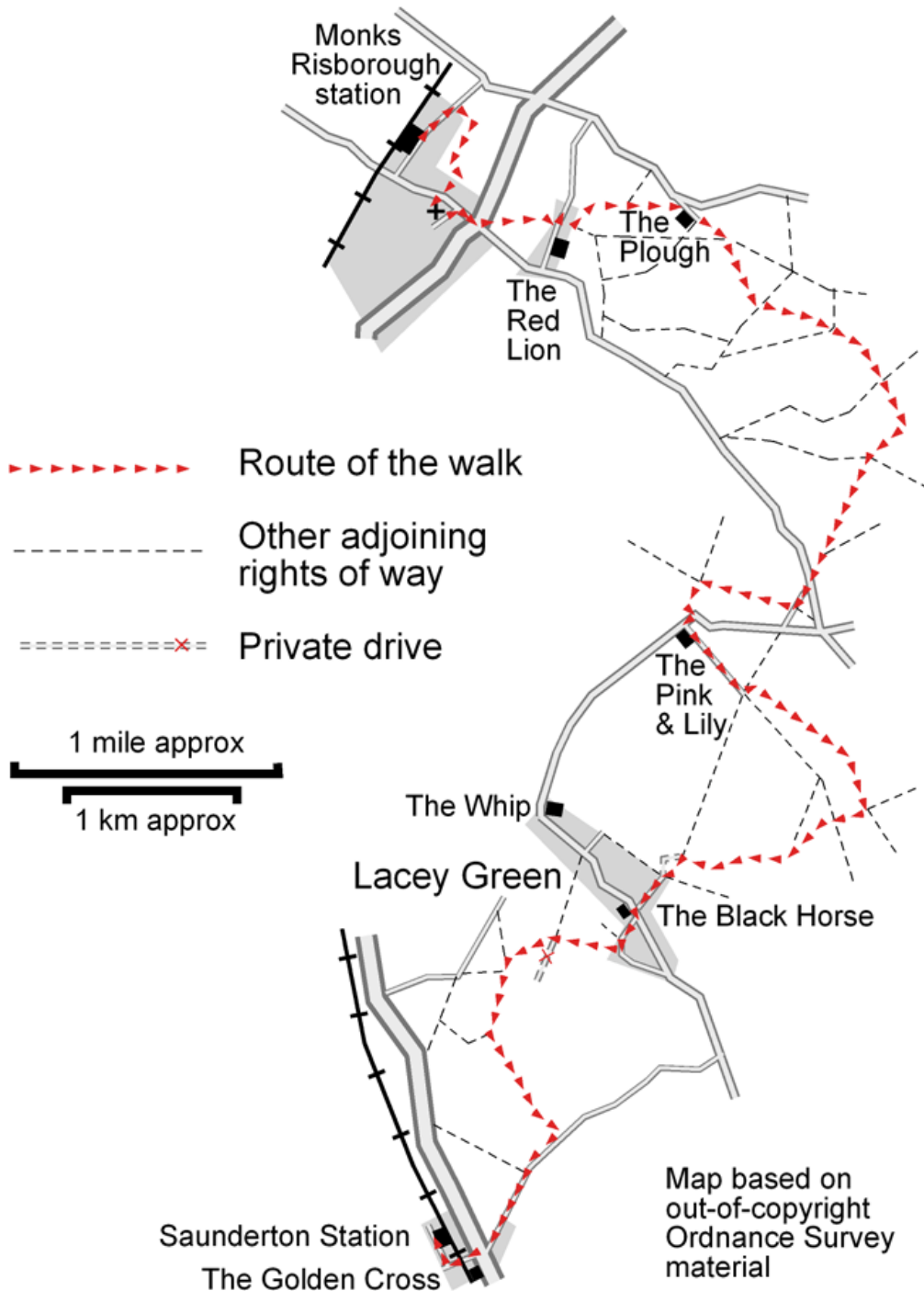


MONKS RISBOROUGH – LACEY GREEN – SAUNDERTON

This walk takes you through similar country to our Little Kimble to Saunderton walk, some of the best of the Chilterns beechwoods, coming out on to open hillside towards the end, with a fine view, but is shorter – and has more pubs. From Lacey Green the two walks follow almost the same routes.

