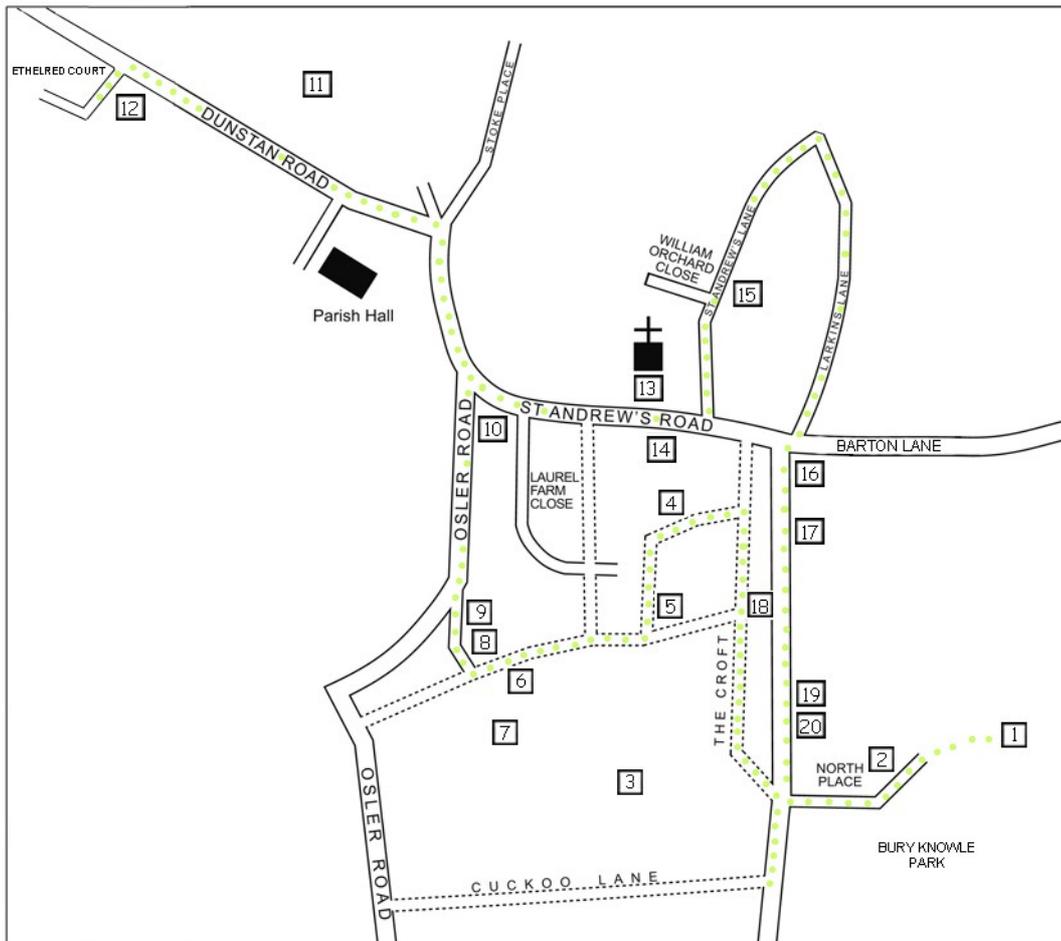


Old Headington Family Walk



Start in the Car Park in Bury Knowle Park.

1. Bury Knowle House (early 1800s) was built by Sir Joseph Lock to replace an earlier house. If you look across the park you can see the ha-ha – a ditch which kept livestock away from the formal gardens.

Adeline Kingscote lived here in the 1890s. She was a writer and was very extravagant. She borrowed money and swindled people with charm and false promises. She went bankrupt and ran off to Switzerland in 1899 owing money to many local people including two vicars.

Turn left onto ...

2. North Place

No.3 North Place was the infant school until 1873 and was restored in the 1980s.

What does the sign on the house say?

Opposite the old infant school is the entrance to Coffin Alley, a passageway used to carry coffins to St Andrew's for burial before Headington Quarry had its own church.

Cross over Old High Street.

3. Headington House (1775–83) has its entrance on your left. The house was built for William Jackson, a rich Oxford printer. The house was bought in 1953 by Lady Berlin, who lived there with her husband, Isaiah Berlin, the philosopher and historian of ideas. See the blue plaque on the gatepost.

What fruit can you see on the gateposts?

The grounds of Headington House originally extended south to London Road, and you can see the bridges over Cuckoo Lane, which used to be the ha-ha, about 20m to your left.

Follow the path beside the gatehouse into the Croft.

Notice the difference between the two walls – it's easy to guess which belongs to the big house.

Look to your left

Can you spot the cottage with the missing door? Two cottages were combined and one of the doorways was bricked up.

Take the second left and walk along to the ...

4. White Hart pub back entrance

The cottage facing, no.8 is supposed to be the oldest surviving house in the village.

Can you find the mounting block?

Follow the narrow path straight on.

