

Haddenham Circular (via Brill) [Full Walk]			Haddenham Circular (omitting Brill)		
1 st walk check	3 rd walk check	4 th walk check	1 st walk check	2 nd walk check	3 rd walk check
28 th Sept. 2013	19 th April 2015	11 th Sept. 2022	30 th January 2016	08 th June 2022	
Current status	Document last updated Monday, 12 th September 2022				
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Haddenham Circular (via Brill)

Start: Haddenham & Thame Parkway station

Finish: Haddenham & Thame Parkway station

Haddenham & Thame Parkway station, map reference SP 731 085, is 10 km south west of Aylesbury, 22 km east of Oxford, and 79m above sea level. Haddenham is in **Buckinghamshire**.

Length: 27.7 km (17.2 mi).

Cumulative ascent/descent: 412m. For a shorter walk, see *below* **Walk Options**.

Toughness: 7 out of 10

Time: 6 hours 20 minutes walking time.

For the whole outing, including trains, sights and meals, allow at least 8 ³/₄ hours.

Transport: Haddenham & Thame Parkway station is on the London Marylebone to Bicester main line, served by trains to Oxford or Banbury. Journey times are from 37 minutes.

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

OS Landranger Map: 165 (Aylesbury & Leighton Buzzard)

OS Explorer Map: 180 (Oxford) & 181 (Chiltern Hills North)

Walk Notes:

This is a very rewarding walk through the pleasant rolling countryside of the north westerly parts of Aylesbury Vale, just north of the Chilterns, with some far views on clear days.

The walk first crosses the Thame Valley north of Haddenham and then passes through the area of the ancient Bernwood Royal Hunting Forest on a wide circular route to return south on a different route back through the Thame Valley to Haddenham.

The lunch stop is in any one of two charming pubs in the ancient hilltop village of Brill. A short loop around the village, providing far views into five counties, passes its well-preserved windmill in a prominent position on Brill Common, before a long descent from this steep-sided village follows.

There are a few ascents throughout the walk at regular intervals, with the third one – up to lunch in Brill – the longest, as the walk links a total of four hilltop villages and crosses one other hill chain.

A shortcut reducing the effort to 4 out of 10 is described.

The walk contains several arable field crossings as well as plenty of pastures, hayfields and meadows, some of which will feature high grass in summer.

Walk Options:

A Shortcut half-way through the morning cuts out the charming hilltop village of Brill (cuts 7.6 km (4.7 mi) and 156m descent/re-ascent). This walk is **rated 4/10**.

A minor Shortcut in Brill is described in the text (cuts 1.3 km).

Bus Lines 111, 112 and 113 offer limited connectivity from/to Haddenham Station to Long Crendon (at the far end of the village from the walk route though), Chilton and Brill. Mon-Fri only.

Order a taxi from Haddenham Station for a pick-up from Brill or Ashendon: 01844 299 444 (quoted fare from Ashendon: £14 in 09/22).

Lunch (details last updated 10/04/2022)

The Pointer 27 Church Street, *Brill Buckinghamshire, HP18 9RT (01844 238 339, <http://www.thepointerbrill.co.uk/>)*. Open all day every day. Food served 12.00-15.00 and 18.00-21.00 Mon-Thu and 12.00-21.00 Fri-Sun. The Pointer is located 12.1 km (7.5 mi) into the walk. It is on a site which has had a pub on it since at least the 1700's, and has a large outside area at the back. Until 2011 known as The Red Lion, it has been lovingly restored by the new owners, now serving as pub, restaurant and butchers, and also offering rooms in a building opposite.

The Pheasant 39 Windmill Street, *Brill, Buckinghamshire, HP18 9TG (01844 239 370, <http://www.thepheasant.co.uk/>)*. Open all day every day. Food served Mon-Fri 12.00-14.30 and 18.00-21.00, 12.00-15.00 and 18.00-21.00 Sat and 12.00-17.00 Sun. The Pheasant is located 12.9 km (8.0 mi) into the walk and also offers accommodation. It has a large outside seating area, with the balcony and garden offering views of Brill's windmill and the open countryside beyond it.

The Hundred of Ashendon Lower End, *Ashendon, Buckinghamshire, HP18 0HE (01296 651 296, <http://www.thehundred.co.uk/>)*. Open 18.00-23.00 Mon-Thu, 12.00-15.00 and 18.00-23.00 Fri, 12.00-23.00 Sat and 12.00-18.00 Sun. Food served 18.30-20.30 Mon-Thu, 12.00-14.00 and 18.30-20.30 Fri, 12.00-14.30 and 18.30-20.30 Sat and 12.00-15.30 Sun. The Hundred of Ashendon is located 18.6 km (11.6 mi) into the full walk and 11.5 km (7.2 mi) into the short walk. Formerly The Gatehanger's Inn and The Red Lion, it is also offering accommodation. Awarded the Michelin Bib Gourmand every year since 2016. They also serve sandwiches and more traditional dishes from a Bar Snack Menu.

