



## Banbury Linear Walk - South East

This is a one-way route from the town centre to Bodicote along the scenic Oxford Canal, part of the longer Banbury Fringe Walk Challenge.

**Distance** 4.4 kilometers / 2.7 miles

**Duration** 1 hour and 45 minutes



Wildlife



Water feature



Great views



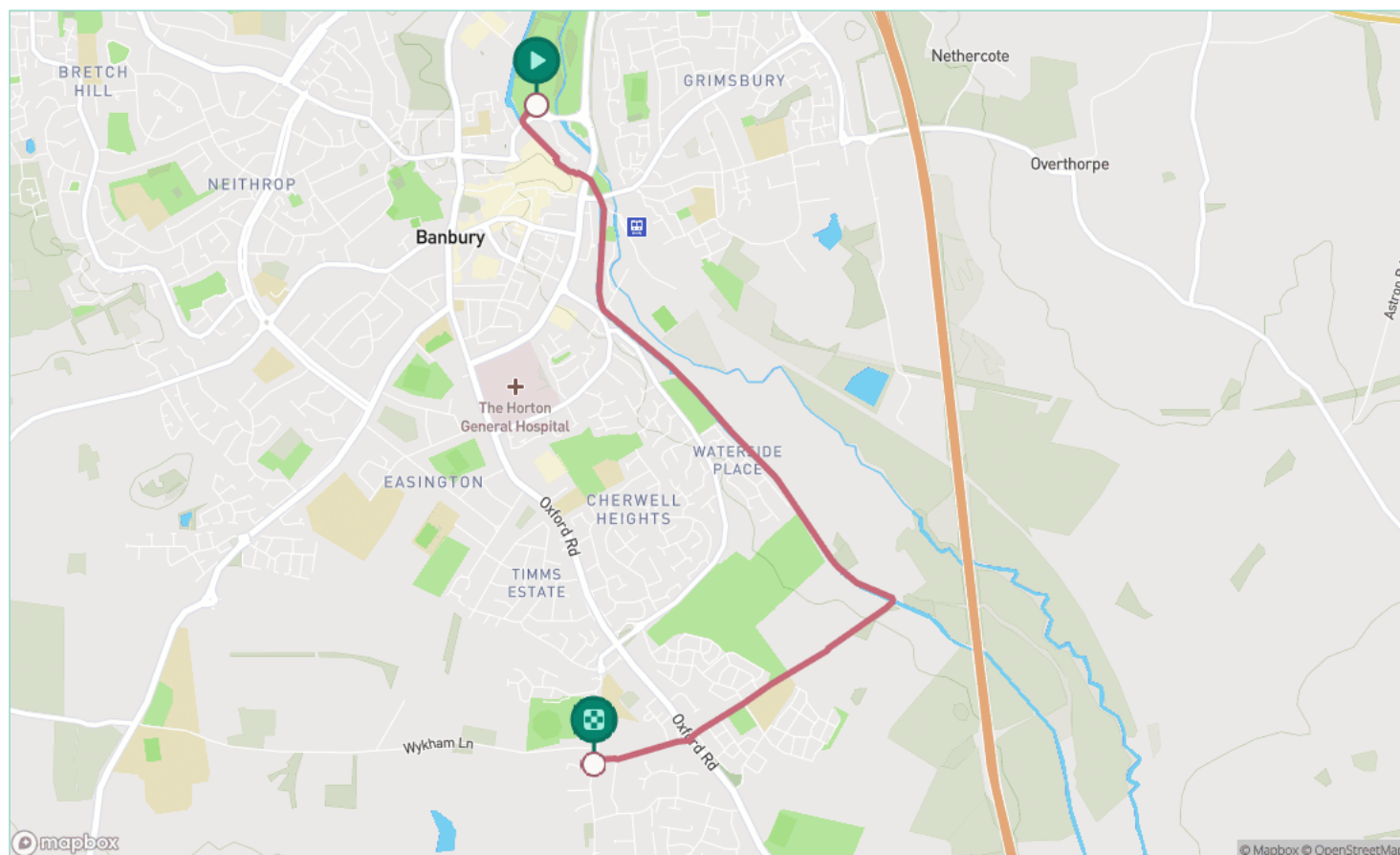
Public transport



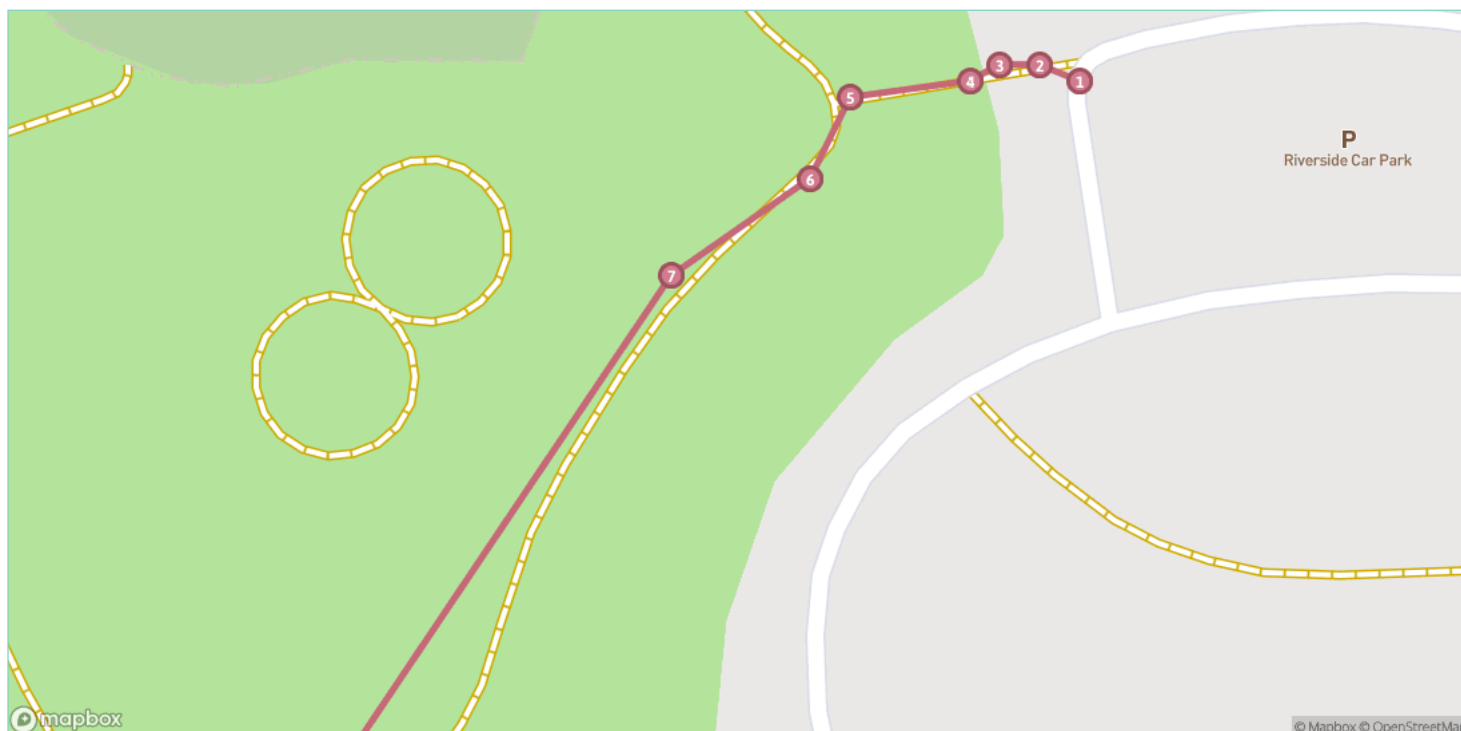
Parking



Botanics



Disclaimer: Directions are provided as guidance only. Weather, construction, closures or other factors may affect routes. Please take care when crossing roads and avoid private land. Always follow local signage and use common sense. Created by Go Jauntly Ltd © 2023. Last Updated: 27 October 2023.



**Step 1:** This walk was created in partnership with Cherwell District Council. Enjoy over 30 walks across North Oxfordshire and experience the sights and sounds of nature as you go.

**Step 2:** Welcome to the South-East Banbury Linear Walk, which starts at OX16 2AY (Riverside Car Park).

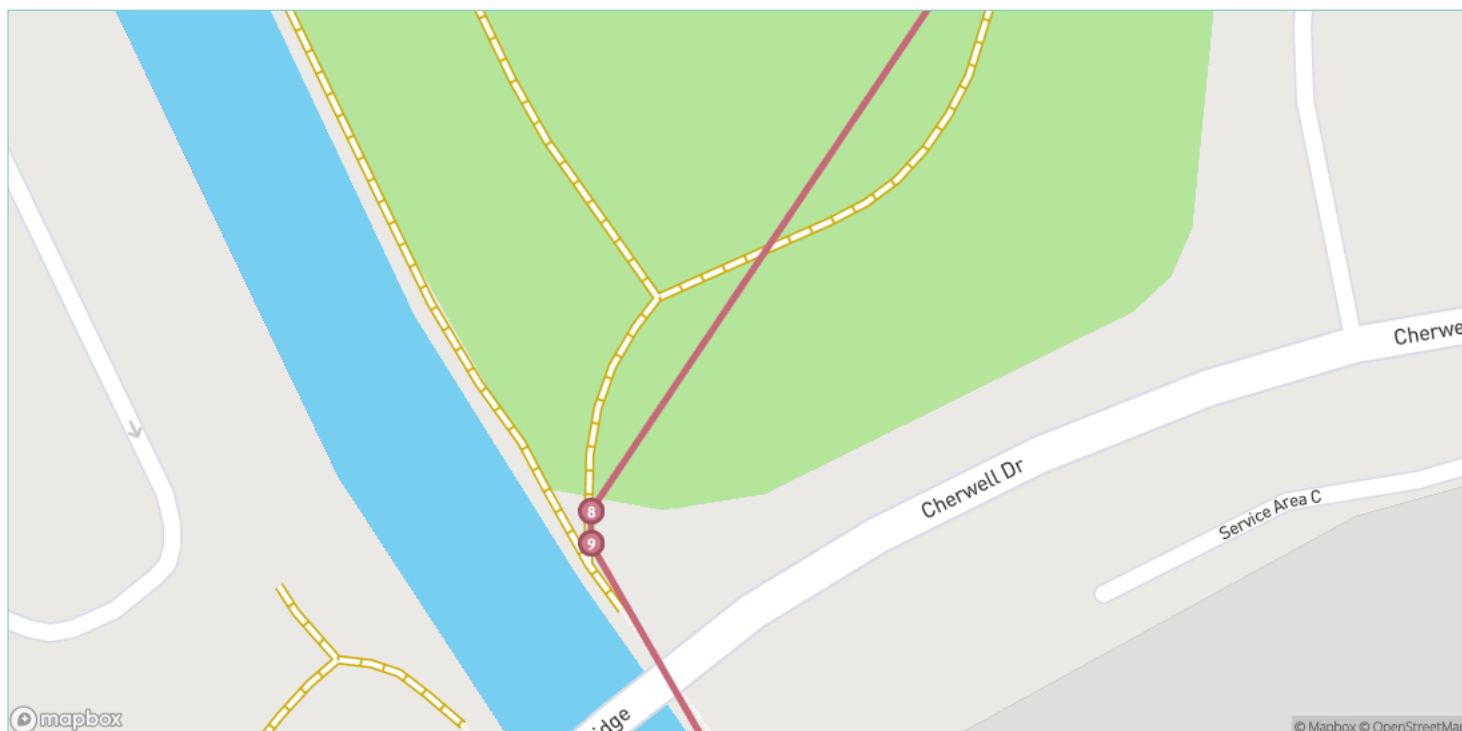
**Step 3:** As this is a linear walk, at the end you can return to the starting point by going back the way you came, walk back along the Oxford Road or catch the B3 bus back to the start.

**Step 4:** Start by heading towards the play area and white Spiceball Park sign.

**Step 5:** You can also easily get here from the town centre on foot. If you're at the central bus station, you can start the route at step 23. If you're at the train station, swipe straight to step 28 and start from there.

**Step 6:** Bear left at the path junction which takes you to the canal towpath.

**Step 7:** Spiceball Park features open fields with a fitness trail, children's play and activity areas and picnic site. Woodland and wild flora areas have been established as well as a nature trail. Fishing is available by permit, too.



**Step 8:** You are advised to wear stout, waterproof footwear as walking in the countryside can be muddy and wet, even in the summer months. For advice on best ways to walk in the countryside check out the read more panel below.

## North Oxfordshire

### Best Ways to Walk

We want you to have fun outdoors, whilst looking after yourself, those around you and the natural environment. So here's some guidance to help you prepare for and enjoy your walk.

Check the weather. Wear appropriate clothing and footwear as walking can be wet and muddy.

Trousers are recommended as parts of the route can be overgrown with vegetation and nettles. Charge your phone. Take a mobile phone battery pack if you have one. Bear in mind that coverage can be patchy in rural areas so download this walk for offline mode in advance if you can.

