



Hanborough to Charlbury walk

Blenheim Palace, its beautiful landscaped parkland, a Roman road, and flint stone villages.

Blenheim Palace & Cornbury Park

Length 22.1km (13.7 miles), 6 hours. For the whole outing, including trains, sights and meals, allow at least 11 hours.

Toughness 5 out of 10.

OS Maps Explorer 180 or Landranger 164. Hanborough, map reference SP 433 142, is in **Oxfordshire**, 7km north-west of Oxford.

Features This is a lovely walk, just an hour and a quarter's journey by train from London into Oxfordshire's countryside and the extensive grounds of Blenheim palace. The River Evenlode and its soft, easy hills and fertile countryside inspired Tolkien's Hobbit Shire.

The start of the walk is good for blackberries in September. Before lunch, there are the 2,100 acres of the Great Park leading to Blenheim Palace, its lake and the Column of Victory that the first Duke of Marlborough had placed on the horizon so that he could see it from his bedroom.

Once over the wall out of the Park, the route is along Akeman Street, the Old Roman road from Alchester to Cirencester, with big stone slabs from the old road still visible in places. This is now part of the Oxfordshire Way and the leg of over a mile to Stonesfield is through open farmland and progress can be hard work if into the wind.

At lunchtime you could picnic in the meadow by the Stonesfield Ford and the old slate quarries, or have a pub lunch in the village.

You pass through the delightful stone villages of Stonesfield, Finstock and finally Charlbury, entering it from a footpath beside Lord Rotherwick's deer park, Cornbury Park. Charlbury has many nice pubs.

Walk Options At point [7] in the Directions, you can turn right to go directly into Stonesfield for lunch, without going down to the riverbank. This reduces the length of the walk by a mile.

After lunch, there is a very pretty shortcut straight along the Oxfordshire Way into Charlbury (see the double asterisk [**] in the Directions). This reduces the length of the walk by another 2 miles.

Alternatively, you could take an infrequent bus from Stonesfield to Charlbury or Oxford, or phone for a taxi.

This walk also works well when done "backwards" - that is, in reverse, from Charlbury to Hanborough, with an early lunch stop at the Plough Inn, in Finstock, or at the White Horse in Stonesfield.

History The Royal Estate of **Woodstock** was granted to the first Duke of Marlborough in 1704. The old medieval palace had

been the birthplace of the Black Prince in 1330 and Elizabeth 1 was imprisoned there during Queen Mary's reign. It was extensively damaged by the Parliamentary army in the Civil War. **Blenheim Palace** was built for the first Duke in recognition of his victory over the French at the Battle of Blenheim in 1704 and the **Column of Victory** has some 6,000 words engraved on it in honour of the Duke. Designed by Vanbrugh, the Palace is a fine example of English Baroque, set in parkland landscaped by Lancelot "Capability" Brown. The Park is the home of the greatest collection of ancient oak trees in Europe, with a number of 900 year old oaks in the High Park section of the Park. The Palace was the birthplace of **Sir Winston Churchill** in 1874, and there is a permanent exhibition of Churchilliana in the Palace.

The Palace is open to the public from 10.30 am to 4.30 pm from mid-February to mid-December, daily from mid-February to 01 November, and Wednesday to Sunday inclusive from November to mid-December. The Park is open from 9 am to 6 pm or dusk if earlier, and the Formal Gardens from 10 am to 5.30 pm. Entry costs (2018)–to Palace, Park and Gardens: £ 26.00: to Park and Formal Garden: £ 16.00. Family tickets, annual passes and concessions also available.

The walk through the Park is on public footpaths or permissive paths and there are no admission charges if you keep to the walk's directions. For further information, and for information on what's on, phone 08700-602080.

The village of **Stonesfield** is the home of Stonesfield slates, the stone roof tiles that are characteristic of villages and towns in Oxfordshire and many of the Oxford Colleges. The slates are no longer mined, so only second-hand tiles can be obtained at great expense.

