

Summary: Difficulty: DIFFICULT, Distance: 11.9 miles, Ascent: 651m

Overview

This quiet, relatively remote, stage of the Chiltern Way offers fine views across the Oxford Plain from the downs above Ewelme before continuing northwards through mainly broad-leaf woodland.

TERRAIN: Field and woodland paths and tracks. Woodland interspersed with farmland and some open down and parkland.

START: The car park at Cow Common at the east end of the village of Ewelme.

FINISH: Stokenchurch, the Kings Hotel (currently closed).

FOOD AND DRINK: There are few opportunities for refreshment along this stage. Ewelme: The village store and café in the centre of the village, 500 metres west of the start point sells sandwiches and other snacks. The Shepherd's Hut pub is at the west end of the village. Russell's Water: The "Five Horseshoes" pub at Upper Maidensgrove (700 metres off route; Wed to Sun only). Ibstone: The "Fox Inn". Stokenchurch: Fleur de Lis pub, Royal Oak pub, Coffee on the Green also shops and chip shop.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT: Very limited

PARKING: Car park at Cow Common, Ewelme.

COMPLETING THIS STAGE: There is no public transport at the west of this stage so to complete you need to break into sections or use 2 cars or a taxi.

Visit [Chiltern Way](#) for information and news. You can view a detailed map of this stage on [OS Maps](#) and follow it on the app. The next stage is [9 - Stokenchurch to Wendover Dean](#) – click to download.

For more detailed information on this stage and on the Chiltern Way we recommend the "Chiltern Way including the Berkshire Loop" book by Nick Moon available from the [Chiltern Society](#).

Route Description

1: Ewelme

Coordinates: OSGB SU64759118 LatLon 51.6158,-1.0662

From the car park at Cow Common which overlooks the cricket field at the east end of the village of Ewelme, you should take the road towards the church. The finger sign on the triangle next to the car park indicates the direction of the church. After about 150 metres, before you reach the church, take the track on the right-hand side which almost doubles back on the way you have just walked. The track rises gently uphill and then levels out into farmland. After about 1km, the grassy track descends steeply to the Ewelme/ Cookley Green road. Turn left and walk along the road for approximately 350 metres then turn left onto a track at the Chiltern Way finger sign. After another 350 metres you will reach a "cross-roads". Turn right here and proceed a short distance to the Icknieldbank woodland,

2: Icknieldbank

Coordinates: OSGB SU66599141 LatLon 51.6176,-1.0396

This is a popular parking place for walkers. The onward direction is generally indicated by the Chiltern Way finger sign and more precisely by a waymark post near the parking area. The path rises steeply through mixed woodland. You should continue to the top of the hill and through a gate onto uncultivated down-land. After approximately 300 metres, the grassy path will lead you to another gate. Turn right after the gate and follow the path along the north side of the ridge for about 1km. At a fork in the path take the right hand route and you will reach the junction with the Ridgeway long distance path. Turn right and continue uphill through the woods. The Chiltern Way follows the same route as the Ridgeway for the next 1.2km. After 500 metres, the path emerges from woodland into farm-land then falls quite steeply to a hollow before climbing to the Ewelme/Cookley Green road. You should cross the road and take the lane immediately in front of you. This road proceeds downhill and after a right turn you will arrive at St Botolph's Church, Swyncombe.

3: Swyncombe

Coordinates: OSGB SU68229020 LatLon 51.6066,-1.0162

Go through the gate into the churchyard and follow the path around the side of the church to the gate on the far side of the churchyard. Turn left after the gate and follow the path; crossing a private estate road and through another gate into open parkland often grazed by sheep. The grassy path rises steadily uphill with views of Swyncombe House to the right and you should head towards the gate on the edge of the woods which is visible approximately 300 metres distant. After the gate, take the path straight ahead ignoring the path going off to the right. The path rises gently through mainly beech woodland and is often muddy in places. After about 600 metres you will reach the Ewelme/Cookley Green road. Turn right and walk along the road for approximately 300 metres, passing the cricket ground on your left, to Cookley Green.

4: Cookley Green

Coordinates: OSGB SU69529021 LatLon 51.6065,-.9975

From the waymark post at the corner of the green, you should head across the northern edge of the green to the far corner. Then cross the Watlington/Nettlebed road, taking care because sight-lines are not good at this location, and take the track indicated by the Chiltern Way finger sign at the side of Cookley House. The tree-lined track follows the line of an ancient road way downhill. After approximately 1km you will reach a T junction with another bridleway. Turn left here and after a short uphill section of about 400 metres you will arrive in the village of Russell's Water. When you reach the road turn right if you want to visit the Five Horseshoes pub at Upper Maidensgrove (approximately 700 metres), otherwise turn left and follow the road a short distance to the pond.

