

THE THAME OUTER CIRCUIT

The Thame Outer Circuit is described in an anti-clockwise direction, starting and finishing at Haddenham and Thame Parkway, but may be joined at any point. It takes in the villages of Long Crendon, Shabbington, Tetsworth, Sydenham, Emmington, Towersey, Kingsey and Haddenham Church End as well as passing through the Rycote Estate and the Oxfordshire Golf Course. The terrain is generally flat and the walk is mainly on public rights of way with a few sections using fairly quiet roads. However, it should be noted that this area is fairly low-lying and that, after periods of heavy rain, some fields, particularly those adjacent to the River Thame, may be flooded.

The walk has been divided into three sections, with the start and finish of each accessible by bus from the centre of Thame. The walk descriptions overleaf are written using relevant bus stops as starting and finishing points, bearing in mind that the first and last parts of a walk may have to divert from the main circuit.

The map also shows a number of linking routes, again using public rights of way, which connect sections of the walk with the centre of Thame, thus facilitating shorter walks using part of the main circuit. An alternative to the route between Long Crendon and Shabbington is shown on the map. This is a nicer route and slightly longer but parts of it may be muddy in the wet.

THE LINKING ROUTES

These numbered routes, shown in different colours on the map, are provided to enable shorter walks to be taken from and to Thame which link with parts of the Outer Circuit. These routes are all on public footpaths and are generally well marked. The routes are described going out from Thame and need to be followed in the reverse order when used to return to Thame.



Rycote Chapel

Linking Route 1

From Priest End take the Old Long Crendon road up to the by-pass. Cross this, with great care, and take the path opposite to a stile on the left signed "Thame Valley Walk". Cross this and follow the TVW waymarks across three fields to a track, go right for 80 yards then left on a path across a field. Then across several more fields in the same direction until reaching a road.

You are then on the Outer Circuit between points 4 and 5

Linking Route 2

From the Recreation Ground follow Moreton Lane in a straight line across the Phoenix Trail and continue until reaching a tarmac path on the right. Take this and continue through the village of Moreton straight on past the war memorial until reaching another path junction where the route divides.

For Route 2a take the right fork, bear left, and follow the brideway past the golf course. Immediately after passing the club house over to the right you meet the Oxfordshire Way and the Outer Circuit between points 11 and 12.

For Route 2b take the left fork and follow the lane, initially on tarmac and past various farms, for some miles until you reach the main A40 road in Tetsworth. This is the Outer Circuit between points 13 and 14.



Long Crendon Church and Courthouse



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- Key**
- Bridleway (cycleway)
 - ... Footpath
 - Public house
 - Bus Stop



Along the old railway track

Linking Route 5

Leave Thame on Moorend Lane, turning left at Cromwell Avenue and crossing the main road Eastern Bypass to the lane opposite. Continue on the lane past the sewage works and a farm and about 100 metres after passing under some power cables, turn left at a footpath sign. Take this and follow the waymarks across three fields to Scotsgrove Mill. Then take the well-marked brideway straight on for about a mile until you reach a large 4-way footpath sign.

You have reached the Outer Circuit between points 1 and 2.



Haddenham Church End

Linking Route 4

Leave Thame via East St and Kingsey Road. Just before the Eastern Bypass bear left and follow the brideway, crossing the main road and continuing past the Rugby Club and Thame Showground. When reaching a stile on the right, cross this and another and through a large gate (the pedestrian side will not be locked). After passing the cottage, bear left and follow the footpath across several fields, keeping in the same direction.

When you meet a crossing path at a junction, this is the Outer Circuit between points 23 and 24.

Linking Route 3

Leave Thame on the Phoenix Trail heading towards Princes Risborough. Some 500 yards after passing the sloping exit to Towersey you come to a crossing public footpath.

This is the Outer Circuit at point 22.



Towersey village green



Oxfordshire Golf Course

See reverse for detailed descriptions of the three sections of the Thame Outer Circuit.

Walking Routes

THE THAME OUTER CIRCUIT



20 mile circular walk in the countryside around the market town of Thame in Oxfordshire

- HADDENHAM • LONG CRENDON • SHABBINGTON
 • TETSWORTH • SYDENHAM • EMMINGTON
 • TOWERSEY • KINGSEY

Leaflet designed by Sam Osborne
 Photos by Pam and Tony Clark, and Ruth Comish

The Thame Outer Circuit is an approximately 20 mile circular walk through the Oxfordshire countryside surrounding the market town of Thame. The walk has been divided into three separate sections, with the start and finish of each accessible by bus from the centre of Thame. Also shown are linking routes to facilitate shorter walks from the town which link in with parts of the Outer Circuit.

