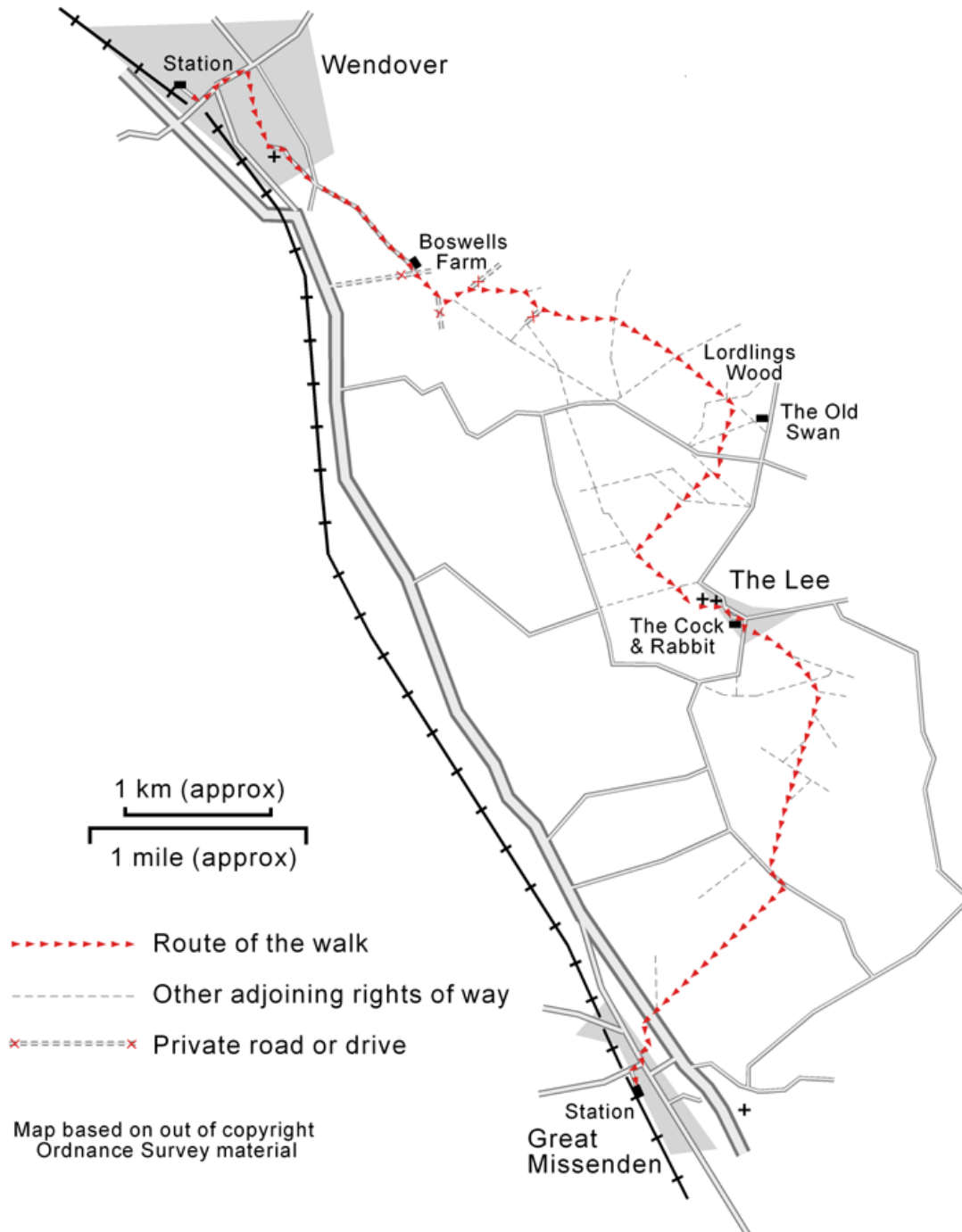


## WENDOVER TO GREAT MISSENDEN

A pleasant walk, following the Ridgeway national trail out of Wendover, then through woodland onto the Chiltern plateau, and eventually down into the Misbourne Valley. This walk could be combined with the Great Missenden to Wendover Walk to make an all day walk of 14 miles.

Checked 2009



## Distance

6.5 miles (10 km)

A gradual ascent of 100 metres (300 ft) out of Wendover. Otherwise fairly flat

## Travel

Wendover and Great Missenden are both on the Chiltern Line between Marylebone and Aylesbury via Amersham.