Checked 2009



Distance

Monks Risborough to Lacey Green	6 miles (9.75 km)
Lacey Green to Saunderton station	2.25 miles (3.75 km)
Total	8.25 miles (13.5 km)

Several climbs of about 40 metres (130 feet), one of which is fairly steep for a short distance and may be slippery when wet.

Travel

Monks Risborough is on the branch line between Princes Risborough and Aylesbury, with connections from Marylebone, High Wycombe and the Midlands, and from Harrow and Amersham via Aylesbury. Saunderton is on the main Marylebone – High Wycombe – Princes Risborough – the Midlands line.

There is a good bus service (hourly on Sundays) between High Wycombe and Aylesbury stopping at Monks Risborough (on the main road; walk in the direction away from Princes Risborough to pick up our route at the pedestrian crossing and school) and at Lacey Green.

The local bus from Princes Risborough station passes close to Monks Risborough station.

The bus service from Saunderton is too infrequent to be helpful.

Detailed travel information for the whole of this area is available from the Traveline South East website www.travelinesoutheast.org.uk or telephone 0871 200 22 33

Ordnance Survey Map

This walk as far as just past Lacey Green is on the Ordnance Survey Explorer map number 181, *Chiltern Hills North*. It then goes on to 172 *Chiltern Hills East* for the last two and a quarter miles (3.75 km). However, we have given all distances for this last section, so a second map may be superfluous.

Refreshments

The Red Lion at Whiteleaf.

The Plough at Cadsden.

The Pink and Lily at Parslow's Hillock.

The Black Horse at Lacey Green (closed Monday lunchtimes; no food Mondays or Sunday evenings; space limited when the garden is not in use).

The Golden Cross at Saunderton, at the finish, open all day and has ice cream.

Please always be considerate about muddy boots in pubs etc; either take them off, or cover them up.

Never eat or drink your own provisions on pub premises (including the garden, if there is one).

Route

Monks Risborough is so called because it belonged to the monks of Canterbury from Anglo-Saxon times.

On leaving Monks Risborough station, turn left and go along the road 300 yards to a footpath on the right, at the end of the houses. (The map shows an obvious short cut along roads by turning right out of the station if you wish, though part of it has no footway.)

Go along this path to a stile, then bear right across the corner of a field to another stile into an enclosed path.

At the end of this path, 15 yards after a stile on the left, go through the kissing gate ahead and bear half right to a stile and footbridge, hidden in a dip in the field corner.

Go over the bridge and through the gap to the left of a gate, and follow the path ahead, bending left and then right past a large brick building, to a road.

Cross the road to the path into the churchyard.

The Old Rectory to the left of the church dates originally from 1670.

In the recreation ground to the right of the churchyard is a dovecote, probably 16th century.

St Dunstan's church dates from the fourteenth century, but was much restored by Street in the 1860s. Many of the windows are in the Perpendicular style, and there is a Norman font, and a modern sculpture of St Dunstan tweaking the devil's nose. The church is normally open, but a notice board outside gives details of where a key can be obtained.

Go round the far end of the church and then bear left to leave the churchyard at the left-hand corner and go along a wide enclosed path to a T-junction (with some attractive old houses, one dated C16-C17 by Pevsner).

Turn left, and return to the road you crossed before entering the churchyard.

Turn right along the road to a T-junction with the main road (A4010).

Cross by the pedestrian crossing on your left and go a few yards further left, to a path alongside the school.

Go up the path and bear half left up the next field, to an enclosed path leading to a road.

Continue up the road to a T-junction with the Upper Icknield Way where you turn left (and where the Red Lion pub is 100 yards to the right, past a couple of attractive thatched cottages).