The walk has been created by members of Thame & Wheatley Ramblers to encourage walking in the countryside as an integral part of Thame Green Living, a plan adopted by Thame Town Council to promote a cleaner, greener, healthier Thame.

The role of Thame Town Council in sponsoring this project is gratefully acknowledged.

Walkers are asked to respect the Country Code: to leave things as they find them, to take litter home, to keep dogs on leads near livestock and to clean up after their dogs.

You can also find this walk online at: www.thametowncouncil.gov.uk/visit-thame/town-trails

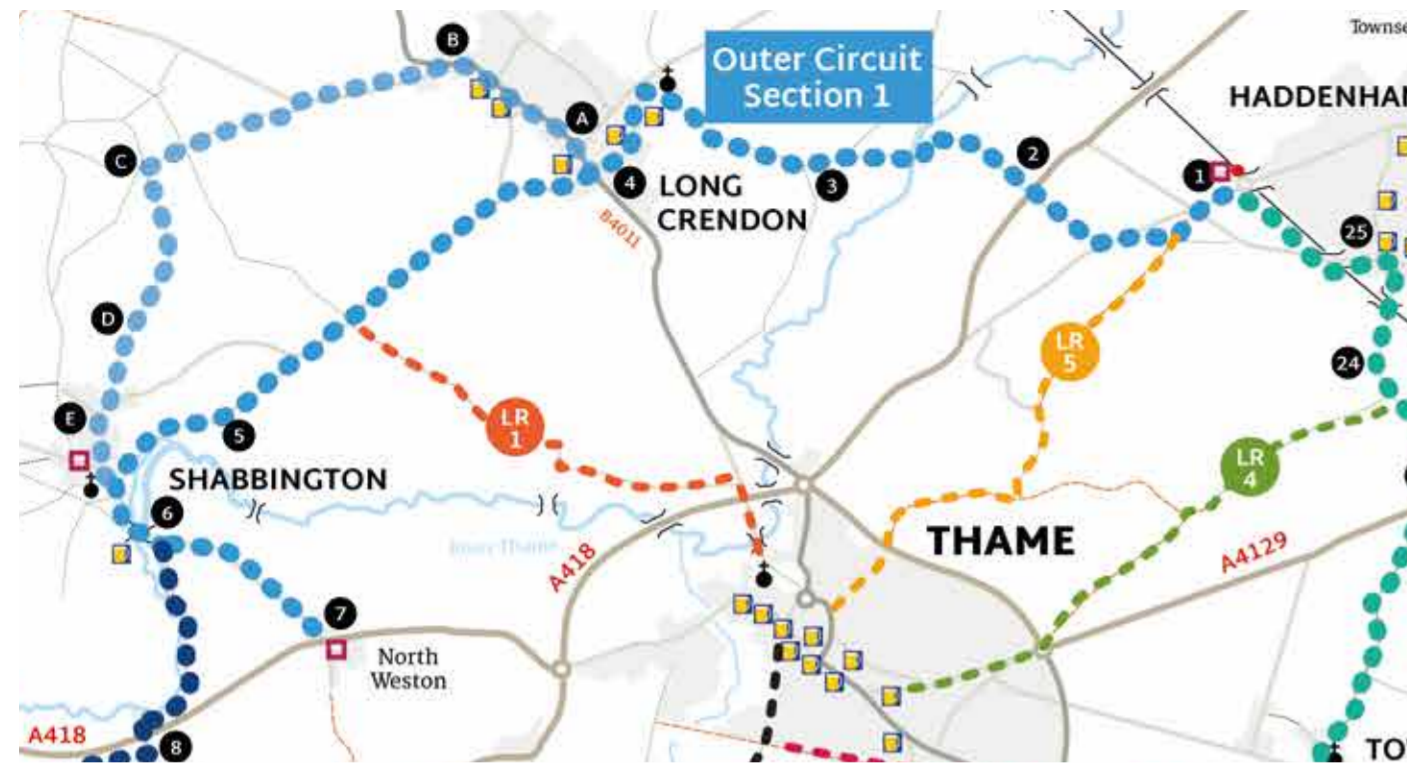
Leaflets of other walks in the area are available at the Town Hall Information Centre