Tea (details last updated 10/04/2022)

The Crown at Cuddington Aylesbury Road, *Cuddington, Buckinghamshire, HP18 0BB (01844 292 222, <https://www.crowncuddington.co.uk/>)*. Open all day every day. Food served Mon-Tue 12.00-14.00, Wed-Fri 12.00-14.00 and 18.00-20.00, Sat 12.00-15.00 and 18.00-20.30 and Sun 12.00-15.00. The Crown is located 3.7 km from the end of the walk and a Grade II listed Fuller's pub with some outside seating.

House of Spice 19 Fort End, *Haddenham, Buckinghamshire HP17 8EJ (01844 292 934, <http://www.houseofspice.uk.com/>)*. Open 16.30-22.00. An old pub converted into an award winning restaurant. Part of a group of restaurants across Bucks and Oxon. 1 km from the station.

Smarts Fish & Chips 5 Banks Parade, *Haddenham, Buckinghamshire HP17 8ED (01844 291 791)*. Open all day every day. 1.2 km from the station.

The Rising Sun 9 Thame Road, *Haddenham, Buckinghamshire HP17 8EN (01844 291 744, <https://www.risingsunhaddenham.co.uk/>)*. Open 12.00-14.30 and 17.00-23.00 Mon-Thu, 12.00-24.00 Fri-Sat and 12.00-22.30 Sun. 900m from the station. Owned by Oak Taverns.

Little Italy Espresso Bar, Haddenham and Thame Parkway Station Thame Road, *Haddenham, Buckinghamshire HP17 8EW (01844 290 426, <http://littleitalyexpressobar.com/>)*.

Notes:

Haddenham

The name is Anglo-Saxon Hædanhām, "Hæda's Homestead" or, perhaps Hædingahām, "the home of the Hadding tribe". Haddenham is renowned for its ponds which were used to breed Aylesbury ducks, and it is also the home of Tiggywinkles, the animal welfare charity and veterinary hospital. Haddenham is the country's biggest village.

Wychert

Haddenham is known nationally as one of only a few wychert (or whitchet) villages. Wychert is Anglo-Saxon in origin (wit chert), meaning 'white earth', and refers to the local clay soil deposits. It describes a method of construction using the wetted clay mixed with straw to make walls and buildings, which are then thatched or topped with red clay tiles. The method is similar to that of a Cob building. To maintain the rigid nature of wychert it must not become too dry for risk of crumbling, nor too wet for risk of turning to slime. Keeping wychert well ventilated and not subject to excess condensation is therefore highly recommended. Render applied to a wychert wall must be of a breathable material – a lime based render is common practice. One of the largest Wychert structures is Haddenham Methodist Church.

Wychert Way

A 21 km (13 mi) waymarked, circular walk around Haddenham linking the surrounding Wychert villages and pubs of Cuddington, Chearsley and Long Crendon. Waymarked paths link the centre of Haddenham and the station to the walk.

River Thame

Nowadays seen as a 65 km (40 mi) long tributary of the longer Thames, there is a school of thought saying that the Thames upstream of Dorchester, where the Thame joins it, is called Isis, and that the Thames is only the confluence of Isis and Thame. What seems certain is that all three names go back to the Celtic "Tamesas/Tamesis" (probably meaning "dark"). The Thame's source is several small streams in the Vale of Aylesbury on the north side of the Chiltern Hills. These streams converge north-east of Aylesbury.

Thame Outer Circuit

A 31 km (19 mi) circular waymarked route around the market town of Thame.

Thame Valley Walk

A 24 km (15 mi) waymarked linear Long-Distance Path along the Thame Valley from Aylesbury to Albury, linking the North Bucks Way with the Oxfordshire Way.

Bernwood Jubilee Way

A 98 km (61 mi) waymarked circular Long-Distance trail from Brill, developed by the Bernwood Ancient Hunting Forest Project within the ancient Forest boundary. Brill's close association with Bernwood, as its administration centre, gave it an importance throughout the history of the royal forest and makes it an ideal starting/finishing point. The most northerly points of the route are near Oxford and Buckingham, the most southerly just north of Thame. Opened in 2002.

Bernwood Forest

One of several forests of the ancient Kingdom of England and a Royal hunting forest, Bernwood is thought to have been set aside as Royal hunting land when the Anglo-Saxon kings had a palace at Brill and church in Oakley, in the 10th century and was a particularly favoured place of Edward the Confessor, who was born in nearby Islip.

From about 1217 through to the 17th century the forest went through a gradual period of deforestation.

Long Crendon Courthouse

Purchased by the NT in 1900 by Public Subscription, the courthouse is a fine example of a 15th century timber-frame construction. The ground floor (now tenanted) was the village poor house.

