

Pilgrimage Oddington-Charlton-on-Otmoor-Oddington

St. Andrew's Church, the pilgrims' church of the Ray Valley Benefice, originates from the 12th century. Admire the unique interior of the Church, mainly from the Anglo Catholic period in the 20th century. The memorial to the Maoris killed in the First World War is unique in the world. It was commissioned by the eminent Maori Princess, Maggie Papakura, who is buried in the churchyard.



From the churchyard, look out across Otmoor and reflect upon the injustice suffered by the poor through the enclosure of the moor in the 19th century.

In the churchyard is the only complete preaching cross in Oxfordshire, fully restored in 2017.



On leaving the church turn right and walk through the village. With the telephone kiosk ahead, go straight onto the track that leads on to the moor. Pause at Oddington Bridge for prayer and reflection.

Straight ahead we have two options:- in good weather the bridleway is the more pleasant route, with an abundance of wildflowers in Spring and Summer. The alternative is the permissive path, running parallel with the bridleway, which has a hard surface. Both routes go the bridge over the Glebe Brook. From there continue on the bridleway until it reaches a wide track going off to the left. This is the Roman road from Dorchester-on-Thames to Alchester. (If the rifle range on the moor is in use this route will be barred, with a signed diversion across the fields.)



Continue on the Roman road towards Fencott, taking the path off to the left towards Charlton. This leads to Charlton Bridge over the Ray. A time for prayer and reflection.



Straight ahead to enter Charlton-on-Otmoor at the Crown Public House. Turn left to arrive at the Church of St. Mary the Virgin.



The Grade 1 listed church originates from the 13th century. The splendid rood screen dates from the early 16th century and survived the Reformation order that all such screens were to be removed. On May Day garlands of flowers are hung on the screen.



There is now the opportunity to rest and to pray in this tranquil setting.

On leaving the church turn right and walk along the High Street. Admire the stone houses which, up until the 20th century, were occupied by the craftsmen and tradesmen who made up this vibrant, commercial village.

On leaving Charlton the route is on the road to Oddington, a distance of about half a mile. Not busy but care needs to be taken.

Overall distance about 3 miles. Flat but route across Otmoor can be wet and muddy.