Take water. If you're walking alone it's sensible, as a simple precaution, to let someone know where you are and when you expect to return.

Respect landowners. Remember that the countryside is a working place so leave crops, buildings, machinery and livestock well alone. Leave gates as you find them and please keep to the line of the path.

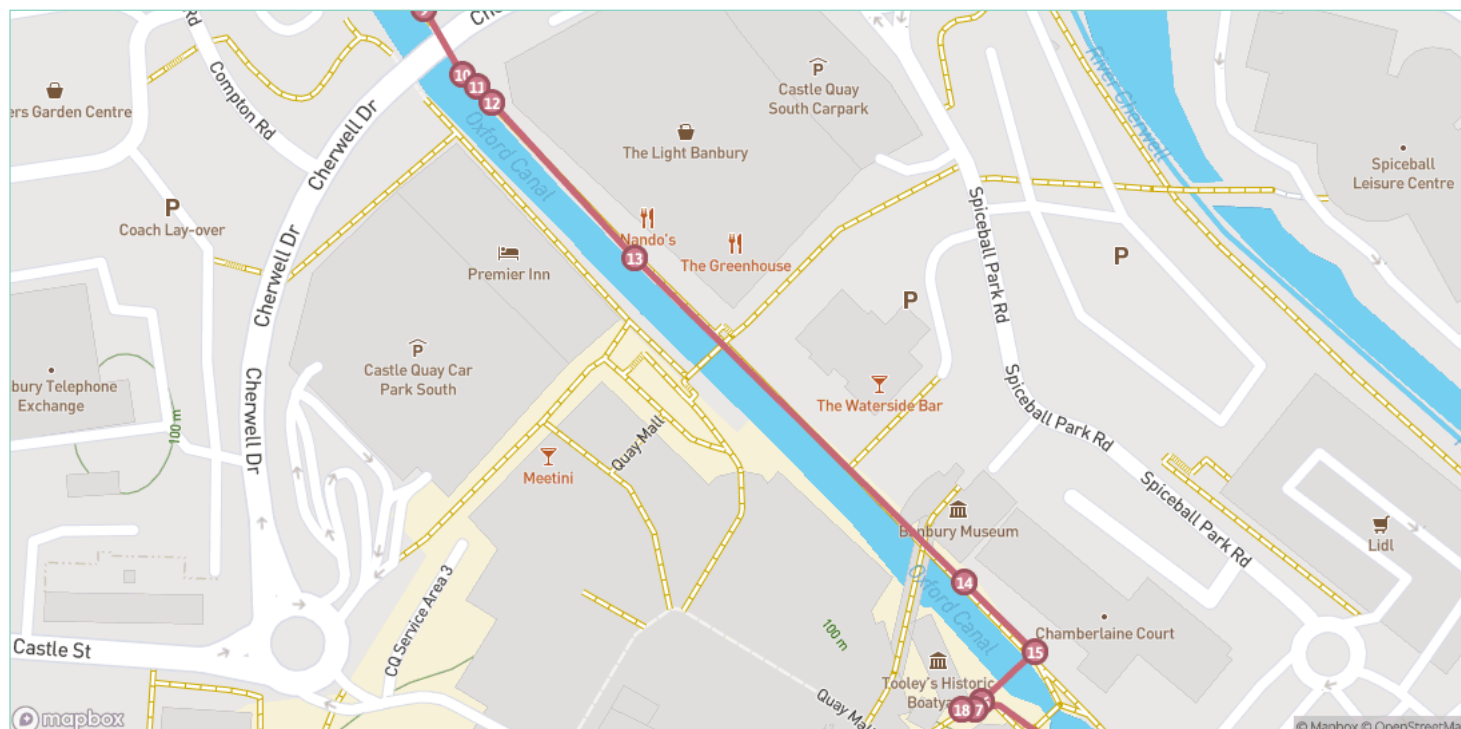
Respect local people. Park your car responsibly. Do not obstruct gateways, narrow lanes and village facilities. Consider leaving valuables at home.

Respect nature. Pick up any litter you see and never leave your own. Ground nesting birds can be disturbed by dogs, particularly in the Spring. Their poo can be bad for the environment so please keep them close by and clean up after them. Look after your dogs. Dogs should be kept under your control and on a lead if animals are in the fields. Current advice recommends you should not walk between a cow and her calf and, if you are threatened by cattle, you should let the dog off the lead.

Stay safe. Take great care when crossing or walking along roads and narrow paths.

More guidance for users of the countryside - follow the Countryside Code using the link below.

**Step 9:** Join the Oxford Canal towpath from Spiceball Park. Start by heading left. Notice the new development on both sides of the canal.



**Step 10:** Running from Coventry to Oxford, the Oxford Canal was a thriving commercial success from its completion in 1790 until the rise of competition from the railways in the late 19th century.

**Step 11:** It continued to carry commercial traffic up until the 1930s and now has a new lease of life as a recreational waterway.

**Step 12:** Notice your first sign for the Banbury Fringe Walk. Keep your eyes out for others as you continue on. They can help guide you too.

