

SWC_ Walk_ Goring circular via Hill Bottom, Woodcote and Cleeve.

This circular walk is best done anti-clockwise and the walk instructions are written to reflect this . It is a mix of beautiful, rolling Chilterns countryside, forest trails and quiet country lanes. This is a spring to early autumn walk. The best time to do it however is probably late April or early May when the foliage of the beech trees is at its most vibrant and where there should be good displays of bluebells and other spring flowers in some woods. Sections of the trails through woods will be muddy after rain.

There are very short but safe stretches along potentially busy roads. There are three pubs en route before you reach Goring. At the end of the walk there is **Pierrepoints**, a lovely, friendly tea stop by the River Thames in Goring. It closes at 5pm on Tuesdays to Saturdays (not open on Mondays and Sundays) It stays open until late on Friday evenings.

If you do the walk on Sunday there is the **Village Cafe** in Goring High Street which does teas and cakes and basic meals. You pass it on the way to the River Thames. It closes at 5pm on Sundays and on all other days of the week.

This walk takes a completely different route to the Goring Circular SWC 17. Before lunch the route intersects in some parts with Time Out Book 1, Walk 4 and SWC 3 Walk 170.

Walk checks

1. Saturday, 2 May 2015	Walk checked and up-dated by SWC walking group.
2. Sunday 13 August 2017	Walk up-dated by SWC walking group
3. Wednesday 18 April 2018	Walk up-dated by SWC walking group
4. October 2022	Walk updated by SWC walking group

Length	18.0km (11.3m).
Maps	Explorer 171, Chiltern Hills West
Toughness	4/10 with 342m (1,111 feet) of ascent and descent
Features	<p>Goring on Thames A former Oxfordshire village of the year (2009) it has an attractive riverside setting in beautiful countryside and on sunny summer days there will be many weekend visitors. See its Wikipedia pages for further information.</p> <p>Woodcote Oxfordshire village of the year in 2008 the name means “ cottage in the wood” and prehistoric artefacts dating back to 3000 BC have been found in the area. The village was first documented in 1109. For</p>

	<p>more information about the history of the village see its Wikipedia pages.</p>
<p>Walk options</p>	<p>Shortening the walk</p> <p>You can shorten the walk to around 12.0km (7.5m) by ending in Woodcote and catching the X40 bus that operates an hourly service at weekends until late between Reading and Oxford. You can catch the X40 south-bound bus to Reading at the war memorial opposite the Red Lion pub on your route. See here for timetable.</p> <p>Lengthening the walk</p> <p>You can extend the walk by 7km (4.5m) from Goring by taking the Thames Path to Whitchurch and then across the river to Pangbourne. This makes a long walk of 25km (16m). This part of the Thames Path is very scenic and if you have the energy for a short but steep climb off the main path immediately after entering some woodland you are rewarded with some superb views of the Thames and the surrounding countryside. After refreshments at Goring this extension makes a lovely evening “coda” to the main walk in high summer.</p> <p>The map for SWC walk 170 shows you the Thames Path route from Goring to Pangbourne</p> <p>There are a number of excellent pubs in Whitchurch and Pangbourne for drinks and/or a meal before catching a train at Pangbourne back to London. (See Book 1 Walk 4 for Pangbourne options). There are two pubs in Whitchurch on your route and before crossing the Thames to get to Pangbourne station and both are excellent for food and drink: the Greyhound (01189 842160) and the Ferryboat (0118 984 2161). Check their websites for opening times and food availability at weekends.</p>
<p>Transport</p>	<p>Direct trains run from London Paddington station to Goring and Streatley station on the line to Oxford. However this is a slow stopping service; you will get to Goring more quickly by catching an express train that stops at Reading – journey time about 35 mins – and then taking a slower stopping service to Oxford from there.</p>
<p>Suggested trains</p>	<p>Take the nearest train to 10am from London Paddington station. If however you want to walk at a more relaxed pace and give yourself a better chance of reaching Pierrepoints café in Goring, which closes at 5pm on Saturdays, then you may wish to take a slow stopping train nearer to 9am or a fast train to Reading and then change for a slower stopping service and aim to reach Goring and Streatley station at around 10.30-10.45am</p>

Lunch and Tea**Lunch**

The recommended lunch pub is the **Sun Inn** (0118 9842260) at Hill Bottom. It is well-known from other walks (see SWC 170) and does reasonable food.

The **Black Lion** (01941 680625) at Greenmoor Hill Woodcote is described as “a real ale community pub featuring large screens” and a pub garden but it does not serve meals.

