

Cheddington to Leighton Buzzard		
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Cheddington to Leighton Buzzard

Start: Cheddington Station

Finish: Leighton Buzzard station

Cheddington station, map reference SP 922 185, is 11 km north east of Aylesbury, 6 km south of Leighton Buzzard, 99m above sea level and in **Buckinghamshire**. Leighton Buzzard Station, map reference SP 910 249, is in Linslade, which lies west of the River Ouzel, while Leighton Buzzard itself lies east of it. It is 15km north east of Aylesbury, 15 km south east of Milton Keynes, 92m above sea level and in **Bedfordshire**.

Length: 24.8 km (15.5 mi), of which 3.7 km (2.3 mi) on tarmac or concrete.

Cumulative ascent/descent: 254/261m. For a shorter walk, see *below* **Walk options**.

Toughness: 5 out of 10

Time: 5 hours 30 minutes walking time.

For the whole outing, including trains, sights and meals, allow at least 7 ¾ hours.

Transport: Cheddington and Leighton Buzzard stations are on the London Euston to Milton Keynes (West Coast) Main Line. Journey times are 40 minutes to Cheddington (hourly service) and between 34 and 50 minutes from Leighton Buzzard (up to 3 trains per hour). Buy a day return to Leighton Buzzard.

Saturday Walkers' Club: Take the train closest to 9.30 hours.

OS Landranger Map: 165 (Aylesbury & Leighton Buzzard)

OS Explorer Map: 181 (Chiltern Hills North) and 192 (Buckingham & Milton Keynes)

Walk Notes:

A splendid walk through East Buckinghamshire's rolling landscape of fields and wooded areas on the edge of the Chiltern Hills, linking up a handful of delightful hill top villages to provide panoramic views across pleasant countryside. Broadly following the Thames/Great Ouse watershed in the morning, it initially heads west, mostly with grand views of the Chilterns (when not walking in wooded areas), to then turn north with far views into Aylesbury Vale to the west, on to lunch pubs at either Aston Abbots or Cublington. The afternoon route is more level, but still features the hilltop village of Wing and ends with a fairly tranquil descent into Linslade (for Leighton Buzzard station).

Disclaimers: There are several arable field crossings to contend with, generally along well-cleared paths, but this walk is nevertheless more challenging in high summer. There is also a level crossing of the dual carriageway Leighton Buzzard-bypass road near the end of the walk.

Walk options:

Two bus services linking Aylesbury with Leighton Buzzard run through the walk area, but the walk can sensibly only be shortened by taking a bus to Leighton Buzzard, as Aylesbury is being served by a different train company, necessitating the extra cost of two single tickets:

- The 165 bus (Aylesbury-Leighton Buzzard) travels through Wingrave, Rowsham, Aston Abbots (the early lunch stop), Cublington (the lunch stop) and Wing (5 km from the end of the walk). It runs about every two hours until mid-afternoon Mon-Sat;
- The 150 bus (Aylesbury-Leighton Buzzard-Milton Keynes) takes a more direct route, along the A 418, with opportunities to catch it at Wingrave Cross Roads (ca. 1 km off the walk route from Aston Abbots [the early lunch stop]) and then again in Wing (5 km from the end of the walk). This service runs hourly Mon-Sat, but less frequently and only until late afternoon on Sundays/Holidays.

Lunch:

Royal Oak Inn Wingrave Road, Aston Abbots, Buckinghamshire, HP22 4LT (01296 681 262). Open Mon-Sat 12.00-14.30 and 17.00-23.00, Sun 12.00-22.30. Food served Mon-Sat 12.00-14.00 and 18.00-21.30, Sun 12.00-21.00. The Royal Oak Inn is located 250m off route 11.5 km (7.1 mi) into the walk and is a Grade II listed C16-C17 timber framed building.

The Unicorn High Street, Cublington, Buckinghamshire, LU7 0LQ (01296 681 261, <http://www.theunicornpub.co.uk/>). Open 12.00-15.00 and 17.00-23.00 Mon-Thu, 10.30-15.00 and 17.00-24.00 Fri, 9.30-24.00 Sat and 12.00-19.00 Sun. Food served Mon-Sat 12.00-14.30 and 18.30-20.30, Sun 12.00-15.00. The Unicorn is located 13.9 km (8.7 mi) into the walk. It is a 17th Century building with log fires and a large garden at the back (including a Pétanque court!).

