

You are never far from the river on this 5 mile circular route, which centres itself on a bustling crossroads in the market town of Lechlade-Up-on-Thames. The walk uses paths field tracks and road and along the pretty route you will encounter water-meadows, pretty river views, not to forget the town of Lechlade which has several great places for a refreshment stop. The halfway point of Inglesham is a small village which houses the St John the Baptist Church which has Anglo-Saxon origins, but most of the current structure was built around 1205.

Distance: 5 miles

Duration: 2 hours

Difficulty: Easy

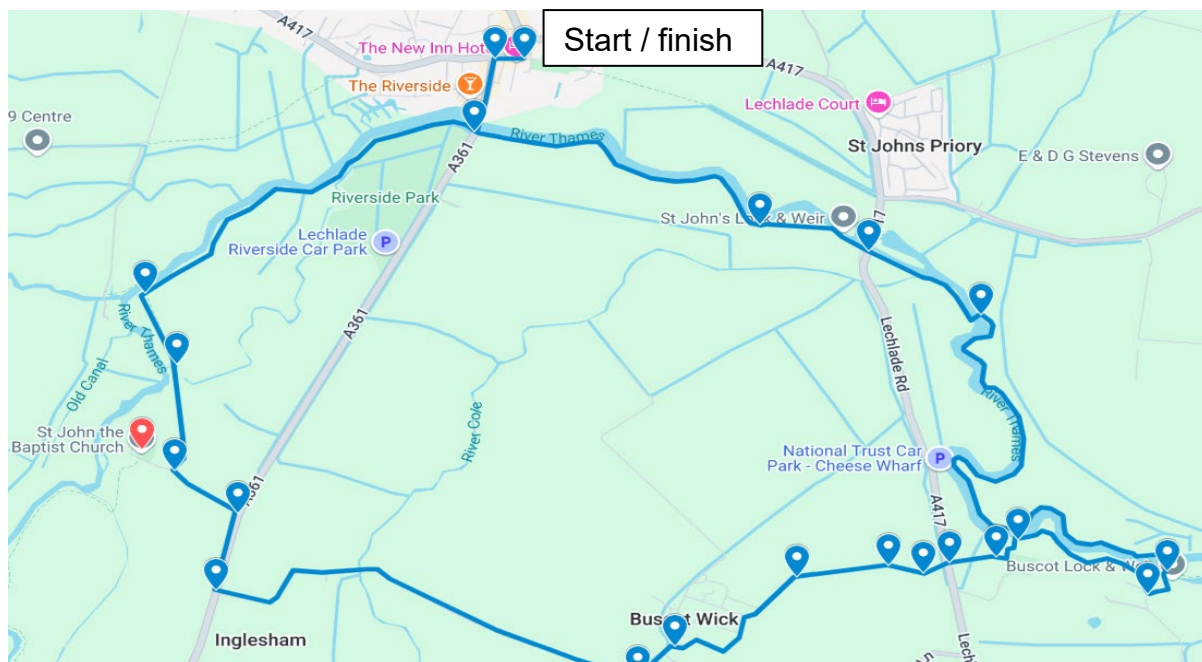
Refreshments / toilets: Lechlade has plenty of choice for refreshment stops, plus public toilets are available.

The 'Round House' near Lechlade

Start Point: Lechlade Market Square

Refreshments / toilets: Lechlade has many options for refreshments and there are public toilets available.

Half Penny Bridge, Lechlade



Detailed Route Description:

This walk starts in the pretty Market Square of Lechlade. With the New Inn Hotel on your left walk along the A361 for a short distance until you reach the traffic lights. Turn left here (which is still the A361) and walk towards the river.

Reach Halfpenny Bridge. This is a toll bridge that opened in 1792 – the toll house is still standing. Cross this bridge and, at the end, drop down some steps on the right to the riverbank.

Walk ahead, with the river to your right, for just over ½ mile (800m) until, immediately after a bridge across the Thames, you see an old roundhouse among the trees on the far bank. Here the River Coln joins the Thames, alongside the now silted-up Thames and Severn Canal.

Continue along the riverbank, cross a footbridge over a stream and head across the field to find a stile to the left of a house. The walk continues by turning left along the lane but, if you want to visit St John the Baptist Church, turn right.

At the end of the lane turn right, along the main road (making use of the verge). After 150yds (137m) turn left towards Buscot. Turn left up the driveway for Buscot Wick Farm. Just before the farmyard take the path to the right of the farm. Take the track across the field to a gate. In the next field stay on the same line to another gate. Go through and follow a hedge until a gate on your left. Cross this field to the road. Cross the road and enter another field, cross to a stile and turn left into the churchyard.

Leave the churchyard by the lychgate and follow the riverbank to Buscot Weir. Here turn right if you want to visit the estate village of Buscot, which now belongs to the National Trust; there is a small shop and a pub on its short main street. Otherwise walk on to pass Lock Cottage and make your way across a succession of locks and bridges to a stile. Do not cross the stile. Instead, stay on the Thames Path (with the river now on your left hand side).

Follow the river's meanderings until it brings you to a wooden bridge. Cross this and turn right to continue along the riverbank, noting the River Leach across to your right, which joins the River Thames just before St John's Bridge.

Walk beneath St John's Bridge, which dates from the 14th century and which takes its name from a former nearby priory. Pass a lock, noting the statue of Father Thames that was built for the Great Exhibition of 1851 and which was moved here from its original site at Thames Head.

Then enter the wide meadow ahead through a gate, the spire of Lechlade's parish church towers out of the flat landscape. The parish church was the inspiration for Percy Shelley's Summer Evening Meditation. Continue to the Halfpenny Bridge. Turn right to cross the bridge and you are back in Lechlade.