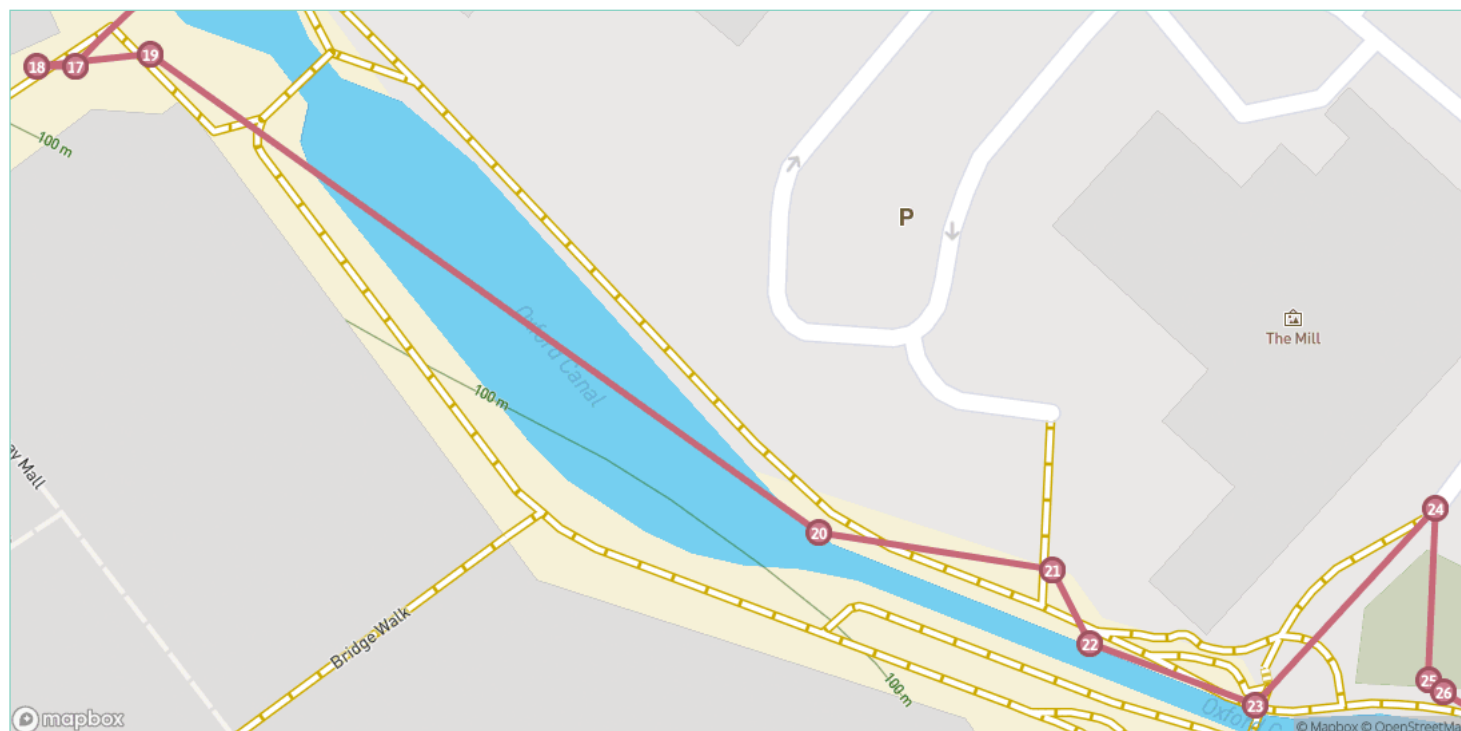
**Step 13:** The canal is lined by houseboats, and in this stretch they have easy access to the town centre.

**Step 14:** On your left is the Banbury Museum, a family-friendly museum telling the story of Banbury. There's a café and shop, too, if you'd like to pop in.

**Step 15:** Stay left at the bridge to continue along the towpath.

**Step 16:** Across the bridge is Tooley's historic boatyard, said to be the oldest continuously working dry docks in Britain.

**Step 17:** Today boats are still repaired at the boatyard as they have been for over 200 years.



**Step 18:** You can also access the Castle Quay shopping centre, which has shops of all different types. Feel free to explore if you'd like.

**Step 19:** The Castle Quay shopping centre was opened in 2000. The ground on which it is built includes the site of Banbury Castle, which was the subject of two intense and bloody sieges during the English civil war.

**Step 20:** When you're ready, return to the side of the canal (opposite to the shops) and continue on with the canal to your right.

**Step 21:** On your left is the Mill Arts Centre. This sculpture is "The Dancers," by students from learning disability arts classes from July 2005.

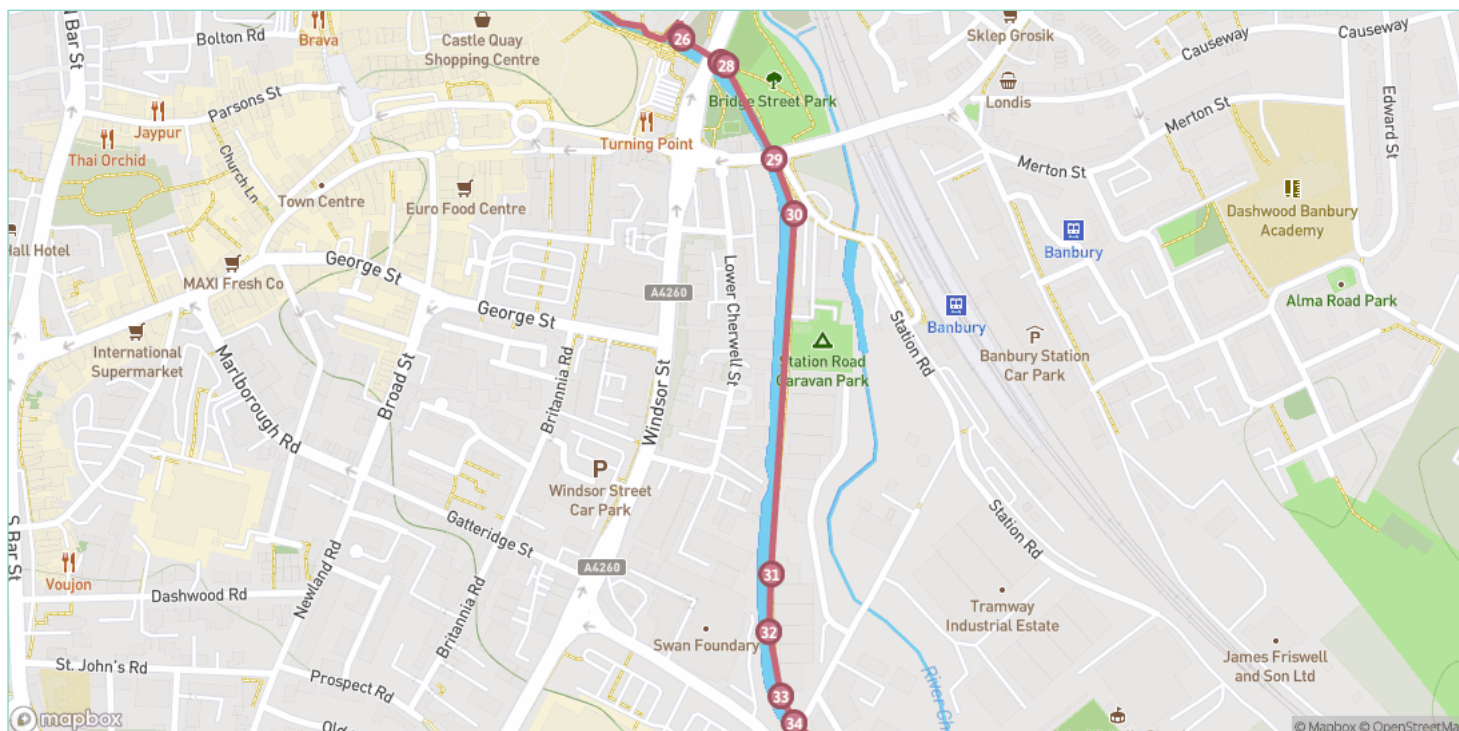
**Step 22:** Bear left to follow the ramp down. Hold the handrail if you need to.