Chilton House

A Grade II listed Georgian manor house, dating back to the early 18th Century. It was built for the view, and has a 12th century church in its grounds. Remaining under the ownership of the Aubrey-Fletcher family, the house was converted to a luxury nursing home, providing the comfort and services of a fine country house hotel, but as of September 2022 houses Bruern Abbey Senior (Boys) School.

Brill

Brill is a charming village on a steep-sided hill with views into five counties. Its name is a modern abbreviation of *Bre-hyll*, with both syllables meaning 'hill', the first is Celtic/Brythonic, and the second Anglo-Saxon. Its history dates back beyond the Royal Hunting Forest of Bernwood, of which it was once the most important settlement in the forest. Such an exposed hilltop site would have been settled upon since the Stone Ages, and traces have been found of an Iron Age Fort as well as a Roman settlement and an Anglo-Saxon castle. King Edward the Confessor chose Brill as the location for his royal hunting lodge,

helping to establish a thriving pottery and brick industry that supplied bricks for houses in Oxford and Thame as well as for Waddesdon Manor. It is rather salutary to consider how Brill would be today if Queen Victoria had chosen to visit nearby Dorton Spa rather than Leamington Spa...

And while The Great Train Robbery in 1963 took place 27 km away from here further east near Cheddington, the robbers had hid at the remote Leatherslade Farm on the boundary of Brill with the village of Oakley for two days before the crime and returned there immediately after it to divide the loot.

J.R.R. Tolkien is supposed to have based the village of Bree in The Lord of the Rings on Brill.

Brill Windmill

Windmills have been a feature of Brill since at least the 13th century. The present Grade II listed windmill was probably erected sometime in the 1680s. Although not quite the oldest windmill in England, it is one of the best preserved of the dozen or so 17th century 'post-mills' still standing. A post-mill is a mill in which the whole structure revolves around a central post in order to face the wind. In 1634 another post-mill was built opposite today's windmill, on the other side of the road across the Common. It was struck by lightning in 1905 and demolished. The 'tump' on which it was built is still clearly visible. Brill Windmill is a major landmark in Buckinghamshire and is open to the public on the first Sunday of each month throughout the summer (14.00-17.00).

Wotton House

Wotton House was built between 1704 and 1714, to a design very similar to that of the contemporary version of Buckingham House. The house is an example of English Baroque and a Grade I listed building. The grounds were laid out with a formal parterre and a double elm avenue leading down to a lake. Fifty years later William Pitt and Capability Brown improved the landscape, creating pleasure grounds of 200 acres incorporating two lakes. After a fire gutted the main house in 1820 the owner, Richard Grenville, 2nd Marquess of Buckingham, commissioned John Soane to rebuild it. After the 3rd Duke of Buckingham, the last direct Grenville male heir, died in 1889, the house was let to a succession of tenants until in 1929 it was bought by Major Michael Beaumont MP and renovated, concealing all of Soane's detailing including the central three-storey Tribune. In 1947 Beaumont sold the estate and the main house was let to two boys' schools. By 1957 the house had become derelict and was due to be demolished when Elaine Brunner found it and had most of the Soane features restored.

The South Pavilion (the former coach house) was sold separately in 1947. It has had a number of notable owners incl. Sir Arthur Bryant and Sir John Gielgud, and is presently owned by Tony and Cherie Blair (bought in 2008 for £4m).

Waddesdon Manor

One of the seven great houses built in the Vale of Aylesbury by the Rothschilds in the second half of the 19th century (the others being: Aston Clinton, Tring, Ascott, Eythrope, Mentmore Towers and Halton). Waddesdon Manor, set in formal gardens and an English landscape park, was built on a barren hilltop overlooking Waddesdon village by Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild (1839-1898) on farmland bought in 1874. He wanted a country retreat built in the style of a turreted Loire Valley châteaux and engaged the French architect Gabriel-Hippolyte Destailleur. It was meant to house his superb art collection and entertain the fashionable world.

Bequeathed to the NT in 1957 with the largest endowment the Trust had ever received, the Rothschilds ensured the family's continued involvement by naming a family member as the chairwoman of the management committee. To this day it is managed by a family charitable trust. As a family, the Rothschilds were the greatest art collectors of the 19th century, and the collection continues to grow through the patronage of family trusts.

Several films have been shot here, including the Carry On film Don't Lose Your Head, the Indian film Kabhi Khushi Kabhi Gham, and The Queen, in which interiors and the gardens doubled for Buckingham Palace. Waddesdon Manor has also been used in several television series. The house stood in for the exterior of the fictional Haxby Park in the second season of Downton Abbey (the interior was filmed at Halton House) and as Snow White's and Prince Wendell's castle in the TV mini-series The Tenth Kingdom. It was used as the O'Connell family's home in the film The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor, and as the front part of the 'Hotel du Triomphe' in Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows.