Cornbury Park is a private estate whose deer park was carved out of the Wychwood Forest (as was Blenheim). **Wychwood Forest** was once a vast royal hunting ground that extended over much of western Oxfordshire; in pre-Norman times it extended all the way to London. Now the sole surviving remnant of the forest lies within Cornbury Park estate. The imposing seventeenth-century mansion was built for Edward Hyde who was Viscount Cornbury and the first Earl of Clarendon. As one of Charles II's chief advisors and Lord Chancellor he became the virtual head of the Government in 1660.

Travel Take the train nearest to **9am** from **Paddington** Station to **Hanborough**. Journey time about 1 hour 15 minutes. Trains back from **Charlbury** are hourly. Journey time about 1 hour 20 minutes. Buy a day return to Charlbury.

Lunch If not picnicking beside the River Evenlode, **The White Horse** (whitehorsestonesfield.co.uk, tel 01993-891063), 8 miles into the walk (7 miles if taking the short-cut up the road into the village) is now the only remaining pub in Stonesfield. It is open at lunchtime, bar and food, from Wednesday to Saturdays from 12 noon to 2 pm and on Sundays from 12 noon to 3 pm. Please note the pub is closed on Mondays and not open on Tuesdays until late afternoon. Given this pub's history of closing down on a fairly regular basis, it is best to 'phone ahead to check it is open for business and serving lunch.

An alternative, late lunch stop - if you can make it in time - or if you are doing this walk "backwards" - is the **Plough Inn** in Finsock tel 01993-868333, some 11 miles into the walk, via a short detour from the main walk route. If doing the walk in reverse, the pub is under 3 miles from Charlbury. This 18th century thatched village pub serves home cooked meals from 12 noon to 2.30pm, Tuesday to Saturday (closed lunchtime Mondays) and from 12 noon to 4pm on Sundays.

Tea At walk end the **Bell Hotel** (tel 01608-810278) on Church Street, Charlbury, makes for a comfortable and pleasant tea stop.

There are also three pubs in Charlbury awaiting your custom: **The Bull Inn** (tel 01608 81068900), good for food; **Ye Olde Three Horseshoes** (formerly known as The Farmers), both on Sheep Street, and the **Rose & Crown** (tel 01608 810103), with its good choice of beers, on Market Street.

If doing the walk in reverse, you have two pubs in Hanborough which you should find open for refreshments.

Updates No major route changes. Detour to the Plough Inn, Finstock, and some minor updates added March 2017. In due course directions for the reverse walk will be provided.

The strange detour around the Column of Victory sticks to public footpaths, but the apparent permissive ways are more pleasant.

The Black Head Inn in Stonesfield, and the Crown pub in Finstock, which used to be a late lunch option, are now closed, and are now private houses.

Help Us! After the walk, we would love to get your [feedback](#)

Photos Upload your photos to the [SWC Group on !\[\]\(c507f772dba2b921f86777f01218e570_img.jpg\) Flickr](#), and [videos to !\[\]\(a75296508989caaa77a08d26cfccd4e5_img.jpg\) Youtube](#). This walk's tags are:



By Car **Start:** [OX8 6TF](#)

Finish: [OX7 3HH](#)

Help National Rail: 03457 48 49 50 • Travelline SE (bus times): 0871 200 2233 (12p/min) • TFL (London) : 0343 222 1234

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Walk Directions

The [numbers] refer to a sketch map which is only in the book.