Tea:

The Cock Inn 26 High Street, Wing, Buckinghamshire, LU7 0NR (01296 752 210, <http://www.all-inns.co.uk/pub/the-cock-inn>). Open daily 12.00-late. Food served all day. The Cock Inn is located 5.2 km from the end of the walk.

The Queen's Head 9 High Street, Wing, Buckinghamshire, LU7 0NS (01296 688 268, <http://www.thequeensheadwing.co.uk/>). Open Tue-Thu 11.30-15.00 and 17.30-23.00, Fri 11.30-15.00 and 17.30-24.00, Sat 11.30-24.00, Sun 12.00-22.30. Food served 12.00-14.00 and 18.00-21.00 Tue-Sat and 12.00-15.00 Sun. The Queen's Head is located 5.2 km from the end of the walk.

The Hare Inn 10 Southcott Village, Linslade, Bedfordshire, LU7 7PR (01525 373 941). Open daily 12.00-late. The Hare Inn is located 550m from the end of the walk.

Tudor Pub & Carvery at The Ship 90 Wing Road, Linslade, Bedfordshire, LU7 2NN (01525 382 858, <http://innbritain.co.uk/>). Open Mon-Sat 12.00-23.00 and Sun 12.00-22.30. Food served Mon-Fri 12.00-15.00 and 17.00-21.00, Sat 12.00-21.00 and Sun 12.00-20.00.

The Buckingham Arms 84 Old Road, Linslade, Bedfordshire, LU7 2RB.

Linslade Fish Bar 43 Old Road, Linslade, Bedfordshire, LU7 2RB (01525 373 617).

The White Horse 9 New Road, Linslade, Bedfordshire, LU7 2LS (01525 635 739, <http://whitehorsebandb.co.uk/>). Open 10.00-23.00 every day, located 400m beyond the station.

Café Sorelli 1 High Street, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire, LU1 1DN (01525 374 449). Open 10.00-16.00 Sun-Tue, and 10.00-22.00 Wed-Sat, located 0.9 km beyond the station.

The Golden Bell 5 Church Square, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire, LU1 1AE (01525 373 330, <http://www.goldenbell.co.uk/>). Open 10.00-23.00 Mon-Thu, 10.00-24.00 Fri-Sat and 11.00-23.00 Sun. Located 1 km beyond the station.

The Black Lion 20 High Street, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire, LU1 1EA (01525 853 725). Open 11.00-23.00 Mon-Thu, 11.00-24.00 Fri-Sat and 12.00-22.30 Sun. No TV's, no piped music. Bedfordshire County CAMRA Pub of the Year 2015 and 2016, located 1 km beyond the station.

The Bald Buzzard Alehouse 6 Hockliffe Street, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire, LU1 1HJ (07771 722 064, <http://baldbuzzard.co.uk/>). Open 12.00-21.00 Tue-Thu and 12.00-22.00 Fri-Sat. Leighton Buzzard's 1st micropub, opened in July 2015. It serves mainly cask ales, while shunning all forms of electronic entertainment, loud music, television, or gaming machines, located 1.3 km beyond the station.

Espresso Head 8 Hockliffe Street, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire, LU1 1HJ (01525 374 505, <http://www.espresso-head.co.uk/>). Open 08.00-14.30 Mon-Fri and 08.30-16.00 Sat. An Icelandic inspired micro café, located 1.3 km beyond the station.

Notes:

Cheddington to Aylesbury Railway

A branch line run by London & North Western Railway led from Cheddington to Aylesbury, to connect Aylesbury to the London & Birmingham line (now West Coast Main Line). The railway was built in 1839, but passenger services were terminated in 1953 and goods services in 1964. It terminated at a station called Aylesbury High Street, between the Union Canal and Aylesbury City Centre, a few hundred meters from the current Aylesbury station (which started out as the terminus for the Princes Risborough to Aylesbury line).

Mentmore Park

Mentmore is derived from the Old English for Menta's Moor.

Queen Edith, the wife of King Edward the Confessor had a hunting lodge here.

After several changes of ownership, in 1850 the village and manor house were bought out of insolvency by Baron Mayer de Rothschild. He planned to build a new grandiose mansion, the chosen site being that of the village itself, because of its fine elevation. To Rothschild this posed no problem: the village was simply moved to the site it occupies today, a few hundred meters away on the other side of the hill!

