

TRING GRAND TOUR (SOUTH)

This itinerary takes in some surprisingly remote places amidst classic Chiltern scenery, from Tring Park along the Ridgeway to Wendover Woods and Wendover town, returning via the canal arm at the foot of the hills. It can be combined with Grand Tour (North) to make a long and challenging circular route.

Main route is around 13 miles long – various alternatives are suggested to extend the walk.

1. The Route starts in Tring Town Centre

From the town centre, head for the Natural History Museum, turn left into Park Street and

2. Right at the house where a path points towards 'Tring Park'



and enter Tring Park via the footbridge.

3. Walk up the avenue of lime trees, going straight ahead.

4. Bear left up the hill on the 'Woodland Walk'

5. Turn right onto the Ridgeway Path. Follow that.

6. Upon meeting the road, turn left and then right into Church Lane through Hastoe

and continuing along the ridge through Pavis Wood



7. You reach the twisty lane known as The Crong.



In the valley below you is Dancer's End Waterworks with its pumping station of 1864, whose original steam engine is preserved at the Kew Bridge museum. The chalk pits provided the lime needed for purification.

Here you have a choice of routes. For the shorter one, cross the road and continue through Black Wood.



For the longer route jump to waypoint 12.

8. Go briefly left at South Park House,



Cross the road and bear right;



9. Cross the field diagonally to the right towards a gate.



Follow path ahead and you soon reach a lane – this is the car path for the woods. Cross this lane and bear right.

There are many paths through Wendover Woods. There is a large car park, café and many activities for children. Heading left, downhill before the café will bring you out of the woods, beside a house at The Hale.

10. Turn right along Hale Lane



Or, you might pass the café and follow the marked path through Halton Wood to Boddington Hill, topped by an ancient hillfort, before dropping to the road to Wendover you may come out to Hale Lane a little closer to Wendover

11. Turn right onto Hale Lane.



There are other exits from the woods into Wendover, whichever way you choose, head for the clock tower in Wendover.

12. **LONGER ROUTE** - From The Crong, for the longer route go left past the radio mast and cross the road to the right and follow the Ridgeway signs through the farmyard, over the fields.



13. Cross another road near Hengrove, a particularly fine country house of 1910.



Entering the forest, continue on the Ridgeway, bearing left to cross Hale lane. Turn Right:



Then turn left



Continue through Hale Wood and Barn Wood, which brings you eventually to Hogtrough Lane. Note that this is the site of the planned HS2, so the development of this line may affect this route.

Continue to the cross roads and cross into Church Lane.



Proceed to St Mary's Church. Here is the beginning of the spring-fed stream that becomes the Wendover arm of the canal. Follow the signs to the town centre.

You might wish to avail yourself of the many facilities of the old town of Wendover.

14. From the clock tower take the Aylesbury Road and turn right along Wharf Road to the point where the canal begins.
15. Turn left onto the towpath.



The water flow here has been measured since 1841, one of the oldest continuous environmental records anywhere.



Take the secluded towpath to Halton, an estate village with pretty 19th century cottages; note the cast-iron bridge with its ornate Rothschild monogram. In 1914 Alfred de Rothschild put his park at the disposal of the military, which built a huge tented camp where Kitchener's Fourth Army was assembled. It later became one of Britain's first RAF bases and Halton House is now its Officers' Mess.

Continue past Green Park, Aston Clinton (the now-demolished mansion was yet another seat of the Rothschild family) to Buckland Wharf where you cross the old A41 and follow the gently flowing stream.

At Drayton Beauchamp (well worth a detour to view the church) the canal used to come to an abrupt end; leakage meant that it was closed to traffic in 1904, the flow of water being piped to the reservoirs. There were fears that the new A41 would obliterate the canal but the Ministry was persuaded to build a bridge, complete with a new section of waterway so that sufficient headroom would exist. The name Saxon Bridge refers to the burial of a wealthy Saxon lady, found at the top of Tring Hill; there is no evidence, however, that she was a princess.

16. To conclude this itinerary, leave the canal at Drayton bridge and walk up the lane to Tring Hill roundabout.



17. Cross the roundabout and follow Aylesbury road back to the town.

If you wish to combine the two parts of the Grand Tour, connecting with the Grand Tour (North) continue along the canal towpath.



What was a dry canal bed between here and Little Tring is being progressively renovated by the Wendover Arm Trust. Once complete, the walker will be able to follow the canal, but for now:

Continue along the canal until the path reaches a point where the renovation works block the path:



Go a little further and past the gate onto Little Tring Road:



Turn right and follow the road up the hill to join the canal again, by turning left onto the towpath just past Waypoint 18

18. To extend the walk, a very enjoyable detour is to circle Tringford Reservoir. Just after joining Little Tring Road, you will see a left turn towards the pumping station:



Turn left left along the path around Tringford Reservoir



and then Startops Reservoir. From the Angler's Retreat Pub, turn east along the main Grand Union Canal. This takes you through one of the most interesting sections of the canal, rising up the Marsworth flight to Bulbourne top lock,



where the Wendover arm joins the main canal. Between here and the Grand Junction Arms is an interesting range of waterways architecture, including the workshops where lock gates were made.

19. Continue along the Canal - Leaving the canal at Marshcroft Lane, turning left and joining the Grand Tour (North) at Waypoint 5

To return to Tring, turn right along Marshcroft Lane, returning to Tring via Chiltern Way and Mortimer Hill.