Banbury North-West Circular Walk

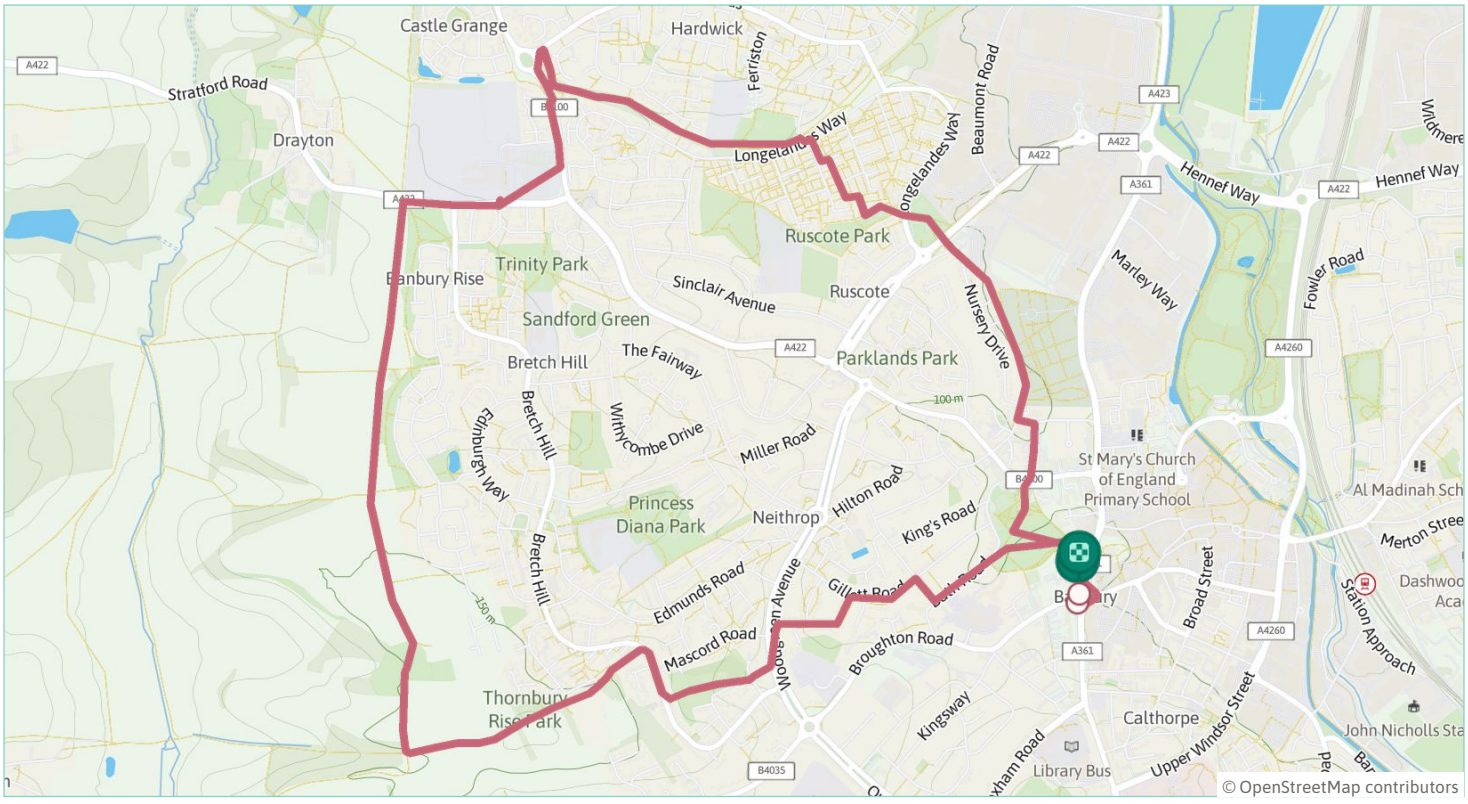
This circular route starts in the town centre and follows a stretch of the Banbury Fringe Walk. Features rural farm tracks and town parks.

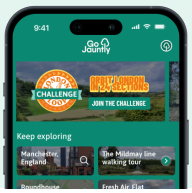
Distance 8.4 kilometres / 5.2 miles
Duration 3 hours

Wildlife | Water feature | Great views | Public transport | Parking | Botanics

Use the QR code or link below to view this walk on our website or app.