1. **[1]** Coming out of **Hanborough Station**, walk the 85 metres up the access road to the A4095, dead ahead. **Cross over** the road by the pedestrian traffic lights and **turn left** along the pavement. Down in the valley on your right-hand side you can just make out the River Glyme. In 140 metres you cross over a bridge over the railway line. Continue along the road, uphill, towards the village of Hanborough.
2. In 300 metres you pass a large stone cottage (No 153) on your right-hand side. 100 metres beyond that, you come to a turning on your right-hand side (Park Lane), which is a dead end **[2]**.
3. **Turn right** into Park Lane, gently downhill. In 200 metres, you come to the end of the houses. Continue straight on along the path ahead, indicated by a bridleway sign, your direction initially 325°, with a stone wall on your right-hand side.
4. In 20 metres you pass on your left the entrance to High Thatch. Over the wall, ahead on your right-hand side, you can see the tower of Combe Church.
5. In 100 metres the path brings you out into a field and you follow it along its right-hand edge, with a hedge on your right, going downhill in the same direction as you were just previously.
6. In 150 metres, on approaching a wide gap in the hedge ahead, **turn right** through a narrow gap in the hedge to your right and **immediately turn left** along the left-hand edge of that field, still downhill, with the hedge now on your left.
7. In 300 metres you come to the far corner of this field, with a metal fieldgate on your left-hand side. **Turn left** through the gap to the left of the fieldgate (where there used to be a wooden swing gate) to go down the car-wide track with a stone wall on your left-hand side, your direction 250°. The **River Evenlode** runs alongside the track, down below on your right-hand side.
8. In 115 metres you come up to a road, at a bend in the road. **Turn right** along this road, in 15 metres crossing the river on a stone bridge. In a further 115 metres you pass the entrance to Blenheim Palace Sawmills and Combe Mill on your left-hand side.
9. In 90 metres pass under the railway bridge and keep straight on, steadily uphill, ignoring ways off and with Combe Church visible on the horizon ahead on your left-hand side. In 450 metres you come to the top of the hill, where there is a house on your right behind a stone boundary wall.
10. In a further 200 metres (and 25 metres after Boltons Farmhouse on your right-hand side), there are footpath signs pointing off to the left and right. **[3]** **Turn right** off the road, over a stile, following the footpath sign ('East End half a mile'), your direction 85° initially, along a grassy path.
11. In 200 metres you come to the far left-hand corner of the field. Cross over the stile in the hedge and **turn right**, walking along the right-hand side of the next field, with the hedge on your right, towards a house in the distance, your direction 110° initially.

