

**HIDDEN HERITAGE: WALK 4 - WATERWAYS**

*This walk follows Oxford's watercourses and takes you through open spaces and quiet residential streets which not long ago echoed to the sound of railways and industry.*

1

- Walk begins at **Folly Bridge** (OX1 1SW) over the Thames (at the junction of St Aldate's and Abingdon Road)
- From the west side of the bridge (by the pedestrian crossing), walk down the ramp onto the **Thames Path** on the south side of the river
- Walk westwards along the towpath
- Continue past a blue and white Over Footbridge with long ramps until you reach a much more substantial white and black bridge with steel lattice sides

2

- Cross the river here
- From the bridge, you can see the fork in the river (the Castle Mill Stream to the right, and the Thames to the left)
- You are going to walk alongside the **Castle Mill Stream**, and later you will reach the point where both branches of the river merge again

3

- After crossing the river, walk down the curving ramp
- Turn right onto the signed **Mill Stream Walk** to continue along the Castle Mill Stream in the same direction as before (following the northward bend of the river)
- Proceed along Mill Stream Walk until you come to **Oxpens Road**

4

- Cross Oxpens Road at the light-controlled crossing on the west side of the stream
- Keep left of **Westgate** car park, and follow the path towards City Centre
- Proceed along beside the stream, crossing it via the Swallow Gates footbridge (so that the stream is on your right-hand side)

5

- Walk along **Woodins Way** to where it joins Paradise Street
- Continue northwards in **Paradise Street** and cross beside Quaking Bridge into **Fisher Row**
- Cross over and continue along the pedestrian path beside the stream
- At the path end, climb the **seven steps** up to **Park End Street**

6

- Cross Park End Street with care (the nearest controlled pedestrian crossing is to your right)
- Descend **seven steps** to continue along the path beside the stream

*On the east side of the stream is a car park which was once a hive of industry, being the former basin at the end of the Oxford Canal.*

7

- The path ends with a climb of **ten steps** to **Hythe Bridge Street**
- Cross over and turn to the right (ignoring Upper Fisher Row straight ahead)
- Walk **20 metres** along Hythe Bridge Street
- Immediately after crossing the stream, turn left onto the footpath that will take you northwards along the **Oxford Canal Towpath** (between the stream on your left and the canal on your right)

*On your right is a monument celebrating the 200th anniversary of the canal.*

8

- Walk north along the canal towpath (passing the residential moorings)
- The canal boat residences end just before **Isis Lock** (the interchange point between the canal and the Castle Mill Stream)

*When the canal first reached Oxford in 1790, it terminated in the basin on the south side of Hythe Bridge Street. The canal became an important part of the route between the Midlands and London via the Thames.*

9

- Walk over the fine iron bridge that crosses the lock to the path on the west side of the canal
- Make a brief diversion here, doubling back across the narrow steel footbridge across the Castle Mill Stream, and along the footpath for approximately **100 metres**, to Rewley Road
- Cross **Rewley Road** and look over the parapet of the bridge on which you are standing
- Ahead, you will see the rail bridge over the stream
- On the north side of the stream (below the rail bridge) is all that remains of the rail link that once brought the London and North Western Railway into its own Oxford station (where the **Saïd Business School** now stands)

*What you see here is the swing bridge that carried the railway across the once busy stream, which Oxford Preservation Trust is going to restore.*

10

- Return to the canal path beside the lock and proceed north

11

- If you wish, cross the canal north of **St Barnabas** by means of the pedestrian footbridge
- Turn right and walk south with the Whitworth House apartment building to your right, along **Canal Street**, past the **Old Bookbinders** pub on your left and view **St Barnabas Church**

12

- Retrace your steps to the canal path and walk north
- To your left and right are the developments that have taken place on the former **Lucy's Ironworks** (the Lucy's building was demolished in 2006)

13

- Walk north along the canal
- Ascend the ramp to the first road bridge that you come to (which is **Walton Well Road**)
- To the west, the road climbs over the railway bridge to **Port Meadow** (an ancient meadow beside the Thames, extending north as far as the village of **Wolvercote**)

14

- If you wish to visit the cemetery of **St Sepulchre** before returning to the canal, you can cross over the canal and walk east along Walton Well Road
- At the junction with **Longworth Road**, you can see the **Walton Well** built into the front garden boundary wall of a house

15

- Continue along Walton Well Road to its junction with **Walton Street**
- Turn right along Walton Street
- Next to number **78** on your right, you will find a gateway giving access to the cemetery

16

- To proceed with the walk, return by the way you came to Walton Well Road and the bridge over the canal

17

- At this point, walk north along **Rutherway** (west of the canal) to **Merrivale Square**
- Walk around Merrivale Square and continue north along the easternmost of **Plater Drive's** two arms

18

- At the northern limits of Plater Drive, walk through between numbers **39** and **41**
- Turn right and walk along **Navigation Way**, with Aristotle Lane Recreation Ground on your right
- Cross the canal bridge to meet **Hayfield Road** (opposite The Anchor pub)

19

- Turn left along Hayfield Road between the distinctive terraces
- At the junction with **Frenchay Road**, turn left and walk to the top of the bridge over the canal
- From here, the **Trap Grounds** nature reserve is to the left
- You can choose to walk back into the city along the canal path **OR** by walking east along Frenchay Road (crossing Hayfield Road) to reach **Woodstock Road** and bus services

**END OF SELF-GUIDED WALK**

Share your discoveries with us @OxfordPresTrust on Twitter! Love Oxford? Find out how you can support Oxford Preservation Trust by visiting the website: [www.oxfordpreservation.org.uk](http://www.oxfordpreservation.org.uk).



**CAN YOU SPOT ANY OF THESE ON YOUR WALK?**

ILLUSTRATIONS BY EDITH GOLLNAST FROM OXFORD HERITAGE WALKS (BOOKS 4 & 6)