Having turned left, go 60 yards, to a drive on the right, with an Icknield Way Riders' Route sign.

Go up the drive 50 yards to a footpath sign. Turn left, and go 50 yards across in front of houses, to a fenced path between two tarmac drives (to the right of Penwood).

Follow the path up to a tarmac drive.

Turn right, and from the edge of the cricket field go across in front of the pavilion (tactfully if there is a match on!) to a gate at a gap in the hedge.

Head slightly left across two fairways of the golf course (watch for play coming towards you, from the left on the first and from the right on the second) to a hedge corner.

Just to the right of the hedge corner, go over a stile and follow an enclosed path (around the old house on your left), up and then down to a road.

Turn right, to pass the Plough pub.

Go over a stile to the left of the pub car park and continue ahead fairly level 300 yards to a path junction with valleys to your right and slightly left.

Go up the fairly steep path ahead (take care; bare chalk can be slippery when wet) and then continue more or less level along the ridge 350 yards (mostly through classic beechwood).

After bearing slightly right, you go slightly downhill to a path junction, where you continue ahead 40 yards to a T-junction (with a low concrete pillar), turn left, and after 20 yards go through a gap in wooden barrier labelled "Footpath Only" at a junction. The net result of all this is that you continue in the same direction!

After 100 yards, when another path joins from the right, continue ahead 350 yards to where a wide ride (with inconspicuous electricity lines) joins from the right.

Continue ahead, just to the right of the electricity lines (which lead to Solinger House) to a stile and gateway on to a tarmac drive.

Bear right down the tarmac drive 200 yards to a gate and stile on the right, just before the drive swings left away from the wood.

Go over the stile and immediately turn left, to continue in the same direction in the wood, at first downhill and then fairly steeply uphill. (There are muntjac deer in this wood.)

Follow the path as it bends right after the steepest part of the hill, ignore a cross track (with a “Keep Out” sign), and continue 200 yards to a track crossing, shortly after a wide ditch.

This is Grim’s Ditch. It is thought that these extensive linear earthworks date from the Iron Age, and were probably built to mark territorial boundaries, rather than for military purposes. One suggestion that has been made is that it could have served as a boundary between pastoral and arable land.

Just to your right the Ditch, impressively deep at this point, turns sharply to continue parallel with your route ahead.

Continue ahead (with Grim’s Ditch now 30 yards away on your right) nearly half a mile (0.8 km), at first in the wood, then outside the wood edge, then in the wood again, gradually getting closer to Grim’s Ditch on your right, and where the path crosses the ditch (just before a curiously carved tree stump on your left), continue for a short distance on the bank beside the ditch, to emerge at a road junction.

At the junction continue in the same direction on the road ahead (signposted Lacey Green) 200 yards to a footpath sign and stile on the right immediately after the last house.

Follow the footpath for 150 yards, keeping right at a possibly indistinct fork, to a junction of wide tracks, where you bear slightly left and continue 500 yards, ignoring a cross track and a track to the right, to a T-junction of tracks (immediately after an old fence) with a much narrower path ahead.

From here, according to “The Chilterns”, by Leslie Hepple and Alison Doggett, our route follows closely for the next mile and a half (2 km) the line of the “Black Hedge” (blacan hegecan) described in a charter of AD 903 as the boundary of the parish of Monks Risborough (formerly East Risborough). However, the hedge itself is more visible further north (to your right at this point).

Turn left along the track (you may find it less muddy alongside the old fence, bearing right later to join the track), to a drive, which you follow 40 yards left, to a road.

A curious figure may be visible in the garden on your right

Turn right along the road to a junction, with the Pink and Lily pub ahead.

Our route turns left here, down the lane immediately before the pub (signposted “Lily Bottom only”), but to enter the pub continue a few yards ahead.

