

Something to Tew over, Great Tew to Little Tew & back

Approx. 4 miles

Approx 1/3 walk is on road, 1/3 across fields & 1/3 on tracks.

Directions

Post code for sat nav is OX7 4DB

This is the post code for the Falkland Arms where we will be dining, but there is no parking.

There is a free car park at Great Tew which is where we will meet.

Depending which direction you arrive from, the car park is just before (on the left) or just after (on the right) of the triangular junction which leads down to the Falkland Arms. It is signposted.

Approx 40 mins, 22 miles

Stileometer

Reads 0 for this walk.

Inclineometrics

There is are three slight inclines & one moderate incline. Overall up is 150ft (with a corresponding down).

Dining arrangements

Falkland Arms
19-21 The Green
Great Tew
Chipping Norton
OX7 4DB

We are 'promised' a starting loo break at the Falkland Arms.

Menu is at www.falklandarms.co.uk

(Please note that some of the 'mains' come in large & small sizes)

Optional quiz

At Great Tew

1 What is the girl doing in Great Tew?

At Little Tew

2 How many steps up to the house?

3 Where would you get your horse shod?

At Great Tew

4 At St Michael's church where does the congregation gather?

5 Where might the Light Brigade be found?

6 What is the girl doing in Great Tew (if you missed it the first time)?

Take a stroll through one of Oxfordshire's loveliest villages before exploring undulating countryside to the south.

Ascent/gradient 150ft (46m)

Level of difficulty Easy

Paths Field paths and tracks, stretches of quiet road

Landscape Rolling parkland and farmland on edge of Cotswolds

Suggested map aqua3 OS Explorer 191 Banbury, Bicester & Chipping Norton

Start/finish SP 395293

Parking free car park in Great Tew

Public toilets none on route

While you're there

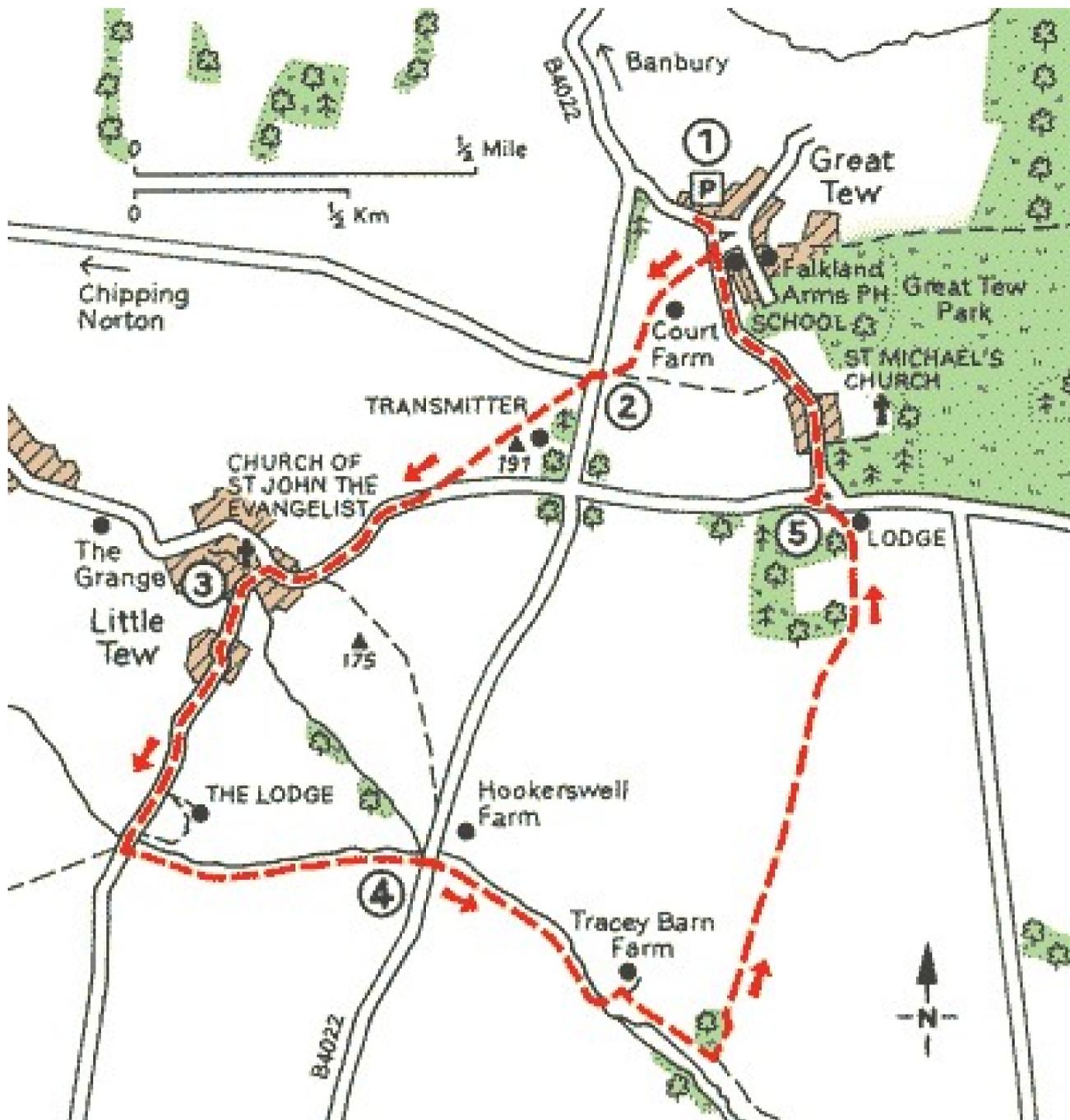
Walk along the splendid avenue of laurels and traveller's joy leading to Great Tew's fine medieval church, which lies peacefully amid the trees of the parkland. The church walk was originally the carriage drive to the mansion of Lucius Carey, 2nd Viscount Falkland.