5: Russells Water

Coordinates: OSGB SU70818977 LatLon 51.6023,-.9790

At the converted old inn sign now reading "Village of Russells Water" turn right onto the track running on the north side of the pond, then immediately left following the sign to "Kiln Cottages". After about 50 metres the bridleway emerges onto Russell's Water Common. Turn left onto the grassy footpath that skirts the edge of the common to the far corner. After entering the woods, follow the white-painted arrows down the well-worn gully to the main road at Pishill Bottom.

6: Pishill Bottom

Coordinates: OSGB SU71129038 LatLon 51.6078,-.9743

Turn left and walk along the road uphill for about 300 metres. Then turn right through the palisade gate at Grove Farm and follow the path through the farmyard, turning right then forking left. The bridleway climbs steadily through woodland out of the valley and is well marked with white painted arrows. The path continues through undulating broad-leaf woodland and is generally clearly way-marked. After approximately 1.8km the path drops down to the valley floor. At this point, ignore the path to the left and walk straight across the clearing and up the opposite bank. After another 300 metres the path emerges from the woods into open fields. Walk uphill to the right hand corner of the field, through the gate to a track (Hollandridge Lane).

7: Hollandridge Lane

Coordinates: OSGB SU72599158 LatLon 51.6184,-.9529

Cross the track. The path skirts the edge of the next field for about 120 metres and at the way-mark post cuts diagonally to the left across the field and downhill into the woods. After approximately 400 metres through woodland following the clearly marked path, you will come to a gate and the path continues into a large field. Follow the path which runs up the dry valley bottom, passing a solitary oak tree. When you reach the hedgerow at the other side of the field, take the footpath to the right, and walking uphill after approximately 300 metres you will reach the Northend road at the track entrance to Brackendale.

8: Northend

Coordinates: OSGB SU73039275 LatLon 51.6289,-.9462

Cross the road and follow the path into woodland. After a short distance you will enter the Wormsley Estate. Follow the white painted arrows down through the woods. The path is steep in places and often slippery when wet, so care is needed. At the valley floor, turn right at the way-mark post, where the path meets another. After a further approximately 200 metres you will leave the woods and enter open parkland. Turn right onto the estate road and after about 40 metres turn left through a gate into a field. You should head for the gate visible uphill about 100m away. Then after crossing another estate road, continue across the next field towards a gate about 350 metres distant. After crossing a bridleway and through a further gate follow the path uphill along the edge of the next field to a stile at the edge of woodland. Cross the stile and enter the woods. After a short very steep section the path meets a bridleway. You should turn right along the bridleway and continue uphill to a gate marking the boundary of the Wormsley Estate with Ibstone Common. Turn left after the gate and after approximately 100 metres the path splits in two.

9: Ibstone

Coordinates: OSGB SU75009387 LatLon 51.6387,-.9176

Take the right-hand fork if you wish to visit the Fox Inn; otherwise take the left fork to continue on the Chiltern Way. After about another 200 metres the path emerges from the woods onto the Ibstone Road. Turn left and walk along the road for about 150 metres and turn right through a gate just after the last house. The path is indicated by a Chiltern Way finger sign located on the left side of the road. The path skirts around the garden fence before entering the woods. This down-hill section is well marked with white arrows and is quite steep in places. After approximately 500 metres you will emerge from the woods into a clearing made for over-head power lines. Cross the clearing and, ignoring the footpath going off to the right, go through the gate, turn left and proceed uphill along the edge of a field for 200 metres or so before entering woodland again. After a short distance the path meets another footpath. Continue uphill to the left and leaving the woods you will enter open farmland. After skirting the edge of the first field, go through the gate and head straight ahead cutting across two fields and through two gates passing Studdridge Farm on your right. Immediately after a further gate, turn right and after 25 metres, cross the farm access track.

10: Studdridge Farm

Coordinates: OSGB SU75559505 LatLon 51.6492,-.9094

Continue through the gate diagonally to the left. You should cross the field heading to the right hand corner of the copse in the middle field and, after skirting the edge of the copse and a pond, cut across the field to the gate in the far right hand corner. Go through the gate and the path continues downhill with the hedgerow on your left hand for about 250 metres before entering a small wood. After emerging from the wood, the path continues uphill past several paddocks. When you reach the surfaced access road to a small commercial estate, turn right onto the road and follow it to the left through the tunnel under the M40 motorway. The tunnel access road takes you to Cooper's Court Road which brings you to the A40/Oxford Road in the centre of Stokenchurch village with its pubs, cafes and shops.

11: Finish - Stokenchurch

Coordinates: OSGB SU76069627 LatLon 51.6601,-.9018

We hope you have had a good walk. We are committed to making the Chiltern Way as enjoyable as possible, so if you feel we could improve the directions or came across any path problems, please contact us directly by e-mail: office@chilternsociety.org.uk.