Nether Winchenden House

A Grade I listed Medieval and Tudor Manor House and Country House, for 450 years in the same family ownership, altered in the late 18th century in the Strawberry Hill Gothic style, and nowadays used as a wedding venue.

Outer Aylesbury Ring

An 85 km/53 mile circular 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/view/outeraylesburyring/home> .

WALK DIRECTIONS

Alight from the train in **Haddenham and Thame Parkway Station** on platform 1 and walk up a ramp towards the station building. Through or past the station building, *turn right* along a pavement past a bus stop and – upon reaching a main road – continue to the right of the road along a narrow gravel path, signed for **Snakemoor Local Nature Reserve**, parallel to a main road, though separated by trees. In 120m cross a concrete lane leading to the nature reserve and continue along the main road on a narrow grassy strip. In 125m, at a four-way road junction, *turn left* along **Station Road**. In 35m *turn right* by a Public Bridleway signpost and through a metal kissing gate into a field (ignore the obvious car wide farm track). In the field, *turn right* with a **Permissive Footpath** sign, along the boundary (and with views to The Chilterns) and parallel to the car wide farm track (235°). In 200m *turn right* through a metal kissing gate by a wooden four-way footpath/bridleway signpost into another field. Follow **Wychert Way** and footpath markers across the field (280°). In 240m you reach the boundary hedge by the main road and a footpath signpost behind it, *but turn left this side of the hedge*.

Follow the field boundary of a narrow neighbouring field, with a Wychert Way marker (250°). In 170m *turn right* at a two-way wooden footpath signpost (**Long Crendon and Chearsley**) through the boundary hedge, cross the main road and continue into a field. Follow a footpath signpost across this large field, gently rising on a usually well-cleared path (310°). After 485m you leave the field through a gap in the boundary hedge and cross the busy **A418** (Oxford to Aylesbury) to continue in the same direction through a metal gate to the right of a metal field gate, descending on a car wide grassy farm track, then a pasture boundary, towards the **Thame River**. In 410m walk through a metal kissing gate to *veer left* (280°) across a pasture with a **Thame Outer Circuit** marker towards a bridge over an arm of **The Thame**. In 260m you walk through a metal gate and cross the two-railed steel-and-concrete bridge. *Turn left* but stick to the other arm of the Thame on the right, on slightly higher ground. In 140m *turn right* over a bridge across this arm of the Thame, which is split here further into two channels, indicating the former site of a mill.

Veer right to in 50m go through a new metal gate into a field with a **Thame Valley Walk** marker (i.e.: ignore a stepless stile and a metal field gate dead ahead). *Bear left* to cross the field *diagonally* (265°) to its far corner along a usually well-cleared path, with the village of **Long Crendon** behind it on a hill (or skirt around the left-hand car wide grassy boundary). In the corner a footpath joins from the right: the **Bernwood Jubilee Way**. Leave the field over a stile and across an un-railed concrete bridge into a field corner. Follow the right hand boundary strip of this field, in 120m swinging right with the boundary. Continue in the same direction (295°) along the boundaries of three fields, with a hedge and a ditch on the right, for 660m. In the very far field corner, *veer right* into a grassy area and *bear left* uphill on a winding path through a grassy area, broadly in the same direction as before. In 160m continue up a narrow earthen path between fences with **Circular Walk** and **Thame Valley Walk** markers, still uphill.

In 130m join a tarmac lane to houses and continue uphill. In 70m stay ahead at a crossroads, with **High Street** and good examples of **Wychert Walls** on the left, and the NT-owned **Long Crendon Courthouse** and **St. Mary the Virgin** on the right. In 80m *turn right* at a T-junction with a main road, and in 75m *turn left* with a footpath signpost across the road and along a narrow earthen path between hedges. In 90m emerge over a stile into a field corner and *veer right* towards a stile in the opposite boundary fence, in front of the second left of four large barns (10°). In 185m cross a set of stiles either side of a ditch, and *turn left* in a farmyard to pass through several metal field gates. [The many gates in this yard are used primarily for managing the movement of livestock herds through it, so may be open most of the time.] In 35m (just after a

double metal field gate) *turn right* along concrete. In 50m cross a stile to the left of a double metal field gate and *turn left* along a hedged farm track (340°, 'Footpath' signs).

In 500m continue ahead, descending between fences, where another track turns left. In 210m go over a stile left of a metal field gate into a pasture and cross it *veering right* towards a stile in 360m, initially hidden by a large tree at the bottom of this valley (10°). Go over the stile (negotiating some low tree branches) into a narrow corner of a field on the right and *veer right* to follow its left-hand car wide boundary (30°). In 180m you *veer left* with the boundary and a marker post (ignore a left turn through the hedge). In 120m **[!]** *turn left* through a narrow gap in the hedge with a yellow marker on a pole and *turn right* along the adjacent field's boundary. In 130m ignore a car wide hedge gap on the right, but in 30m walk through a well-hidden narrow gap in the field corner. Cross an un-railed wooden plank bridge over a stream and a stile into a pasture's corner and *turn left* uphill to the right of **Wombwell's Farm**.