Mentmore Towers

The house was built between 1852 and 1854 for the banker and collector of fine art Baron Mayer de Rothschild, who required a house close to London. The house was designed by Joseph Paxton (who had previously designed the Crystal Palace) and his son-in-law, George Henry Stokes, in the 19th century revival of late 16th/early 17th century Elizabethan and Jacobean styles called Jacobethan. The mansion has been described as one of the greatest houses of the Victorian era. Historically it was first known simply as 'Mentmore'. It is a Grade I listed building, with its park and gardens listed Grade II*.

Mentmore was the first of what was to become a virtual Rothschild enclave in the Vale of Aylesbury, as later other members of the family built houses at Tring in Hertfordshire, Ascott, Aston Clinton, Waddesdon (2) and Halton. Since 1846 Baron Mayer de Rothschild had been slowly buying land in the area.

It was later inherited by the 5th Earl of Rosebery, later Prime Minister for two years from 1894. He and his son bred numerous winners of classic horse races at the two stud farms on the estate (Mentmore and Crafton, the latter passed on this walk).

The possible purchase of Mentmore for the nation through the government's National Land Fund was the desire of the then Director of the V&A, who hoped that Mentmore would become a 'branch' of his museum for 19th century decorative arts as Ham House was for the 17th century and Osterley was for the 18th-century. The government refused to spend such large sums from the fund though. The government was offered the house and contents for £2,000,000 (£21.6 million as of 2016) but declined, and after three years of fruitless discussion, the executors of the estate sold the contents by public auction for over £6,000,000. The Rothschild/Mentmore collection is said to have been one of the finest ever to be assembled in private hands, other than the collections of the Russian and British royal families.

It then became the headquarters for Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's educational charity, the Maharishi Foundation, in 1978. The building was put up for sale in 1997 and was eventually purchased by an investor, with the intention of restoring it into a luxury hotel with 171 suites, including 122 in a new wing on the slope below the house. These plans ran into numerous legal and financial problems and have yet to be implemented. English Heritage has placed the house on the "At Risk register" and the house needs urgent work on the roof and chimneys.

The house has appeared in many films including Terry Gilliam's *Brazil* (1985), *Slipstream* (1989), Stanley Kubrick's *Eyes Wide Shut* (1999), Philip Kaufman's *Marquis de Sade* biopic *Quills* (2000), *The Mummy Returns* (2001), *Ali G Indahouse* (2002), *Johnny English* (2003), and Christopher Nolan's *Batman Begins* (2005); and also in many music videos, like Roxy Music's "Avalon", Enya's "Only If ..." and the Spice Girls "Goodbye".

Wingrave

Derived from Old English *Wiwinga grāf* = "the grove of the people of Wing".

Many houses and cottages around the recreation ground and in other parts of the village were constructed in Tudor Revival style, erected by Hannah de Rothschild in the 19th century. These houses, which display her personal cypher 'H de R' were homes for estate employees. They remained part of the Mentmore Estate until well into the 20th century.

Wingrave Manor was leased during WWII to the exiled Czechoslovak government as a residence for the employees and families of the Private Office of President Beneš. Beneš himself lived at The Abbey in nearby Aston Abbots. In 1944 he donated a bus shelter to the villages of Aston Abbots and Wingrave, this is on the A 418 between the two villages (Wingrave Cross Roads). In 1998 President Václav Havel, the first post-communist President of the Czech Republic, visited Wingrave to mark its Czech connections.

Aston Abbots

Aston derives from Anglo-Saxon for Eastern Estate. The suffix 'Abbots' refers to the ancient abbey in the village, which was the country home of the abbots of St Albans in Hertfordshire. The Holy Church of Alban The Martyr had originally been given the land in the times of Edward the Confessor by a Danish chief called Tolf, as he wanted to be buried at the church. The present house known as The Abbey, Aston Abbots was largely rebuilt in the early 19th century.

Cublington

In the 14th century the village was moved for unknown reasons to its current place from a site 500m to the northwest. A small man-made hill, about 6.1m high, known as "The Beacon" (in fact the motte of a small Norman castle) is still visible there today.

