



# 06 BERKSHIRE/OXFORDSHIRE THE GORING GAP

▶ Distance: 11¼ miles/19km ▶ Time: 5½ hours ▶ Grade: Moderate



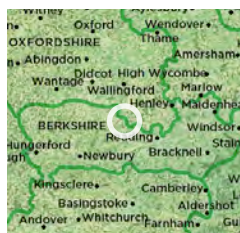
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Emerging onto the sloping chalk grassland of Lardon Chase.



PHOTO: TOM BAILEY

## PLAN YOUR WALK



## ROUTE

**Start/parking** Pangbourne Station, grid ref SU632766, postcode RG8 7DY. £4.20 weekends/after 10am Mon-Fri. Or Pangbourne Village Hall (£5.50)

**Is it for me?** Muddy riverside paths, undulating woodland tracks and open downland. Return leg on waymarked Thames Path **Stiles** None

## PLANNING

**Nearest town** Reading  
**Refreshments** Choice of pubs in villages on route, plus Beale Wildlife Park café. Try Goring's John Barleycorn (01491 872509)

**Public toilets** Pangbourne (village hall), Goring (Wheel Orchard car park)

**Public transport** Trains from London Paddington/Didcot Parkway (gwr.com). Bus 143 from Reading (thames-travel.co.uk)

**Maps** OS Explorer 137; Landranger 189



CHOSEN BY...

**PHILIP THOMAS**

The River Thames squeezes between the chalk folds of the Berkshire Downs and Chiltern Hills at Goring, where in the last half-million years it has scooped out the woody valley known today as the Goring Gap. The opening miles of this walk meander across its wavy west side to cross the river at Streatley and turn downstream from Goring to Whitchurch on the Thames Path National Trail. You'll largely be following the route tramped by hundreds of eager young walkers on March 25th 1932, all of whom had arrived at Pangbourne aboard the 'Hiker's Mystery Express' from London Paddington.

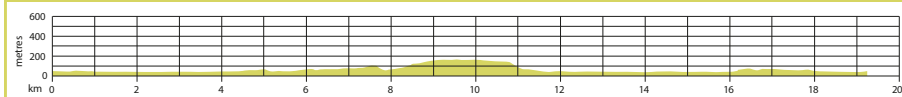
## 1 Start

Leave station from London-bound platform (2) and head down to main road (A329). Cross and turn L along pavement for ½ mile. Take footpath R along riverbank. Follow this towpath, past Beale Wildlife Park, for another 1¼ miles. Reaching field with church peeping through trees on L, turn L at private mooring to a metal gate/sign in the far hedgerow. Follow paddock edge to track and go L to lane. Turn R along lane to main road in Lower Basildon.

## 2 3 miles/4.6km

Turn R along pavement for nearly ½ mile, crossing road where the pavement switches sides. At junction, turn L into

## GRADIENT PROFILE



06 BERKSHIRE/OXFORDSHIRE  
THE GORING GAP► OS Explorer map 137 ► Buy maps at: [ordnancesurvey.co.uk/shop](http://ordnancesurvey.co.uk/shop)

Hook End Lane, signposted for Upper Basildon. At fork, go R for Aldworth. In another mile, just before junction, swing R up drive for Ash Hill (bridleway). Where the drive hairpins L, carry straight on down track (here you cross segment of Grim's Ditch, thought to mark an Iron Age tribal boundary). Before main road, swing L through kissing gate into National Trust land 'The Holies'.

**3** 5 miles/7.9km

Follow grassy track ahead curving up into the combe. At gate, either carry on, or for a great view, turn R up track which zags up to a bench. Go L through gate, and along wood edge to rejoin main track through gate at head of the combe. At next gate/junction, you may wish to detour R 150m down to a viewpoint. Otherwise keep to the stony track ahead. This eventually dips to a gate/junction. Carry straight on up to road.

**4** 6¼ miles/10km

Cross R into car park and go through gate at back into NT Lardon Chase. Keep to the crest of the hill until you come to a gate, shortly before a bench (with a trig point concealed in the hedgerow nearby). Tuck through gate for a superb view north from Lough Down and return to the bench. Turn R downhill to a gate in the bottom corner of Lardon Chase. Follow track



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ahead to cross road. Turn L and carefully negotiate Streatley crossroads, straight on down to Goring and Streatley's two-part, timber-beamed bridge.

**5** 7½ miles/11.9km

Crossing the Thames into Goring, swing R across road and down steps. Here, either carry on through churchyard to John Barleycorn pub and turn R down Ferry Lane further on, or take the signposted Thames Path R down to the riverbank and follow it downstream.

**6** 9 miles/14.4km

1½ miles further on at Ferry Cottage, the trail turns L away from the riverbank, then R at a T-junction onto a bridleway into Lower Hartslock Wood (it's worth detouring up the

first path L for a magnificent view back to the Goring Gap). Eventually the trail pulls away from the river, dips into a dry valley, then rises steeply to a paved drive, which leads to Whitchurch. Take care as you turn R down road to pick up pavement. In abt 500m, the Thames Path tucks R into a drive for Walliscote House, then through churchyard to the riverbank. Cross Whitchurch Bridge and take footpath R, signed 'station'. **CW**

**VIEW THE WALK ON OS MAPS ONLINE:**  
[walk1000miles.co.uk/cwroutes](http://walk1000miles.co.uk/cwroutes)

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



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DATE WALKED

TIME TAKEN

YOUR RATING