[The farm has a history of keeping very inquisitive cattle in this field. If you feel threatened, leave the field back over the stile and *turn right* uphill along the boundary hedge past the farm to the road.]

Leave the field in 240m in its top far-left corner over a stile onto a road. Ignore a footpath marker pointing right and *turn left* along the road, with a field on the right. In 165m ignore a signposted footpath turning right into the field. In another 450m turn right with a footpath signpost over a stile to the left of a metal field gate (which may be unlocked) and continue along a left-hand field boundary. In 200m, in the field corner, *turn left* through a metal field gate or over a stile. In 135m cross a stile to the right of a rusty metal field gate onto a tarmac lane and continue in the same direction into the village of **Chilton**. In 280m, at a T-junction with the main road through a village and with a bus stop on the left, *turn right*. In 200m the road *turns left*, where a lane continues ahead through a large gate, leading to **Chilton House** and signed for **Bruern Abbey Senior School** and **Chilton Business Centre**.

Here you have a choice:

For a shortcut continue ahead (for details see the end of the main walk directions).

For the main walk, *turn left* along **Thame Road** (but for a rest and/or a magnificent view first follow the shortcut for 70m to a bench with views). In 90m *turn right* along **Dorton Road** at the rear entrance to **Chilton House**. In 40m enter the churchyard of **St. Mary the Virgin** on the right [well worth a visit, if only for the magnificent **tomb of the Croke Family** in the far-right corner, for the adult couple and all 11 children!]. In 40m *turn left* around the church, in 30m leave the churchyard through a wooden gate on the left and down steps back onto the road. *Turn right* uphill and in 310m pass a bench on the right (views to **Dorton**, **Ashendon** and **Winchenden**, all passed in the afternoon, as well as the area the **Shortcut** passes through) and swing left with the road. In 280m, where the road curves to the right, you *ignore a footpath* into a field opposite a red brick house on your right.

[!] In 20m *turn left* through a metal kissing gate *by a second footpath signpost*. Continue downhill through four fields (290°), soon with a large farm on a hill in the distance a little to the right and the lunch destination **Brill** on a higher hill behind it. Leave the fourth and largest field through a car wide gap in the boundary with a footpath marker post on the left to continue in the same direction through another field on a usually well-trodden path. In 210m enter **Chilton Grove** through a gap in a boundary hedge and in 35m leave the wood through a metal gate into a pasture. Ignore a footpath ahead but *veer right* in the general direction of farm buildings on a hill behind to a point about 120m left of the initially hidden far right field corner (320°).

In 370m leave the field through a metal gate, a plank bridge over a ditch and a stile to continue in the same direction in another field. In 260m leave the field through a metal gate and across an un-railed wooden plank bridge into a wooded strip, which you leave in 15m through a metal gate after an un-railed plank over a ditch into a field. Continue uphill towards the farm buildings (325°). In 260m go through a metal kissing gate to the right of a metal field gate and continue uphill to the right of **Chiltonpark Farm**. *Veer left* around the farm buildings and to the left of an electricity pole with a yellow marker and then continue in the same direction (330°) towards the left of a double electricity pole. [The large industrial building 10 km away on the half right (25°) is the **Greatmoor Energy from Waste** facility]. Leave the field through a metal kissing gate to the left of a metal field gate into another pasture and *veer left* through a dip **towards** a metal field gate at **the highest point of the next field** (295°).

Ignore any tracks half left and down and in 400m leave the field through a set of metal gates either side of an often-overgrown area into another field and continue in the same direction on a usually obvious path. In 275m in the top-left corner *turn left* through a metal gate into a pasture and follow its right-hand boundary fence, with the adjacent field on the right dropping away steeply (260°). In 180m leave the field through a metal gate to the right of metal field gates and *turn right* in the next field towards a wooden gate to the right of a wooden field gate in the far-right corner next to **Brill House** (330°). Continue in the same direction on a clear path through a dipping grassy area and in 150m through a wooden gate onto a gravel path between houses by a footpath signpost. *Turn left* along the gravel track by a wooden bench. In 35m join a concrete track through a green towards the centre of **Brill**, soon passing **All Saints Church** on the right. In 110m you reach a main road and *turn right* towards the first recommended lunch stop **The Pointer**. Just past the pub a lane turns right by **Brill Memorial Hall**.

