

# Piddington and Cadmore End Common

With **Andrew Clark**

**A classic Chilterns walk of rolling countryside, woodlands and stunning views.**

**DISTANCE:** 4.5 miles/7.3km

**START:** Old Oxford Road, Piddington HP14 3BH.

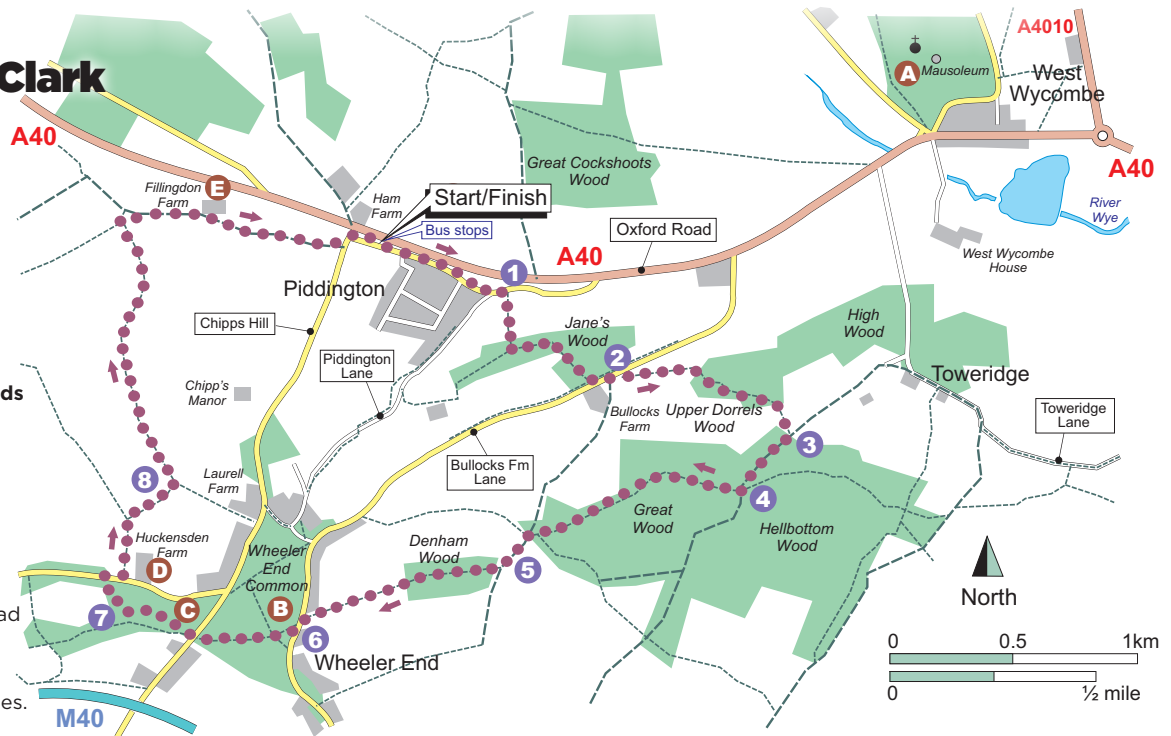
Grid ref: SU 807942. Park roadside near The Dashwood Roadhouse in Old Oxford Road

**TERRAIN:** A moderate walk along good paths, some of which could be muddy at times.

There are five stiles and a number of gates. One steep climb near the start and a total ascent of 500ft/150m