**Step 23:** Walkers can join the route from the central bus station here. Cross the canal bridge (No 165) from the back of the bus station and turn right along the canal towpath.

**Step 24:** The entrance to the centre is here, and there's a small cafe inside where you can learn more about all they have going on every week.

**Step 25:** This sculpture, by Michael Fairfax, features the poem "Flow," by Jamie McKendrick. The two worked together on the beautiful canalside piece.





**Step 26:** The tops represent hump backed bridges, immediately below are lock gate cogs, and under the inscriptions are ripples on the surface of the water.

**Step 33:** Up the stairs to your left is a sign pointing to the Banbury Station. It's a direct walk along Tramway Road.

**Step 27:** Bear right to stick along the canal.

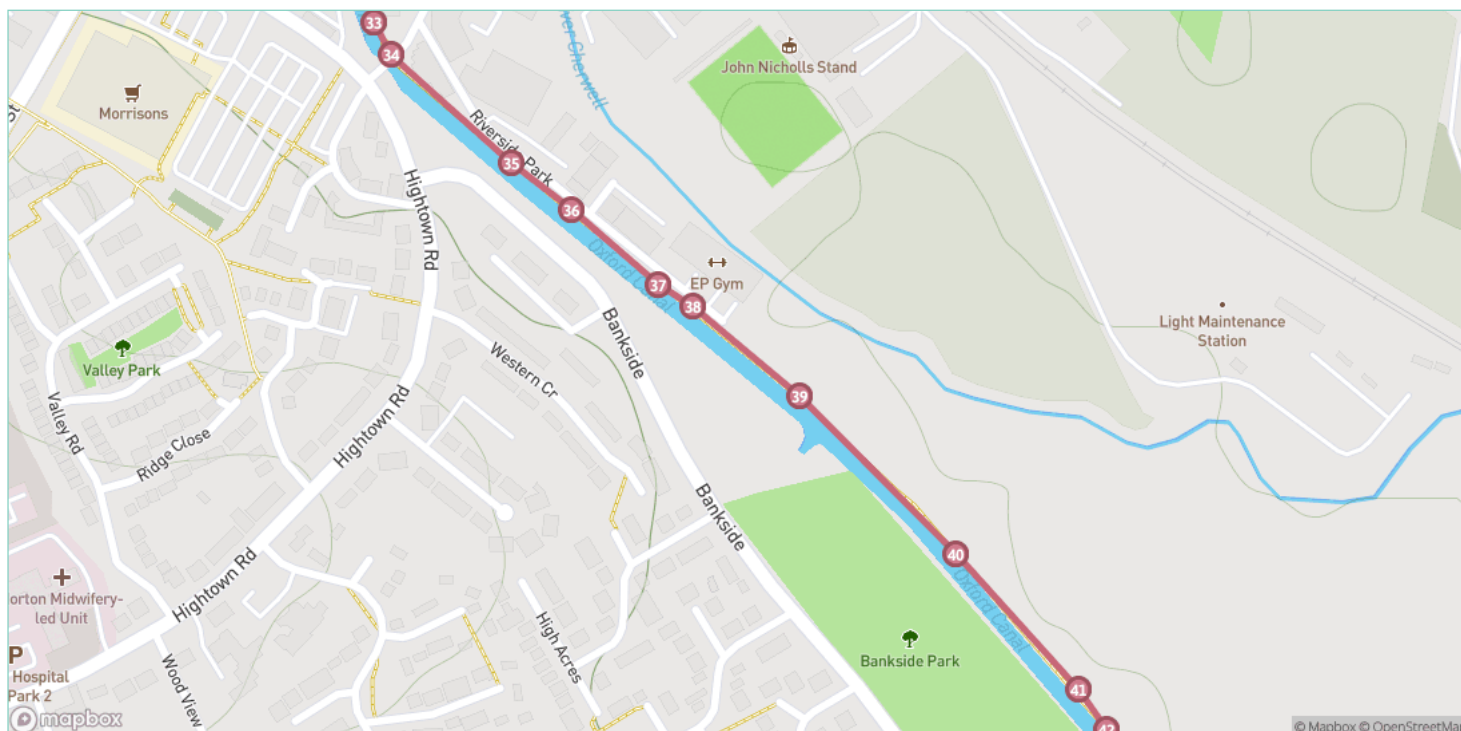
**Step 28:** Walkers can join the route from the train station here. Walk out of the station to Bridge Street, cross over, follow the signs to the towpath and on reaching the canal, turn left.

**Step 29:** Pass under the bridge's brick arch.

**Step 30:** The towpath follows the whole canal, 80 miles! We're not going that far today.

**Step 31:** The towpath is compacted dirt, so it can get muddy in spots after rain.

**Step 32:** Canals have historically been good places for industries. Most don't need direct access anymore, but the industrial activity often remains.



**Step 34:** Pass under the bridge which is number 168. The route follows the canal until number 172. Be on the lookout for other numbers in between.

