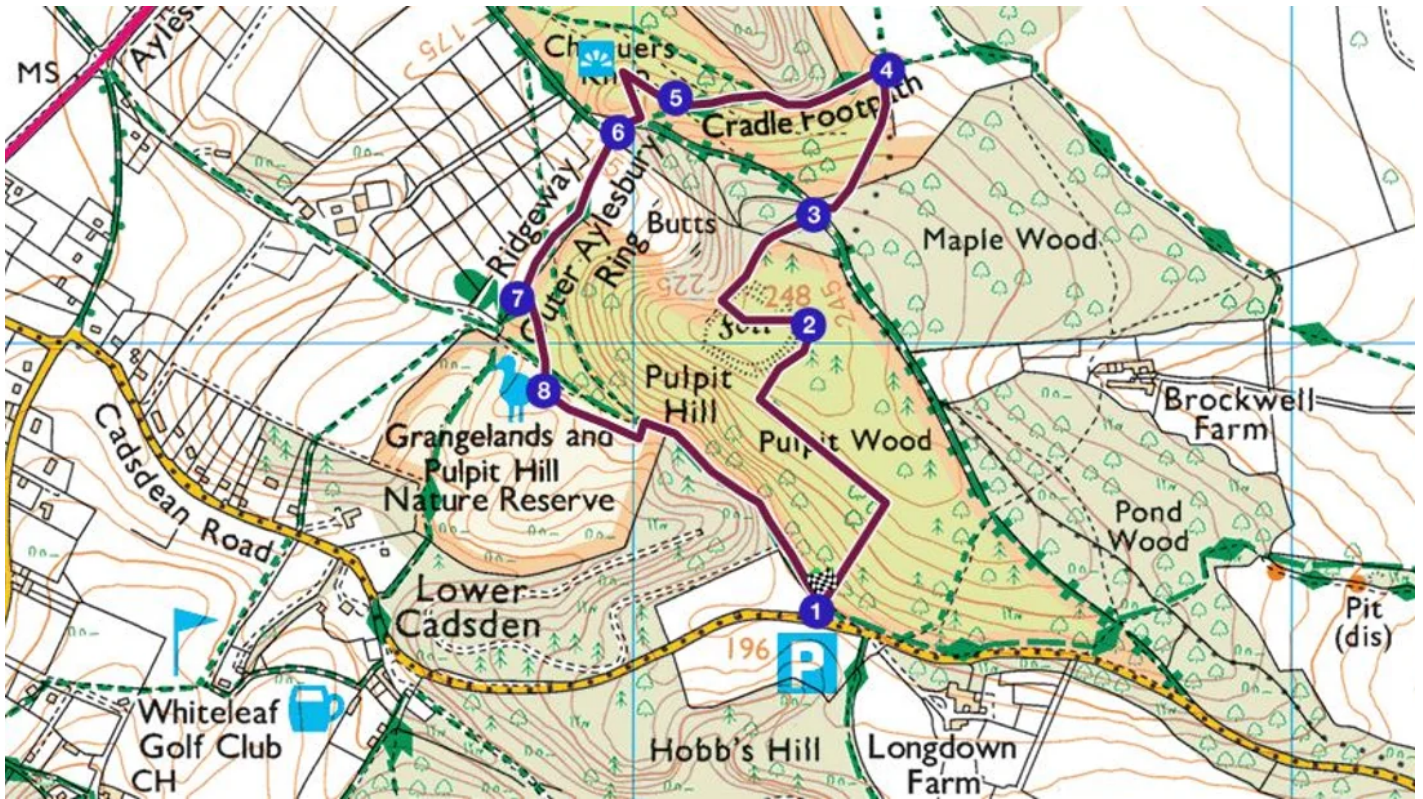


OXFORDSHIRE, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE & BERKSHIRE

Pulpit Hill fort and nature reserves circular walk

This short walk offers panoramic views across the Chiltern Escarpment and Aylesbury Vale, as well as the chance to explore a hidden Iron Age hillfort, beautiful beech woods and the Grangelds and Rifle Butts Nature Reserve.