The **Red Lion** (01491 680483) in Woodcote is “ an 1845 pub with old beams and a leafy beer-garden” and a possible late lunch pub. It is opposite a cricket ground with a substantial pavilion and some seating around the boundary so on a weekend summer’s day you may catch a match and this would be a pleasant spot to rest and have a drink or meal whilst waiting for a bus. You will reach this pub in good time if you decide not to go to the Sun Inn and take the shortcut as detailed in the walk instructions..

Tea

A lovely café **Pierrepoints** (01491 874464) does delicious cakes, light meals and refreshments which you can also take out to eat by the nearby weir on the Thames. It closes at 5pm from Tuesdays to Saturdays (not open on Mondays and Sundays) It stays open until late on Friday evenings.

If you do the walk on Sunday there is the **Village Cafe** in Goring High Street which does teas and cakes and basic meals. You pass it on the way to the River Thames. It closes at 5pm on Sundays and on all other days of the week.

Before you reach Pierrepoints there is the **Miller of Mansfield** pub. (01491 872829). Beyond the café across the two bridges to the other side of the river Thames in Streatley there is the **Swan** (01491 878800) a stylish riverside hotel, restaurant and bar.

At the start and at the end of the walk you pass a **Tesco Express**, ideal for provisions for the walk or snacks and drinks for your train journey home

A. Goring and Streatley station to the Sun Inn, Hill Bottom (8.2km, 5m)

1. Make your way over to platform 4 and leave Goring station through its main entrance/exit and turn left up the road. In 60m turn right up Reading Road passing a Tesco Express store on your right. In 70m turn right up Whitehills Green. In 60m turn sharp left with Whitehills Green and continue up the road. In 80m you take the right hand fork in the road bearing right with the road after 30m.
2. You continue to the end of the cul-de sac and go towards a gap in the hedge straight ahead of you where there is a partially hidden footpath sign and you go ahead on the enclosed tarmac path. In 30m go through a wooden gate with two footpath signs on a post just beyond it.
3. **! From the gate you take a diagonal route to your left towards the corner of the field on no clear path. You follow a bearing of 120 degrees across a playing field.** You continue on this bearing heading for a clear gap in the corner of the field. Go through the gap to pass a Chiltern Way footpath sign to your right. You now follow the clear path uphill to your left with the field boundary 5m to your left.
4. After climbing for 80m the path levels out. In 200m you go through a gap in the hedge at the field boundary and continue on the clear path. In 200m you ignore a wooden kissing gate to your left and continue ahead towards the field boundary 30m away where the path turns right to go steeply downhill.
5. As it reaches the bottom of the slope the path swings gently to the left and you head towards a wooden kissing gate and two footpath signs. Go through the gate and head towards another kissing gate 40m away which leads into a wood (**the Great Chalk Wood**).
6. Go through this gate and continue on the clear path through the wood. After 450m ignore a track to your right and continue on the main and now car-wide track as it bears left.
7. In 150m you reach a cross path with a wooden footpath post to your right and a no-cycling sign. You continue straight ahead following the Chilterns footpath sign along the clear wide track. In 80m, ignore the track joining from sharp right to continue ahead on the car-wide track as it gently descends. **!You reach a T junction in 30m. with a footpath post to you right and here you turn right on a path going gently uphill.**
8. In 150m open fields are visible to your left. You continue on the earth path which has now narrowed. **! You reach another T junction with a footpath post just ahead of you with multiple footpath signs on it. Here you turn right to go gently uphill.** In 60m ignore a track to your right and continue ahead through the woods. (*In Spring open fields should soon be visible about 25m away through the trees to your left.*)
9. You continue on the wide earth track. The track forks with a footpath post just ahead of you. Take the left fork and continue on the earth track. In 70m pass a footpath post to your left and two unmarked wooden posts just ahead of this to continue ahead on the track as it goes towards the edge of the wood.