Cublington became the centre of national attention in 1971 when the biggest, most expensive and most painstaking exercise in future planning ever in Britain (The Roskill Commission) recommended that the village (plus Dunton and Stewkley), should be totally demolished to make way for London's Third Airport, centred on the old wartime airfield at Wing, and more than three times the then size of Heathrow. A two and a half year campaign to oppose the proposal by the Wing Airport Resistance Association (WARA) followed. The government later rejected the Roskill recommendation on environmental grounds, in favour of a site at Maplin Sands, Foulness (still on-going...).

Outer Aylesbury Ring

An 85 km/53 mile Long Distance Walk along the higher ground around the outside of the original **Aylesbury Ring** to produce a walk with good views through pleasant countryside and passing through many delightful villages and towns. Launched in 2013 and created by Aylesbury & District Ramblers, who have also produced leaflets, detailing 14 sections plus separate linked circular walks. Website:

<https://sites.google.com/site/outeraylesburyring/> .

Wing/All Saints Church

Wing derives its name from the Old English Weowungum. It could mean "Withun's sons or people" or "The dwellers at, or devotees of, a heathen temple." The temple in question is likely to have been at the site of the current Anglo-Saxon church of All Saints (itself having replaced an earlier Christian church), where an even earlier Roman structure has been excavated during renovations. This would turn this site into the perhaps oldest, continuously used religious site in England. The current church building is one of the finest Anglo-Saxon churches in the country, surviving in an unusually high degree of completeness, and a Grade 1 listed building. It dates to the 10th century, with some extensions over the following five centuries. The polygonal apse includes pieces re-used from a ruined Roman building nearby and is one of the finest examples of 9th century architecture in England and the only complete Anglo-Saxon apse.

Linslade

The name derives from the Anglo-Saxon and may mean 'river crossing near a spring'. Modern day Linslade sits opposite the town of Leighton Buzzard on the western bank of the River Ouzel, both together forming a civil parish. A significant settlement starting growing at this site only after the building of the Grand Union Canal, and subsequently of the London to Birmingham Railway (now known as West Coast Main Line). The original Anglo-Saxon settlement of Linslade, which was prominent during the 13th century as a pilgrimage site, was to be found further north, and survives today as the hamlet of Old Linslade.

Linslade is most famously associated with The Great Train Robbery in 1963: the train was made to stop at a manipulated signal at a crossing 4 km south of Leighton Buzzard station, towards Cheddington station, just east of the village of Ledburn, and then driven on further south for 1.2 km to Bridego Bridge to unload the post bags onto a truck on the road below. The scene of the crime is these days acknowledged with a Network Rail plaque referring to it as "Train Robbers" bridge.

WALK DIRECTIONS

Alight from the train in **Cheddington Station** on platforms 1 or 3 and leave past the station building into the car park. Cross it diagonally towards the right hand side approach road. In 70m continue along this road, with a large field on the right behind a green boundary strip. **[!]** In 65m *turn right* through an unmarked and easily missed narrow gap in the dense greenery. In 25m go through a metal fence and reach a field boundary at a T-junction with a bridleway and *turn left* along it (200° initially). This is the course of the dismantled **Cheddington to Aylesbury Railway**. In 100m ignore a Permissive Footpath turning right along a margin between two fields. This is heading towards **Mentmore Park** 2 km away (**Mentmore Towers** is in a prominent position on a hill on the left).

In 145m *fork left* with a wooden bridleway sign (Mentmore) to the left of the field boundary hedge and into a grassy strip to continue broadly in the same direction (245°). In 340m continue in the same direction by a wide gap in the boundary hedge on the right. In 100m emerge from the grassy strip by a bridleway marker on a metal pole through a gap right of a metal field gate onto a road. *Turn right* with a bridleway marker on a metal pole opposite, cross the road and in 20m continue along a grassy path cut into the very wide green strip, veering away from the road, which is flanked on both sides by these 100m wide lush green margins with mature trees. In 15m *turn right* with a bridleway marker on a low wooden pole to continue in the same direction parallel to the road for the next 1 km (in 800m keeping to the right of the rather grand gate of **Mentmore Golf & Country Club**, then keeping to the left of a large tree).

200m from the approach road to the golf club *turn left* away from the road at a bridleway sign on a metal pole, just before it veers right past a lodge. Follow a grassy path through the green strip towards a gap in the trees. In 40m pass to the right of a wooden field gate, with a bridleway marker pointing ahead. Continue along a tarmac track (225°) which in another 40m joins the golf club approach road in a bend. Continue in the same direction on the left hand wide grassy road boundary. **Views on the left** are stretching from smaller hills near Cheddington along the Chilterns to Princes Risborough. In 135m continue ahead on a gravel track, where the road turns right. In 440m pass a green metal barrier with the golf club gardener's yard on the right.

