

MINCHINHAMPTON TO BOX CIRCULAR WALK

2 HOURS Distance 3.5 MILES 5.6KM (not incl. Pub extension)

Level of difficulty: Easy

This walk takes you through the local historic market town of Minchinhampton. It guides you through the beautiful Cotswold villages of Box and across the National Trust managed open spaces of the Common with its ancient iron age archaeology, orchids and skylarks. After an ascent at the beginning, from the hotel, it is mostly flat and offers 2 pubs to choose from for a relaxing drink.

MINCHINHAMPTON and BOX CIRCULAR WALK DIRECTIONS

1. Turn right out of hotel driveway and walk up the hill to the white gates and cattle grid.

2. Turn left onto Love Lane, note the elegant Cotswold stone Georgian house to your right.

3. Continue along Narrow Lane.

4. Turn right onto Besbury Lane and continue up to the main road.

5. Cross over carefully onto Minchinhampton Common and bear slightly left towards the church tower, in the distance.

6. You will notice small earth works all over this large common.

7. You are now at the edge of the historic market town of Minchinhampton; continue on through the small parking area, alongside the old gothic school house, on your right (now replaced with a thriving modern nursery/ primary school), and the pollarded lime trees along the cemetery wall.

8. Turn left and go into the churchyard through the Victorian wood and cotswold stone-tiled porched gateway.

9. The church is worth a visit (see History1, overleaf) and shows the past and present wealth of this lovely market town.

10. After visiting the church, leave by the path to the left, pass in front of the cottages and turn left into Market Street.

11. The impressive Market Hall, 1698, is straight ahead. It is still used today for plays, meetings and markets. Read the white board on the North end, telling of all the charges for tethering horses and

livestock.

12. Woeful Dane Dairy Cafe is on the left and sells its own organic locally produced cheeses.

13. Turn right in the High Street; this road has changed little over the last few hundred years. Many buildings are typical of the historic Cotswold architectural style. The Cotswold Club is a classic example. Greylands is a fine 18thC Georgian mansion.

14. Continue on past Boots the Chemist down Well Hill; the source of the town's water supply until the reservoirs were built on the Common. There are several lovely houses here. Turn right at Rock Cottage into King Street.

15. Go through the metal gate (known as a kissing gate) and note 1797 above the doorway of Weavers Cottage, on the right. Looking across to the left are the woods of Princess Anne's Gatecombe Park Home.

16. Continue along the narrow path, passing under several stone bridges. This takes you round the stunning English lawned garden of Well Hill House.

17. Rejoin the road and turn left onto Cuckoo Row and continue to the gates of Lammas Park/Lammas Court.

18. Turn left into Box Lane. Continue down the narrow lane with dry stone walls and fields on both sides.

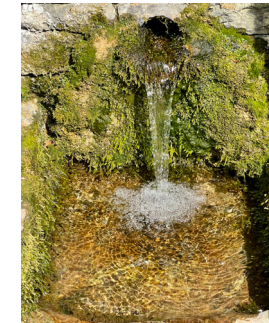
19. Pass between Box Farm and Box End Farm and follow the lane round to the right, into Box Village.

20. The village of Box sits on the spring line, and is a collection of lovely small Cotswold stone cottages and larger

villas and is typified by drystone walls often covered with colourful plants.

21. The view to the horizon, slightly to the left is to Beadesert School, amongst the large trees, once the Bishop of Gloucester's house followed by a wealthy London banker; now a thriving preparatory school.

22. Pass Truewell House, an elegant Georgian villa, on the right with its spring, a great place for your dog to drink but not for humans!



residential home for young adults run by the Novartis Trust.

23b. Do not cross, unless you want to make a detour to the Old Lodge Pub (if so, head for the white building, across the road, behind the small group of 5/6 trees ahead, and slightly to your right, otherwise..... continue to next step..

24. Stay on this side, but cross the small lane, beside the cafe and continue along the side the Common, with the main road on your left.



25. Cross another larger road, continuing straight ahead but veering slightly towards the buildings on your right (The northern edge of Minchinhampton). Veer to the right, crossing another road and heading for the twin gabled corner building at the far end of the trees. Follow the wall round to the right,



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26. There are many small mounds, most likely linked to the extensive rabbit farming. Other ridges are part of the ramparts of the early British, Iron Age Amberley Camp

27. Minchinhampton Common covers 1,800 hectares of common land managed by the National Trust. It is a hotspot for flora and fauna from Orchids, Skylarks to butterflies. *see the section History and Nature of Minchinhampton Common, for more information*

28. You will arrive at the grassy ridge known as the Bullwarks (see photo below), part of the Iron Age fort. passing an array of detached stone and wooden dwellings, and a



fine row of beech trees, until you arrive at Dr Brown's Road.

29. Turn left to main road. Cross very carefully, as traffic can be fast! Go down Burleigh Lane.

30. Bearing left at the junction and continue down the hill, for a few minutes; bearing right until reaching the white gate and cattle grid.

31. Go through the gate and continue on down the hill until you see the Burleigh Court sign.

Welcome back!!



MINCHINHAMPTON CHURCH

Most of the church is Victorian dating from 1842, though the transept (the cross part) is medieval and has a beautiful round stained-glass rose window in the "decorative English style". The ceiling would not look out of place in Game of Thrones! Look for the impressive Royal Hanoverian Coat of Arms (Queen Anne 1714 and George 1 onwards). The French inscriptions, *Honi Soit Qui Mal y Pense* and *Dieu et mon droit*, are still used today on state buildings and British passports. On leaving, turn and look up at the pepperpot tower. the original tall spire was destroyed in a gale in 1602 and was never fully replaced.



HISTORY & NATURE OF MINCHINHAMPTON COMMON

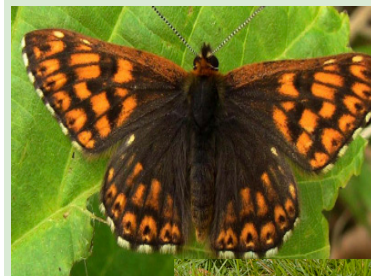
IRON AGE SETTLEMENTS & BULLWARKS EARTHWORKS

The Common is covered in small mounds and a long earth bank called the Bullwarks (see step 28). These are evidence of Iron Age settlements dating from 800 BCE to 50 BCE.

NATURE ON THE COMMON

Minchinhampton Common covers 183 hectares (451-acres) and is classified as a SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) due to its flora and fauna. The Common is owned and managed by the National Trust and is one of the largest grassland commons in the Cotswold area.

From April to June there is an abundance of rare Orchid varieties (Bee, Fragrant & Frog). There are 30+ species of butterfly here. The threatened Common Blue butterfly has recently been reintroduced. Cowslips and primroses are also common in Spring. Rabbit farming was once a big industry here and the low banks that run along the roads and various dips and mounds are evidence of fencing.



COWSLIPS

if you want to know more about the history, architecture and nature, why not join one of our full or 1/2 day walks. Ask at reception for details