

The Packhorse and Chazey Heath, Mapledurham, Oxfordshire



Moderate Terrain

3 miles
Circular
1.5 hours

071213



Access Notes



1. The walk has a few gentle gradients, there are no gates and just one stile (with a dog gate beneath which is large enough for most dogs).
2. The route follows a mixture of lanes plus field and woodland footpaths, some of which can be quite muddy in winter and after rain. There are a couple of sections of road walking with no pavements so take particular care along these parts of the route.

The Packhorse was once a farm within the Mapledurham House estate dating back to the 1600s, but now provides an ideal place to enjoy refreshments before or after a walk in the Chilterns.

A 3 mile circular pub walk from the Packhorse near Mapledurham in South Oxfordshire. The walking route performs a simple loop around this southern section of the Chilterns AONB, including a short stretch of the Chiltern Way, with chance to enjoy small belts of woodland, open fields and village lanes.

Getting there

The walk starts and finishes at the Packhorse pub which can be found on the main A4074 Woodcote Road, just a couple of miles north of Reading. Head north out of Reading through Caversham on the A4074, continue past Mapledurham Golf Club and through Chazey Heath and you'll find the Packhorse on the right. There is a large car park directly in front of the pub.

Approximate post code **RG4 7UG**.

Walk Sections



Start to Crossroads



Standing on the large grass verge with your back to the pub and facing the road, turn left along the grass verge with the road on your right. Take care as the grass verge narrows and you'll reach a gravel section with a stile on the left (this is the way you'll return later) and a bus stop. Cross to the right hand side of the road here and continue down the opposite grass verge passing in front of an old barn and a guest house.

Immediately after the guest house, turn right onto a stone and grass track signed as a footpath. Follow the track with a house to the right and horse paddocks to the left. At the end of the pretty green lane you'll pass a pink thatched cottage on the right to reach a T-junction with a quiet



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road. Turn left along the quiet lane – Sheepways Lane. The lane is fairly quiet, but take care of any traffic that does pass. Take time to enjoy the arable views each side and continue until you reach a crossroads.

1 → 2 Crossroads to Newell's Lane



Cross over with care to go straight ahead on the road signed to Mapledurham and Trench Green. After just 100 yards, look out for a footpath crossing the road. Turn left here onto the signed footpath, a concrete access track. Follow the concrete track between fields and pass a pair of brick cottages on the right.

Keep ahead on the now stone track and soon afterwards, where the main track swings left, fork right to keep straight ahead into a large crop field. Swing right to follow the path heading straight across the centre of the undulating field. As you emerge from the crops, continue in the same direction over the rough grass field edging to reach the top left hand corner of the field.

Pass through a large hedgerow which conceals a marker post confirming you are still on the footpath. In the next open field continue in the same direction, through open ground and then passing immediately to the right of a row of ash trees. Continue, passing brambles, for just a few more paces to reach a T-junction with a narrow grass track, known as Newell's Lane.

2 → 3 Newell's Lane to Rokeby Drive



Turn sharp left along the grass track. Follow the narrow green track between tall hedgerows. If you glance through the trees to the right, you'll see Caversham Heath golf course. The track descends through a sunken section between steep banks and then bends right then left passing the club house over to the right.

Follow the path uphill and at the fork keep left for a few paces to reach a T-junction with the road. Turn left (signed for the Chiltern Way Extension) along the road edge taking care of any traffic for just 100 yards. When you reach the woodland on the right, cross over to turn right, again signed for the Chiltern Way Extension.

Keep straight ahead on the path along the left edge of the field, with the woodland to the left. About 200 yards in, as the woodland edge swings away left, you'll see a marker post with yellow arrows. Fork right here onto the footpath which crosses diagonally

right across the centre of the crop field. At the far side, pass through a gap in the hedge to reach a T-junction with the main A-road. Cross this with extreme care, as the traffic is fast moving, and turn right along the grass verge for a few paces and then turn left into Rokeby Drive.

3 → 4 Rokeby Drive to Bardolph's Wood

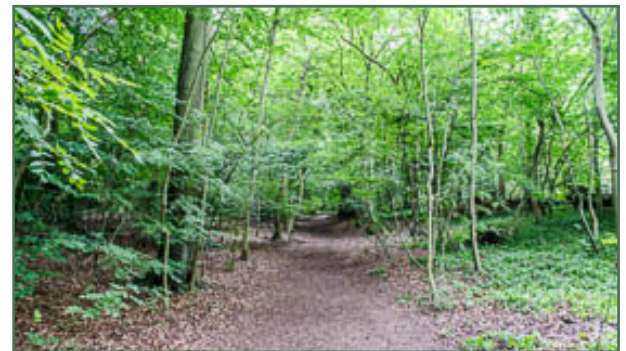


Follow the pavement along Rokeby Drive for some distance. You'll pass the golf course crossing point (for Mapledurham Golf Course), then a playing field on the right and more properties each side. Rokeby Drive forms part of the Chiltern Way which is a 125 mile circular walking route through the Chiltern chalk hills, with an extra 50 miles of extension loops of which this is one. At the end of the road you'll reach a T-junction.

Turn left, signed to Dyson Wood and Kidmore End and keep left at the next fork. Take care walking along the road edge for this stretch as there are several bends in the road and the traffic, whilst fairly light, can be fast moving. On the left you'll pass a number of impressive detached residences with interesting names such as Beechwood, Little Orchard, Good Acres and Hollywood.

Continue with care as the road bends left and then right into a section of dense woodland. Immediately after the chevron signs for the right-hand bend, turn left onto the path into woodland, Bardolph's Wood.

4 → 5 Bardolph's Wood to End



Keep ahead for a few yards and then swing left to join the main wide path through the woodland. Follow the path through a small clearing, taking a moment to admire the majestic tall beech trees, passing to the left of a large pit in the forest floor. Keep ahead and you'll join a path with a fenced meadow to the right, and the golf course visible through a gap to the left. Follow the path alongside the right-hand fence bending right and then, at the T-junction, right again.

The path continues into another section of woodland. At the next junction keep left and then continue through a young plantation. The path emerges via a stile to meet a T-junction with the main road. Turn right along the rough path keeping close to the fence on the right, passing under the branches of a wild cherry tree.

Continue along the grass verge where you'll come to the Packhorse on the right 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.

