exit via two metal gates onto an access drive that runs in front of the house.
- 11 Turn left and walk down the drive and exit for Crowsley Park grounds via a metal pedestrian gate on to a public road.
- 12 Turn left and walk a short distance before turning right into a small lane signposted to Crowsley.
- 13 Continue on walking through the hamlet of Crowsley until you reach Frieze Cottage, turn left and take the footpath that runs along the side of the cottage.
- 14 Walk past a brick and timber framed cottage in a large garden then enter a field via a kissing gate, then through another kissing gate and continue along the same path until it emerges on to a minor road.
- 15 Turn right and walk up to a junction with a major road (B481); the Bird and Hand pub is on the corner.
- 16 Cross over the main road and walk through a gap in the hedge opposite onto Sonning Common Millennium Green.
- 17 Turn right immediately and follow the footpath that runs along the edge of the Green.
- 18 After about 750m exit the Green onto a pavement that runs along the main road into Sonning Common.
- 19 Continue along the main road past Blackmore Lane, at the next crossroads, turn right into Widmore Lane and walk up the hill taking time to stop and take a look at the Widmore Pond and its information board on the right hand side of the road.
- 20 On the opposite side of the road there are some steps up a bank that lead back to the Butchers Arms pub.

Butchers Arms

Opening Hours:

Monday-Saturday: 12pm-Midnight

Sunday: 12pm-10pm

Kitchen Opening:

Lunch

Monday-Saturday: 12pm-2:30pm

Sunday: 12pm-4pm

Evening

Monday-Thursday: 6pm-9pm

Friday & Saturday: 6pm-9:30pm

Sunday: Closed

- Hold a Party • Garden/Patio • Family Friendly
- Watch Sports • Disabled Access • Dog Friendly
- Park The Car • WiFi Access

Butchers Arms

Blounts Court Road

Sonning Common

Reading RG4 9RS

Tel: 0118 972 1490

www.thebutchersarmspub.co.uk



Download the App



To follow Brakspear Pub Trails on your smartphone, simply download the free ViewRanger app from the Apple App Store or Google Play, then visit www.viewranger.com/brakspear to find the full collection of walks. Pick your favourite route, download it in the app, then follow it using ViewRanger's offline GPS navigation.

www.pub-trails.co.uk

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