**Step 35:** What sorts of little signs of activity can you notice from the areas around the houseboats?

**Step 36:** Do remember that people live in the houseboats, so please try to be respectful as you pass by.

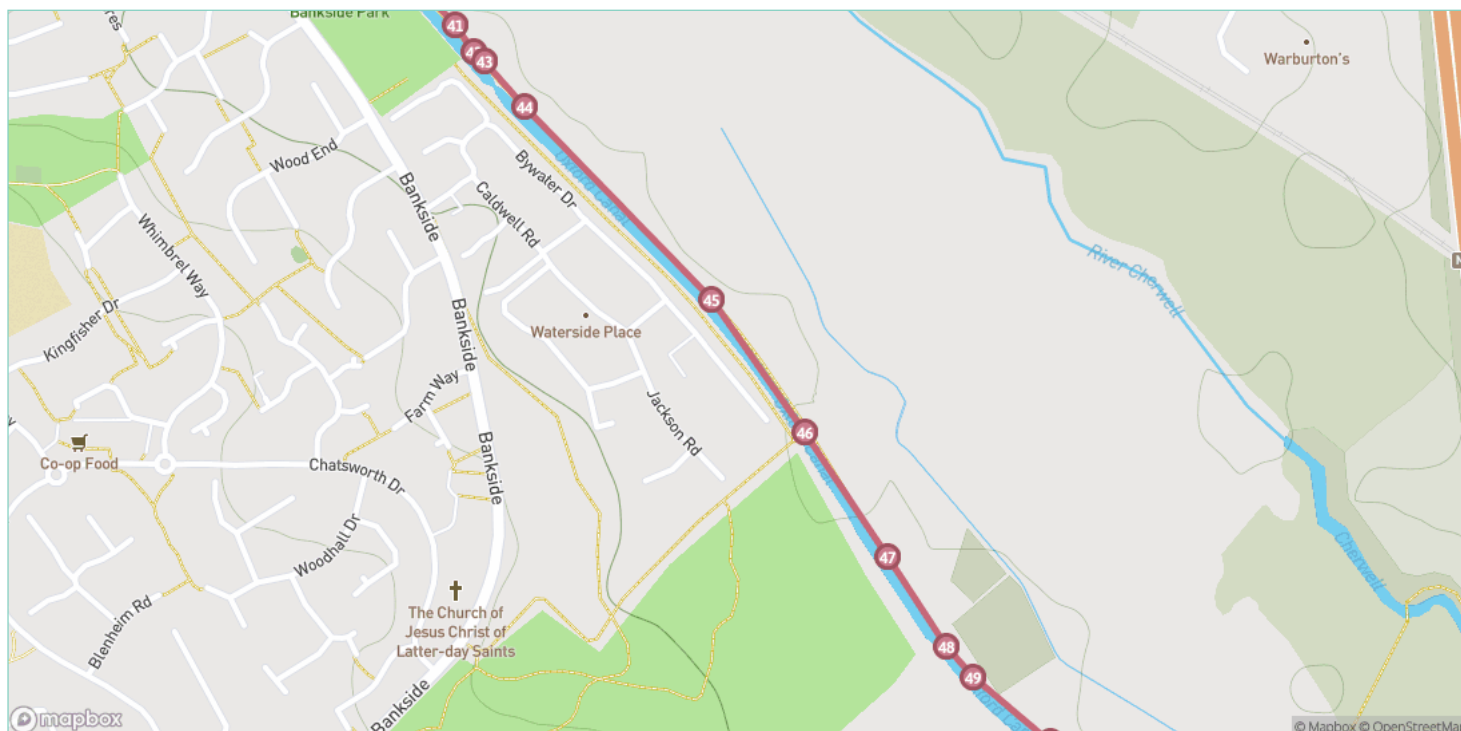
**Step 37:** British Waterways used to oversee most canals in Britain. Now, the Canal & River Trust manage these waterways in England and Wales.

**Step 38:** Can you spot this little fella long the way? We're not sure that this is where a frog belongs! 🐸

**Step 39:** What's been your favourite of all the boat names you've seen so far?

**Step 40:** On your right, the lovely Bankside Park comes into view.

**Step 41:** Just walking along, this little duck didn't seem to mind at all. What signs of life can you spot whilst on your walk?



**Step 42:** Another Banbury Fringe sign as you continue straight along the towpath.

**Step 49:** Keep walking straight and admire the small woodland that appears on your left.

**Step 43:** The vegetation alongside the towpath provides food and shelter for a wide variety of animals.

**Step 44:** On your left, meanwhile, are some active fields for agriculture.

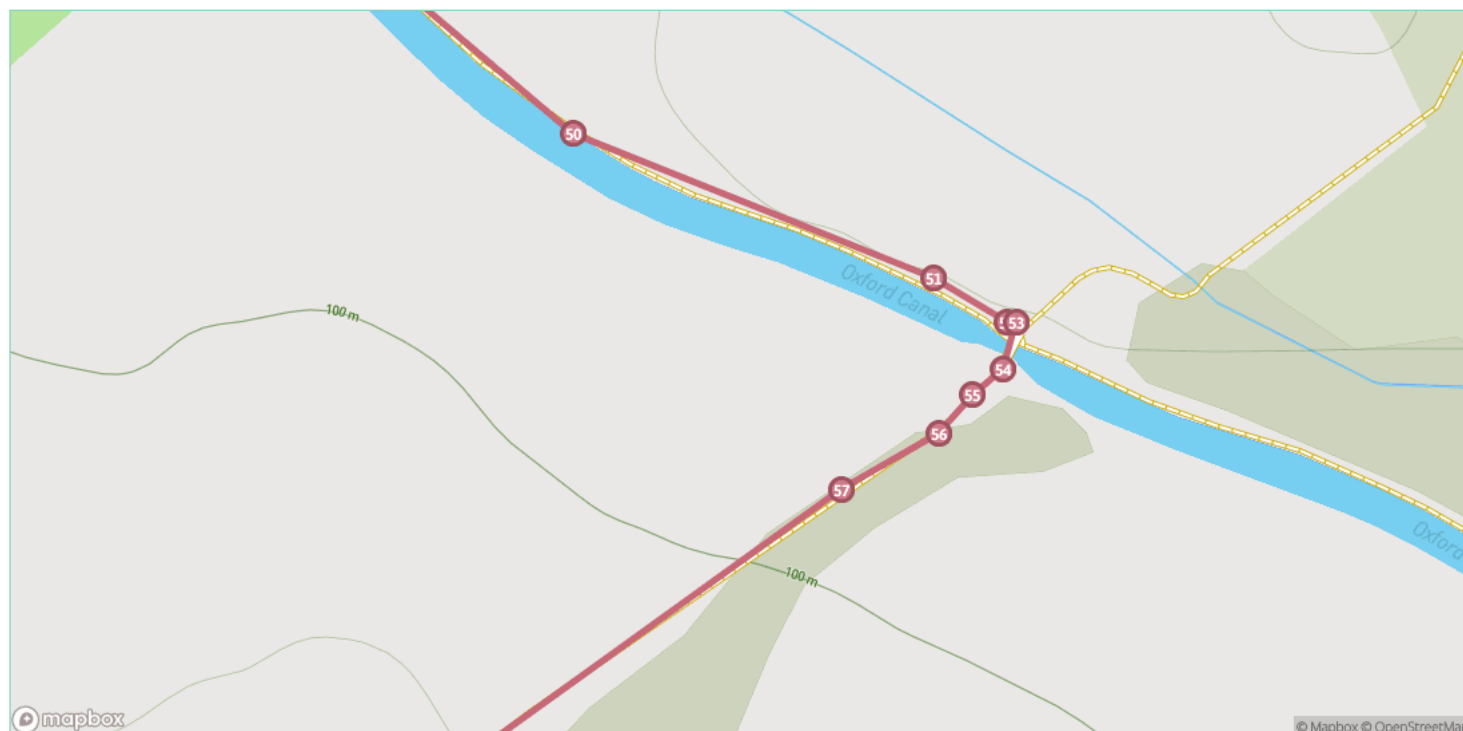
**Step 45:** Did you know towpaths were originally meant for animals such as horses, to physically pull barges down the canal?

**Step 46:** This is Bridge 170. Almost to 172.

**Step 47:** In the distance, you can see some new homes under construction. You'll pass through one of these sites shortly.

**Step 48:** Looks like the remains of an old bridge. Beneath canal bridges, there's often a submerged upside-down brick arch built for stability.





