

This five-mile circular walk uses the Thames Path from Medley to Godstow and the Oxford Canal towpath from Wolvercote to Jericho.

Port Meadow is on the northwest side of Oxford and is a natural floodplain of the River Thames. It is also one of the largest open spaces in the north of city. The flood plains are home to many species of cattle, horses and wildfowl.

Distance: 5 miles

Duration: 2.5 hours

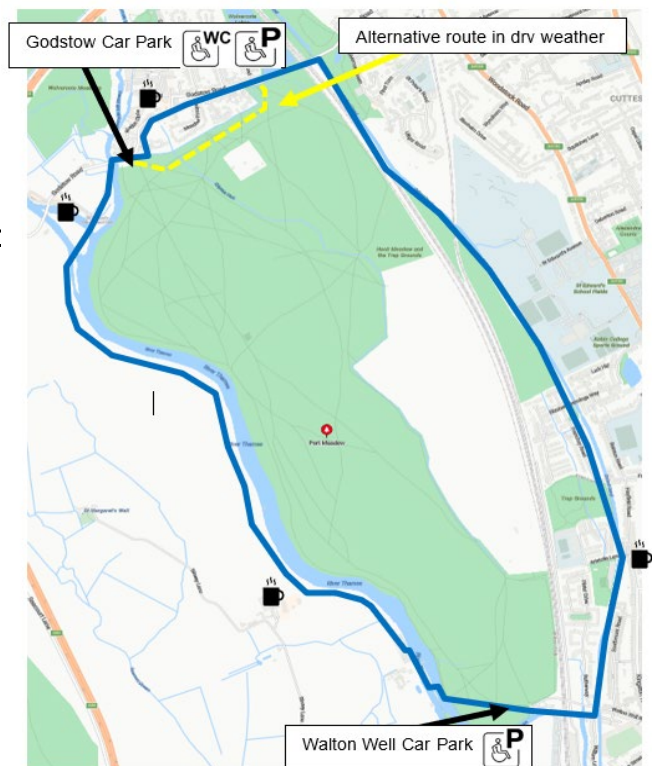
Difficulty: Easy.

Refreshments / toilets: This walk is very close to central Oxford so has several pubs and coffee shops along the route: The Perch, The Trout, The Anchor and The White Hart to name just a few.

Start Point: There are two free car parks along the circular route that you could start at. Both are marked on the map:

Walton Well Car Park, at the South end of the meadow. Walton Well Road, Oxford, OX2 6ED.
What3words address [///lost.spoke.ships](#)

Godstow Road Car Park, at the Northern end of the meadow. 189-216 Godstow Road, Oxford, OX2 8PU
What3words address [///larger.taped.shock](#)
There are accessible toilets at this car park.



View towards Bailey Bridge



Oxford Canal at Aristotle Lane (Bridge 242)



Detailed Route Description:

For this route we are starting at Walton Well Car Park, but as mentioned, there are several starting points you could use, such as Godstow Car Park at the north of Port Meadow, which also has public toilets and accessible facilities and parking spaces.

Start at the southern end of Port Meadow in Walton Well car park. Go through the gate into the meadows and walk westwards along a gravel track which takes you a short distance across to canal boat moorings at the end of Fiddlers Island.

Walk across the wide large wooden bridge (Bailey Bridge) and we will join the Thames Path on the island, turning right to go northwards. Follow the waterside trail for a short distance until you reach a red arched bridge. Go across the bridge which takes you to Bossoms Boatyard. Continue walking Northwards past the boatyard and some sheds and you will get to Medley Sailing Club. Just after the sailing club is another gravel track that goes to Binsey and the Perch Inn if you wanted to divert for refreshments.

Continue along the Thames Path on the west side of the river and enjoy the views over the meadow on the opposite bank. This is a good picnic place, where bathing in the river is popular in summer. After a mile, we get to the wettest and the muddiest part of the walk. This is in the field between a footbridge and Godstow lock. For awareness there are often cows in this field so please make sure dogs are on leads.

Godstow Lock is has seats and information boards. Continue onwards and you will pass the remains of Godstow nunnery. Shortly after this we will leave the Thames Path - climb up the bank to the gate onto the bridge and turn right towards The Trout Inn – another fabulous place to stop for refreshments.

Continue along the road. You will pass the community allotments on your left before going over another bridge which crosses a small stream. Once over the bridge you will come to Godstow car park which has public toilets – this also marks the halfway point of the walk.

From the car park we will follow along the road through the pretty village of Wolvercote, passing The White Hart community pub. This is Godstow Road and we will follow it for 1.2 miles until we join the Oxford Canal towpath. (In drier weather there is an alternative route which cuts from Godstow car park through the meadows and allotments and brings you out on Godstow Road a little further along – see yellow dotted line on map).

After approximately a mile you will see a bridge ahead and need to make sure you are on the lefthand side (north side) of the road (the side next to Wolvercote Lakes Nature Reserve) as the road splits into two bridges here, only one of which has access to the canal.

As you cross the bridge lookout for an opening on your left that leads to steps down to the canal at Wolvercote lock and bridge 235.

Once on the towpath, turn right (southwards) and continue for 2 miles beside the canal. You will see the playing fields of St Edwards school on the east side of the canal. By bridge 239 (Frenchay Road) is the entrance to another nature reserve, the Trapgrounds, which teems with wildlife and is worth a detour if nature is something you enjoy.

On the east side of bridge 240 (Aristotle Lane) is the Anchor Inn where you could divert to for a drink or some food. Finally, you will pass under bridge 242 (there is not a bridge 241), and walk up a ramp that takes us up to Walton Well Street. Turn left, over the railway, and we are back in the car park.