Here you have a choice:

For a shortcut (cuts 1.3 km), cutting out a scenic meander around Brill, which provides for **panoramic views into five counties**, *turn right* along the lane: In 50m *turn left* with a **Bernwood Jubilee Way** marker in front of the church yard wall of **All Saints Church** (Cream Teas Sat & Sun). In 80m pass the club house of the **Sports & Social Club** to the left onto a cricket pitch. In 115m in the left corner of the pitch a tarmac track joins from the left at a T-junction. This is the main walk. *Turn right* and pick up the directions at the asterisk *).

For the main walk, continue towards the village green (**The Square**) with its war memorial in 60m. *Turn left* along the green past a bus stop and a bench and in 80m *turn right* through bike barriers along a narrow tarmac track between garden fences ('To Harris Close', and with a **Bernwood Jubilee Way** signpost). In 70m continue ahead where a path turns right to houses and in 40m walk through a wooden kissing gate into a grassy area. In 125m descend steps and emerge through a wooden kissing gate onto a gravel lane, where you *turn right*. In 60m emerge from a wooded area with clear views of **Brill Windmill** ahead on a hill and soon into **Oxfordshire** on the left. In 150m cross a tarmac lane and ascend the hill to the windmill on **Brill Common**, an area shaped by clay workings for brick making and the Brill pottery industry (and – on a clear day – with 180° views from there into **Oxon, Wars, Bucks and Northants**).

At the windmill *turn right* (110°) along a grassy path and in 50m walk through a car park to reach a gravel lane in 35m and *turn left* along it. In 25m cross a road (or *turn right* to the second recommended lunch stop **The Pheasant**) to continue along a gravel lane (**North Hills**). In 25m cross a lane at a T-junction and in 30m *turn right* at a footpath signpost through a wooden kissing gate into a wooded area. Follow the path on the left (70°), ignoring a path on the right. In 120m go through a wooden gate into a

more open area near a garden fence corner on the right and *veer right* along the fence (100°). In 50m ignore a wooden kissing gate on the right near houses with footpath signposts. In 130m leave the grassy area through a wooden kissing gate onto a raised roadside kerb, with views to the North East, into **Bedfordshire** (the large building 4 km away on 60° is **Wotton House**). *Turn right* along **Tram Hill**, then **Temple Street**, uphill into Brill. In 220m, by the **Fire Station**, *turn left* through bike barriers along a tarmac path (135°). In 50m you emerge through a metal kissing gate into the corner of a sports field. *Turn left* with the tarmac path.

*) In 25m bear right with the tarmac path and in 130m emerge in a car park and *veer right* through it away from a school on the left. In 80m *turn left* at a T-junction with a road and swing right with it. In 35m *turn left* along a gravel lane and *turn right* in another 25m. In 50m continue ahead through a metal gate to the right of a metal field gate and start the **long descent from Brill** along a grassy track (75°), with panoramic views ahead to **Dorton, Ashendon** and **Waddesdon Manor** (on a wooded hilltop), **Chiltonpark Farm** (passed before lunch) to the right and all the way to the **Chilterns** behind. In 500m continue through a metal gate to the left of a metal field gate into a large field and follow its left-hand boundary, with **Chinkwell Wood** on the left. Ignore all paths left into the wood and also a footpath half right across the field. In 530m in the bottom-left field corner *veer left* towards its very narrow left-hand end and cross a stile left of a metal field gate into an adjacent pasture. Follow the right-hand side boundary hedge and fence and in 30m continue in the same direction at a fence corner (100°).

Leave the field over a stile to the left of a metal field gate to cross a grassy farm track and enter a wood over a stile. In 100m leave the wood over another stile and *veer right* in a pasture towards its far-right corner. In 400m leave the field over a stile into trees (with another stile just to the right where a footpath joins from the right) and continue in the same direction on an earthen track. In 40m cross a couple of ditches, but ignore a footpath turning right towards **Ashfold School, Dorton House**. In 180m you reach a road in a bend and *turn right*. In 140m *turn left* off the road into a field, opposite an exit of Ashfold School, by **Dorton Lodge**, through a metal kissing gate by a footpath signpost and head towards its far-right corner (95°). In 340m walk through a metal kissing gate into the next field and continue in the same direction. In 140m *turn right* through a wide hedge gap (a missing field gate) [a set of metal gates either side of a two-railed wooden plank bridge to the left of this is currently very overgrown] and *turn left*. In 25m you walk over a stile and cross a plank over a ditch to then cross the **Marylebone to Birmingham railway lines**.