Peep through the wrought iron gates to see the secret gardens.

Take the left fork, on the left corner, see ...

5. Croft Hall (1836) was a Baptist church until 1902 and was converted to a house around 1980.

Turn right

6. Coach House (formerly Waldencote) used to house the generator for White Lodge and is the former home of the Anglo-Irish writer Elizabeth Bowen. The gates on the left past the Coach House lead to Sandy Lodge; White Lodge is behind.

7. Sandy Lodge/White Lodge (c 1830) was built as one house, and divided in 1920/21. Headington School opened in White Lodge in 1915.

Turn right.

8. The Court was a more modest house before being remodelled in 1924. A small dairy farm was run from here where butter and milk were sold. Lord Sholto Douglas lived here in the late twenties and built a small Roman Catholic chapel.

See the small carved stone framed window on the left side of the house.

9 The Old Pound House was a stable block for Headington House. The house was built in 1914 and includes some of the old outbuildings. The garden contains the pound where stray animals were kept as well as the livestock of farmers who refused to pay the toll at the London Road turnpike.

Follow the road keeping to the right.

10. St Andrew's House (1862–82) was the old vicarage until 1977.

Cross the road and turn left

11. The Rookery has an early 19th century exterior which hides the earlier central range, which was upgraded in 1660 by William Finch an Oxford Lawyer. In the early 1870s it was a prep school for boys. It is now Ruskin college, which provides educational opportunities for adults with few or no qualifications.

12. Ethelred Court is the probable site of the royal residence where King Ethelred stayed. King Ethelred was only 10 years old when he became king following the murder of his older brother.

Retrace your steps to St Andrew's House

How many windows/doors/cottages are there in the row of pink cottages?

13. St Andrew's Church (1150–1881) was a Saxon timber church. King Ethelred may have been christened here and St Frideswide spent time here before founding her nunnery. The chancel arch dates from 1150, the south aisle and arcade from the 13th century, and the upper tower from 1500. The south porch was added in 1598, and the vestry in 1881.

Go in through the first gate. Can you find John Young's grave with its decorative skulls? He died in 1688 aged 100. Read the inscription.

14. The White Hart pub (17th century) was perhaps the original "Joan of Hedington's" Alehouse, featured in a play. A fire which started here in 1718 burnt down 24 houses, mostly on Old High street.

Turn left onto

15. St Andrew's Lane

Notice the shutters with iron fastenings at no.2 and the stone hood over the door at no.4, and the stone pavement, all of which are listed. No.1 was sold in 1910 for £150.

On the left is Unity House where the sister of Lord Nuffield, William Morris of Morris Motors, lived.

On the right at no.19, hundreds of deer antlers were found in a pit beneath the current garage. It's thought to be the site of King Ethelred's huntsman's hut.

Follow road right and continue up Larkins Lane, Nos 1,2 and 3 are 17th century cottages. On the left is the Grange and Old Pottery (not visible from the road).

Cross the road

16. The Black Boy pub (1937) is set back from an earlier Black Boy pub first mentioned in 1667. The village stocks were sited outside the pub, next to a large elm tree. The house opposite used to be a Post Office.

Go up Old High Street

17. The Priory was once called Linden House after the lime (linden) trees outside. Originally Elizabethan it was rebuilt in 1876; only the staircase remains.

Can you see the dragon corbels on Nos 87 and 89? You should be able to make out the letters LI ND EN S CO TT AG ES on the corbels.

In the early 1900s Mrs Sturgess lived here with her 12 children. She loved amateur dramatics and lived to be 93.

In the mid 1920s the house was built by an enclosed order of nuns. They had no contact with the outside world and had a special wooden turntable to deliver parcels and supplies. A local man, Bill Berry, was allowed in twice: once to show a nun how to use the new lawn mower and once to kill two hens. In 1968 the house was bought by nuns whose main work is teaching and nursing.

18. Site of The Bell

Cloche house was built on the site of the old Bell pub and part of the old building still stands at the back of the house. No.72A was built in the garden of the old pub.

See the sign on the house at no.72A. Can you work out its date?

19. The British Workman, 67 Old High Street (1880) was the headquarters of the Temperance Society. It was a centre for village sporting activities, dances, carpentry classes, billiards and also was used as a soup kitchen, a baby health clinic (until 1930) and in the Second World War was the headquarters of the local Home Guard and ration books were given out from here.

Notice the plaque under the window.

20. The Hermitage (69 Old High Street)

The malthouse of Bury Knowle House was demolished leaving a long wing at right angles to the road. Charles F Bell, Keeper of Fine Arts at the Ashmolean, bought it in 1912 and demolished three inhabited cottages without warning as he disliked his windows overlooking them. One man was in the middle of his breakfast at the time!

Turn left into North Place, back to the start.

There is a play area in the park to your right. Beyond it there is a storybook tree carved by Matt Cave, a local artist, from a tree struck by lightning. It has characters from books by J R R Tolkien and C S Lewis as well as benches with carved animals.