Buses link Great Missenden with High Wycombe (but not on Sundays), and Wendover with Aylesbury.

Detailed travel information for the whole of this area is available from the Traveline South East website [www.travelinesoutheast.org.uk](http://www.travelinesoutheast.org.uk) or telephone 0871 200 22 33

There is parking (pay except on Sundays) in Link Road near Great Missenden Station.

## Refreshments

Pubs: the Old Swan near Lee Gate (16th century, home cooked food prepared to order). Closed Monday lunchtime.

The Gate Inn at Lee Gate was closed the last time we checked.

The Cock and Rabbit at The Lee (Italian style).

Various opportunities for refreshment at Great Missenden.

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).

## Ordnance Survey Maps

The whole of this walk is on Explorer Map 181 *Chiltern Hill North*.

## Route

From Wendover Station, turn right up Station Approach, then left to walk down Pound Street, which shortly becomes the High Street.

**Wendover is strategically situated at the entrance to one of the gaps through the Chilterns.**

**The High Street is on the Ridgeway national trail and also on the line of the Icknield Way, a trade route dating back to prehistoric times connecting Salisbury Plain and East Anglia, the main centres in the Neolithic period, and running below the ridge of the Chiltern Hills.**

**The open area on the left of the High Street is known as the Manor Waste, and is where the market is held every Thursday.**

**A little further down on the right is the 17th century Red Lion. Oliver Cromwell is said to have stayed there in 1642. Robert Louis Stevenson visited in 1875 and admired the wood panelling in the parlour. Rupert Brooke was also a visitor.**

**At the bottom of the High Street is the distinctive red brick clock tower, built in 1842 by the then Lord of the Manor as a market hall and lock-up; the tower was added in 1870. The building now houses the tourist and community information office, and the parish council offices.**

**A little way along the Tring Road ahead is a group of cottages supposedly given by Henry VIII to Anne Boleyn.**

Go down the High Street to just before the clock tower and turn right to follow the Ridgeway along Heron Path.

Continue on the Ridgeway (which is signposted or waymarked with an acorn sign) along the tarmac and concrete path through Heron Park, beside the stream whose crystal clear Chiltern water still feeds into the long abandoned Wendover Canal, for 400 yards to a house in front of you, where the path bears right away from the stream. Pass the mill pond on your right, and emerge opposite the church gate.

**St Mary's parish church is 14th century but was considerably restored in the 19th century.**

**Open Sunday afternoons, sometimes with refreshments available.**

Turn left and follow the minor road (Church Lane) for 400 yards to a crossroads.

Cross over to the Ridgeway path (Hogtrough Lane) and go gradually uphill for half a mile (1km) to Boswells Farm on the left.

Ignore a private drive crossing the track, and continue 300 yards beyond the farm to a footpath junction with a field on your right.

Bear left to follow a fence on your left, and continue on a level track for 150 yards to a path junction.

Follow the Ridgeway path diagonally uphill to the right for 700 yards to a Ridgeway signpost at a junction, near the top of the rise. (Just in case the signpost is missing, note that if the Ridgeway starts going downhill, you have gone 50 yards too far.)

Bear right at the signpost, here leaving the Ridgeway (the path from the junction may be indistinct for a short distance, especially after leaf fall) and at the top of the slope turn left onto a track (yellow waymark arrow on tree).

Follow this track (ignoring a left fork almost immediately) for 500 yards to a cross track, then go ahead 200 yards to a concrete Ordnance Survey triangulation pillar (shown on the map as 232 metres, or 761 feet).

**As triangulation requires clear lines of sight to other features, this was presumably an open hillside when the original survey was done.**

Continue for a further 350 yards, passing a field on your left, to another crossing track (a bridleway) and ahead 600 yards through Lordling Wood among tall, graceful beeches to join a drive with a garage on your right and a white house on your left.

Continue ahead 60 yards to a field corner on your right.

(To go to the Old Swan continue a further 200 yards along this track, then pick up the route here again afterwards, or use the short cut shown on the map.)

Turn right to follow a right-hand hedge down to a road near Lee Gate.

Cross the road with care, turn left for 20 yards, then go right opposite Bumble Cottage to follow another right-hand hedge.

At the top of the rise, cross a stile, turn right for 20 yards and take a path to the left.

Follow the straight path with holly bushes to your left, ignoring a crossing path, for 300 yards to a gravel drive and a gateway.

