North Wessex Downs AONB

The North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) includes some of England’s finest and most ancient landscapes - from chalk downland and river valleys to arable farmland, ancient woodland and world-famous historic sites. The AONB is ideal for walkers, cyclists and riders to enjoy panoramic views along open chalk escarpments, as well as rights of way through woodland and alongside rivers and parts of the Kennet and Avon Canal. Visitors can follow routes that include the Ridgeway National Trail, the White Horse Trail and the Wayfarer’s Walk, taking in attractive rural towns and villages that offer opportunities to enjoy local produce and hospitality. For further information about the North Wessex Downs AONB, please visit www.northwessexdowns.org.uk

This is part of a series of walks in the North Wessex Downs AONB that can be accessed by public bus from Swindon.

Transport options

Thamesdown 46, 46A, 48 (no service on Sundays and Bank Holidays)
For start of walk, alight at the bus stop just south of the road bridge over the M4 motorway. Ask the driver for Foxhill turn.
For the return bus journey, board at the Aldbourne Pond bus stop.

OS Maps: Explorer 157 & 170
Start point grid reference: SU 218804

Refreshments:
Aldbourne: pubs and shops, including a Co-op store

The Countryside Code

- Be safe, plan ahead and follow any signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants and animals and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under control
- Consider other people

For further information contact:
S. R. Cassell, Voluntary Project Manager
Swindon Bus Rambles
Email: info@heritagewalks.org.uk

LIDDINGTON HILL TO ALDBOURNE
(Linear)

Near Sugar Hill
Near Liddington Hill

5 miles/8 km
Suitable for all walkers
No stiles
Mostly flat
Walk directions

1. Travelling from Swindon, alight from the bus at the stop just south of Liddington and the road bridge over the M4 Motorway. This stop is below Liddington Hill (on your right).

2. Cross the minor road ahead (signed Baydon, Bishopstone and Hinton Parva). Keeping the main (Swindon to Aldbourne) road on your right, go through a gate on your left (about 20 yards from the road junction) waymarked Aldbourne Circular Route.

3. Follow this waymarked route around the edge of a field. Go through a gate, and continue until reaching another gate. Go through this and immediately turn left.

4. At a junction of paths ahead, close to a woodland, turn right along a bridleway. Follow this waymarked route for about 3 miles, eventually to emerge at a lane with houses.

5. Turn right to reach the village of Aldbourne.

Points of interest

The Ridgeway

Thought to be Britain’s oldest road, this byway is an ancient chalk ridge route used by prehistoric man. It stretches 87 miles from Overton Hill, just south of Avebury, to Ivinghoe Beacon in Buckinghamshire.

Sugar Hill

This hill probably gets its name from ‘Segur’ the name of a local 12th century landowner.

Four Barrows

This is a Bronze age cemetery dating from between 2500 - 1500 BC.

The contents of these barrows (burial mounds) are now in the British Museum and the Wiltshire Heritage Museum (Devizes). These include three skeletons, a bronze dagger, an incense cup and an awl.

Aldbourne

Mentioned in the Domesday Book (1086) the village of Aldbourne has a history going back over 1000 years. Agriculture has remained an important industry over the centuries. Other industries in the village have included textile-weaving, chair-making and the manufacture of bells.