

# The Greyhound and Besselsleigh, Abingdon, Oxfordshire



Moderate Terrain

4 miles  
Circular  
1.5 to 2  
hours

280314



## Access Notes



1. The route has just a few gentle slopes and you will need to negotiate several gates plus three stiles (all of which have open fence surrounds which should be suitable for most dogs).
2. The paths cross a number of farm fields which can be very muddy in winter and after periods of rain and can be a little overgrown in the summer.
3. Some of the fields are part of a dairy farm and could be holding grazing cattle so take care with dogs.

The Greyhound is a handsome and welcoming village pub, built from Cotswold stone some 400 years ago with a large garden to enjoy in the summer and a great selection of cask ales

A 4 mile circular pub walk from the Greyhound in Besselsleigh, Oxfordshire. The walking route takes in the surrounding classic English agricultural countryside with plenty of birdlife to enjoy. We saw red kites, woodpeckers and a kestrel on our journey.

## Getting there

Besselsleigh is situated about 5 miles south-west of Oxford, on the A420 between Oxford and Swindon. The walk starts and finishes from the Greyhound pub which is on the junction between the A420 and the side road signed to Besselsleigh Village and Eaton. There is a large car park alongside the pub.

Approximate post code **OX13 5PX**.

## Walk Sections



Start to Woodland Corner



Standing in front of the pub, facing the main A420 road, turn right and right again down the side road signed to Besselsleigh Village and Eaton, passing the Greyhound pub now on your right. The Greyhound pub takes its name from the greyhound which is pictured in the coat of arms of the Lenthall family who used to own Besselsleigh Hall.

Continue past a horse paddock on the right and immediately after the next section of hedge turn right down the tarmac drive marked as a footpath to Cumnor. Keep ahead across a short section of scrub and pass through a metal gate into a large open field. Continue, keeping close to the left-hand edge of this field with a row of telegraph poles



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running parallel on the right.

Ignore the first gate, half way along on the left, just continue to the top end of the field. Here you will see two gates. Take the right-hand of the two and cross the small wooden bridge. Immediately afterwards bear left to join the footpath passing through holly bushes and then between a collection of native trees and hedgerows. After a short distance you'll reach the corner of a woodland marked with a large corner fence post and a stream now visible down to the left.

## 1 → 2 Woodland Corner to The Park



Keep ahead with the fenced woodland to the right and the stream down to the left. Follow the fenced path through the pretty section of woodland comprising coppiced hazels and other native species. Pass through the next metal gate and keep ahead on the open woodland path, still with the stream on the left.

Soon the path emerges to the corner of a very large crop field, simply keep straight ahead along the left-hand boundary. Follow the left-hand edge of this very long field, staying with the hedgeline as it steps back to the left a couple of times and then continues ahead for another long stretch.

Eventually the field narrows to a small strip. Keep straight ahead for just a few yards to reach a crossroads of paths (with the village road visible about 100 yards ahead). Turn right here onto the grass track. Ignore the first path left (into the cricket ground), instead take the second left path which leads through the belt of woodland. Follow the woodland path with the cricket ground to the left.

Pass through the staggered barrier and continue ahead on concrete alleyway between garden fences. You will emerge to a T-junction with the small residential road called The Parks. This Oxfordshire village, Cumnor has a number of notable residents, including Philip Pullman, author of the 'His Dark Materials' trilogy, and the chef Sophie Grigson.

## 2 → 3 The Park to Henwood Farm



Cross over and go straight ahead along the right-hand pavement of Kenilworth Road. You'll soon reach a T-junction, keep right

along the pavement. After just a few paces bear left to cross over the dead-end side road (Abingdon Road) to keep ahead on the narrow tarmac path running as the right-hand pavement for the main road signed to Abingdon, Swindon and Bristol.

Keep ahead over the large road bridge which crosses the A420 dual carriageway below. Continue on the right-hand pavement as the road swings right and then, just before you reach the side turning signed to Bristol and Swindon, cross over with care to take the signed footpath opposite. Follow this down the steps and over a footbridge into a large crop field.

Cross the crop field diagonally right (somewhere between 1 and 2 o'clock), heading for the large clump of trees on the far boundary. At the far side you'll emerge alongside a waymarker post with yellow arrows to reach a stone farm track. Cross over this and take the footpath opposite, which passes immediately to the left of the clump of trees, to join the wide grass path between open crop fields, with the cooling towers of Didcot Power Station visible across to the right.

Continue as a line of trees runs on the right. Ignore the smaller path which forks left across the centre of the field, just stay on the field edge path to reach the far boundary. Cross the stile and take the next stile opposite into the pasture (which may be holding cattle). Pass to the right of the large tree in front of you and you'll see a cattle holding pen to your right.

Keep straight ahead across the pasture, keeping the wire fence close to the right. Towards the end of the field, bear left to cross the fenced bridge across the ditch into the next small field. Once over the ditch turn right and cross the stile out of the field to reach a stone lane with Henwood Farm directly opposite. Henwood Farmhouse dates back to the 17th Century and is a Grade II listed building.

## 3 → 4 Henwood Farm to End



Turn right along the stone and grass path, passing the corrugated barn on the left. Ignore the next footpath off to the left, simply keep ahead on the path with fenced pastures directly to the right. You'll emerge to a T-junction with the road. Cross over and turn right along the pavement. Immediately before the national speed limit signs, turn left down a stone and grass track signed as a right of way.

Follow the wide track with fenced fields both sides for some distance – keep your eyes peeled for red kites here. Eventually you'll emerge out to the road alongside a T-junction. Cross the road in front of you to the grass verge on the far side, and then veer left to follow the narrow right-hand grass verge of the road signed to Swindon and Bristol.

Keep ahead, taking care of any traffic, and before you reach the T-junction ahead, cross to the left-hand side of the road to join the pavement. Follow the pavement as it swings left alongside the A420 on the right, with the Greyhound pub on the opposite side. For your safety, we recommend you continue beyond the pub to cross the road using the designated crossing island alongside the bus stop. Then simply come back along the opposite side of the road to reach the Greyhound for some well earned hospitality.



## Disclaimer

This walking route was walked and checked at the time of writing. We have taken care to make sure all our walks are safe for walkers of a reasonable level of experience and fitness. However, like all outdoor activities, walking carries a degree of risk and we accept no responsibility for any loss or damage to personal effects, personal accident, injury or public liability whilst following this walk. We cannot be held responsible for any inaccuracies that result from changes to the routes that occur over time. Please let us know of any changes to the routes so that we can correct the information.

## Walking Safety

For your safety and comfort we recommend that you take the following with you on your walk: bottled water, snacks, a waterproof jacket, waterproof/sturdy boots, a woolly hat and fleece (in winter and cold weather), a fully-charged mobile phone, a whistle, a compass and an Ordnance Survey map of the area. Check the weather forecast before you leave, carry appropriate clothing and do not set out in fog or mist as these conditions can seriously affect your ability to navigate the route. Take particular care on cliff/mountain paths where steep drops can present a particular hazard. Some routes include sections along roads – take care to avoid any traffic at these points. Around farmland take care with children and dogs, particularly around machinery and livestock. If you are walking on the coast make sure you check the tide times before you set out.