10. The path bears sharp right and becomes enclosed with bushes either side. Continue on the path with fine views ahead of you. You reach a large hay-barn away to your left and you emerge onto a gravel area with a tarmac lane just ahead of you and a footpath post on your right. Turn left on the lane passing the large barn with fine views of the open countryside. *(The River Thames should soon be visible away to your right and you should also see and hear trains also away to your right.)*
11. Continue along this pleasant lane as it swings to the right passing through an open metal field gate (or use the stile just to its right) to bear left with the lane ignoring a track to your right with a footpath post. In 100m ignore narrow earth track with a footpath post to your right and continue along the lane.
12. Pass Cockpit plantation to your left to veer left with the lane passing a cottage on your left. Soon you reach a staggered cross-roads a two-armed footpath sign just ahead of you and another sign pointing left on the other side of the road. Here you turn right along a gravel track **following a sign for Coombe End Farm**. Where the track forks take the left hand fork heading towards some farm buildings. Go through a metal gate to your left (or the large metal field gate if it is open) passing a Chilterns footpath post. In 30m turn left through a metal kissing gate with a footpath sign to follow the field boundary which soon swings sharply to the right. Continue on this field boundary heading for another metal kissing gate in a line of hedges 50m away.
13. Go through the gate and bear left into a field and head towards another metal kissing gate in a fence. Go through this gate to follow a faint path on a bearing of 120 degrees across a field. You will soon see a metal kissing gate ahead of you. Go through this gate into woodland, noting a Chilterns Society footpath post on your right, following the path ahead with a wooden fence to your left.
14. In 80m you pass a kissing gate on your left and continue ahead on the path through woodland to reach a further kissing gate in 70m with two footpath signs on a post. **! Go through the kissing gate and turn sharp left with a wooden fence to your left and a house beyond this.**
15. In 70m you reach the corner of the field as it narrows to go through a metal kissing gate to continue ahead in the same direction along a concrete lane. In 130m you reach a three armed footpath sign to your right and beyond that a busy road. Cross the road and turn right soon reaching a lovely church on your left (a possible early picnic spot). **! 40m beyond the church and at the edge of the church grounds go through a gap in the fence with a wooden field gate to its right to follow a bearing of 130 degrees across a grassy playing field area.** In 80m you reach a lane and a three armed footpath sign.
16. *(If you are unsure of the direction head towards the gate in the top left hand corner of the playing field area and when you reach this turn right along the lane to reach the footpath post and the gravel track opposite on the other side of the lane.)*
17. **(If you are not having a meal at the Sun Inn and wish to take a short cut to the Red Lion at Woodcote then do not take the Chiltern Way extension ahead of you**

but turn left on the lane, Goring Hill Lane. Pass Orchard Coombe on your left and continue ahead. You soon reach Bridle Road on your left and you take this and continue ahead until you reach a cross-roads with Gashes Lane ahead of you. You continue along Gashes Lane and pick up the instructions at para 23.)

- 18 Cross this lane and take the enclosed gravel track ahead of you –the Chiltern Way Extension- following the direction of the footpath sign. You pass some houses to your left and the track narrows as it approaches a metal kissing gate. Go through the gate and continue on the path. Where the fence to your left ends you reach an information board with pictures of insects. ! **You now take a grassy path heading diagonally across the field on a bearing of 120 degrees passing under some telegraph wires in 80m.**
- 19 You continue ahead towards a kissing gate 60m away. Go through the kissing gate (with a warning sign about it not being a bridle path or for use by motorised vehicles) to bear right on the car-wide track passing a locked metal field gate to your right in 70m. In 50m ignore a track to your right to continue ahead along the gravel and earth track an intermittent line of trees just to your left.
20. In 130m at the field boundary you reach a footpath post with a number of arrows on it and you ignore a path to your left to continue ahead on a clear track that marks a field boundary. Eventually you reach the corner of the field to go through a metal gate just away to your left. Go through this gate and turn left on a semi-enclosed narrow path.
21. You keep on this path ignoring all ways off. The path starts to widen and you continue on. After 800m the track forks and you take the left fork to reach a tarmac road where you turn left. You pass a sign for Whitchurch Hill and a small wooden shelter and where the road forks you bear right heading for a sign for Hill Bottom. You continue up this tarmac road with houses away to your left. In 100m you reach **the Sun inn** on your right your recommended lunch-time pub.

B. Sun Inn to the Red Lion, Woodcote. (4km, 2.5m)

22. On leaving the Sun Inn turn right up the road going gently uphill. Go past Hill Bottom Close on your left and continue up the road. In 80 metres opposite Bridle Road on your left you reach a two-armed footpath sign where you turn right down a lane (Gashes Lane).
23. The lane narrows and you continue along an earth track going gently uphill with hedges on both sides. 15 metres after entering a wooded area there is a footpath post where the path forks and you take the right hand fork along the edge of the wood with open fields to your right. In 60m ignore a track to your left and continue on the track keeping to the edge of the wood. The path becomes a wide earth track. Bear left with the track as it narrows and continue ahead.
24. The path meets a rough track lane and you bear right with the track. In 80m you pass to the left of a metal gate to cross a tarmac road and continue ahead passing a two-armed footpath sign to your left. 50m ahead of you there is a clear white arrow on a tree and you continue on the trail through the wood.