Find out more about Thame Green Living at www.thamegreenliving.org.uk

Leaflet designed by Sam Osborne

SECTION 1. HADDENHAM TO SHABBINGTON

6.0 OR 7.25 MILES. START: HADDENHAM AND THAME PARKWAY STATION. 280 BUS FROM THAME.



1. From the station car park entrance take the gravel path signposted Snakemoor Nature Reserve, to reach the Thame Road. Walk down the right side of the road and at a crossroad turn left and immediately right to go through a gap. Follow the bridleway straight ahead between hedges. At a large 4-way finger post (Linking Route 5 joins here) turn right, signposted Long Crendon, to cross a field. Just before reaching the road turn left to follow a path on the inside of the hedge. On reaching a gap in the hedge with a fingerpost turn right to cross the road to a well signed footpath opposite. Follow this across the field to reach a gap in a hedge and the busy Aylesbury Road

2. Cross the road to a gate opposite and follow the path downhill to a further gate. Go diagonally left to another gate and footbridge. Cross this, but note that the area beyond is liable to be flooded after heavy rain. Unfortunately there is no way around this at present. If OK, however, bear left to follow a raised embankment alongside the river and cross a concrete bridge on the right over the River Thame – the site of the old Notley Mill. Bear slightly right to go through a gate then diagonally left (almost due west) and take the path through a field in the direction of the houses of Long Crendon that can be seen on the hill.

3. At the far side of the field cross a stile and footbridge, continuing straight on with a hedge on the right. Continue straight ahead on the path without deviation, latterly slightly uphill and along an enclosed path between fences, to reach a road. At a T-junction turn left by the 15th century Courthouse (NT) and nearby St Mary's Church. Continue along Long Crendon High St to reach a main road (B4011). There are two options from here.

OPTION 1.

4. Cross the road (at a pedestrian crossing nearby) and continue in the same direction down Frogmore Lane, passing Long Crendon Manor on the left. At a T-junction turn left and continue on Long Crendon Road for nearly a mile, passing the first Thame Valley Walk (TVW) sign on the left (Linking Route 1 joins here). Continue on the road to the next footpath sign on the left, just beyond where the road bends to the right. Go through the pedestrian gate, following this TVW sign diagonally right to cross the field to a footbridge and a waymarked stile in a gap in the hedge. Cross this and turn right to head for a further stile and footbridge to the right of 2 trees.

5. Follow the left side of the next field for some distance to find a (broken) stile in the far left corner of the field. Cross this to follow a reasonably clear path through scrub to reach, in the bottom left corner, a footbridge and gate. Go through the gate into a field and continue to another gate, keeping a fence on your right. Then follow written footpath signs in a generally straight line towards a church across several small fields, separated by barriers opened by removing the central pole, to reach a gate to the road opposite Shabbington church. Turn left for about 300 yards along the road to the Old Fisherman pub.

OPTION 2.

(This is 1.25 miles longer than Option 1 but avoids over a mile of road walking.)

A. Cross the main road and turn right. Continue on the main Bicester road (B4011) through the village. As the road bends to the left, continue for a short distance until reaching a side road, signposted "Westfield only".

B. Take this road and continue along it for 1/2 mile or so passing a sign to Bailey's Farm on the right. Soon after this, where the road bends to the right, take the footpath on the left and immediately go right to follow a footpath sign between a hedge and a fence to reach a stile. Cross this and turn right and left to follow the right side of a field. Continue straight ahead on the right side of the second field. Ignore the crossing footpath, then, just before the end of the third field turn left along a footpath across the field, following a somewhat hidden waymark in the hedge.

C. These fields can be muddy. Go through a gap in the hedge and continue straight ahead across the next field to another gap. Through this and straight ahead to another gap. Then turn right and almost immediately take the left fork of two grassy paths, keeping the hedge on the left.

D. At a gate in the corner of the field go straight ahead on the left side of the next field to another gate to cross a track to yet another gate. Go straight ahead to the far left corner of the next field to a kissing gate. Go through the gate and follow the narrow path ahead between hedges. At the end of the path go straight across the field ahead to cross a stile alongside a gate to arrive at a road.

E. Turn right onto the road and follow it around to the left, ignoring side roads, for 350 yards to a T-junction. Bear left here to follow the road for 400 yards to the Old Fisherman pub.

Both options merge at this point.

