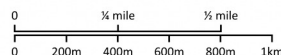




Shipton-on-Cherwell church stands in a fine position overlooking the Oxford Canal. Next to it is **The Manor**, a former recording studio where numerous well-known albums were recorded, including Mike Oldfield's classic *Tubular Bells* in 1972–73 and Radiohead's *The Bends* in 1995.



BLETCHINGDON



The slender spire of **St Mary's Church, Kidlington**, known as "Our Lady's Needle", is visible from many points on these walks. The church dates from 1220 and has fine medieval stained glass and woodwork. Adjacent are the **Morton Almshouses**, built 1671.



www.walksfromthedoor.co.uk



The atmospheric ruin of **Hampton Gay Manor** stands in fields above the River Cherwell, near the isolated parish church of St Giles. The house was built by the Barry family in the late 16th century; it burnt down in 1887 and is now on the Buildings at Risk register.



Bletchington Park is a Grade II* listed Palladian country house built in 1782. The adjacent **parish church** contains Norman fragments but was heavily restored in the Victorian era.



The **River Cherwell** rises in Northamptonshire and flows southwards for about 40 miles through North Oxfordshire before joining the Thames at Oxford. For much of its length it is closely followed by the **Oxford Canal**, which links the Grand Union Canal with the River Thames and was opened to traffic in 1790.

The Bell at Hampton Poyle

11 Oxford Road, Hampton Poyle, Oxon OX5 2QD
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website thebelloxford.co.uk

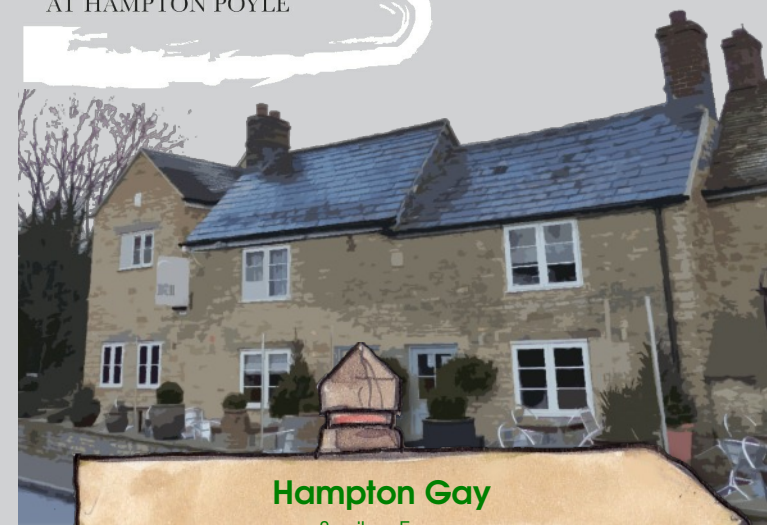
email contactus@thebelloxford.co.uk

bar	11am–11pm
lunch	Mon–Sat: 12–2.30pm Sun: 12–3pm Bank Holidays: 12–2.30pm
dinner	Sun–Thu: 6.30–9pm Fri–Sat: 6.30–9.30pm

three circular walks from

The Bell

AT HAMPTON POYLE



Hampton Gay

3 miles: Easy

Stroll across the meadows to an isolated church and ruined 16th-century manor house.

Hampton Poyle & Bletchington

4 1/4 miles: Moderate

Climb to a pretty village with a historic church, country house and village green.

Cherwell valley

4 1/2 miles: Fairly easy

Visit four historic churches, plus a ruined manor house and a pretty riverside return.

Hampton Gay

3 miles: Easy

Allow 2 hours. Wet vegetation and muddy sections may be encountered after rain. Numerous stiles.

1 From the front door of the Bell, turn right. **2** At the road junction, go straight on into Church Lane. **3** Follow the road until you reach the church. **4** Take a footpath over a stile on the right just before the churchyard wall and cross the field to a double stile and bridge. **5** Turn left over a stile a little further on by a gate, and cross a paddock to a second field gate, beyond which turn half right to a stile in the corner of the next paddock. **6** Continue in the same direction to a double stile and footbridge in the field corner. **7** Cross to a belt of trees, within which is a double footbridge and two stiles. **8** Walk uphill across the field to a stile in the hedge, then cross the next field heading in the approximate direction of Hampton Gay church. **9** After a stile by an old ash tree, follow the field edge ahead then, when the field boundary bends left, keep straight on across the field, past an overgrown pond, towards the ruined Manor House. **10** Turn left to visit the church, returning the same way. **11** With the manor ruins now on your left, walk up to a metal kissing gate at the end of the lane at Manor Farm. **12** Walk between the farm buildings and follow the tarmac lane beyond as it bends to the right, ignoring a footpath to Bletchington on the left. **13** At a left-hand bend, turn right onto a footpath across the field, signposted "Hampton Poyle ½". **14** Cross to a stile and gate, and turn left along the field edge. **15** Beyond a footbridge and double stile in the corner of the field, continue along the field edge to a further footbridge over a ditch. **16** Walk diagonally across the next field to a stile in the far left-hand corner, with a belt of woodland on your left. **17** Follow the wooden paddock fence and pass through a gap, then bear right to a stile in the direction of the church. **18** Cross a stile in the left-hand hedge then bear right over a double-stile to return to the road. **19** Turn left and retrace your steps along Church Lane to the Bell.

