



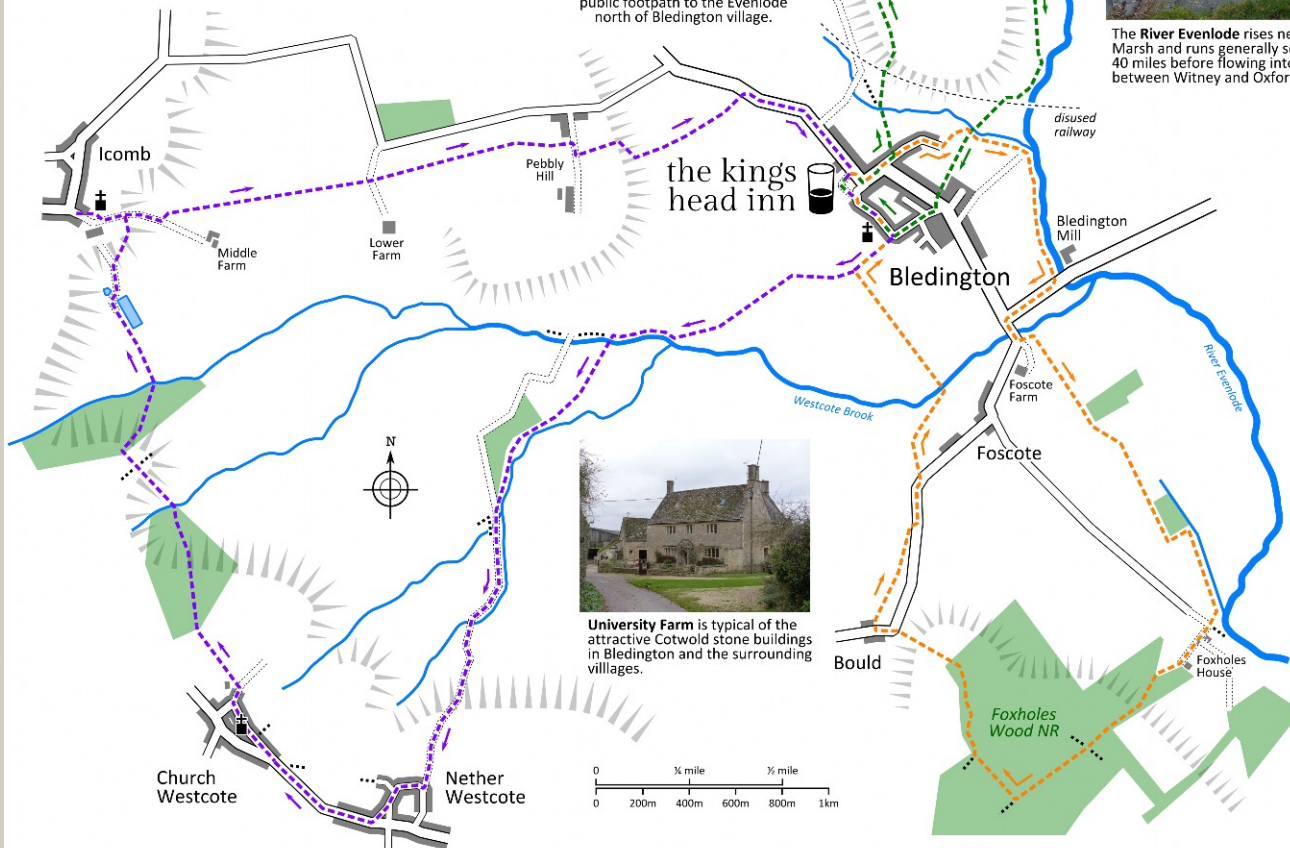
Pretty **Icomb** (pronounced "Ickum") sits on a lofty ridge overlooking the Evenlode valley. Icomb Place is a fine Cotswold house, mentioned in the Domesday book; the oldest parts of the current house date from around 1230. The parish church of St Mary the Virgin contains the finely carved effigy of Sir John Blackett, who lived at Icomb Place and fought with Henry V at the Battle of Agincourt in 1415.



This natural **willow arch** spans the public footpath to the Evenlode north of Bledington village.