6. Now follow the road to the left to cross several bridges and past a signpost for the Thame Valley Walk on the right (Section 2 starts from here). Continue on the road for about two thirds of a mile to reach a main road (A418). Just to the right is a bus stop from which you can get a 280 bus back to Thame.



Consultation near Long Crendon

SECTION 2. SHABBINGTON TO EMMINGTON

7.9 MILES. THIS LONGER SECTION MAY BE SPLIT INTO TWO HALVES, (3.6 AND 4.3 MILES) WITH A BREAK AT TETSWORTH, BUT THIS CANNOT BE DONE USING PUBLIC TRANSPORT.

7. There is a 110 bus service between Thame and Shabbington but this is infrequent. Otherwise take the 280 bus from Thame and alight at Shabbington Turn. Cross the main road and head up the side road towards Shabbington for about two thirds of a mile. Just before the second of the hump backed bridges turn left over a footbridge waymarked Thame Valley Walk (TVW). The path follows the right side of a field and eventually runs alongside the river. Shortly after the field boundary bears left, turn right over a footbridge. Turn right again, following the right side of the field. At the next field boundary, bear right through a gap and cross another footbridge, still alongside the river. Follow the river around to the right until reaching the corner of the field. The path then leaves the river and turns sharp left to follow the right side of the field to a gap which leads onto the main road (the A418).

8. Cross this busy road to the gap on the opposite side, then over a stile (or through a gate). After 100 yards climb a flight of steps, within a high hedge, to a track which follows the line of the old Thame to Oxford railway. Turn right to follow the track, still on the TVW, through a gate, and after a few hundred yards turn left where the track is crossed by a concrete access road to Rycote Farm. Follow this road up to the top where the TVW meets the Oxfordshire Way (OW).

9. Go slightly left through the farmyard now following the OW, then through a gate and, keeping alongside the left hand hedge, find a kissing gate in the left hand corner leading into the Rycote Estate. Follow the waymarks through the Estate turning right, sharp left and right again up some steps to the Rycote Chapel. Follow the path past the Chapel, noting the ancient yew tree, into a wood. Where the wood ends go straight ahead along the enclosed path. Then go through a gate into some more woods and follow the path until you reach a busy main road (A329). Cross this and over the stile immediately opposite into the Oxfordshire Golf Course.

10. Follow the OW waymarks across the access road to turn slightly right and, after crossing a tarmac path, continue uphill to reach the access road again. Turn left along the grass verge to arrive at a slip road on the right. Cross the road here to find a waymarked (OW) grass path between bushes, to shortly arrive at a low stile.

11. Continue in the same general direction across open land to a waymark post. Go straight ahead to another OW waymark post and turn left onto a bridleway (Linking Route 2a joins here). After about 25 yards turn hard right onto a reasonably clear path, latterly through bushes, to arrive at an open field.

SECTION 3. EMMINGTON TO HADDENHAM

5.6 MILES. TAKE THE NUMBER 40 BUS FROM THAME AND ALIGHT AT EMMINGTON.

19. Walk up the side road on the left signposted "Emmington Village Only". Turn left again immediately after the row of cottages to follow a footpath sign "Towersey 3". At a junction of paths turn right, then go over a 'stile' to the right of a large gate. Continue along the left side of a field to a wooden telegraph/electricity pole, then go left to cross a waymarked 'stile' and follow the right side of the next field in the same direction. (NB. These 'stiles' are shortly to be replaced by gates. In the meantime you may be able to avoid this 'stile' by continuing for a few yards and going through a gap in the hedge).

20. Then continue on the path around the edge of this very large field to reach the far right hand corner and a gate. Through the gate and over a footbridge to turn immediately left for a few yards to the corner of the next field. Cross the footbridge and stile here, then turn right onto a wide track alongside a wood to reach the corner of the field. Turn left at the footpath sign and continue with a hedge on the right. The path bears right to reach another field corner.

21. Turn right over a footbridge and stile and after just a few yards go left over another stile and footbridge through a gap in the hedge. Continue straight ahead along the left side of a large field. In the far left corner cross a footbridge and continue in the same direction in the next field, eventually bearing left between hedges followed by a left over a footbridge and then right to reach a metalled track. This is the Phoenix Trail (Linking Route 3 joins here).

