

ON YOUR BIKE: OXFORDSHIRE
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Secret Oxford, Streams, Islands and Fishes

This route starts and finishes in the heart of Oxford and explores many of the less well-known faces of the city.

MAP OS Landranger 164 Oxford, Chipping Norton and Bicester (GR SP516063).

THE ROUTE This 10-mile route starts in Radcliffe Square and heads south-west using mostly river towpath and cycle tracks, and despite being a city-based ride, it uses almost exclusively cycle tracks and minor roads. It is therefore a particularly family-friendly ride. You can shorten the route by 2 miles by missing out North Hinksey.

DISTANCE 10 or 8 miles.



Start from the eastern side of Radcliffe Square with the Radcliffe Camera to your right and All Souls College to your left. Ride out in a southerly direction. Cross High Street at the pedestrian lights. **Turn R** and immediately **turn L** down the narrow, partly-cobbled Magpie Lane. **Bear R** at the junction (Merton Street) and soon **bear R** into Oriol Square. **Turn L** through bollards onto Bear Lane and **bear L** into Blue Boar Street. The Museum of Oxford is located at the T-junction with St Aldates. **Turn L** and pass the main entrance to Christchurch College on your left. **Turn R** soon onto Brewer Street. Take care as this is a little difficult to spot. If you find yourself at the traffic lights with Speedwell Street, you have gone too far!

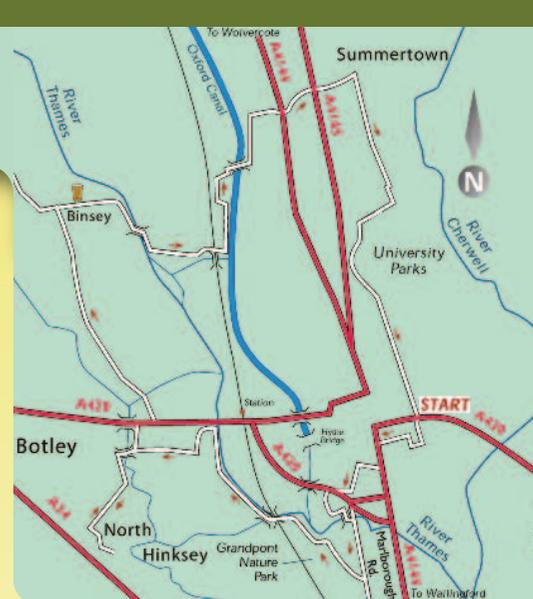
Pass the entrance to Champion Hall (the University's only Jesuit College) and **turn L** at the T-junction (Littlegate Street). **Turn R** on the left-hand bend and soon **turn L** onto a cycle track (marked Routes 5 and 7). Follow the track **R** onto Thames Street and cross at the pedestrian lights. Keep following the Route 5 and 7 signs onto Blackfriars Road, Trinity Street and Friars Wharf. Cross the River Thames on the foot/cycle bridge. On exiting the bridge, **turn R** (river on left) and soon **turn R** onto Marlborough Road. **Turn R** at the crossroads (Whitehouse Road). Ride to the end of this road and **turn L** onto a gravel track through Grandpont nature Park. Follow the track as it passes under the railway bridge and onto the riverside path. Dismount and push your bike across Osney Lock.

You are now on Osney Island and therefore surrounded by water! Soon go ahead onto East Street with the Watermans

Arms pub on your left and the river to your right. At the end bear **L** down North Street. Go straight over at the crossroads onto West Street. **Turn R** (Swan Street) and cross the bridge over the stream and ride carefully along the cycle track as it goes around the edge of a school. Keep a good look-out for pedestrians and fellow cyclists as the path is narrow and twisty. Cross Ferry Hinksey Road using the pedestrian lights and go straight over onto the path along the edge of Oatlands Road Recreation Ground. Keep a look out on your right for the end of Riverside Road, the last terrace end you pass before the path bends left to cross a wooden bridge over the stream. If you don't want to go on to North Hinksey and instead shorted the route by 2 miles, then follow the tarmac path onto Riverside Road and continue the route at (*).

Otherwise, follow the path over the wooden bridge and bear **L** where the path forks shortly after. **Turn R** at the T-junction with the tarmac cycle track. This is Willow Walk. Ride over the stone bridge and soon **turn L** onto the road in North Hinksey. **Turn L** by the church down the no through road (signed The Fishes Public House). You will find the popular stream-side pub about 100 yards down the road on your left. When you are refreshed retrace your steps. Ride back down Willow Walk and **turn L** onto the cycle track through the field, over the wooden bridge and follow the tarmac side track to the left onto Riverside Road.

(*). Cross Botley Road using the traffic island (CARE!) and **turn R** onto the pavement cycle track for a short distance. **Turn L** (Binsey Lane). After approximately 1 mile, and in Binsey village, **turn R** through a kissing gate (signed



Bossom's Boatyard). **Bear R** at the river and keep to the track nearest the river. Cross at the red arched footbridge and continue on the other side, soon bearing **L** up the ramp and across the wooden plank bridge. Keep straight ahead along the stony track and exit Port Meadow through double green gates.

Keep straight ahead and cross the railway. **Turn L** at the T-junction (Rutherway). **Turn L** (Merrivale Square) and soon **turn L** (Plater Drive). At the second sharp right-hand bend, keep straight on onto the cycle track and through two sets of metal bollards. **Turn R** and go straight over at the traffic lights at the canal bridge. **Turn L** (Hayfield Road) and **turn R** at the crossroads (Frenchay Road). At the end of the road, **turn R** onto the pavement cycle track and cross Woodstock Road at the pedestrian lights. **Turn R** and immediately **turn L** (Staverton Road). Once again **turn R** onto the cycle track at the end of the road and cross Banbury Road at the pedestrian lights. Go straight ahead onto Belbroughton Road. **Turn R** at the T-junction (Charlbury Road). Go straight over the crossroads (Linton Road) and then straight over the next crossroads onto Dragon Lane (past the Dragon School). Exit through the gate and **turn R** and immediately **turn L** (Fyfield Road). **Turn R** (Crick Road), **turn L** at the T-junction (Bradmore Road) and **turn R** at the T-junction (Norham Gardens). This whole area was built in the Edwardian era, when University dons were first allowed to marry and needed houses befitting this new status. Few dons could afford these grand town houses these days!

Turn L at the T-junction onto a gravel cycle track alongside the University park and University Museum of natural History. At the end of the track, rejoin Parks Road. Go straight over at the traffic lights and continue on to the next traffic lights. Go straight over onto Catte Street and continue back onto Radcliffe Square and the end of the ride.