Cross the stile opposite and follow a right hand hedge into a wood.

Bear slightly left, keeping to the right of a pond, and emerge on to a path between fields with an intermittent hedge on your left.

At the end of the field turn left to follow the Chiltern Link path (which we are going to follow for most of the next three quarters of a mile (1.2km)).

Go through the end of a narrow wood, then continue with a hedge on your right to a junction with a track.

Go ahead over a stile and half left to another stile to the left of a house with a white gable end.

Cross a gravel drive and go immediately over two more stiles, turning right to follow a path beside two churches.

**The first is the old parish church of The Lee, dating from the 13th century. It was originally a chapel of ease, served until the 16th century by the monks of Missenden Abbey. There are some interesting wall paintings, which were not discovered until 1965. At the top of the east window is some rare 13th century glass. Below are Art Nouveau style stained glass portraits of three notable puritans - Oliver Cromwell and two from Buckinghamshire: John Hampden (whose refusal in 1635 to pay the ship money tax demanded by Charles I was one of the events that led to the Civil War) and Miles Hobart, who was MP for Marlow and in 1626 was imprisoned for two years for locking the door of the House of Commons against the King's Messenger.**

**The new church, further on, was built in 1867/69.**

**Just past it, over to the left, is a separate area containing graves and memorials to members of the Liberty family. The most striking is a tall Celtic cross in Art Nouveau style, a memorial to Arthur Lasenby Liberty, founder of Liberty's of Regent Street. He bought the manor and built or improved many of the houses in The Lee at the beginning of the century.**

**The whole of the churchyard is a conservation area - part of the National Living Churches and Cemeteries Project for Conservation.**

**The keys to both churches may be obtained from the Vicarage, 200 yards along the road to the left.**

Go through the kissing gate at the far end of the churchyard, turn right, and fork right at the village green, to reach the Cock and Rabbit.

**Opposite the pub is a cairn of "pudding-stone", a type of conglomerate caused by the action of ancient river flows. There are some interesting old houses round the green.**

Turn right at the pub.

**A diversion along this road for some 300 yards leads to an enormous wooden statue, by a driveway on the left.**

**This is a ship's figurehead of Admiral Earl Howe, and comes from the Howe, later renamed as HMS Impregnable, the last wooden warship built for the Royal Navy. There is another likeness of Admiral Earl Howe in the crypt of St Paul's Cathedral.**

**When the ship was broken up in the 1920s, a lot of its timbers went into the rebuilding of Liberty's store.**

After turning right at the Cock and Rabbit, go immediately left by Hawthorn Farm, on a road which soon becomes a stony track.

Stay with the track as it bears right, ignoring the signpost for the Chiltern Link, which we now leave, and go ahead at a track crossing, passing a cottage, then Field End Grange, on your right, to the end of the track, with gates and a memorial seat.

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Immediately after the memorial seat, turn right over a stile by a metal gate and follow a right-hand hedge for 200 yards.

As the hedge bears right, strike out very slightly left across the field to a stile by an electricity pole. Continue in the same direction over three fields to houses and a road.

Turn left for 150 yards, then go right at a public footpath sign on the tarmac drive (signed to Mulberry Park Hill).

Go 200 yards along the tarmac drive, and at a gateway keep left and follow an enclosed path between hedges for 300 yards to a kissing gate into the field ahead.

Go ahead downhill, close to a left-hand hedge, with views over Great Missenden in the valley below to a stile into the next field.

Continue downhill in the same direction following the track ahead to the road.

Cross the very busy A413 with great care.

(There is an underpass to the left, but it is not a right-of-way and it can be very muddy as can the field on the other side of the road. In muddy conditions you might like to go left along the road verge where you can cross at the traffic island just before the roundabout. Take the road into Great Missenden for a few yards and then cross a stile on the right. Cross the field half left to rejoin our route at the gate by the electricity pole.)

Cross the stile on the other side of the road, turn left, going through two gates, and continue alongside the hedge to the furthest electricity pole.

Turn right through a gate by the electricity pole, leading on to an enclosed path. (A short section of this path can get very overgrown; it can be avoided by going briefly into the car park on your left.)

Keep ahead bearing right and immediately left by a house (no. 20).

A cul-de-sac (Walnut Close) leads up to the main road, where you turn left, then right and left again for Great Missenden Station.

**A short distance along the High Street is the Roald Dahl Museum and Story Centre, with the Twit Café, closed Mondays except Bank Holidays.**