



Circular walks

in Oxfordshire



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www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/walksandrides*

Three walks around
Eynsham, taking in:

- * Swinford Toll Bridge
- * The Thames Path
- * Pinkhill Lock
- * South Leigh
- * Eynsham Lock



Eynsham

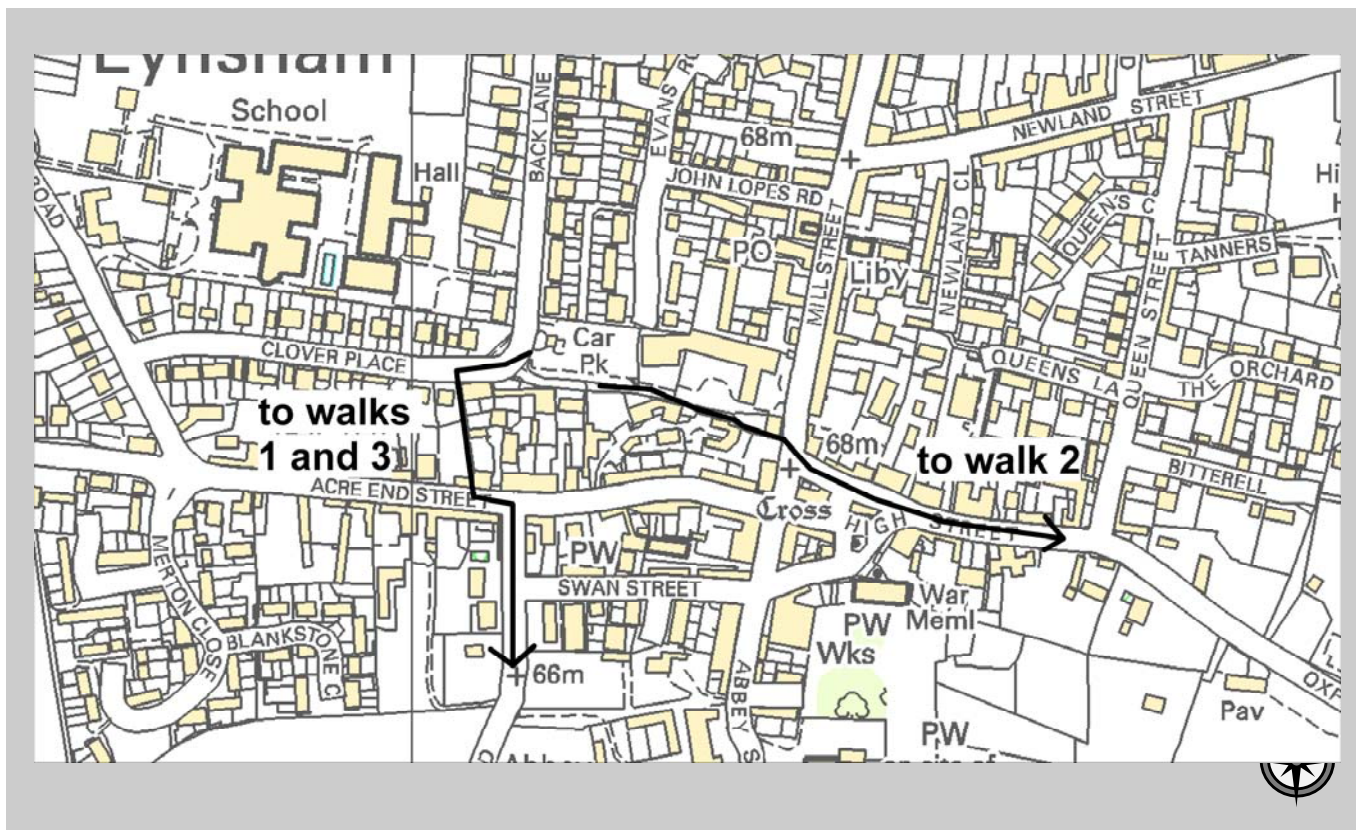


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Getting to the start

All three walks start from the car park in the centre of Eynsham, which can be reached from either Clover Place or Back Lane, OX29 4QL. The car park is free (at time of writing).



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 180.



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

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Points of interest

- A** Evidence of prehistoric and Roman settlements has been found in this area. **Eynsham** is mentioned in the Anglo-Saxon chronicle as 'Egonesham' when it was captured from the Britons by Cutha of Wessex in 571 AD. The recorded history of this former market town begins, however, with the foundation of a Benedictine Abbey and the definition of Parish Boundaries in 1005. Only scattered remnants of the Abbey stonework now remain in a few gardens or built into the walls of some houses.
- B** The **Bartholomew Room** was built in about 1703 as a court house and market hall on ground granted by the Lord of the Manor. It soon housed the Eynsham Free School endowed by a local benefactor, John Bartholomew. It is now the Parish Council Rooms, and the ground floor, once used to house the Parish fire engine, is now an Exhibition Room. The carved stone shield above the entrance may be from the demolished Abbey.
- C** **St James Church in South Leigh** is thought to have been built on the site of a pre-Conquest church, although there is no trace of Saxon work in the existing fabric. The features of particular interest are the 15th century murals, which were found under several coats of whitewash during work in 1872 and were restored in 1993. The most memorable, designed to catch the eye when leaving, depicts the Archangel St Michael weighing souls. John Wesley preached his first sermon in the Jacobean pulpit in 1725 and a second one in a house in the village in 1771.
- D** **The Talbot Inn** serves food and has a heated covered terrace and a decked wharf and is open daily. See www.talbot-oxford.co.uk
- E** The **Thames Path**, launched in 1996, is a National Trail that follows the river for 180 miles (288km) from its source in the Cotswolds to the Thames Barrier. The route passes through peaceful water meadows and historic towns and villages, into the City of London. Further information is at www.nationaltrail.co.uk/ThamesPath or by calling 01865 810224.
- F** The **Swinford Toll Bridge** was built by the 4th Earl of Abingdon under a special Act of Parliament of 1767 to replace an ancient ferry. The ferry crossing was often hazardous and, in 1636, the ferry carrying some Welsh Sheriffs delivering ship money to Charles I capsized and several people drowned. The bridge was opened to traffic in 1769 and was used by heavy stagecoaches.
- G** At **Pinkhill Lock**, a pound lock replaced the old flashlock in 1791, when there was still commercial traffic on the upper Thames.
- H** East of the river is **Beacon Hill**. This 400-foot knoll was allegedly fortified by Offa of Mercia in 779 AD to defend the 'Swine Ford'. During the 16th century, the summit housed one of the beacons set up to warn of the approach of the Spanish Armada.

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.

With thanks to the Eynsham Society (CPRE)