12. In 300 metres you come to the far side of the field. Cross a stile in the hedge ahead and continue straight across the next field, to cross a stile 40 metres away, next to a stone building. **Turn left** up the drive for 35 metres to the road.
13. **Turn left** along the road. In 225 metres you come to the Combe Gate entrance to the Blenheim Estate. **Turn right**, following the footpath sign through the high wooden kissing gate to the left of the main gate, to go straight ahead up the estate road. In 50 metres you come to a T-junction and **turn left**. Follow the road as it bends around to the right and down the hill through the trees. The road then swings left then right.
14. In 350 metres you come to a clearing; if you stop just before the treeline and look to the right, you may just be able to see the top of Blenheim Palace through the trees. The road now swings to the left then right downhill, through some conifers.
15. 300 metres further on, you come [4] to the edge of the trees on the right-hand side, where the road ahead goes around to the left, downhill. Straight ahead on the hillside opposite are half a dozen copper beeches in two clusters. On your right-hand side there is a Blenheim Palace black and white public footpath sign and a new bench seat. [!] **Turn off the road** here and walk around the tree line on your right, your direction 55°, following the clear grassy path, gently downhill, which swings to the right. Depending on the time of year, there may be an electric cattle fence on your left-hand side.
16. In 200 metres you come down near to the edge of the lake – with 'Private – No Public Access' signs directly ahead and over to your right. Bear left with the path to **go over a stile** or go through the wooden swing gate 5 metres to its right. Beyond the stile/gate, bear right onto a track. Keep ahead, soon with the start of the Lake on your right-hand side, your direction 70° initially. In 70 metres you come to a junction in the track, with a broad grassy way going uphill on your left. Ignore the grassy way and follow the wide track **around to the right**, along the side of the lake, gently uphill.
17. In 600 metres the path curves sharply to the left and up a rise. From this point, you have a fine view over to your right across the lake to the Great Bridge and your first real view of Blenheim Palace, a view that will slowly unfold as you continue along this path, around the lake towards the bridge.
18. Keep to this path for the next 600 metres, mostly gently uphill, ignoring ways off down to your right to the lake, until the path brings you down to a wooden swing gate at a T-junction with a tarmac drive. **Turn right** down the drive and in 85 metres, at a junction in the drive, turn left for 5 metres then left through a wooden swing gate in the electric cattle fence on your left-hand side.
19. Note: there is a right of way to the start of the Great Bridge for views to the left and right across the lake, but if you want to visit **Blenheim Palace**, which is highly recommended, you will need to buy a ticket. **Continue ahead** down the drive to cross over the **Great Bridge** and keep ahead for the Palace.
20. But to continue the walk: having gone through the swing gate, head across the grass, gently uphill, towards the **Column of Victory**, your direction 325°. In 500 metres, at the Column, pass it and continue ahead across the grass in the same direction as before and in 60 metres cross the wooden fencing ahead at a part lowered for walkers.
21. [!] The suggested way ahead may not be an official public footpath, but it is well used and appears to be permitted by the Blenheim Estate. [!] The original Book's route - on public footpaths - has you turning right at the Column and over grass to the estate road, where you turn left. However, the permitted route, as follows, is more pleasant: **Keep ahead** across the grass, your direction 325°, keeping parallel to the wooden field fence 150 metres over to your left. In 400 metres the path across the grass comes down to a tarmac estate road, coming in from your right. There is a public footpath down this estate road.
22. Now continue along this estate road or the grassy areas to the left or right for 300 metres, in the same direction as before, then **bear left** across the grass to the corner of the wooden fence over to your left.
23. On reaching the fence corner, continue along the fenceline with the fence on your left-hand side. In 60 metres [!] **you turn left** over the stile in the fence, marked with a black Blenheim Park footpath disc. [5].
24. Continue ahead beside the wooden fence on your left-hand side, your direction 210°. In 250 metres you come to a copse of trees surrounded by a wooden fence. **Turn right** and follow the fence around the trees in a circle.
25. After walking around the circle of the fence for some 75 metres [!] you head **a quarter right** across the field, aiming for the wooden kissing gate in the fence ahead of you, with a copse of copper beech trees ahead, slightly left, on the far side of this fence, your direction 220°. The Shakespeare's Way joins from across the field.
26. In 110 metres go through this wooden kissing gate and follow the direction indicated by the Blenheim Park footpath disc. You are now aiming for a gate in the wooden fence on the far side of this field, to the right of a second clump of copper beech trees in the middle of the field, your direction 320°.
27. In 130 metres you pass the clump of trees on your left-hand side and in a further 200 metres you go through the wooden kissing gate in the fence ahead. You now **bear half-left** across a paddock for 30 metres to go through another wooden kissing gate, coming out on to a car-wide track, with a double wooden fieldgate opposite, a little to the left. **Turn right** along this track which leads through a band of trees at a field boundary.
28. In 40 metres on the far side [!] **turn sharp left**, in the direction of the Blenheim Park disc on a fence post, along a car-wide track, your direction 235°, with a hedge and tree line on your left and an open field to your right. The track (muddy in winter) curves a little to the right.
29. [!] In 150 metres, as the track swings to the left, you come to a post on your left-hand side marked with multiple Blenheim Park footpath discs. Here **turn right** and in 10 metres pass through a wooden swing gate, keeping ahead beside a wooden fence on