Information

Address: Pulpit Hill car park, Longdown Hill, Princes Risborough, Buckinghamshire, HP27 0NB

OS map: Explorer 181

Activity: Walking

Moderate: Mostly soft footpaths and woodland tracks. For further details, see Terrain section.

Dog friendly: Dogs are welcome but must be kept on a lead as sheep and cattle graze on several parts of the route.

Full trail: Miles: 1.6 (km: 2.56)

Short trail: Miles: 1.3 (km: 2.08)

Access: Challenging

Duration: 1 hour

Terrain

The route is entirely off-road on soft footpaths and woodland tracks. There is one steep climb at the beginning of the walk and one gentle descent. Some paths can become muddy and slippery after heavy rain. Stout walking shoes or boots are strongly recommended.

Please note that part of the route from Step 3 onwards is not on National Trust land. Therefore, the National Trust does not check for hazards on these sections of the walk and walkers follow this route at their own risk.

Total steps: 8

Start point: Pulpit Hill car park, grid ref SP832045

1. With your back to the road, head towards the far left corner of the car park and then along a path that passes a National Trust sign saying 'Pulpit Wood'. After a short distance, you'll meet a crossing track with a horse-friendly gate on your left. Cross the track, heading straight uphill. After a short steep climb of about 200m turn left following the signpost to Pulpit Hill Fort. This is a wide level path along an avenue of overhanging beech trees. After about 250m, turn right at another signpost. Beneath the trees on your left, you'll see the degraded ramparts of the ancient hillfort protected by some low fencing.
2. On entering a small clearing in the trees, turn left to follow a clear track between the ramparts of the hillfort. The path crosses the fort for about 100m then turns right at a T-junction. Go gently downhill to reach a crossing track.
3. At the crossing track, you can shorten the walk by turning left to follow a sunken path downhill. If you follow this shorter route, after about 400m, you'll reach some rough steps on your left. Turn left onto the Ridgeway and go through a gate to reach the Old Kimble Rifle Range. Then follow the directions from Step 6. For the full walk, follow the path straight across the track and then through a kissing gate. Continue downhill into open grassland, ignoring any crossing paths until you reach a wire fence. Follow the fence, keeping it to your right.
4. At a crossing of paths marked by a number of gates and a four-way sign post, turn left onto the Ridgeway path and continue downhill along a wire fence with a steep wooded slope on your right. As the path swings right and uphill again, it enters more open grassland. Bear left along the more well-used path, ignoring a branching path that runs downhill towards Great Kimble. The Ridgeway here is locally called the Cradle Path.
5. Continue to follow the waymarked Ridgeway path for about 50m. Just after a crossing of paths, and opposite a marker post, turn right onto a grassy path. This leads up to a flat-topped mound just ahead of you, Chequers Knap, where you can take in the views.

Follow the right-hand path back to the Ridgeway until you reach a metal kissing gate. Go through the gate and turn right down a sunken path. After 30m turn left, go up some steps then down some more to a kissing gate next to a notice board. This marks the entrance to Grangelands and The Rifle Range Nature Reserve.

6. Once you've descended the steps and slope to more level ground, you can choose to continue along the Ridgeway. But in the spring and summer months it's more rewarding to turn left onto the faint grassy path that circumnavigates the lower part of The Rifle Range Nature Reserve before rejoining the Ridgeway path on the far side.
 7. Continue along the Ridgeway. As you reach the top of a gentle rise, look out for two footpaths on your left. Ignore the first signposted path then, after about 40m, take the second unmarked path to the left. This winding path takes you across another area of scrub and grassland, part of the National Trust's Pulpit Hill site. You'll soon reach a metal kissing gate and a crossing track. Cross the track and go through a gate to enter the Grangelands Nature Reserve. For the most direct route back, turn immediately left and follow the path parallel to the track, with a hedge on your left. However, it's well worth taking time to explore the Nature Reserve.
 8. When you're ready to continue, return to the top (northern) boundary of the reserve. There are two gates that lead onto a track that runs below the southern edge of Pulpit Hill. At whichever point you join the track, turn right and follow it back to the car park.
End point: Pulpit Hill car park, grid ref SP832045
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