In 200m *turn right* off the gravel track along a gravel-and-earth track into trees by a bridleway marker on a wooden pole (325° initially). In 155m *turn left* with the path close to the boundary of the wooded area. In 150m *turn right* with the path. Follow this path through the narrow wooded strip for another 500m (ignoring a couple of narrower tracks turning right towards the golf course) until the path itself *turns right* to the golf course. *Turn left* along a gravel track, now with the wooded area on the left. In 380m *turn left* at a path crossing along a grassy path towards a wooden gate with a bridleway marker 10m away. Go through the gate and in 35m continue along a tarmac path with a house on the right. In 15m *turn right* along a road (330°).

Pass Garden House, **Crafton Stud Farm** and Stud Cottage. 200m further on *turn left* off the road through a wooden kissing gate along a narrow path, with a fence on the left and a hedge on the right (240°). In 300m emerge through a wooden kissing gate and a narrow wooded strip onto a field boundary. Follow a footpath marker *half right* across the field corner (285°) on a usually well-cleared path and in 185m continue through a boundary gap to a gravel farm track junction. Continue in the previous direction along the middle of three farm tracks to another field corner in 40m.

The continuation of the walk follows the right-of-way on usually well cleared paths through this large field, but alternatively the farm track skirting the field along the left gets you there as well (but is not a right-of-way): follow the path into the field on a

290°-bearing towards the left of a pylon for 270m to a **clear footpath junction in the middle of the field** (grand views in all directions) and *turn left* there, now towards the left of a large white house on a hill and to the right of a prominent tree (250°). In 290m exit the field by a footpath marker on a wooden pole. Half left in the distance: the brutalist, 1960s-built, Grade II-listed, Bucks Council County Hall in Aylesbury.

Continue in the same direction along a grassy field boundary *on the left* of a wooded boundary between two fields. In 175m pass a footpath marker on a low wooden pole on the right and in 190m – in the bottom right corner of this field – cross a one-railed wooden plank bridge over a brook. Cross the next field on a usually well-cleared path in a similar direction (255°). Cross a stile into a grassy field and continue in the same direction, ascending towards a footpath marker on a low wooden pole in a gap in the tree line. In 100m another footpath joins from the bottom left corner of this field.

Continue in the next grassy field in the same direction towards the right hand end of a boundary hedge in the field near the top of the rise 150m away (not the garden hedge at the very top), **[!]** where you *veer left* to stay level and head for houses 75m away (235°), ignoring a well-trodden path ahead. Leave the field over an un-railed plank bridge across an often muddy area and continue with a garden fence on the left to eventually cross a stile and reach a road. *Turn right* into **Wingrave**. In 160m reach a road through the village at a small triangular green opposite The Rose & Crown pub.

Cross the road, *walk to the left of the pub* through a metal gate to the right of a metal field gate onto a grassy area and ascend towards the village green-cum-sports field. *Veer right* across it to its far right corner by a large solitary chestnut tree, to the right of the changing rooms and the left of **St. Peter and St. Paul Church**. Leave the green through a metal kissing gate by a footpath marker on a metal pole onto **Church Street** and *turn left*. In 35m pass **Coblers Wick** on the right, in 40m *turn right* over a stile into paddocks and *veer left* down the field towards a stile on the opposite side (250°).

In 125m go over the stile and cross a single-railed plank bridge into a grassy area to initially stay with the left hand boundary, but in 20m *veer right* and in 50m leave the grassy area through a gap in a fence to continue left on a narrow path between trees. In 50m walk through a wooden kissing gate into a farm yard and continue in the same direction along an overgrown path to the left of a corrugated iron barn onto a tarmac lane (or swing left around the overgrown area and through a metal field gate onto the lane, or turn right around the barn and onto the lane).

Cross the lane and go through a metal gate into a grassy field at a footpath cross paths, ignore a footpath veering left and one turning right, but continue straight ahead in the previous direction (265°). In 200m walk through a metal kissing gate to the right of a metal gate into the next field and cross it half left (230°). In 260m walk through a metal gate into the next field and continue in the same direction. In 180m pass through a metal gate, cross a brook over a two-railed wooden plank bridge and climb over a stile into the next field to continue in the same direction to a point about 25m to the left of the far right corner of the field (or skirt around the right hand boundary).