- your left-hand side, your direction 305°, between large fields.
30. In 400 metres, as the wooden fence on your left ends and before an electric cattle fence starts on your right, **go through** the wooden gate ahead of you, marked with Blenheim Park footpath discs. 15 metres ahead at the edge of the wood is a footpath post with a yellow arrow. Follow the direction of the arrow along a narrow path between the edge of the wood on your left and the electric cattle fence on your right.
 31. In 60 metres [!] you **turn left** through the trees on an unmarked but clear path into the wooded area: in a further 40 metres follow a yellow footpath arrow on a wooden bridge with wooden railings to cross over this bridge. 20 metres further on, you come to a stony car-wide track. **Turn right**, your direction 350°, though the wood.
 32. In 200 metres you come to another track at a crosstracks, with an Oxfordshire Way disc on a post on your left-hand side. **Turn left** on to a footpath and in 25 metres go up wooden ladder steps over a high stone wall [6], and leave the Great Park down the ladder steps on the far side, going into the large field beyond.
 33. Walk straight ahead with a very ancient hedgerow (at least 500 years old) on your left-hand side, your direction 260° along a path that was once the Roman **Akeman Street**, with a vast field on your right.
 34. You are now on the **Oxfordshire Way** which you will follow straight ahead for the next 2 km. But in more detail:
 35. In 500 metres you go straight over a road and continue along the footpath on the opposite side, still with the hedgerow on your left-hand side. Soon you can see the rooftops of the village of Stonesfield, the suggested stopping place for lunch. In about 800 metres the path switches to the other side of the hedgerow and you continue ahead, now with the hedge on your right-hand side.
 36. In 700 metres you come to another road [7].
 37. If you do not intend to picnic beside the River Evenlode, you can head direct to your lunchtime pub by **turning right** along this road (Combe Road), steadily uphill. In 475 metres you come to a T-junction with Woodstock Road by Stonesfield's War Memorial. Here **turn left** and another in 100 metres **turn** right up Pond Hill. Continue the directions at the asterisk [*] in paragraph 43 below.
 38. To head for the River Evenlode: cross over the road and continue straight on, keeping a hedge and valley on your left (Bagg's Bottom on the OS map), your initial direction 240°. At the end of the first field, pass through the field boundary with a stone wall on your right and **turn right**, then **immediately left** to continue ahead, still following the hedge and valley on your left, in the same direction as before, but now with a vast field on your right.
 39. Continue along the Oxfordshire Way, ignoring all ways off, for a distance of 650 metres from Combe Road, and then go through a metal kissing gate to the **Stonesfield Ford** meadows by old stone quarries, to swing right on a wide grassy path down to the **River Evenlode**. In 100 metres go through a metal kissing gate and **turn right** – where to go left takes you over the Evenlode footbridge. (30 metres further along the river, on this side and right of the footbridge, is a good spot to swim. This whole area is good for a picnic).
 40. Having turned right, your onward path into Stonesfield is relatively steeply upwards, away from Stonesfield Ford, initially in a cutting, your direction 10°. Go up some steps in the path and after 200 metres up this path go through concrete bollards. In a further 25 metres pass on your left-hand side an Oxfordshire Geology Trust notice about Stonesfield's fossils and slates. Here the Oxfordshire Way branches off to the left on a grassy path, but your route is **directly ahead**. The path soon levels out and becomes a track (Brook Lane) between hedges, as you come into the outskirts of **Stonesfield**.
 41. In 200 metres you come to a churchyard on your left-hand side. The track is now a surfaced road (Church Street). Keep ahead and in a further 175 metres the road swings to the right at the junction with High Street on your left.
 42. In 75 metres you come to a T-junction where you continue more or less straight on, slightly to the left, along Pond Hill.
 43. [*] Continue down Pond Hill and ignore all roads off to the left and right. You soon pass on your right-hand side '**Best One' Convenience Store**, a possible stop for basic picnic provisions. Some 400 metres along Pond Hill from the junction with Church Street, you come to a T-junction with the Ridings. Opposite, slightly to your right, is the **White Horse**, a possible lunchtime stop.
 44. At the T-junction **turn left, downhill**, following the sign to Fawler and Charlbury. In 160 metres ignore the Boot Street fork, uphill to the left, and 125 metres further on down the hill, you pass a 1722 house called Clockcase on your right-hand side. 30 metres further on [!] **turn right** off the road up a car-wide track, rejoining the Oxfordshire Way, with its sign, your direction 330° initially. Note the traditional slates on the building on your right-hand side at the start of the track and looking back, on other buildings in the village.
 45. In 350 metres you come to the top of the hill next to a barn (Highfield Farm). 100 metres further on you come to a cross tracks where you can look back for a panoramic view of the village of Stonesfield. Take the tarmac lane going **straight ahead**, on the Oxfordshire Way, heading in the same direction as before, initially with a hedge on your left and open fields to your right. Once over the brow of the hill you have open fields on both sides of you.
 46. In 500 metres you come to a telegraph pole and a building on the right-hand side, where the lane curves sharply around to the right.[!] **Turn left** off the track onto another track, in 15 metres passing Hill Barn Switchgear Station on your right (hidden in undergrowth in summer). Here [!] **turn right** through the undergrowth and in 10 metres go through the wooden swing gate, next to a fieldgate, with a faded Oxfordshire Way disc on it. Continue **straight ahead**, downhill, along the left-hand edge of the field,