25. **(! You need to take care through these woods until you reach the tarmac lane. There are white arrows on trees to your left and right on this trail so look out for these as you proceed.)**
26. The path bears gently right and you pass a large white arrow on a tree showing you the way ahead. Further arrows are on trees as you proceed. **! The main track turns right. at a cross-paths and just ahead is a tree with cross-path arrows on it. Here you turn left on a narrow path passing a tree with a large white direction arrow on it in 3m.** You are heading for a gate which should just be visible about 50m away through the trees.
27. Go through the wooden kissing gate and continue on the path with white arrows on trees showing you the way ahead. You continue ahead at a cross-paths another arrow visible on a tree some 50m ahead of you. Continue on the track noting the white arrows on the trees showing the way ahead.
28. In 80m ignore a path to your left and continue ahead following the arrows on the trees. **! You reach a cross-paths with a tree 5m to your right with arrows showing a path ahead and a path to your right and you continue ahead. In a further 80m the path forks and you take the path to your right passing a tree in 20m with an arrow on it showing your onward direction.**
29. Continue on the path following clear white arrows on trees showing your onward direction. There is soon a wire fence 30m away to your right. **! You meet a shallow depression on your left. Here you bear right heading 50m to the left of wooden gate in a fence (The gate is locked). You are heading towards a tree 50m away with a white arrow on it.**
30. You soon meet the fence and continue on the track with the wire fence immediately to your right heading towards a tree with a white arrow on it. A wooden gate is soon visible ahead of you. Go through the wooden gate and descend to a tarmac lane.
31. Turn right on this lane immediately passing a “primitive” Methodist church on your left. In 40m you reach a footpath sign on your left and you follow this on a narrow, winding path through the woods. In 40m where the path forks and becomes indistinct you take the left hand fork. You reach a clear cross path, at which you go left and up towards the left hand corner. Continuing upwards and left, you reach a T junction where you turn right down an earth and dirt track (Green Lane). (There is a white painted house over to your left.)
32. In 50m the track merges with a tarmac lane and you continue in the same direction. You pass a wooden gate to your left and in 10m you reach a main road (Greenmore) which you cross carefully and turn right on the pavement. *(The Black Lion pub is just to your right).*
33. You pass Oakdene to your left and continue ahead on the pavement passing Croft Way on your left. Where the footpath ends, take the path to the left and then immediately right parallel to the road, with houses on your left. You next cross

Grimmer Way and continue in the same direction. Ignore a left path but take the next path to the left (which also has access from the road).

34. In 50m you cross a road (Lackmore Gardens) and continue ahead along a now enclosed dirt path. Beyond the fence you see a large school away to your right. You pass a 2 armed footpath sign to your left and continue down the enclosed path.
35. You reach a metal kissing gate with a public footpath sign on a post showing the way ahead. **! From the gate you now bear right due North across a recreation ground heading towards the corner of a fence 70m away.** At the corner of the fence you will see a large cricket pitch/playing field ahead of you. Beyond the cricket pitch is a main road (Oxford Road) where you should see a white building the **Red Lion pub** and you head towards this.
36. *(Here if there is no cricket match or other activity taking place you can head straight towards the Red Lion pub noting the impressive cricket pavilion away to your right. If a game is being played follow the fence just to your left, passing wooden benches until you reach the main road and turn right for the pub This is a nice place to stop for a late lunch or relax with a drink if a cricket match is taking place.)*
37. As you near the Red Lion pub you will see a footpath sign showing the direction you could have taken across the playing field and when you reach this sign, if not stopping at the pub, you turn right along the pavement. Here you soon pass a bus shelter where you can catch a bus either to Reading or Oxford (see walk notes above)

C. Woodcote to Goring (5.8km, 3.6m)

38. You meet a cross-roads where you continue ahead following a sign for Crowmarsh and Wallingford. **(Take care here as for a short stretch there is no pavement.)** As the busy road veers left you reach a fork with Tidemoor Lane to your right and just beyond it is a 3 armed footpath sign. Ignore Tidemoor Lane to your right and cross the main road where you have space to walk to continue down the road. In 40m you reach a lane on your left and a three armed footpath sign where you turn left along the tarmac and grassy lane following a Chilterns Way extension sign.
39. The lane starts to go gently downhill through open countryside. The track enters a wooded area (Dean Wood) and passes a sign saying private land but you are on a public right of way. Some buildings appear ahead of you and you cross over a very narrow cattle grid. **! You eventually reach a footpath post by a tall hedge on your left with a multiplicity of signs on it. 10m beyond this sign you veer right on a driveway to go to the right of a small wooden barn passing a yellow arrow footpath sign and taking a narrow path past the barn now on your left.** You continue on the path to pass an attractive house to your left now on a wide grassy track. Keep on this track passing some tennis courts beyond some hedges on your left.
40. At the end of the tennis courts on your left you reach a footpath post with a number of directions on it. Here you turn sharp left past the tennis courts on your left and

continue towards a wood. In 40m the track bears right and you pass a footpath post to your left (ignoring the path into the woods) and you continue along the field edge with the wood to your left and a huge field to your right.

