



Circular walks

in Oxfordshire



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Two walks around
Faringdon, taking in:

- * Badbury Hill
- * Great Coxwell
- * Little Coxwell
- * The Folly



Faringdon



**OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL**

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk

Getting to the start



All three walks start from Market Place in Faringdon, SN7 7HL. There are car parks off Gloucester Street and Southampton Street. Limited parking can also be found in Market Place and Church Street.

Public transport

For timetable enquiries, please call Traveline on 0871 200 22 33.

You will also find information and Oxfordshire County Council public transport timetables in most Oxfordshire libraries and Tourist Information Centres. Alternatively, write enclosing an A5 stamped addressed envelope to: Oxfordshire County Council, Public Transport, Speedwell House, Speedwell Street, Oxford OX1 1NE.

Easy-to-follow routes

Each walk is marked with metal signposts where the path leaves the road, and with waymarks on gates and stiles at every change of direction.

The appropriate Ordnance Survey map to use on this route is OS Explorer 170.



When out walking, it is always wise to let someone know where you are going or, if possible, have someone with you. Take your mobile with you, and make sure it is fully charged. If you use your car to access the route, please park with care – do not block farm gateways or village facilities, and do not leave valuables in view.

Please follow the Countryside Code:

- Be safe – plan ahead and follow any signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants and animals, and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under close control
- Consider other people

Points of interest

- A** The name **Faringdon** means “fern-covered hill”. The town nestles on the slopes of a hill overlooking, to the north west, the valley of the Thames and the edge of the Cotswolds, and to the south east the valley of the Ock and the Vale of White Horse. Faringdon has been a market town since King John gave the town a royal charter in 1218 to hold a weekly market. The town became important because of its position on the London-to-Cirencester road, and on the old wool merchants’ route from the Cotswolds to the South East. During the Civil War, Faringdon was one of the last places in England to hold out for the King, although Oliver Cromwell briefly occupied the town in 1645. Not long after this, the Town Hall in the Market Place was built. The upper chamber was used as a meeting room and a Magistrates’ Court. On market days, butter, eggs and other farm produce were sold on the steps. At the start of the 20th century it was a fire station, and was then used as the Faringdon Branch Library.
- B** At the top of Market Place in Faringdon is **All Saints Church**. It is designed in the shape of a cross with a central tower. The church reflects much of the town’s history. Faringdon’s three most notable families have their tombs and monuments here. Outside, the marks of cannon fire can still be seen on the church itself, a reminder of the time when the Roundheads attacked the town in 1645 and 1646 and the church spire was destroyed. A view of Faringdon House can be seen through a hole in the north wall of the churchyard.
- C** **Badbury Clump** is an Iron Age fort, strategically placed on the highest ground in the area. The banks of the camp were levelled early in the 19th century, leaving little but vestiges of the fosse on the south side and a faint es-carpment on the other sides.
- D** **Great Coxwell Barn** is a 13th century Cistercian monastic barn. It is stone built with a stone tiled roof and an exceptionally interesting timber construction that can be seen from inside. Nearly all the timber beams, struts and posts are original. The barn was acquired by the National Trust in 1956 under the will of Ernest Cook.
- E** At **Little Coxwell**, the church of St Mary has a Norman nave and chancel with an interesting 13th century double bellcote. Arthur Mee asks us to note the 500-year-old man still smiling by one of the three windows on the south side.
- F** **Folly Hill** is perhaps the site of a short-lived castle during the reign of King Stephen and Cromwell’s Battery during the Civil War. In around 1780, the summit was planted with Scotch firs and laid out with paths and seats by Poet Laureate, Henry Pye (described by Walter Scott as “respectable in all except his poetry”). In 1935, Lord Berners, the composer, artist and writer, who lived in Faringdon House, commissioned the building of the observation tower. It has been described as the last folly to be built in England. In digging the foundations some skeletons were unearthed and it has been suggested that they were victims of the storming of the castle in 1145.

If you would like to give us feedback about these walks, you can email countryside.reviews@oxfordshire.gov.uk You can also upload photos of your walk online at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/countrysidephotoupload Alternatively, call 01865 810226 or write to: Oxfordshire County Council, Countryside Service, Signal Court, Old Station Way, Eynsham, Oxford OX29 4TL.