The **River Evenlode** rises near Moreton-in-Marsh and runs generally south-east for 40 miles before flowing into the Thames between Witney and Oxford.



University Farm is typical of the attractive Cotswold stone buildings in Bledington and the surrounding villages.



Stayt's Farm in Church Westcote was built in the late 1600s and is a Grade II listed building.



St Leonard's Church in Bledington, dating in part back to 1170, is a fine example of a Cotswold parish church. Its high clerestory windows give the interior a light and airy feel. Carvings on the exterior walls illustrate a range of medieval headgear.



Foxholes Nature Reserve is an expanse of ancient woodland maintained by the Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust. It is home to the rare Bechstein's Bat and White Admiral butterfly and many kinds of fungi.

three circular walks from the kings head inn bledington



Evenlode circular

2½ miles: Easy

Pleasant level walking through the village and the watermeadows of the River Evenlode.

Foxholes Nature Reserve

4 miles: Fairly easy

Farmland walking to an ancient woodland reserve rich in flora and fauna.

Westcote and Icomb

6¼ miles: Moderate

Explore four gorgeous Cotswold villages with superb views over the Evenlode valley.

Evenlode circular

2½ miles: Easy

*Allow 1–1½ hours. Wet grass and muddy sections after rain.
Riverside paths may be impassable in flood conditions.*

1 From the Kings Head, walk down the drive past the swings to the road, and turn right. **2** Follow the road round to the left and walk parallel to the stream for 100 yards. **3** When the main road turns right, keep straight on down Chapel Lane. **4** After a further 100 yards, turn left on a footpath alongside a house called College Place, to a footbridge. Walk behind another house then turn right over another bridge and a stile into open fields. **5** Cross the field to meet a farm track at a bridge and follow the track over the former railway line. **6** Bear left in the next field to a kissing gate. **7** Cross three fields, separated by kissing gates, to reach a hedged bridleway. **8** Turn right and follow the bridleway as it bends to the left. **9** After 250 yards, before another left-hand bend, take a footpath on the right that passes under a willow arch to a kissing gate into fields. **10** Head straight on, passing close to a meander in the Evenlode. **11** Follow the riverside to another kissing gate, then leave the river for a while before rejoining it briefly. **12** Turn right in a large field and walk parallel to the right-hand edge to a kissing gate in the wooden fence. **13** Keep on in the same direction and through another kissing gate, with the former railway bridge over the Evenlode now visible ahead. **14** Bear right in this field to join a track that meets the old railway line. **15** Go through a kissing gate opposite, and walk across the next field to a footbridge. **16** Walk straight across the field ahead, aiming to the right of some 20th-century housing. **17** A path alongside the houses leads out to the road. **18** Turn left then immediately right into Church Lane. **19** By the church, bear right to return to the village green and the Kings Head.

Foxholes Nature Reserve

4 miles: Fairly easy

Allow 2½ hours. Some paths may be under crops, or muddy after rain.

1 From the Kings Head, walk down the drive past the swings to the road, and turn right. **2** Follow the road round to the left and walk parallel to the stream for 100 yards. **3** When the main road turns right, keep straight on down Chapel Lane. **4** Follow the lane round to the right past University Farm, and at the end skirt to the last house. **5** Beyond a gate, turn left along the edge of the field, then bear right along a sidestream of the River Evenlode, ignoring a footbridge on your left. **6** A kissing gate leads to a narrow path between the river and a water treatment works. **7** After a couple of fields, the riverside path leads behind gardens to emerge by Barrington Mill. **8** Cross over and turn right, crossing again when the pavement switches sides. **9** At