41. Continue on the earth track along the field edge. You ignore a footpath post to your left and a narrow path into the woods and you continue ahead soon going uphill and swinging to the left. You pass another footpath post and continue gently uphill, the path swinging gently to the right.
42. You reach a tarmac lane with a 3 armed footpath sign on your left. Here you turn right on this lane (South Stoke Road) going gently downhill. (*Take care here as there may be a fair bit of traffic*). In 160m turn left at a three-armed footpath sign to go through a wooden kissing gate to follow the clear grassy path towards another kissing gate 50m away. Go through this kissing gate (with a footpath sign on a post) to follow the clear track into the wood.,
43. You soon pass a tree with a white arrow on it and follow the path which keeps close to the edge of the wood to your left. There are somewhat indistinct white arrows on the trees as you continue on this path. You continue ahead at a staggered cross paths and continue through the woodland. In 80m you leave the wood passing a footpath post on your right and continue ahead on the wide dirt track going towards trees ahead of you.
44. You reach a footpath sign on your left and a T junction with a tarmac lane (Beech Lane). Turn right along the lane. You pass an entrance drive to a large detached house on your left. You reach a cross-paths with a footpath sign to your left and the entrance to Beech Farm House on your right. You continue ahead on the earth track - the Chiltern Way extension going gently downhill.
45. **In 250m you reach a footpath sign on your left showing Goring 1.5 and a path going into a wood** . You go up a small bank and follow the path into the wood. Keep on this path as it meanders through the wood (Wroxhills Plantation) keeping ahead on the narrow path at a cross paths, you continue in the same direction. The path meets a horse-blocking barrier with a footpath post at a cross-paths and you continue ahead following the sign for the Chilterns Way soon going gently downhill now through Wroxhills Wood..
46. The path bears left downhill as it skirts the wood just to your left and with attractive hills away to your right. Continue on this narrow path eventually reaching a 2 armed footpath sign and just beyond this a lane. Bear right on the lane and in 15m turn left at a 2 armed footpath sign following a path with a wire fence just to your right. This path runs along the side of gardens and houses beyond a wooden fence to your right. (*This is the area known as Cleeve on 1:2500 OS maps.*) Eventually, you go through a broken metal kissing gate and in 20m go through a “commemorative” wooden kissing gate to an open area , where you continue in the same direction.
47. In 100m go through a further wooden kissing gate to continue on the path ignoring a path to your left going uphill. In 15m go over a cross path and continue ahead on a narrow enclosed path passing a hidden Chilterns footpath sign on your right. In 40m

you reach a three-armed footpath sign to cross a dirt track to continue ahead towards a gap in a line of bushes to reach a tarmac path where you bear left with a white house ahead of you to your left.

48. In 40m the path comes out onto a road (Lockstile Way) and you continue ahead along the road in a pleasant residential area soon passing Milldown Avenue to your right. You pass Ferne Close on your right and then Meadow Close on your left and continue down the road.

49. **! At a T junction with Valley Close to your left and Lockstile Way bearing right you continue down a narrow enclosed path visible across the road directly ahead of you.** In 40m this path reaches a lane where you turn right. Continue along the lane where in 100m you reach a crossroads. ***Here you have a choice.***

1. To go directly to Goring and Streatley station turn left along the busy B4526 road soon passing Reading Road and the Tesco Express on your left which you passed as you set out. 60m further on Goring and Streatley Station is on your right.
2. Continue ahead following a Thames Path sign and cross over the railway bridge to continue down the High Street for refreshment opportunities at firstly the **Village Cafe** after 150m. In a further 50m you reach the **Miller of Mansfield pub.** Continue for another 70m and you reach **Pierrepoints café** and signs for the Thames Path to continue the walk to Pangbourne.
3. To carry onto Pangbourne without stopping in Goring, take option 1. but continue on past the station. Turn right at a fork in the road, walking towards the river and to join the Thames path.