12. Follow the right edge of this field for about 50 yards to a waymark post. Bear left to follow the OW waymark, ignoring the bridleway. Keeping the hedge on the right continue down to the corner of the field. Go left, then right across a footbridge to join a track. Turn left onto the track, leaving it at a sharp left bend and continuing straight ahead along the OW to cross a footbridge. Follow the path past a sewage works to a gate. Then follow the right side of the next two fields to a gate in the corner of the second field. Go through this onto a tarmac path to arrive at Tetsworth Green.

13. At the main road (A40) turn left, and follow it through Tetsworth for almost a mile along the tarmac footpath (Linking Route 2b joins on a rise after 1/4 mile). Then, about 400 yards after passing the road to Adwell, lookout for a footpath sign on the left. (NB. The next section currently contains two difficult and unsafe stiles. These should be avoided until they are replaced. Therefore continue along the A40 and take the next minor road on the left signed "Thame". Follow this to a T-junction and turn left again to regain the route near a tollhouse. Cross the road to take the footpath about 50 yards on the right and continue from point 15).

14. Once the stiles are replaced take the footpath through a gate and over a footbridge to another gate. Through this and turn right, with a white fence on the left. As the white fence turns left, continue ahead heading slightly to the left side of a field containing horse jumps, etc. With some difficulty find a stile and waymark sign in the left corner of this field. Cross this stile and follow the left side of the next field, in the general direction of a pylon, to a gate. Cross the access road to a further gate to follow the left side of a field, passing the pylon, to a stile in the corner. Cross the stile and footbridge to a road near to a tollhouse. Cross the road and turn left for about 15 yards to a footpath on the right.

15. Cross the footbridge and stile, keeping to the left side of the field. Turn right with the hedge and when it turns left go diagonally right towards two field gates. Go through the left gate. Keeping the line of pylons to the left, go slightly diagonally left to reach the top right corner of the field. Cross a stile/footbridge/stile into another field. Then go diagonally right uphill towards a red brick house to reach a gate, with a waymark, leading onto a farm road.

16. Turn left and follow the concrete road through the farm. 110 yards beyond a (usually open) field gate go over a half mile on the left by a footpath sign. Follow the grassy path to the right between fences to an apparent wire fence across the path. Lift a hook of wire off a fencepost on the left to swing the obstruction aside, remembering to replace it once you are through. Go straight ahead passing a large tree to a gap in the

22. Go straight across to follow the sign to Towersey to reach a minor road. Then left for 400 yards to the Towersey village crossroads. Turn right here and then fork right by a sign "Unsuitable for Motors". Almost immediately fork right again to follow the sign "Bridleway Kingsey 1". Follow this bridleway for about a mile, ignoring paths to left and right, to reach a main road. Turn right for a short distance along a gravelled path, then cross the road to follow the side road, signposted "Haddenham 3".

23. Just past a letter box on the right turn left onto a track in front of Blossom Lodge. After a short way reach a minor road. Turn left and almost immediately right through a gate. Then turn left to follow the left side of a field. As the fence bears left continue straight ahead across the field. On reaching the far side of the field (Linking Route 4 joins here) go straight ahead following the path into the trees. Go over a footbridge and through a kissing gate to follow a clear path across a field to reach a gap in the hedge and a gate.

24. Go through this and turn right to go along the right side of the field to a corner. Turn right through a gate by a cattle grid then bear left to go under a railway bridge. Immediately after the bridge bear diagonally left across a small field to a gate into an enclosed path that passes some Wychert walls to reach a minor road. Continue to the right up the road to reach Haddenham Green with its duck pond and church.

hedge. Continue in the same direction and, about 120 yards after passing a pylon, look for a gap in the hedge on the right.

