

## Temporary Internet Leaflet

(Please note that all our leaflets are currently undergoing redesign for Internet use)

### **TINGEWICK WATER STRATFORD** Circular Walk

3.5 5.5 miles

This walk through the rolling countryside of north Buckinghamshire links the villages of Tingewick and Water Stratford, passing through the pleasant water meadows of the River Great Ouse.

Waymarking The walk is waymarked at every gate or stile or major change in direction.

Yellow arrows for footpaths

Blue arrows for bridleways

The route is described in a clockwise direction starting from Church Lane Tingewick, though the route may be joined at other points and may be followed in either direction.

1. From Church Lane follow the path, known locally as the Gitty, to the south and west of Tingewick Hall. The Hall dates from 1854 and was formerly the rectory at Tingewick.
2. Follow the waymarked path across the fields. When passing through farmyards, please take care to leave livestock and machinery alone. To the north there are views of the River Great Ouse. The river rises just north of Brackley, at Ousewell, and empties into the Wash at Kings Lynn in Norfolk.
3. At the path's junction with the road there is a choice of routes; turn right towards Water Stratford for the short cut (see section 15) or left for the main walk.
4. After approximately 200 metres cross the road, joining the bridleway

on the right. After two fields the route crosses into the county of Oxfordshire, follow the path to the disused railway line.

5. The Buckingham and Brackley Junction railway was completed in 1850. In 1956 a Halt was added at Water Stratford as a result of the line being selected for a "railcar" experiment. The olive green railcars operated between Buckingham and Banbury. The line was eventually closed in the early 1960s.

Bacons House farm buildings formed the Home Farm of a house reputedly owned by Sir Francis Bacon, the English statesman and philosopher.

Turn left along the lane then, after approximately 200 metres, take the waymarked footpath on the right.

6. After recrossing the old railway, the path drops back down to the river. The rocks of the Ouse Valley are relatively young in geological terms, dating back a mere 200 million years. The Jurassic limestones, clays and sands were deposited in shallow seas of the time.

7. The willow trees and reeds just to the north of the river mark the site of Hunts' Mill. Noted in the Domesday Book, all that now remain are the stone foundations of the wheelhouse and evidence of a mill house to the west.

Follow the waymarked route away from the river. At the paths' junction turn right, heading east along the bridleway towards Water Stratford.

8. Leaving the bridleway, follow the footpath into the village of Water Stratford.

9. The main road through the village follows the line of a Roman road, which ran from Alchester (near Bicester) to Towcester. The old English word Straet, which gives us our modern "street", was also applied to Roman main roads. Where the street crossed a river by means of a ford,

the name Stratford resulted.

Cross the Roman road and take the footpath on the right across the fields. The pasture is grazed by horses, cattle and sheep, so please keep all dogs on leads and close all gates behind you.

10. The route runs parallel to the top of a large meander in the river. The valley is slightly wider at this point and is liable to flooding. The wet meadows that result provide a habitat for species such as ragged robin and cranesbills.

11. Continue through two more fields, turning sharply to the right heading from the footbridge. The path follows the line of the stream, the familiar reed-mace with its poker shaped flower can be found by the banks.

12. Along the wooded embankments and cuttings of the old railway, ragwort can be found. This plant is closely associated with railways. The light, fluffy fruits have been observed to travel in carriages and get off the train at the stations! (Rackham: The making of the English Countryside).

Follow the path to the line of hawthorn and oak trees, turn right and continue to Tingewick Mill.

13. In the Domesday Book, Tingewick Mill was recorded as being worth 4 shillings! The Mill ceased working in 1966 but some of the machinery is still in place. During the 1930's, eels caught at the mill were sent to Billingsgate Market for sale.

Follow the drive past the Mill House and continue down the lane to Tingewick.

14. The present Manor Farm stands on the site of the ancient Manor of Tingewick. The nearby church of St Mary Magdalene has a twelfth century north arcade, decorated with chevron mouldings.