**Step 50:** Almost to the end of the canal segment now.

**Step 51:** Made it to bridge 172, also known as 'Nadkey Bridge.' Here, you'll take your leave from the Oxford Canal.

**Step 52:** Come up from the towpath past the remains of a stile. It's a bit steep, so tread carefully.

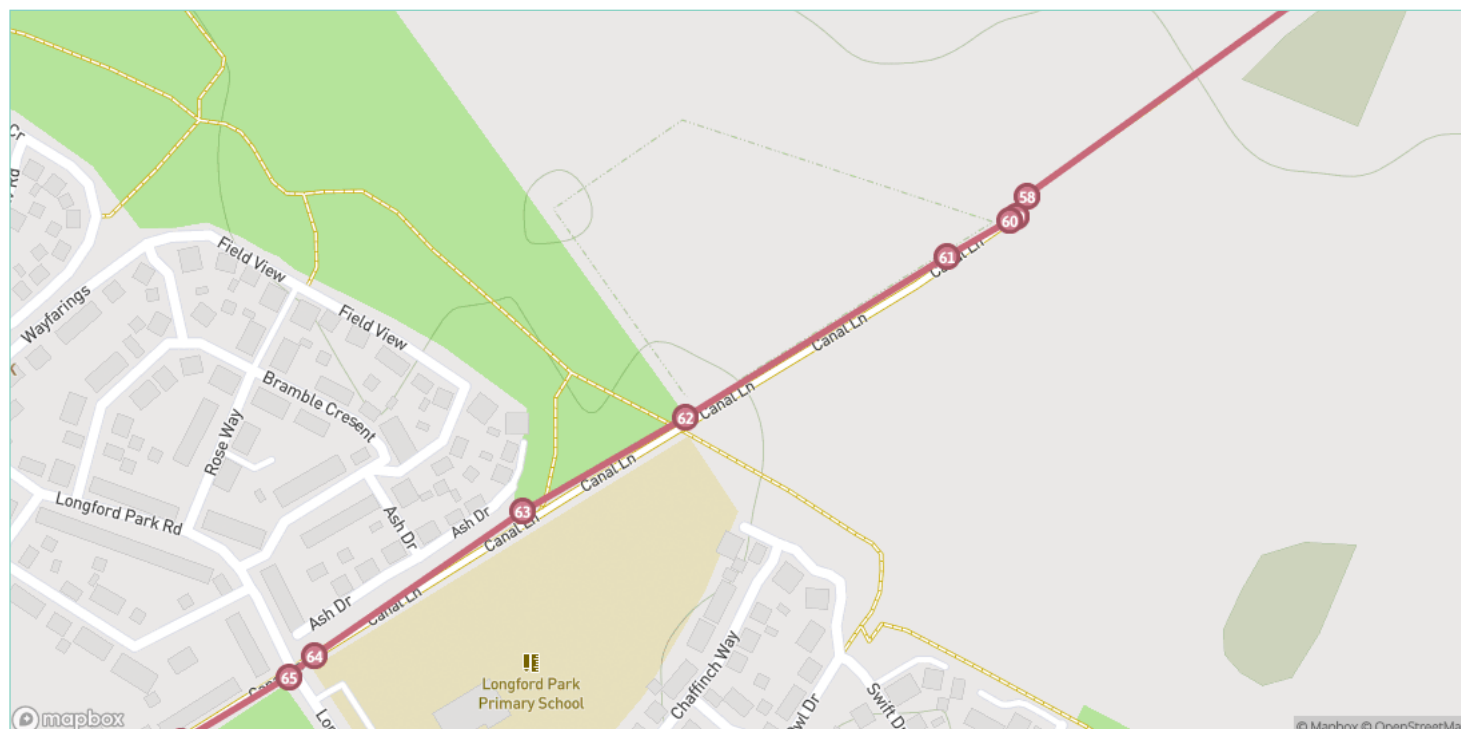
**Step 53:** Turn right to cross over the bridge. Soak in one last view of the canal.

**Step 54:** Continue on towards the gate. You can open it by reaching around and undoing the latch.

**Step 55:** Please make sure to close the gate and leave it as you found it before you continue on.

**Step 56:** Next, head straight up the hill with the trees on your left.

**Step 57:** It can be a bit muddy, so please proceed slowly and carefully. Take your time during your climb.



**Step 58:** Why not spend a moment admiring the views behind you as you catch your breath.

**Step 59:** Head for the gate straight ahead and pass through it.

**Step 60:** Again, please leave it as you find it and close it behind you.

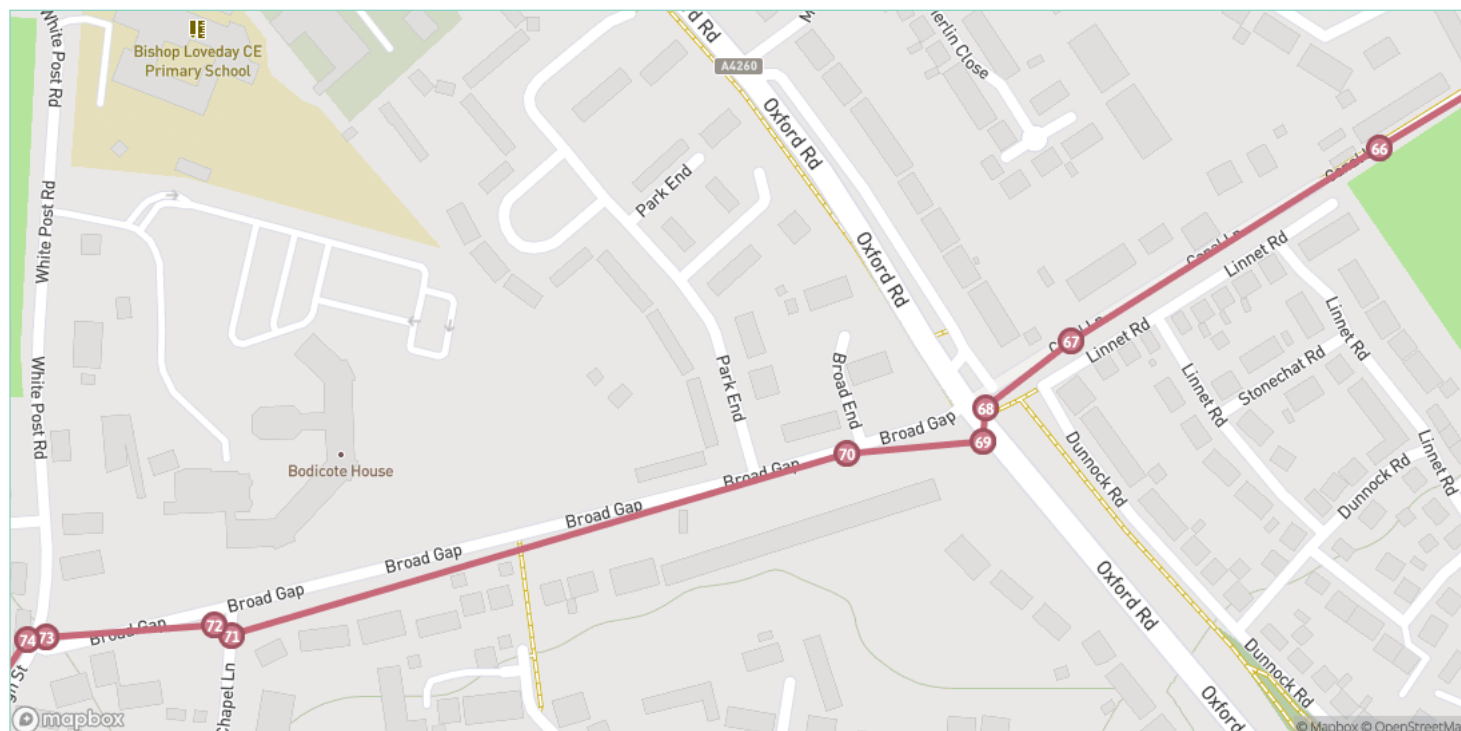
**Step 61:** Follow the track straight ahead through the Longford Park housing estate.