View the walk here





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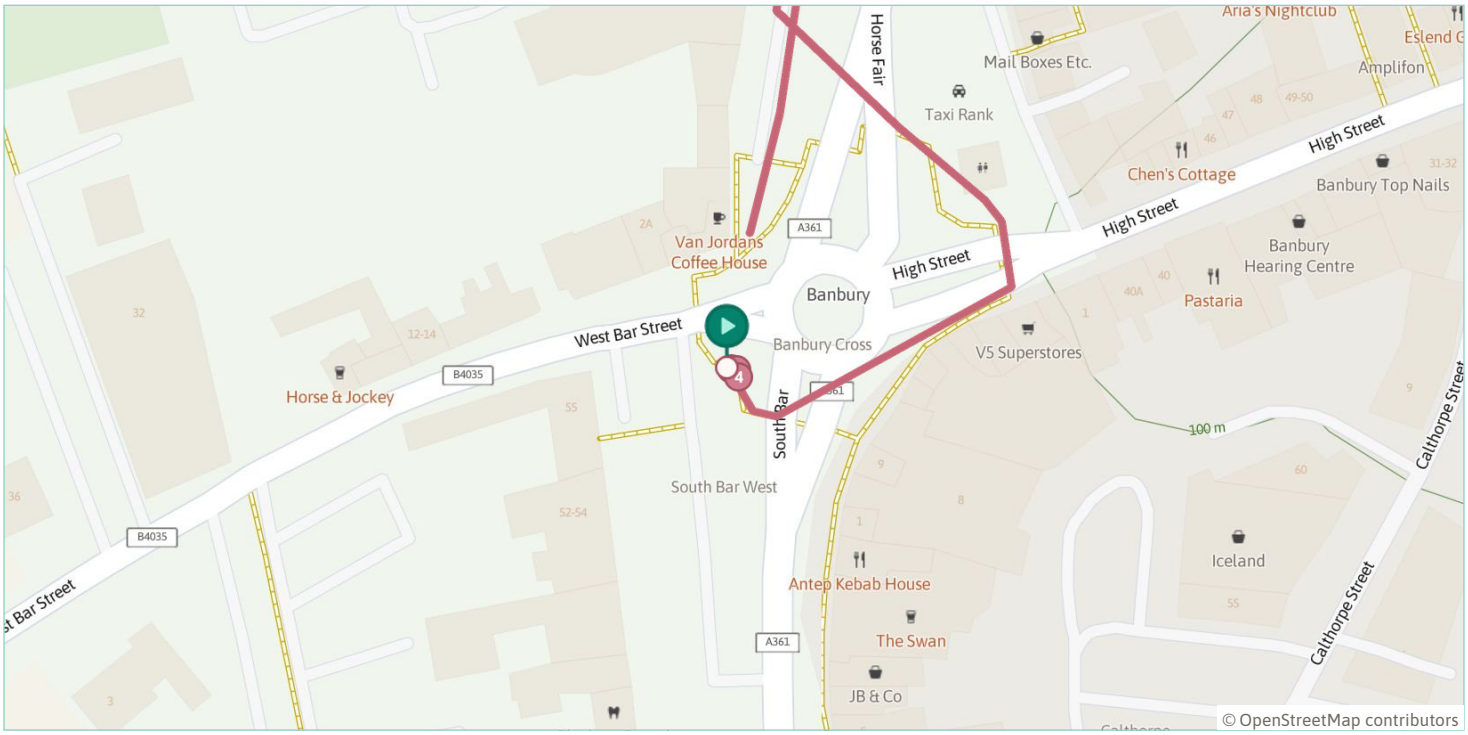

Step 1: This walk was created in partnership with Cherwell District Council. Enjoy over 30 walks across North Oxfordshire and experience the sights and sounds of nature as you go.

Step 2: Welcome to the north-west Banbury Circular walk. This walk starts and ends at the Banbury Cross (OX16 9AA) and includes a segment of the circular Banbury Fringe route.

Step 3: The Banbury Fringe Walk Challenge is a 16km route around the edge of Banbury which is also available in this app.

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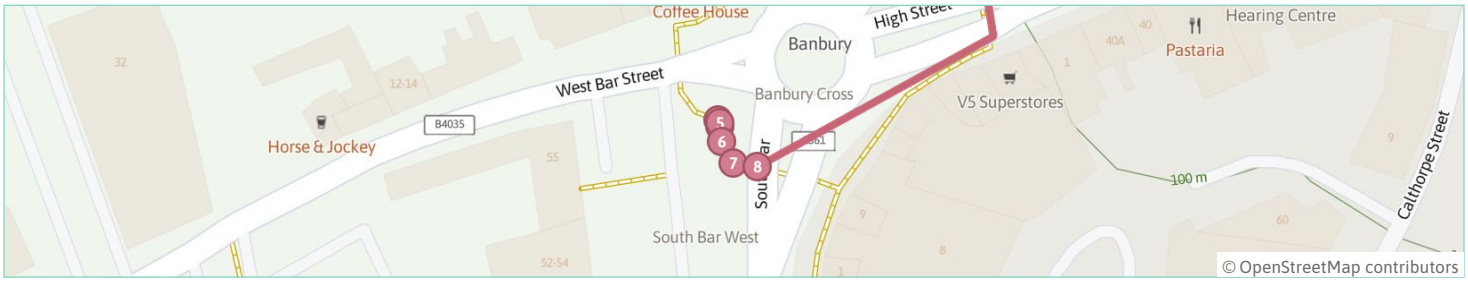


Step 4: You are advised to wear stout, waterproof footwear as walking in the countryside can be muddy and wet, even in the summer months. For advice on best ways to walk in the countryside check out the read more panel below.