**MAPS:** OS Explorer 171 & 172, Chiltern Society 1, 7 & 11

**REFRESHMENTS:** None on route. The Dashwood Roadhouse, Piddington



Map: Glyn Kuhn  
Photos: Colin Drake

**LOCAL TRANSPORT:** For local bus services please check [www.traveline.info](http://www.traveline.info).

## The route

**Walk along the pavement away from the pub for 400m and take the path on the right shortly after Piddington Lane.**

1. Cross over the stile, continue straight ahead up the hill and go through the gate into a wood. Ignore the path on the right, continue uphill to a T-junction at the top and then left to a lane (Bullocks Farm Lane). Turn left along the lane, and shortly after the path starts to descend, take the footpath on the right.
2. Climb up the bank and through the woodland to a broad track. Turn left and follow it downhill with views to West Wycombe Hill. Where the hedgerow on the right ends, turn right into woods and follow the path to a field. Cross directly over it and go through a gap in the hedgerow to a bridgeway.
3. Turn right to join a wide track and continue downhill to a staggered crossing path just after the track becomes surfaced.
4. Turn right and stay on this path for 750m as it drops to near the bottom, then runs parallel to the track on the left before meeting a bridgeway. Turn right for a few metres to a junction and turn left on a wide track. Follow it downhill and, just before the track turns sharply left, turn right on a path into a wood (Denham Wood). It has a lovely display of bluebells in spring.
5. Continue through the wood as the path rises gently to a stile at the edge of a field. Go over the stile and follow the hedgerow on the left to

6. leave the field through a gate. Continue to a lane, turn left downhill for 45m and take the path on the right by the telegraph pole.
6. Walk along to a crossing path, turn right for a few metres and then left along a sometimes muddy track. Continue straight ahead to the left of the line of trees to meet a rough track. Turn right to the main road (Boulter End Lane) and cross directly over onto Cadmore End Common. After a few metres, ignore the path on the left and continue ahead. Where the path divides, continue straight on and pass a pond on the left to very shortly meet a crossing path.
7. Turn right uphill for 100m to a clearing then turn right for a short distance to a lane. Turn right along it for a few metres and turn left through the gate into a field. Stay straight ahead across the field towards a metal gate and go through the kissing gate to its right. Continue ahead, follow the track round to the right and along the field edge to eventually reach the metal field gate directly in front of you.
8. Turn left, go under the overhead cables and right over the stile into a field. Bear diagonally right downhill to cross a pair of stiles in the hedgerow at the bottom. Turn right and follow the wide track down to a junction in the valley bottom. Turn right along the wide track past Fillingdon Farm on the left to a road. Turn left and immediately right past The Dashwood Roadhouse to return to the start.

*Continued overleaf*





Great Wood



Approaching Fillingdon Farm



St Lawrence Church

## Points of interest

**Piddington** was only established in 1903 when Benjamin North moved his furniture factory from High Wycombe. As well as the factory, new houses were also needed for the workers. The walk starts from the Old Oxford Road, once part of the road that connected London to Oxford and Wales. In 1924 a new section of the now A40 was built to bypass the village and runs parallel to it. Over the centuries there have been many routes across the Chilterns. It's reputed that there was a Roman Road that ran from London to South Oxfordshire, possibly passing through Upper Dorrells Wood, Jane's Wood and Piddington.

**A. West Wycombe Hill:** The early sections of the walk afford wonderful views of the hill. It's famous for a number of features – the Dashwood Mausoleum, St Lawrence Church and The Hellfire Caves. The Grade I listed church stands on the site of an Iron Age fort. It was originally built to serve the lost village of Haveringdon and was remodelled in its current form by Sir Francis Dashwood. The crowning feature is the Golden Ball, which is large enough to hold six people and is reputed to have been a meeting place for the notorious Hellfire Club. The design of the mausoleum is based on the Constantine Arch in Rome. It was built to house the urns that contain the ashes of the Dashwood family.

**B. Wheeler End and The Common:** The origins of the village name

are unclear, but possibly come from the Wheeler family who were once brewers in High Wycombe. The main industries in the past were chairmaking, brickmaking and lacemaking. The Common is owned by the West Wycombe Estate and is open access land.

**C. Cadmore End Common:** The name comes from a person 'Cada' and 'maere' possibly the edge of a landholding. Once in Oxfordshire, it became part of Buckinghamshire in 1896. Brickmaking was the main industry, but that ceased in 1939 when the clay ran out.

**D. Huckenden Farm** was once a famous recording studio used by many musicians including Paul Weller, Oasis and Robbie Williams.

**E. Fillingdon Farm** is home to Fillingdon Fine Art, formerly Art of Africa. They continue to exhibit exceptional contemporary paintings, sculpture, ceramics and jewellery by artists associated with Africa. They hold two major exhibitions a year and open by appointment at other times.

*The points of interest were compiled with the assistance of Simon Cains, a local historian in Piddington.*

**Nearby walk (Bottom Wood)** – Walk 22 of the *50 Great Walks in the Chilterns* book starts from the same point.