In 210m go through a metal gate into the next field and continue in the same direction (245°). Leave this field in 230m through a hedge gap, a railed wooden plank bridge and a metal gate and continue along the right hand grassy boundary of the next field. In 190m go through a metal gate into a grassy field and continue in the same direction towards the houses of **Rowsham**. In 260m you leave this field through a metal gate into a grassy strip and in 50 m continue along a lane to reach the **A 418** at a T-junction.

Cross the road and *turn right* on the opposite pavement. In 15m *turn left* by a footpath marker on a metal pole over a stile left of a metal field gate into a grassy area. *Veer*

right across it towards a gate 25m behind the left hand corner of a wooden garden fence (345°). Walk through the gate and cross a stile in 35m into a large grassy field. Ascend through the field towards its top left hand corner and in 290m pass through a metal field gate to continue in the next field towards its right hand far corner. In 210m enter the next field through a wooden kissing gate and follow its right hand boundary. In 230m pass through another wooden kissing gate into the next field and follow its grassy boundary towards the left of a cluster of farm buildings 290m away.

At the farm go over a set of three stiles to cross a few grassy areas and then cross the following field towards its far left corner 300m away (340°), where you go through a gap to the left of a metal field gate into a wooded area. Follow the left hand boundary hedge and in 110m emerge over a stile into a grassy area to follow its left hand boundary. In 110m go through a metal kissing gate and then walk through bushes onto a green on the fringes of **Aston Abbotts**. Continue in the same direction and leave the green through a wooden gate to continue along a tarmac lane (**Bricstock**) past **Nashs Farm** to a road junction.

Here you have choices:

- **For the early** recommended **lunch option The Royal Oak Inn** *turn right* here and in 110m *turn right* at a T-junction with Wingrave Road to reach the pub in 150m on the left. After lunch return to this point.
- **To cut short** this walk here: *turn right* and in 110m reach the bus stop for the 165 bus (not Sundays or Holidays), or *turn right* and continue past the pub for 1km to the junction with the **A 418** (Wingrave Cross Roads) for the 150 bus.
- **To continue the walk** *turn left* (but DO first check your progress against the food service hours at **The Unicorn**. The pub is another 2.7 km away, i.e.: more than 30 minutes).

In 60m *turn right* at a junction with **Moat Lane**. In 100m *turn left* at the village green at a road junction to pass the village hall and **St. James Church**. Continue along the pavement and then a raised grassy bank and *turn left* by a footpath marker up wooden steps and along a fenced-in narrow grassy path. In 85m climb over a stile into a grassy field and cross it to its far left corner (320°). In 185m pass through a couple of field gates into an adjacent grassy field and follow its left hand boundary. Leave the field through a wooden gate into a fenced-in grassy path with paddocks on the right.

Past the paddocks continue in the same direction through a couple of grassy fields (with views to the left towards the hilltop village of **Whitchurch**). Walk through a couple of metal kissing gates either side of a farm track and continue in the same direction through the next grassy field, then through another kissing gate and across an arable field (on a usually well-cleared path). Cross a wooden plank bridge into the next field and continue in the same direction across it. Leave it over another wooden plank bridge and follow the left hand grassy margin of the next field.

Turn left through a gap in the boundary hedge 10m from the far corner of this field to cross an un-railed wooden plank bridge and pass through a metal kissing gate into a meadow. Head for a metal kissing gate in 110m in the same direction (330°) and enter a fenced-in path between gardens. In 110m reach **Whitchurch Road** opposite a small triangular green. *Turn right* along the pavement and in 140m reach the recommended lunch stop **The Unicorn**, opposite St. Nicolas church, **Cublington**.

[To cut short the walk: out of the pub *turn right* along the road and in 225m reach a bus stop (**Cublington Cross Roads**) for services to Leighton Buzzard (not Sundays/BH).]

Else, out of the pub, cross the road and ascend two steps to proceed along **Church Path** between wrought iron fences with footpath and **Outer Aylesbury Ring** markers.

Turn right with the path but in 20m turn left over a stile into a grassy area where you ignore the footpath straight ahead and cross *hard right* to another stile 60m away (50°). Turn left on a grassy path and follow it around a fenced-in playground to emerge in front of a cricket club house. Pass it on the right hand side along its approach road and in 160m leave the area through a wooden gate next to a wooden field gate onto a road. Cross the road, turn left along the pavement and in 50m turn right into **Reads Lane**.