The Pink and Lily pub is named after Mr Pink, the butler at Hampden House and Miss Lillie, a chambermaid, who set up home together, and established the pub, around 1800. It was a haunt of Rupert Brooke, who used to call in at the pub on his walks in the Chilterns. A not very good verse he dashed off on one of his visits is framed on the wall.

Continue down the lane 600 yards to a track on the left, just before a house.

Turn left up the track, then, after the entrance to the garden, turn right round a hedge corner to go through a gap to the left of a gate, into the wood.

For a short distance go along inside the wood edge, then where part of the wood juts out to the right of the path continue ahead through the wood 200 yards, to rejoin the wood edge for half a mile (0.8 km) to a fenced cross path (bridleway). (Where the path may get muddy, there is usually a way round to one side).

Turn right to follow the bridleway over a cross track and continue into a wood and past a stile on your right, down to a T-junction.

Turn right, and go nearly half a mile (0.7 km) along a hedged track in the valley bottom to a five-ways junction, with White House Farm on your right.

If the path immediately left is muddy, stay on the stony track which rejoins our route at the road, otherwise turn left and go uphill, with Grim's Ditch on your left, to a T-junction.

Turn right and then immediately left at a track crossing, and follow the track as it becomes a road, to a T-junction (where the Black Horse pub is a few yards to the right and bus stops a little further. The stop on the near side is for High Wycombe, and on the far side for Princes Risborough).

Turn left for 60 yards to Church Lane on the right (where you go off the bottom of the *Chiltern Hills North* map).

Go down the lane 250 yards, ignoring a path over a stile on the right, to where the lane turns left.

Leave the lane and continue briefly slightly right past a white gate (the second entrance to Lane Farm) and through another gate, then bear right for 150 yards, crossing a stile by a gate and continuing near the right-hand field edge to a gateway.

Go down the next field (300 yards) into the valley, aiming for a prominent hedge junction to the right of a farm, and go through a hedge gap and up on to a track.

Take a short steep path ahead, to join a rutted track.

Turn left up the rutted track for 350 yards (climbing steadily) to a kissing gate, with a fine view.

Dominating the skyline in front of you is the wooded summit of Wain Hill, above Bledlow. Partly visible behind it is Thame and a little further to the right, 10 miles (16 km) away, is Long Crendon, with its church at the right hand (eastern) end of the village. Behind that, breaking the skyline, is the hilltop village of Brill. To the right of that is Ashendon on a low hill, then on the next hill breaking the skyline to the right of that, with a steep wooded slope, is Waddesdon Manor. Almost in line with that is Dinton. Further to the right, eight miles (12 km) away, is Stone, also with its church clearly visible. Most of Aylesbury is hidden by the slope to your right.

Turn left along the field edge for 100 yards, to a metal stile.

Continue 100 yards to a stile and gate leading to a gap through a narrow strip of woodland.

Continue ahead 400 yards along another strip of woodland (the official right of way is inside the wood) with the valley below to your right, to a stile.

Continue in the same direction over the stile, leaving the wood and going along the left-hand edge of a field 250 yards, to a stile.

Follow the left-hand hedge of the next field 400 yards as it curves right and then left, gently downhill, to a gap in the field corner.

Continue 250 yards following the hedge on your left as it also curves right and then left, and continue downhill after the end of the hedge to a fence corner.

Turn right along the fence 30 yards. Do not go through the gap which leads on to a road (Smalldean Lane), but continue along the field edge with the hedge on your left and the road down below you for 350 yards, slightly uphill at first and then down to a gap by a gate and a footpath sign, to join Smalldean Lane. (This section is on National Trust land, and we believe is a permissive path.)

Follow the road to the right, downhill or level all the way, nearly half a mile (0.7 km) to the A 4010 (with the Golden Cross pub on the left). Bus stops are to the left, but the service is too infrequent to be helpful

Cross with care and take Slough Lane ahead for 100 yards, under the railway.

Turn right uphill 150 yards to the station (and over the footbridge for trains towards High Wycombe and London).