Where to eat and drink

With its flagstone floor, high-backed settles and inglenook fireplace, the 500-year-old Falkland Arms at Great Tew is one of the county's finest inns. Expect a straightforward lunchtime menu and a variety of home-made specials.

What to look for

Little Tew is worth close inspection. The church, built by George Street, dates back to 1835 and the Methodist chapel to 1871. The Grange, also by Street, was built as a vicarage about the same time as the church. The school and alms-houses were constructed in the 1860s.



Alternative start

From the car park walk down to the Falkland Arms.
 Continue past Falkland Arms & turn right up a path just past some cottages with flower names.
 Walk to top of path and turn right along path at side of road.
 Look out for 'arch' in hedge on the other side of the road, then follow directions below.

1. [From the car park turn left, pass the turning to Great Tew, follow the road as it bends right and as it straightens out turn right at the footpath sign, signposted 'Little Tew'. [This sign is hidden in the hedge, go through 'arch' in hedge opposite right hand fork of road.]]

Go diagonally across the field, heading for farm outbuildings on the brow of the hill. Cross a stile in front of them to a gate and stile and keep the field boundary on the right. Follow it along to a pair of galvanised gates and a stile leading out to the road at a junction.

2. Cross over and take the path, again signposted to Little Tew. Head diagonally across the field, passing to the right of a transmitter. On reaching the road, turn right and walk down

the hill into Little Tew. Pass through the village and turn left at the turning for Enstone. On the corner is the Church of St John the Evangelist.

3. Follow the road out of Little Tew and look for the entrance to The Lodge on the left. Continue for a few paces to some white railings, then turn immediately left at an opening in the hedge leading into a field. Keep along the left boundary and make for a galvanised gate in the field corner. Continue ahead on the grassy path, passing a house over on the left. Keep ahead on the clear track to a kissing gate leading out to the road.
4. Cross over and follow the track signposted to Sandford. Keep alongside trees and then round to the left towards a house. As you approach it, turn right and join another track heading south east. Keep the fence on the right and make for a gate by some trees. Continue for a few paces to a gate and waymark on the left. Take the path, keeping a belt of woodland and the field edge on your left. Beyond the trees, continue ahead into the next field, again beside a tongue of woodland. Pass into the next field and continue alongside trees. Approach a lodge and keep to the left of it.
5. Follow the drive to meet the road, cross over to the junction and take the turning signposted for Great Tew. Pass the entrance to St Michael's Church, which lies peacefully amid the trees of the parkland on the right. Look for the village school, also on the right, and then, just beyond the turning to Great Tew, return to the car park at the start of the walk.

Arthur Mee, in his book *The King's England - Oxfordshire*, says that 'if our England is a garden, Great Tew is one of its rare plots.' Most would agree. The village is one of the most beautiful in Oxfordshire, a gem of a place that has to be seen to be fully appreciated.

Originally designed as an estate village in the 19th century, with the intention of blending architectural beauty with utility and agricultural management, Great Tew went into decline in later years and virtually became derelict. However, the village has been given a new lease of life, with many of the thatched and ironstone cottages painstakingly restored, and now Great Tew is a designated Conservation Area.

The origin of its name is unclear, but Tew is thought to mean 'ridge', of which there are a great many in the area. The village has a fascinating history. In 1036, 53 tenants lived here. By 1276 it had expanded to become a community of at least 75 households. However, the population fell during the 14th century, possibly as a result of the plague.

In later years the village became closely associated with Lucius Carey, 2nd Viscount Falkland. In the 17th century the manor of Great Tew was inherited by the Viscount, a renowned classical scholar, poet and generous host who moved in elite circles. Falkland later became Secretary of State to Charles I but was killed in 1643 aged 33, serving as an ordinary trooper in the first Battle of Newbury. A later owner, G F Stratton, who inherited Great Tew in 1800, resided in a rather modest late 17th or early 18th-century house which stood at the southern end of the village. During the early years of the 19th century, Stratton engaged in an ill-fated experiment in estate management, drawing his inspiration from the Scottish agricultural theorist J C Loudon.

The estate subsequently changed hands several times before being acquired by Matthew Robinson Boulton, son of James Watt's partner and one of the giants of the Industrial Revolution, who had a keen eye on its sporting potential. Outlying farms were extensively rebuilt, cottages in the village were rethatched and other features such as mullioned windows and stone door heads were added. The estate remained the home of the Boulton family for many years. Between 1914 and 1962 Great Tew was administered by trustees on behalf of two unmarried Boulton sisters, but by now the local workforce had decreased and the estate was all but abandoned.

The noted political editor John Sergeant spent his childhood at Great Tew. His father was the rector of St Michael's Church during the middle years of the 20th century and Sergeant remembers his time here with great affection. In his memoirs, he describes Great Tew as the ideal place in which to grow up.