Ignore a footpath turning off left into a field to continue along the lane under mature trees past a few large houses and a pond. After 350m on this lane, with a house called **Pippbrook** on the right, turn left into a lane to **Rockwell Farm** and cross a stile to the right of the entrance gate into a fenced-in path (footpath and OAR markers). Swing right with the path and pass through a couple of metal field gates. In 40m cross a stile into a field and follow its right hand boundary. In 230m leave the field over a stile and cross a couple of un-railed wooden plank bridges and another stile into a large field.

Cross this field heading for a point about 80m to the right of its far left corner (50°) [or skirt around the left hand edge]. In 290m leave the field through a hedge gap and across an un-railed wooden plank bridge and then a stile into a grassy area. Turn right and in 10m turn left. In 80m cross stiles either side of a lane to continue into a wooded area. In 240m emerge from the trees at a field boundary and turn right along a farm track. In 40m turn left at a T-junction. In 70m at a fenced-in field corner [!] turn right over an easily missed stile in the narrow end of a grassy field and follow the right hand field boundary. Exit from the field over a stile near a group of poplars onto a lane. Turn left for a few meters to a lane crossing and turn right along a tarmac lane (due S).

In 560m cross a road and continue along a gravel lane. In 170m pass a shed (**The Old Gymnasium**) on the left and veer left with the lane through farm buildings. Ignore all ways off and 60m after passing a large open shed on the left turn left at a fence corner with a footpath marker along a minor farm track (70°). 14 km away on the right (105°) – on a clear day, you can see the **White Lion of Whipsnade Zoo**, which was cut into the **Dunstable Downs** in 1933 (about 3 km to the east of the end of Ivinghoe Beacon).

In 190m turn right in a field corner with the track. In 115m turn left through a hedge gap (a footpath joins from the right across the field). Follow this lane for 370m with a hedge on the left and a field on the right. Cross over a stile 10m right of a metal field gate into the next field. Veer right (due E) towards a barely visible decrepit stile left of a metal field gate. In 310m follow markers across the stile and veer left in descending towards the left of a solitary tree, now with views of the village of **Wing** on a hill (70°).

In 205m go over a stile next to a metal field gate and veer right to a two-railed wooden bridge 130m away across the brook at the bottom of this valley (due E). On the other side climb towards the village, veering left to keep just left of the crest of this field (60°). In 310m cross an un-railed wooden plank bridge into a grassy field and veer right towards its top right corner and enter the church yard through a kissing gate. Pass **All Saints Church, Wing** on a tarmac track and leave the church yard through a lychgate.

[For some early tea stops or to catch a bus to Leighton Buzzard: continue in the same direction along a road. In 130m reach a cross roads with High Street and find two pubs on either side: **The Cock Inn** and **The Queen's Head**. To cut short this walk here: turn right along High Street to the **A418** for buses to Leighton Buzzard. Else...]

Turn left down **Church Walk**, with the church yard on the left and in 120m turn right along a road. In 80m fork left at a triangular green towards a road and turn left along it. In 130m turn right a junction with another road in a right bend (**Stewkley Road**) and in 65m turn left into **Dormer Avenue**. In 170m bear left with Dormer Avenue where **Castle Close** joins from the right and in 50m turn right where Cottesloe joins from the

left. In 80m *turn left* along a tarmac track with a hedge on the right and a garden wall on the left. Follow this path and a tarmac driveway to a main road in 120m and *turn left* along it. In 170m *turn right* through a wooden kissing gate with a footpath marker on a pole into a grassy field and continue along a wide fenced path along its right hand boundary (50°) and in 110m ignore a left turning footpath through a metal kissing gate.

In 20m walk through a metal kissing gate and *turn right* at a boundary hedge corner. You follow the field boundary around to the left and in 170m *turn right* through a metal kissing gate to the right of a metal field gate and descend through a grassy area on a clear path, past the occasional yellow marker. In 60m you ignore a metal gate on the right, in 40m cross a plank bridge over a ditch, and in 50m *veer right* with some planks to then go through a metal gate into a wood (**Long Spinney** on the OS map). In 20m *turn left* at a T-junction with a raised path between streams/ditches and in 20m cross a railed plank bridge on the right to continue in the same direction.