Cross a stile and *turn right* in a pasture (110°) towards a low narrow gap in the boundary hedge, aiming just to the right of farm buildings on a hill. In 350m cross stiles either side of a two-railed wooden plank bridge over a ditch and continue in the next field towards a stile left of a wooden field gate. In 100m cross the stile and continue along a hedged in car wide farm track, gently rising, in 70m crossing the long dismantled link to the disused **Grand Central Main Line** railway on a bridge. In 50m you reach the corner of a large field. Continue along the left-hand grassy boundary (60°) and in 480m (and 25m to the right of its far-left corner) cross planks either side of a stile into the next field. On the left you have **Wotton House** again. *Veer right* uphill (65°), aiming well to the left of a clump of trees. In 290m near the top far-right corner of the field walk through a wide gap in a hedge on a plank over an often-muddy area. Continue uphill in the same direction through another field.

In 170m leave this field over a stile and cross a road. Go over a stile into another pasture by a footpath signpost pointing the way due E towards the village of **Ashendon** (with views of **Waddesdon Manor** on a wooded hill through a gap between a farm and the village). In 240m go through a metal kissing gate and along a paved path between trees and in 50m emerge on **Lower End** (road) opposite **The Hundred of Ashendon**.

Continue in the same direction to the left of the pub and in 50m *turn right* and up with the road. In 30m continue in the same direction up a lane (tarmac initially), where the road turns right. In 140m reach the hilltop church of **St. Mary, Ashendon** and cross **Main Street**. The Shortcut joins from the right.

****)** Continue with a footpath signpost along a narrow path between fences by **Long Cottage**. In 50m walk through a metal kissing gate into a large pasture [with the best views yet of the turrets of **Waddesdon Manor** on the left amongst the tree tops] and continue downhill, towards a set of stiles not initially visible 260m away to the right of a prominent tree (110°), in the general direction of a rusty barn and **Aylesbury Astrological Society's Observatory** on a hill chain in the middle distance behind. *Veer right* in the next field (125°) towards a set of stiles in 365m, either side of an un-railed wooden plank bridge. *Veer left* in the next field towards a stile in the hedge on the brow, and near the middle of, the opposite field boundary (110°). In 325m cross the stile into the next field and continue towards a fence corner by a wooded area protruding into the next field, with a row of poplars behind (120°). In 220m go through remnants of an old boundary hedge by a marker post and in 90m pass a footpath marker on a fence post at the protruding field corner. In 40m go over a stile into an overgrown area and walk over a two-railed wooden plank bridge into a pasture.

Keep to the right in the direction of a farmhouse on a hill (140°), in 400m crossing a horse-gallops and in 150m walking through a metal gate to the right of a metal field gate into the next field. Continue in the same direction uphill towards a high fine mesh gate. In 230m walk through a wooden gate to the right of it and then through a wooden gate to the left of a metal field gate immediately behind it, then continue towards the top-left corner of the next field. In 90m walk through a double high fine mesh gate onto a concrete farm track. [The following stud farm has a history of threatening dogs darting out of the main stables/barn. Best arm yourself with some small loose rocks and pebble.] Follow the track (a public footpath) uphill through **Musk Hill Stud Farm** (which used to be owned by Pat Eddery).

In 350m climb over a stile to the right of the farm entrance gate, cross a road and walk through a gap in a field boundary to *veer left* across a field corner on a usually well-trodden path (due E). In 230m *turn right* to follow the wide and grassy left hand field boundary downhill, with views into the **Thame Valley (Nether Wichenden** on the left below, **Cuddington** and **Haddenham** ahead across the river) and towards **The Chilterns**. In 210m, by a footpath signpost away on the left by the roadside, **[!]** *turn right and down* across the field on a usually well cleared path, where the boundary swings left by a house called **Barns Piece**, in the general direction of a prominent **radio transmitter station** on the Chilterns hills (due S, near Chinnor). In 380m leave the field through a wooded boundary and over a stile along a narrow path between a fence and a hedge. In 50m cross a stile onto a track and in 60m you reach a road in **Nether Winchenden**. Cross the road and continue along a car wide gravel track. In 180m cross the **Thame** on a two-railed wooden bridge and continue along an earthen track. In 80m a lane joins from the left from **Nether Winchenden House**.

In 730m you reach the first houses in **Cuddington** at a footpath crosspaths by some monkey puzzle trees and continue in the same direction uphill into the village. In 250m by a small green and a bus shelter, and with **The Crown** pub 50m away to the left, you *turn right* along a road pavement. In 60m, by the entrance door to **The Old Inn** (a privet house), *turn left* across the road and in 15m go over a stile by a footpath signpost into a pasture and cross it diagonally. In 125m go over a stile and cross a small grassy area by some allotments in the same direction to in 40m *turn right* over a stile and cross an arable field on a usually well-cleared path. In 200m leave the field over a stile into a pasture and *bear left* towards a wood. In 100m enter the wood over a stile and *turn right* along its right-hand fringe, on the level. In 110m you emerge in a large

sloping arable field corner and *bear left* downhill towards a metal kissing gate and a bridge over **Dad Brook** on a usually well-cleared path (175°).

