

The Oak & Saw Village Inn Pub Walk

A lovely walk through the picturesque village of Taplow and along the Jubilee and Thames riverside.

Walk Details

Time: 1½-2 hours

Distance: 4.5 miles

Level/grade: Easy

Paths: Roads, Footpaths and towpaths

Landscape: Riverside and countryside

Rectory Road, SAT NAV: SL60ET



Starting your pub walk: Walkers using the pub for lunch are welcome to park in the pub car park, otherwise there is a public free car park next to the village school and street parking outside the church.

It is recommended that large numbers (8 or more people) dining with us pre-order their menu items before departing on the walk so they will be ready upon your return. This can be done by choosing from the menu on the day or from our menus on our web site www.oakandsaw.co.uk

Get your walking boots on and let's get going!

Opposite the pub is the village green and St Nicolas' Church. The church is in Gothic style, dating from 1912, and is distinguished by its tall spire. Anthony McPartlin OBE (of **Ant & Dec** fame) got married here just a few years ago. Dec, Ant and wife to be, Lisa, visited the pub on several occasions planning the big day!

With your back to the pub turn left and walk up Rectory Road past the Old Rectory with its collection of painted wheel covers on the gates, past Cedar Chase on the left which won an award for Best Residential Development in 1966 when it was built by Span Estates. Continue on up to the T-junction at Berry Hill and on the right is Hill House where there is a plaque commemorating one of its residents, Anthony Read, until his death in 2015. Tony was an author, TV screenwriter & producer. Works included Dr Who, The Professionals, Sapphire & Steel, The Baker Street Boys and the Hammer House of Horrors series. At this junction it's worth turning right and walking 20 yards to the entrance of **Taplow Court**.



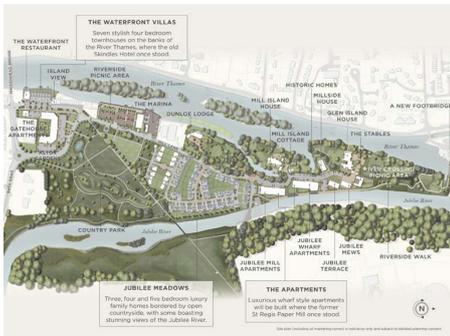
Taplow Court, a mid 19th century mansion set high above the Thames near Maidenhead, is the home of SGI-UK, a lay Buddhist society. The Taplow site has a long history of continuous human habitation. In the Iron Age a massive hillfort covered the site and the famous 7th century Anglo-Saxon burial mound can still be seen in the garden. There has been a manor house here since before 1066 and at the turn of the 19th/20th centuries, the great sportsman, William Henry Grenfell hosted gatherings of the elite, aristocratic social group, 'the Souls', here. After the Second World War, Taplow Court was owned by British Telecommunications Research and Plessey Electronics.



Now turn around and walk back down Berry Hill, past Saxon Gardens, and then turn right along Mill Lane (this lane has recently been closed off to traffic against the wishes of the majority of Taplow residents, but you can still walk along it). Just past the last house on the right the road narrows and there is a footpath forking off to the left, across and down a field. Go down here, heading towards the **Jubilee River**



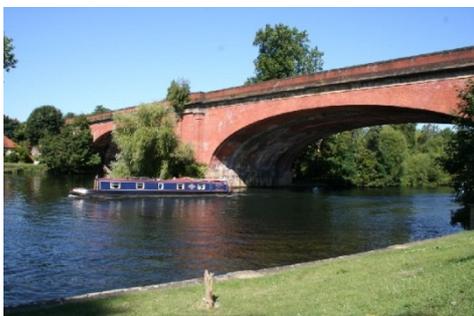
Formally known as the Maidenhead, Windsor and Eton Flood Alleviation Scheme, the **Jubilee River** was created to reduce flooding at a cost of £110 million. The choice of a name for the river was put to the local population in a poll, the result was a strong preference for 'Jubilee', as it was being completed in Queen Elizabeth's Golden Jubilee year of 2002. The river is well used by walkers, runners, swimmers, wildlife enthusiasts and cyclists: a footpath runs along virtually its entire length. A wide variety of bird life can be seen along the river, including green woodpeckers, cormorants, lapwing and red kites.



Cross over the footbridge and you're now on a footpath crossing the new development by Berkeley Homes, named **Taplow Riverside**, a complex of very expensive homes and apartments. There will be over 200 new dwellings released from February 2017, plus a Waterfront Restaurant, where the old **Skindles Hotel** once stood. The majority of this new development has been constructed on the former St Regis Paper Mill and should be a major improvement to the river area once completed. The footpath will lead you to re-join Mill Lane.



Turn left at Mill Lane and follow it, taking the right fork in the road, towards the Bath Road and Maidenhead Bridge. Just before the Bridge, you'll see a Thames Path sign which leads you right through a small, run down boatyard and under the first arch of **Maidenhead Bridge**. There has been a bridge across the Thames here since the 12th century but the present magnificent Georgian crossing was completed in 1777. On the other side the path passes in front of Maidenhead rowing club then immediately after this building you turn left and walk through the car park and onto the road.



Turn right and walk along River Road and you'll see the magnificent **Brunel's Bridge** ahead of you, which was designed by Isambard Kingdom Brunel, engineer for the Great Western Railway. The railway from London to the West is carried across the River Thames on two brick arches, and the bridge was the widest and flattest in the world. Each span is 128 feet (39 m), with a rise of only 24 feet (7 m). The Thames Path passes under the bridge, also known as the Sounding Arch because of its spectacular echo. TRY IT!

Continue along River road with the Thames on your right and some nice houses on your left, past a gate where the road turns into a gravel path. Follow the path (FP17) left between the last two houses and continue past the stables on your right, up to the trees. Continue on this footpath for 500 meters as it bends right, then left past Barge Farm and then turn left on to a track (Amerden Lane).



Follow the track alongside the **Jubilee River**, cross over the bridge and bear left past the boating and skiing lakes, under the railway bridge to the crossroads of the busy A4 Bath Road. Cross over the road and go straight up Berry Hill opposite, keeping to the pavement on the right. Just past the end of the sports field, pass through the kissing gate on your right (FP10) taking the footpath up between the trees, up to the top corner of the field (Berry Hill Farm is on your left).



Go through the kissing gate and up the path between the fence on your left and the hedge on your right. At the end you pass through another gate, then take the path 45 degrees right with the green spire of St Nicolas' church in the distance. Cross the field to where you'll find another kissing gate. Go through this and just a few meters along this path you'll find the entrance to the recently rejuvenated "Old Priory Garden". A number of local residents give up their spare time clearing this wonderful old garden making these hidden delights available to all, it's well worth a quick look around.

Re-join the path leading back up to the church and pub on Rectory road and join us in the **Oak & Saw** for some great home made food and a glass of well deserved cheer!