**Step 62:** Stick to the dirt road and continue straight across the paved crossing.

**Step 63:** Hopefully your day is as glorious as this one looks in the pictures.

**Step 64:** Walk around this wide gate and carefully cross the road.

**Step 65:** Walk around the other gate on the other side and continue straight on.



**Step 66:** Another gate to walk around.

**Step 67:** As you approach Oxford Road, the path becomes more and more like a road, but it stays quiet and largely traffic free.

**Step 68:** Cross the road using the light controlled crossing to your left.

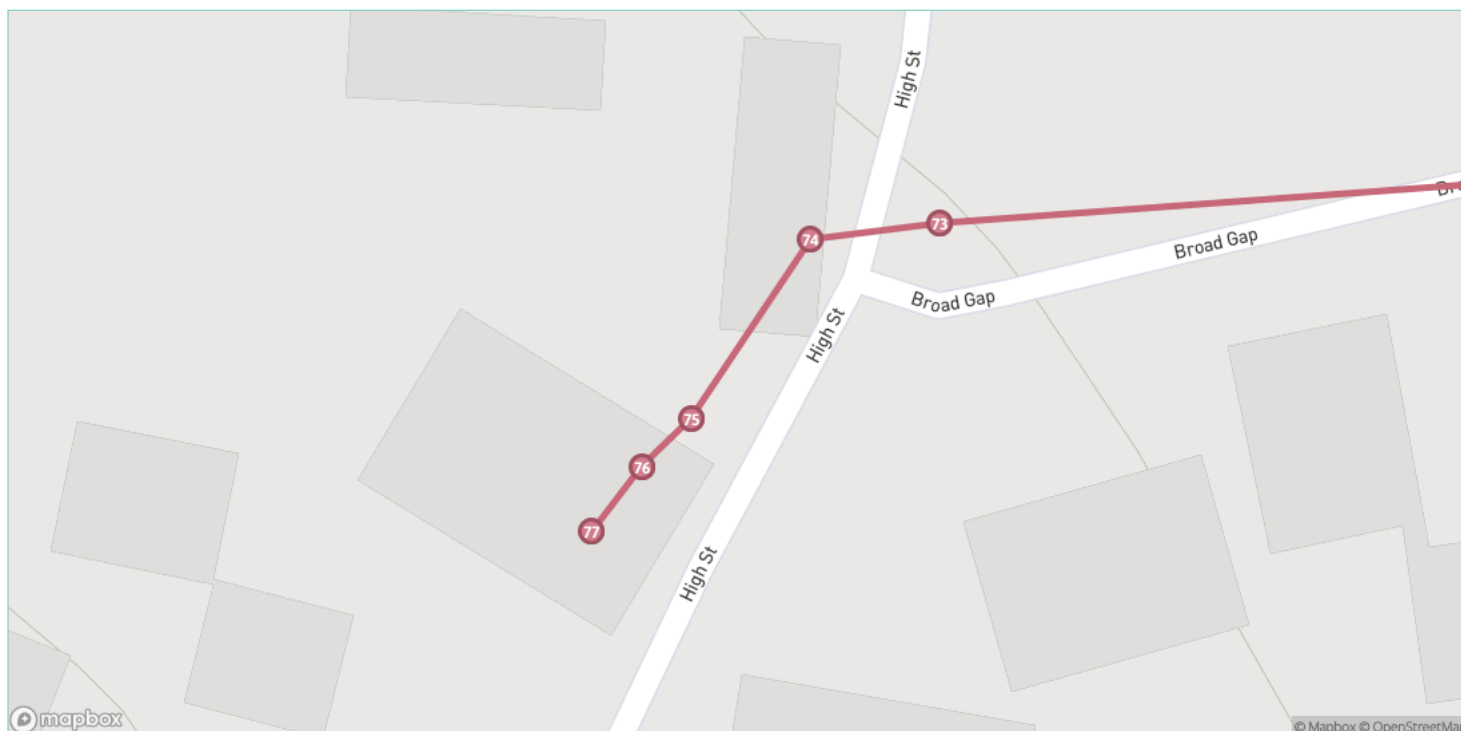
**Step 69:** Continue straight on along Broad Gap towards Bodicote village.

**Step 70:** The pavement here is fairly consistent, flat and easy to follow.

**Step 71:** Continue straight across Chapel Lane and follow the pavement along the stone wall.

**Step 72:** The pavement here is a bit narrow, especially if there are people walking towards you, too.

**Step 73:** This segment ends at the intersection up ahead. This is Bodicote, a large village with the original centre (now a conservation area) set amidst more recent development.



**Step 74:** If you feel thirsty or want to see some of the historical buildings of the village and the two pubs, you can turn left here to head into town.

**Step 75:** Bodicote also provides the focus for another circular walk which connects with the Fringe Walk along the Salt Way.

**Step 76:** And that's it! At the end of the walk you can either return to the town centre by going back the way you came, walk back along the Oxford Road or catch the B3 bus back to the start.

**Step 77:** Why not try out the other three linear sections of the Banbury Fringe Circular Challenge next time? We hope you enjoyed this section. They're each so unique, so there's always more to discover.