Over the bridge, keep to the left-hand side of a pasture and in 110m enter a wood through a metal gate with an orange **Wychert Way Link** marker, in 50m leaving it through another metal gate to continue in the same direction along the left-hand side of a pasture. In 100m you go through a metal gate into a fenced in path. In 170m walk through a metal gate, cross the **A418** and continue in the same direction through a gap in trees and then along the left-hand raised grassy boundary of a large field with a hedge on the left towards the houses of **Haddenham**. In 680m leave the field and continue along a gravel path between houses. In 25m walk through a wooden kissing gate and in 20m *turn right* along a road (**Rosemary Lane**). In 130m *turn right* along **Rudds Lane** at a T-junction. In 100m the road swings left, in 35m reach a green (**Townsend**) and in 100m *turn left* along a gravel lane. In 40m *turn right* along a gravel-and-earth path between **Wychert** walls. In 170m emerge in a tarmac cul-de-sac and in 90m reach a road in a bend.

Here you have choices:

- **for a meal** find the **House of Spice** 35m ahead on the left on a corner;
- **for a fish shop** *turn left* at the House of Spice, follow Fort End for 100m, cross Stokes Croft, pass the remains of a Quaker Burial Site on the left, and find **Smarts Fish & Chips** after 100m in a row of shops on the left;
- **for the station** *turn right*, in 90m pass **The Rising Sun** on the left, in 850m ignore a path on the right, but in another 10m *turn right* to the **station**. There is a **Little Italy Espresso Bar** in the station building.
Trains to London depart from the nearside platform.

Shortcut

(cuts 7.6 km (4.7 mi) and 156 m ascent/descent, lunch is in Ashendon)

Cuts out the charming steep-sided hilltop village of Brill, its historic windmill and some far-reaching views, but features a long descent into a green valley, followed by a steady re-ascent to the recommended lunch stop in Ashendon.

Follow a footpath signpost on the right through the entrance gate to **Chilton House** and **Chilton Business Centre**. In 70m pass the wrought iron gate of **Chilton House** on the left, with most of the remaining route visible on the right (**Lower** and **Upper Pollicott, Ashenden, Winchenden**). Pass a pond on the right and 90m from Chilton House *turn right* with a footpath signpost through a metal kissing gate into a sloping pasture. Follow the sign *half left* through a dip, staying to the left of a lake, aiming for the furthest left of four prominent trees in the opposite field boundary 400m away (30°). You leave the field through an initially not visible metal gate to the right of the tree. Continue in the same direction across another field towards its far-right corner. In 250m leave the field through a hedge gap into another field's corner and follow its left-hand grassy boundary strip. In 470m cross an un-railed wooden plank bridge into another field.

You continue in the same direction and in 220m cross into the next field through a set of metal kissing gates either side of a railed wooden plank bridge across a ditch, and continue in the same direction, initially with a barbed wire fence on the right. In 130m cross a set of stiles either side of railway tracks into a large pasture, with the farm houses of **Lower Pollicott** ahead on a hill. Continue uphill with a footpath marker towards the left-hand corner of a wooded area protruding into this field (75°), ignoring another marked left-forking footpath. You go through an electric fence en route (with a handle bar) and from there follow a fence to leave the field in its upper far-right corner through a metal kissing gate into a narrow fenced grassy area (can be overgrown; the earthworks denote a deserted medieval village). Head for the upper-left corner of the area, by some houses. 10m *before* the field corner, *turn left* over a stile and *veer right* towards a stile 40m away in the boundary hedge of the neighbouring pasture.

Cross the stile onto a concrete lane by a house and *turn left* along it. In 65m *turn left* with the lane. In 60m a footpath joins from the right across a stile. On the left you have views across the parts of the main walk route that the shortcut avoids: **Brill** on a hill top and **Dorton** below to the right. In 250m, at a T-junction with a main road by an **Outer Aylesbury Ring** signpost, you *turn left* uphill towards **Ashenden**. On the right are views of the hill chain crossed later, even (through a dip in that hill chain) all the way to **Buckinghamshire County Council's** high rise building in **Aylesbury**, as well as to the **Chilterns** beyond, as well as of **Waddesdon Manor** to the left of it (amongst trees). In 240m you pass a road turning left to **Upper Pollicott** and in 340m you pass **The Old Forge** on the left and continue ahead, ignoring a left turn to **Dorton** and **Brill**. In 190m a road (**Lower End**) *turns left* at a church yard corner.

Here you have a choice:

- *Turn left* downhill to **The Hundred of Ashendon**, the recommended lunch-stop on the short walk, and continue after lunch by *turning right* out of the pub and following the main walk directions from the pub onwards;
- Or continue along **Main Street** with an **Outer Aylesbury Ring** marker past **St. Mary, Ashendon** to the other end of the church yard wall. A footpath joins from the left (the main route). *Turn right* and join the main walk directions at the double asterisk **).