a junction turn left, signposted to Foscombe and Idbury. **10** Beyond a stream, turn left at the entrance to Foscombe Farm and follow the Oxfordshire Way through a hand-gate on your left before the cattle grid. **11** Beyond a further hand-gate turn right and follow the obvious path for a little over half a mile, passing to the right of two woods. **12** At the end of the second wood, turn left and walk down the hedge to a ditch, which you follow to the right. **13** Near the end of the field, bear right into woodland and cross a bridleway, leaving the Oxfordshire Way. **14** Join a driveway and keep to the right of a series of properties before going through a gate on the right; continue through a gate at the end of the field into the woods. **15** Follow the bridleway beyond. **16** At a fork go through a wooden barrier, and follow the waymarked Wildlife Walk beyond. **17** At a crossroads with a bridleway, go straight on beyond the barrier ahead. **18** At the next junction, turn right. Beyond an information board, join a public footpath and follow it head, with open fields never far away to your left. **19** Leave the wood and walk down the field edge to the road. **20** Turn left and then turn right onto a footpath just before the first house in Bould. **21** Go through a series of gates then cross to a gate and footbridge in a hedge before heading across a field back to the road via a gate in the hedge. **22** Turn left along the road briefly before taking a footpath on the left just before the signs for Foscombe. **23** Cross the field (or follow the right-hand field edge if the line is not obvious) to a gap in the hedge, then go through a gate and descend right of a group of trees to a footbridge over Westcote Brook. **24** Bear left to meet a hedge, which you follow to join a hedged track leading towards Bledington. **25** At a gate marked “Private”, turn right. **26** Walk through the cemetery and past the church, and at the road turn left to return to the village green and the Kings Head.

Westcote and Icomb

6¼ miles: Moderate

Allow 3–4 hours. One long and several shorter climbs. Some paths may be under crops and there may be muddy sections after rain.

1 From the entrance to the pub, turn right across the village green and walk up Church Street. **2** At the church, turn right and walk through the cemetery on the Oxfordshire Way. **3** Follow the path beyond to a kissing gate, and then continue to a second kissing gate and footbridge. **4** Turn half-left and cross the field to a footbridge, continuing across a second field until you reach Westcote Brook. **5** Turn right and follow the brook upstream. **6** Cross the brook at the first footbridge and cross two fields separated by kissing gates. **7** Beyond a further kissing gate at the end of the second field, turn left through a semi-wooded area, keeping close to a stream on your left. **8** Cross a footbridge and continue to a kissing gate leading into a hedged green lane; turn left. **9** Keep on along the hedged bridleway (which is accompanied by a parallel footpath to the right). **10** Follow this bridleway uphill, gradually at first and then more steeply, until you emerge in Nether Westcote. At various points there are

connections with the adjacent footpath if you fancy a change of scene. **11** On reaching the road in Nether Westcote, turn right past the Feathered Nest. **12** Walk up through the village, ignoring a footpath on the right. **13** At a crossroads, turn right and walk along the road to Church Westcote. **14** Beyond a topograph, turn right and pass a post box and the village church. **15** At a grass triangle at the end of the road, turn right and join a track skirting a cottage. **16** After the entrance to a large house on the left, just as the track starts to descend, take a footpath on the left over a stile into a field. **17** Cross the field and pass through a belt of woodland into another field. **18** Drop down to a fence and then up again, before entering woodland. **19** Follow the descending path to the bottom of the wood, where you turn right and then left over a stream. **20** Climb up an enclosed path and then cross the Oxfordshire Way bridleway and continue beyond in similar vein. **21** On entering another wood, go through a gate in the corner of a high fence and turn right, downhill. Ignore crossing paths and exit the wood by a similar kissing gate and cross a stream. **22** Follow a grassy track that skirts to the left of a reservoir, then follow the track right and left at the end of the reservoir, with a smaller pond to the left. **23** Keep left at a junction of tracks, then take a footpath on the right that climbs gradually below a large new house. **24** Go through a gate into a farm track; the main route onward is to the right, but a diversion left to Icomb church and village is recommended. **25** On returning from the churchyard, keep on down the hill; by a clump of conifers before Middle Farm, take a footpath on the left and bear right across the field. **26** Go through a gate at the far side and follow the field edge beyond, crossing the driveway to Lower Farm and continuing in the same direction along a stone wall. **27** Cross the next field to a kissing gate and continue to a footbridge and gate. **28** Walk down to a kissing gate in the far left-hand corner and follow a short grassy track to meet the driveway to another farm. **29** Turn right then left to continue, and at the bottom of the next field turn right to the corner. **30** Bear left after the kissing gate and follow the footpath through a series of fields until you meet the B4450. **31** Turn right and follow the road for 500 yards back to Bledington and the Kings Head.

the kings head inn

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Please see our website or social media for opening
and food service times.



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