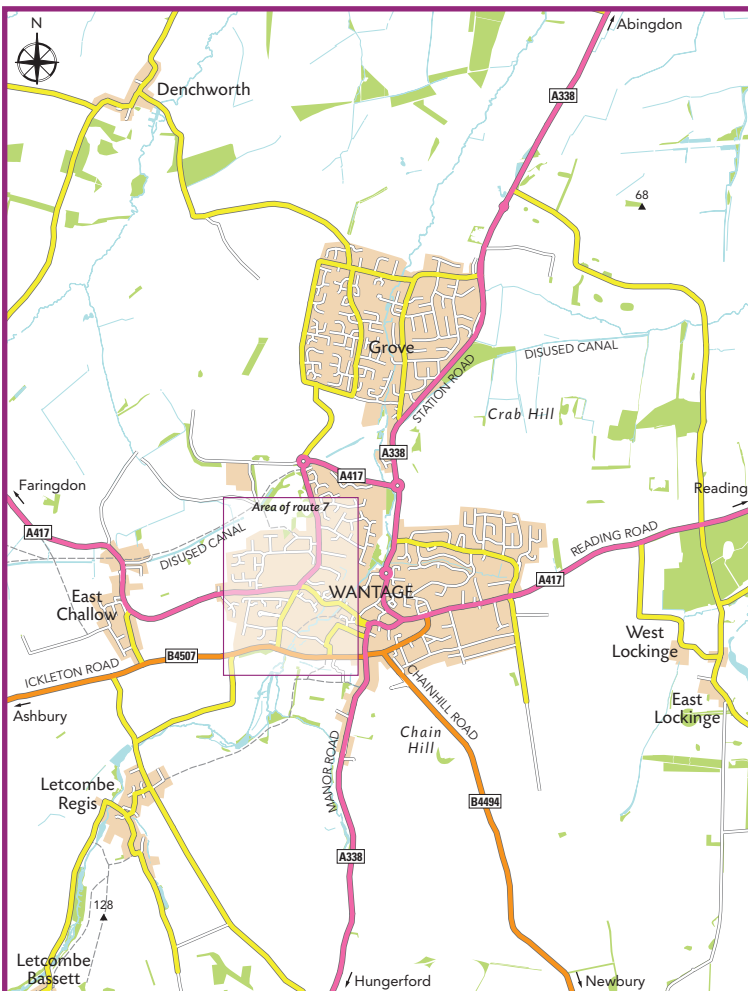


## WANTAGE AREA WALKS & CYCLE ROUTES



### Route 7 - Stockham Walk



The ancient market town of Wantage sits on the Letcombe Brook, at the foot of the Berkshire Downs. The town is characterised by 16th century timber framed houses refaced in the late 18th and early 19th centuries in red brick. In 1847 Wantage became an educational and spiritual centre for the Oxford Movement, and the vicar of the parish church, Rev William Butler, was responsible for several fine buildings in the town centre.

This walk begins at the Vale and Downland Museum, well worth a visit in its own right. The building, a 17th century merchant's house, contains permanent local history galleries including interactive media and films, temporary exhibition areas, a Tourist Information Centre, a shop and an excellent café for lunches, snacks, drinks and home-made cakes – just the thing to fuel your walk or reward you afterwards! Do check opening hours before you go.

Vale & Downland Museum



Time 1 hour

**1** From the Museum, turn left on to Church Street (the thirteenth century parish church of SS Peter and Paul is opposite), cross the street



Parish Church

and bear right round the churchyard wall, and then left, past Old Church House, to turn into Betjeman Lane, which leads down to the Letcombe Brook past 'these old brick garden



Betjeman Lane

walls' mentioned in one of John Betjeman's poems. Cross the Brook by the iron bridge and enter the Betjeman Millennium Park, pausing to read the boards explaining Betjeman's link with Wantage and the beautifully carved extracts from his poems, strategically placed by the paths.

**3** Cross the road and go up the alley opposite and a little to the right, Marns Hey (named after the late Joe Marns, a local folk-dancer and Icknield Way Morris man). Follow it to the right until it reaches Stockham Way.

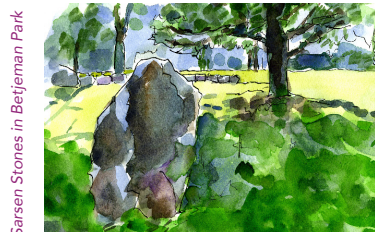
**4** Cross the road, turn left, and after 30 yards turn right, between the houses on to a footpath leading to an open field and play area. Cross it diagonally towards the opposite left corner to exit by another narrow footpath to Wasbrough Avenue. Cross the road with care, and pass between the houses opposite to take the public footpath (marked as such on the open gate) towards Stockham House and Farm. Bear left and follow the footpath beside a children's play area and then the houses of the Stockham estate on your left, and fields on your right. At the end follow the path as it turns left (past the allotments to the right) into Saxon Place.



Stockham allotments

**5** Cross the road and walk right for about 20 yards, then left into Hiskins. Walk up the road to go through a cycle barrier on your left which leads through a footpath to Segsbury Road. Follow Segsbury Road to another cycle barrier and a footpath towards Challow Road.

*fold line - non-printing*



Sarsen Stones in Betjeman Park

**2** Follow the main path either to right or left of the open-air auditorium to exit through the car-park of The Lamb pub. Cross the road and



The Lamb public house

turn left and then right by the row of houses into Rolls Court. Follow the road through cycle barriers into the Belmont footpath; turn left and go up Belmont footpath to Denchworth Road.



Belmont footpath

**6** Walk a little way to the right and cross Challow Road at the lights and turn down Grosvenor Terrace, following it to a crossroads with Framlands Close on the left. Turn right along Naldertown (signposted further along) towards Hamfield. Follow Hamfield left till you reach Ham Road. On your right you will see a 'No Parking' sign harking back to the days when Wantage was in Berkshire.



Locks Lane

**7** Cross the road and go straight on down Locks Lane; on the left you pass the recently restored Alfred's Well. Take a minute to read the information board and then enter the area and follow the path over a footbridge to regain Locks Lane.

**8** At the bottom, cross the Letcombe Brook by the footbridge and follow Locks Lane uphill to turn left on to Priory Road, once Tanner Street: a row of former tanners' cottages on the left is now marked by a blue plaque.

**9** Opposite you at the end of Priory Road is the Church, marking the corner of Church Street; just as you turn back into Church Street, on your right, is a house called The Priory, also marked by a blue plaque commemorating the birth of Bishop Joseph Butler in 1692. Walk along Church Street to return to the Museum.

Produced thanks to funds provided by SEEDA and Oxfordshire County Council through Oxfordshire Rural Community Council

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Further copies of this route and others in the series are available from the Independent Advice Centre, Market Square, Wantage