- following a hedge and fenceline, your direction 290° initially.
47. In 150 metres you come to the bottom, left-hand corner of the field. Go through the gap left by a wooden gate (off its hinges) and **turn right** up the car-wide track, following the sign for the Oxfordshire Way. The track heads down into a dip then up the other side, before levelling out, with a hedge on your left and open fields to your right.
 48. After 750 metres along this track you come to a cross roads, opposite a clump of trees [8] where the Oxfordshire Way goes straight ahead through the trees.
 49. [***] To take the short cut continue straight on at this point, along the Oxfordshire Way, all the way into Charlbury, your initial direction west. You are on a narrow, clear path with hedges and trees on either side which in places widen to woodland strips. Beyond on either side are vast fields. In summer the trees form a canopy overhead which provides good shade on a sunny day. Keep ahead along the mostly level, woodland path, in a westerly direction, ignoring all ways off. In 1.45 km the path comes out on to the access drive of a house called Pippins, on your right-hand side. In 5 metres **turn left** down a gravel access road (Stonefield Lane) which in 100 metres joins a main road at a bend in the road. You now keep ahead along the road into Charlbury, and follow the instructions below for getting to the suggested tea stop or to the railway station via the churchyard.
 50. The main route is to **turn left** onto the car-wide track going into a field on your left, with a footpath post with multiple blue arrows on your right. Walk along the right-hand edge of the field, initially with a hedgerow and later a stone wall on your right-hand side, your direction 220°. Ahead, on the hillside opposite, you can see the village of Finstock, which is on the route of the walk (and further to the right, on the horizon, the Wychwood Forest).
 51. In 900 metres you come to a T-junction with the main road (do not turn right and head for Finstock station – as there are no trains at weekends and only one a day in each direction on weekdays). Instead, **turn left** at this T-junction to go down the hill into Fawler village. In 70 metres you pass Manor Barn, a restored farm building, on your right-hand side.
 52. 200 metres further on, you pass a postbox on your right-hand side. 40 metres beyond the postbox, after the road has gone uphill, and opposite a bus stop, **turn right** down a tarmac lane, going past Corner Cottage on your left-hand side, your direction 160°.
 53. In 100 metres at the end of the tarmac keep ahead, slightly right, and in 80 metres go over a stile to the right of a wooden swing gate. Cross the field ahead towards the ironstone railway bridge and in 60 metres you go over a stile or through the wooden swing gate to its right, to go under the archway beneath the railway. 10 metres beyond the archway, **turn left** and cross the footbridge over the **River Evenlode**. On its far side, **turn right** along the riverbank, your direction 245°; (in summer the first 75 metres of this path are often overgrown).
 54. After 150 metres along the riverbank, go through a metal kissing gate. 15 metres further on, follow the path as it **bends left**, away from the river, your direction 240°. In 35 metres you come out into the open.
 55. Walk along the bottom of the valley on a grassy way and in 250 metres you come up a gentle incline to go through a metal kissing gate. 8 metres further on you come up to a meeting of paths, with a footpath post ahead. **Turn left** for 5 metres and then at a T-junction **turn right** on to a valley path going gently uphill, in the same direction you were going in before (245°), between hedges and barbed wire fences. The path can be muddy in winter.
 56. After 400 metres along this rutted path with an uneven footbed (unpleasant to walk along), you pass under an electricity line, and 10 metres beyond you pass a metal fieldgate on your right-hand side. In a further 20 metres, you come to a footpath post with a blue disc ahead, slightly right, and hidden in undergrowth, [9] [!]. At this point your detour to the **Plough Inn, Finstock** starts - for a late lunch or early tea stop. For the pub stay on the rutted path for a further 490 metres, and you come out on a road beside the pub. Leaving the pub, head north up Well Hill, which leads into School Lane, and after some 450 metres you rejoin the main walk route, at the junction with Wards Lane. To follow the main walk route at point [9] you **turn right** up a path, steeply uphill, with a post and wire fence on your right and a hedgerow to your left, your direction 315°. In 70 metres, at the top of the incline, **keep ahead**, slightly left, along a narrow path between hedgerows (unless this path is overgrown, in which case walk along the left-hand edge of the field to your right), with a vast field beyond, your direction 300°.
 57. In 140 metres, as the path swings to the right, you come up to a white farmgate on your left-hand side. Pass through a gap to its **left** and follow the path around to the left as it becomes a car-wide track (Wards Lane), with allotments on your left and properties on your right, heading into the village of **Finstock**, your direction 255°.
 58. In 50 metres you pass a cottage on your right called Madeleine. 200 metres further on, you come to a T-junction with the main street going through the village. **Turn right** into School Road. In 130 metres you pass a bus stop, a Parish Council and Village Notice Board and the Village Shop and Post Office on your right-hand side.
 59. In another 50 metres you pass the village war memorial on your right-hand side and come out to a T-junction with the B4022 road. On the opposite side of the road is Manor House. **Turn right**, following the sign for Charlbury and Chipping Norton.
 60. 50 metres down this busy and sometimes dangerous road [!] **turn left** over the unusual stone stile, marked by a footpath sign 'To Charlbury'. Go through the hedge archway beyond, across to the far right-hand corner of the lawn. Go through the leftmost of the two fieldgates ahead, to walk straight down the track ahead, your direction 315°, ignoring all ways off.