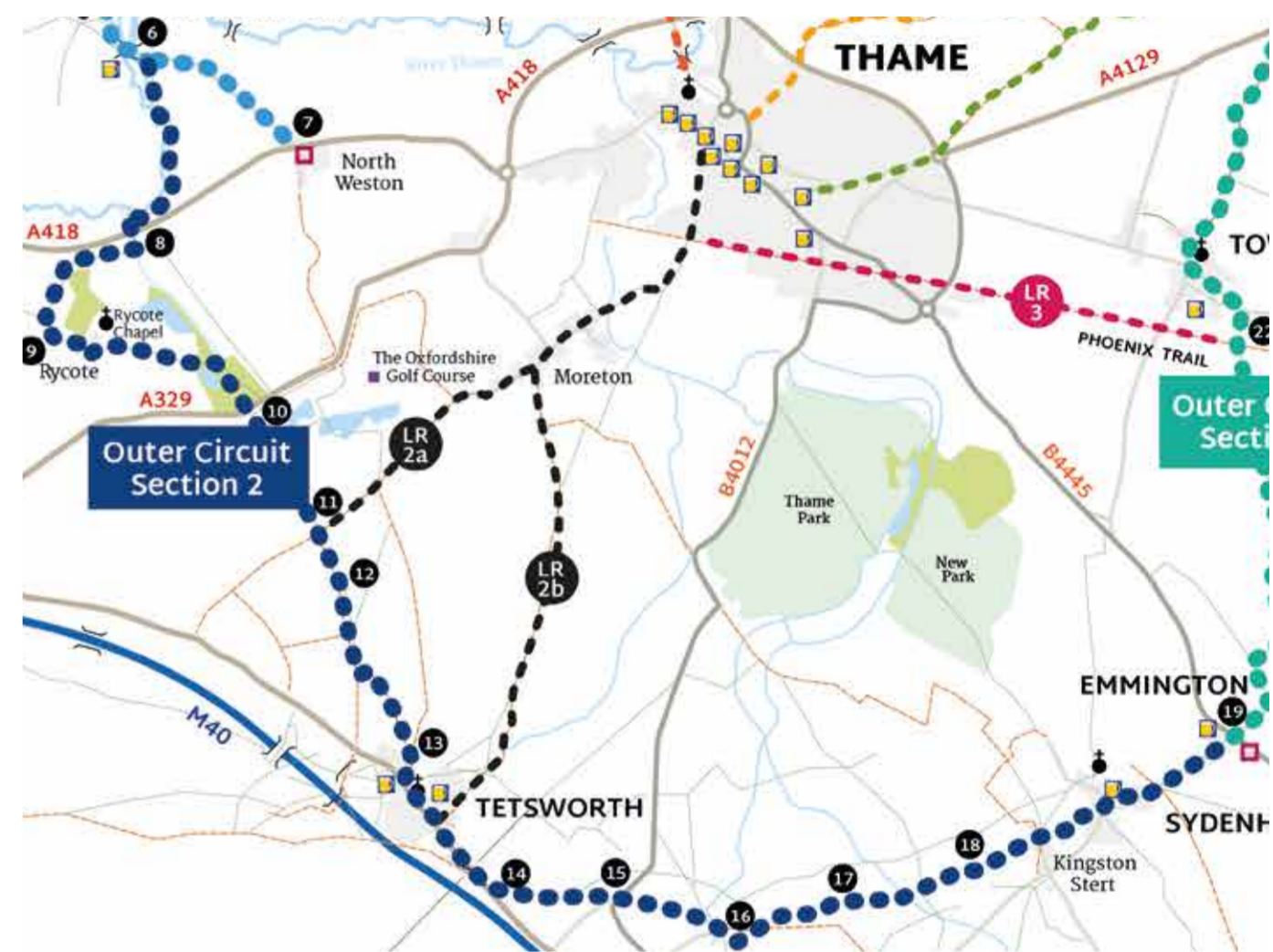
17. Go through the gap and head across the field under the power lines to a waymarked stile about midway along the far hedge. Then through a metal gate and follow the right side of the next field to a gap in the corner. Go straight on, slowly leaving the hedge on the right to reach a metal gate and footbridge. Cross this, and go half right for 50 yards to another metal gate. Then straight on towards the far right corner of the next field. Cross the stile a little to the left of the corner.

18. Bear slightly right across the next very large field towards the corner of a far hedge coming in from the right to a (broken) waymark post. Continue ahead with the hedge now on your right to the top right corner of the field. Cross the footbridge and stile and over the next field to another stile. Go straight on through a clear gap and continue past allotments on the left. Then turn left to follow the waymark to a stone footbridge and

gate. Go along the right side of the next field to a gate and a road. Turn left and follow the road through Sydenham village to the main Thame-Chinnor road half a mile further on. Turn left to the bus stop at Emmington to catch the no.40 bus back to Thame. (Note this is an hourly service).



Rycote Wood



25. Turn left and left again to follow the road through a residential area, passing Wychert walls on both sides. After the road leaves the houses and crosses a bridge over the railway, go through a gate on the right, close to a derestricted road sign, to follow a permissive path parallel to the railway. At the end of this path cross the busy road to the path opposite to Haddenham and Thame Parkway station.

It is possible to take a 280 bus from here to Thame.



Crossing the Phoenix Trail near Towersey