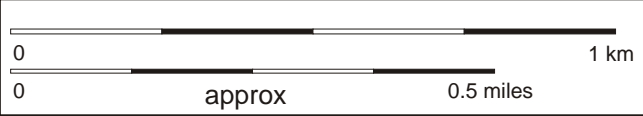
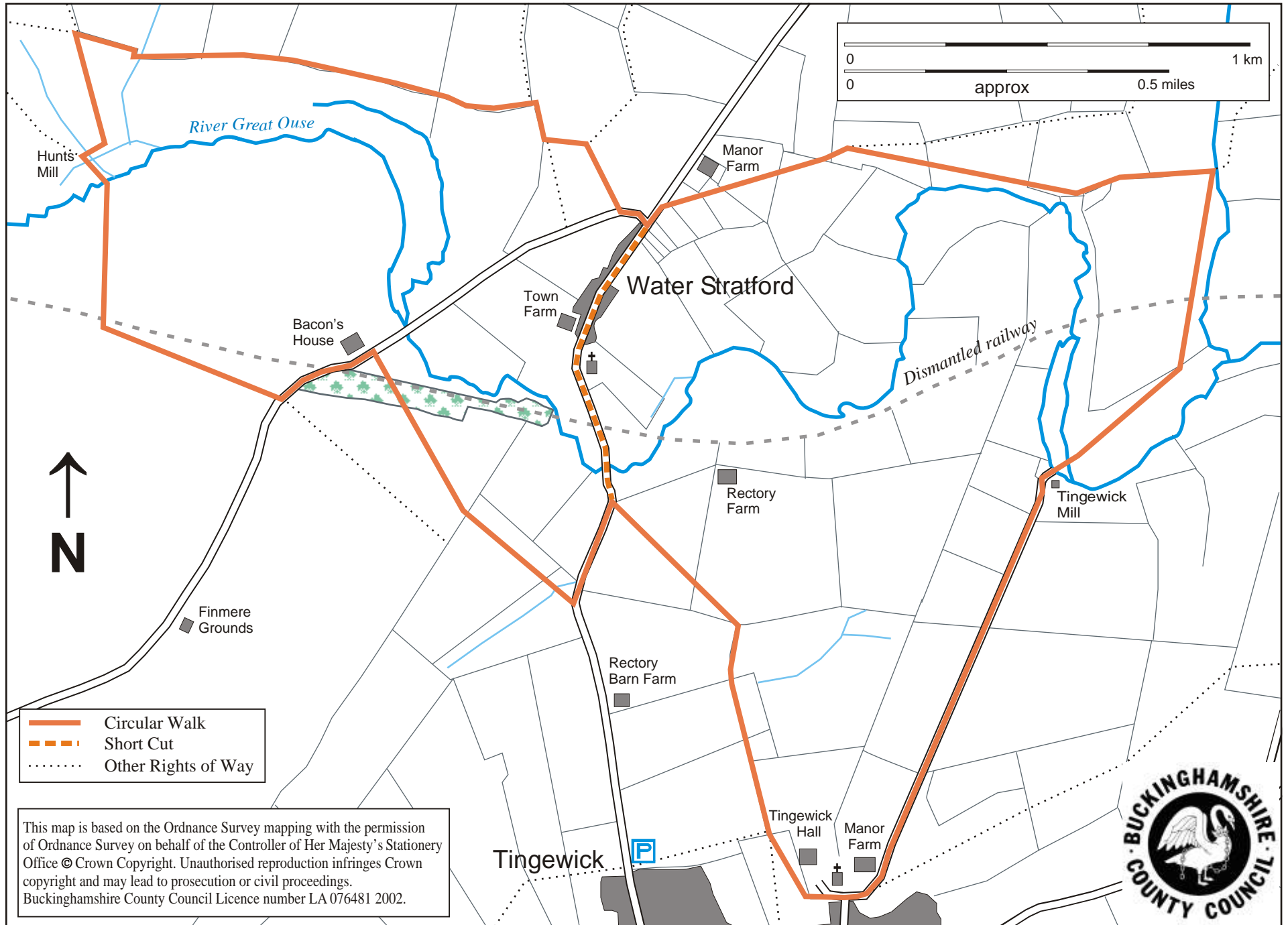
**15. Shortcut:** Follow the road through Water Stratford. The church of St Giles is raised above the road amongst chestnuts and sycamores. The church is Norman in origin. The south doorway is decorated with a carved tympanum showing Christ in Majesty supported by two feathered angels. Rejoin the main walk at 9.

**Parking:** There is a large layby on the Water Stratford road (GR: SP 654332) with a footpath link into the main walk. On street parking is available in Tingewick. Please park carefully and do not obstruct access.

**Footwear:** Many of the paths can be muddy at any time of the year, so waterproof footwear is recommended.

**Refreshments:** There are a number of Public Houses in Tingewick serving food at lunchtime. Refreshments can also be bought at the shops in Tingewick.

**Public transport:** Red Rover Service No 24 connects Tingewick with Buckingham, Winslow and Aylesbury. For further details phone 01296 28686. Paynes Coaches service No 32 connects Tingewick to Buckingham and Milton Keynes. For further details phone: 01280 817761.



- Circular Walk
- - - Short Cut
- ..... Other Rights of Way

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