



Retrace your steps, go left and continue until reaching a kissing gate. Now go $\frac{1}{4}$ left under telegraph wires through a gate and on to a kissing gate at the bottom of the field. You are now on the 2500 acre / 1000 ha Wormsley Estate, a bucolic heaven where Red Kites fly and deer roam, bought in 1986 by the immensely rich philanthropist and cricket lover, the late Sir Paul Getty.



Once extinct in England and Scotland, the first site where Red Kites were intended to be released was Windsor Great Park. However, in 1989 the project ran into difficulties and Getty offered Wormsley Park as an alternative. Since then they have flourished over a large portion of the Chilterns.

Turn left onto the lane (L29) and, at Lower Vicar's Farm, go right, through a gate onto L23. The path goes behind the farm to a gate where you go $\frac{1}{2}$ left across a field studded with cowslips in the spring. Cross the next stile or go through a 5bar gate and continue $\frac{1}{2}$ left, climbing steeply to a bridleway (L19) and turn right.

After just over $\frac{1}{2}$ mile / 900 mtrs, you will reach a lane and go right. Ignore a bridleway on the left and then a signpost for 'Wormsley'. Once past the 'big' house, that is just visible on your right, the lane will bear right to a little bit of south London in the Chilterns (3).

For Getty was so enamoured with cricket, after Mick Jagger introduced him to the game, that he built his own ground based on the Oval in 1992.



You can't follow the lane up to the ground, you must bear left on the bridleway that now becomes a track. Once past the ground, keep to the wire fence on the left. Ignore a bridleway that goes straight uphill between two metal 5bar gates and enters woodland. Look out for and take another distinct narrow path just a little further on to the right of a wire fence.

You will reach a crossing path after 650 yds / 600 mtrs, next to two metal 5bar gates, that is the Chiltern Way. Here turn right and go $\frac{1}{4}$ left over the field to a kissing gate. Go over the lane to another kissing gate and $\frac{1}{2}$ left to a further one next to a 5bar gate.



Turn right onto the lane and quickly left before you reach a warning sign of the 'Keep Out' variety. The Chiltern Way shortly goes left but you must keep on SH4. This clear path passes a stone urn and then winds through Blackmoor Wood. Ignore a crossing track and continue uphill to path SH6 that goes left and that you also ignore. You now have a long climb (900 yds / 823 mtrs) to meet SH5. Here bear right keeping on SH4 for a short distance before forking left onto PY3 until you reach a driveway.

Turn left past a tennis court and go in front of a house to a wire fence where you turn right. The path bears left and reaches a road. Here go $\frac{1}{2}$ left towards Nettlebed and Henley, and forward to the Fox & Hounds (PH). Described by CAMRA as having a rare interior of outstanding historic interest, the pub probably hasn't changed much since the Civil War's opposing armies allegedly observed a truce on the common on Christmas Day in 1643.

When you leave the pub, turn left, returning to the crossroads in the direction of Stokenchurch and Chinnor. Continue and just past a second crossroads turn left onto the Oxfordshire Way.



Walk along the edge of the field with the hedge on your left.

After a field boundary, you ignore a path off to the left, and then bear $\frac{1}{2}$ right into trees. Go through a kissing gate and then left, continuing on the Oxfordshire Way (PY4). You will reach a tarmac drive passing the Pyrtan Cat Hotel and then a sawmill. This is Point A.

Shorter Walk from Point A

For the shorter walk, go right onto PY16 just past the sawmill. Don't deviate from this path until reaching and going through a wooden gate next to a metal 5bar gate. The path bears left as SH3. You follow field edges until reaching a metal gate and then go $\frac{1}{2}$ right up a daunting hill. Eventually reaching a kissing gate, continue up to a track, over a stile and $\frac{1}{4}$ right over a field to the lane back to Cowleaze Wood.



To complete the longer walk keep on the drive and turn right onto The Ridgeway that crosses after a further 475 yds / 435 mtrs. Walk along the track for just over 1¼ mls / 2.82 kms going beneath a row of telegraph wires. Ignore one path going right, keep on until reaching a lane just before the M40.

Here turn right and just after Hill Farm bear left through a kissing gate onto path L14.

This is Aston Rowant National Nature Reserve that covers 400 acres / 162 ha and is composed of flower rich chalk grassland, woodland and juniper scrub. Follow the path uphill along the field edge, through another kissing gate. There are small plaques along the way explaining the scarce flora and fauna, and benches allow you to enjoy marvellous views.



After reaching a 5bar gate, go sharp right along an unused lane passing to the right of picnic benches and by an information sign emporing you to listen out to the local birdsong. At the end of the lane, cross over the road back to the Cowleaze Wood car park.

Starting Point: Cowleaze Wood Car Park Entrance

SU725956

Explorer Map 171

Chiltern Hills West

Length:

Long Walk: 9 miles / 14.42 kilometres

Shorter Walk: 7¼ miles / 11.73 kilometres

Terrain:

A full of interest walk along clear well marked paths but with several long steep inclines.