61. Note the huge array of solar panels covering the lower part of the opposite valley slope. In 650 metres you come out to a car-wide track with a stone wall to the right. Here **bear right**, your direction 30°.
62. In 60 metres you cross a main track coming in from the left and head across the grass to a footpath post with a white arrow, your direction due north. In 60 metres you pass the post to keep ahead and in 75 metres you go straight on down the avenue of trees ahead of you, your direction 350°. [!] Do not go down the other avenue over to your left.[!]
63. Head down the avenue of trees and in 440 metres you keep ahead across grass when the avenue ends to then bear right on to a tarmac road [10]. **Turn left** on this road, opposite Southill Business Park, along the side of a trout lake, your direction 340°.
64. In 115 metres you come to a green coloured metal gate into **Cornbury Park**. **Go through** the green coloured metal swing gate on its right, marked 'Footpath gate'. Keep ahead, uphill along the path, your direction 350° and in 80 metres bear left to go through a metal kissing gate.
65. Now follow the footpath ahead going between a high metal railing (deer protection fence) on your left and a lightly wooded area on your right.
66. In 450 metres the wooded area on your right-hand side ends and you keep ahead along the path, still beside the high metal railing on your left-hand side, in the same direction as before. Deer can sometimes be seen in the park on your left-hand side. On your right-hand side, as you walk along, you will see the village of Charlbury.
67. In 350 metres you come to the end of the path, where your exit has been diverted around a lodge building. The diverted route swings to the right then left and you leave the Park via a metal swing gate, then a gap in the wall, to come out onto the entrance drive to Cornbury Park. To your left you have a view of the house. **Turn right** down the drive, towards the village, your direction 40°.
68. In 90 metres you cross a stone bridge over the **River Evenlode**, way below. 150 metres further on, the drive crosses over the railway line. On the left you can see the tower of Charlbury Church. 100 metres further on, you come up on to the road. Cross over to the pavement on the far side and **turn left** towards the village, your direction 330°.
69. In 550 metres you come up past **St Mary the Virgin Church, Charlbury**, where the road curves sharply round to the right. You can take a short cut through the churchyard down to the railway station, or (for tea) **turn right** up Church Street.
70. In 80 metres you come to the suggested tea place, the **Bell Hotel**, on your right-hand side (despite its name, in reality more of an inn). The **Rose and Crown** (good for its choice of beer) and the **Bull Inn** (good for food) are a little further up the road at the main junction, and **Ye Olde Three Horeshoes** to the right at the junction on Sheep Street. To get to the railway station after tea at the Bell, coming out of the Hotel, retrace your steps to the churchyard, enter the churchyard and follow the tarmac path around the back of the church to the right. Follow the path straight out the other side of the churchyard, through a metal swing gate, past the Old Rectory on your left-hand side and down the road ahead. In 150 metres you come to a T-junction with the main road. **Turn left** down the hill towards the railway station.
71. In 130 metres the road crosses over the river. 85 metres further on, at a mini-roundabout, **turn left** on to the station approach road, coming to the station in 100 metres. The nearside platform (platform 2) is for trains back to London. **Charlbury Station** is a listed building designed by Isambard Kingdom Brunel.

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