Hampton Poyle & Bletchington

4¼ miles: Fairly easy

Allow 2–3 hours. One minor climb; some paths may be muddy after rain or under crops.

1 From the front door of the Bell, turn right. **2** At the road junction, go straight on into Church Lane. **3** Follow the road until you reach the church. **4** Take a footpath over a stile on the right just before the churchyard wall and cross the field to a double stile and bridge. **5** Walk uphill across the field ahead of you, bearing slightly right. **6** Beyond a stile, cross the next field to a footbridge with woodland away to your right. **7** Cross the next field to another footbridge, then bear right across a fourth field to a metalled lane. **8** Cross a footbridge

directly opposite and bear right to another. **9** Beyond the belt of trees continue uphill, aiming for the farm buildings, where two gates give access to the road. **10** Turn left and walk into Bletchington village. **11** At the village green, cross the B4027 and continue straight on, signposted to Weston-on-the-Green and the church. **12** Pass a nursery school then, when the road bends right, take a footpath through a kissing gate straight ahead. **13** At the church, turn right and walk out to the road. **14** At the grassy triangle, turn right along the B-road. **15** At a right-hand bend, leave the road and turn left onto a footpath. **16** Turn immediately left through a metal bridle-gate and walk down a narrow field with woodland to your right, passing a pond on your left. **17** Go through a gateway at the bottom of the field and follow the field edge beyond to a footbridge. **18** After the bridge, turn right, along a small stream with the field on your left. **19** Look out for a path turning right over the stream and between two ponds. **20** Bear left in the next field to a gateway leading to a short track out to the road. **21** Turn left and walk along the road for 400 yards to the road junction at Diamond Farm. **22** Opposite the junction, turn right along a short fenced path between a farm track and the farm, then join the track. **23** When the track ends, keep on along the edge of the narrow field ahead, with the buildings and windpump of Frogsnest Farm away to your left. **24** Cross a footbridge in the far corner of the field and keep straight on, ignoring a path to your right. **25** At the end of the next field, turn right along a farm track. **26** When the track bends right, keep straight on along a field edge with a hedge on your right. **27** As you approach a farm, go through a gap in the hedge on your right to rejoin the track. **28** When you reach the road, turn left. **29** Bear left at the end of Church Lane to return to the Bell.

Cherwell valley

4½ miles: Moderate

Allow 2–3 hours. Mostly level. Some paths may be muddy after rain or impassable in flood conditions.

Follows steps **1** to **9** of the **Hampton Gay** walk, above.

10 Turn left in front of the ruined manor house, and bear right along the fence to Hampton Gay church. **11** Go through a wooden kissing gate between church and manor and head half-left down the field along an obvious path. **12** Pass under the railway bridge alongside the river. **13** Bear left across the field to a footbridge across the river. **14** Cross the bridge and follow the path towards Shipton-on-Cherwell church; bear right to cross a stile before the canal bridge. **15** Turn left along the towpath (*optionally, cross the bridge to view the church and manor house*). **16** Follow the canal as it widens (Thrupp Wide) and then turns sharp right. **17** By the lifting bridge in Thrupp village, turn left past a tea-room and car park, and pass to the right of a thatched house. **18** Follow the track under the railway into Thrupp Community Woodland. **19** Take the path straight ahead that parallels the river through the woodland for ¾ mile. **20** Emerge in a large field and take

the path across the field that leaves the river and heads somewhat to the left of the spire of Kidlington church. **21** Cross a reed-filled ditch and continue towards the church (the middle of three paths). **22** Enter a wood by an old moat and follow the path through the scrubby woodland until you emerge in the car park by the church. **23** Having viewed the church and adjacent cottages and almshouses, follow Church Street back to the car park entrance, but do not enter; instead go through the metal kissing gate and follow the surfaced path ahead of you. **24** Follow the path left and right as it leaves the wood, crossing a bridge over a ditch. **25** A second bridge crosses a further ditch, and then you can either walk along the field edge or between the trees to the River Cherwell. **26** Cross the bridge over the river and bear right to a stile by a gate (ignoring the footpath straight ahead). **27** Walk parallel to the hedge on your left to a gate into a narrow path between gardens. **28** When you meet the road, turn right back to the end of Church Lane. **29** Cross the road and keep straight on back to the Bell.

Opened in 2009, The Bell at Hampton Poyle is a delightful nine-bedroomed, independent, privately owned boutique hotel, pub and restaurant. The charm of this centuries-old historic pub has been complemented by the contemporary design of the restaurant. Flagstone floors, oak beams and large leather armchairs set the tone in this classic English inn.

The inn enjoys a 5-star rating and is the perfect place for business meetings, entertaining or for a romantic getaway on the edge of the Cotswolds.

The Bell is ideally situated:

- 10 minutes from Oxford city centre
- 10 minutes from Bicester Village
- 10 minutes from Blenheim Palace
- 10 minutes from the Cotswolds

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