In 20m you can *fork either way*, although the – slightly longer – right hand route is more interesting: in 50m you pass a pond on your right and follow the meandering narrow path through this pretty wood over several short boardwalks and in 220m re-join the other path at a T-junction. *Turn right* along it over a two-railed wooden plank bridge and *turn left* to leave the wood in another 35m over another two-railed wooden plank bridge and through a metal gate into a rising grassy field. *Veer ever so slightly right* up the slope, about 50m to the right of an electricity pylon, and then towards a metal gate in the line of a red brick house (**Burcott Hall Farm** on the OS map).

Turn right through the gate to continue through another grassy field (60°) and cross a farm track with metal gates on either side to then *veer right* (75°) downhill, in 100m crossing a stile and an un-railed wooden plank bridge into a field. The right-of-way leads across this field towards its far corner (80°), but it can be skirted around the right hand edge. In 300m you cross a stile on the right of a metal field gate into a field and *turn left* along its boundary, in 250m following it – first right, then left – around a wooded area. In 40m leave the field through a wooden kissing gate in the far left corner. Continue in the previous direction with a yellow marker on a pole tied to a tree, to the right of a line of hedges and trees on the left towards the audible **Leighton Buzzard dual carriageway-bypass road**.

In 125m follow a marker on a fence left to the tight corner of this field and go through a wooden gate to *turn left* along the raised embankment of the road. In 190m a footpath joins from left in a fence corner. *Turn right* down tarmac steps with a railing on the right onto the roadside. Cross the nearside lanes carefully **to the middle reservation**, *turn right* between protective steel ropes and in 35m cross the other two lanes to ascend tarmac steps onto the raised embankment and *turn right* with a footpath marker. In 40m *turn left* through a metal gate onto a grassy field boundary to *turn right* along it.

In 190m in the field corner you *turn left* downhill (70°) along the field boundary. In 135m leave the field through a wooden kissing gate into a paddock and continue in the same direction. Leave the paddock in the bottom right hand corner through a set of wooden kissing gates and follow along the left hand boundary of the next field, eventually joining an earth track to exit from the field and follow the track to the houses of **Linslade**. Go through a wooden kissing gate to the right of a metal field gate by the first house and continue in the same direction, in 20m on a road. In 230m *fork right* at a triangular green and in 50m *turn right* at a T-junction (opposite **The Hare Inn**).

In 80m *turn left* along **Orchard Drive**, in 40m ignore Grange Close on the left, but *turn left* in 80m at the corner of the last house, just before reaching the rail tracks, on a narrow tarmac track between fences. Stay in the same direction and in 280m reach **Leighton Buzzard station**. Take the footbridge 40m ahead for access to the platforms.

For the tea options though take the near footbridge and on the other side continue in the same direction on a tarmac track through **Linslade Park** to the left of **St. Barnabas**. In 70m reach **Vicarage Road**, with **Church Road** 5m to the left.

Now either:

- *turn right* along **Vicarage Road** and in 70m left down **Ship Road** to reach the **Tudor Pub & Carvery at The Ship** in 110m at the junction with **Wing Road**;
- or *turn left* down **Church Road**, in 100m left up **New Road**, in 90m right along **Old Road** and in 70m reach the **Buckingham Arms**; continue **past the Buckingham Arms** to reach **Linslade Fish Bar** in 60m;
- or cross **Church Road** and continue down a path between walls, in 80m *turn right* on **New Road**; in 40m reach **The White Horse** pub; in 25m *turn left* along **Wing Road**, in 35m *turn right* over a pedestrian crossing just before a mini-roundabout, in 30m cross the **Grand Union Canal**, in 220m cross the **River Ouzel** and *fork right* along **Bridge Street** (signposted High Street, Market, All Saints Church), in 100m pass **Café Sorelli** on your left, a right turn gets you to **The Golden Bell** in 50m, continuing ahead gets you in 65m to **The Black Lion** on your right and in a further 150m to the **The Swan Hotel** (Wetherspoon's) on your right; at the top of the **Market Square** (and just past the 15th century **Market Cross**) continue in the same direction (i.e: to the left of the Pizza Express branch), in 20m continue along **Hockliffe Street** at a bend, where you find **The Bald Buzzard Alehouse** micropub on your right in 60m, followed by **Espresso Head**.