North Oxfordshire

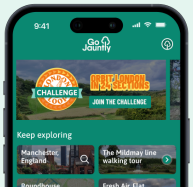
Best Ways to Walk

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.

Learn more

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code/the-countryside-code-advice-for-countryside-visitors

Step 5: All of the circular segments begin at the Banbury Cross, at the statue of the "fine lady."



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Step 6: This references the famous nursery rhyme: "Ride a cock-horse to Banbury Cross / To see a fine lady upon a white horse / Rings on her fingers and bells on her toes / And she shall have music wherever she goes."

Step 7: The Banbury Cross monument commemorates the wedding of Oueen Victoria's eldest daughter in 1859.

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Step 8: When you're ready, let's head out! Cross the street in front of you, with the Banbury Cross to your left.

Step 9: On the other side, turn left and use the next zebra crossing.

Step 10: Letter carver Giles McDonald shaped old Banbury street names into the wall of the public toilets here.

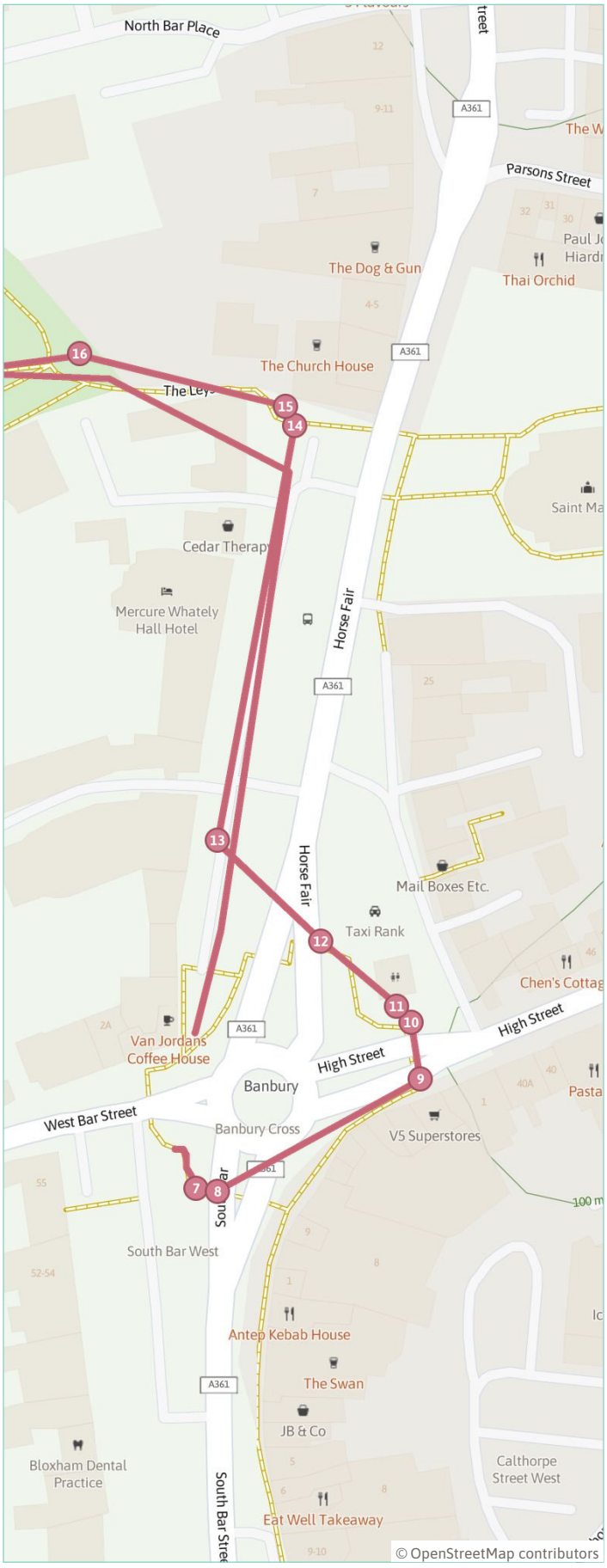
Step 11: Feel free to stop and take a look - you might recognise some of the place names!

Step 12: The route continues on the other corner of the roundabout. Use the light controlled pedestrian crossing.

Step 13: Next, let's leave the roundabout. Turn right to walk along the buildings. You'll pass an Odeon theatre on your left.

Step 14: It might look like there's no way out from the wall up ahead, but a small alleyway appears to the left. Let's go down there.

Step 15: This passage whisks you away to the People's Park, the first true public park in Banbury.



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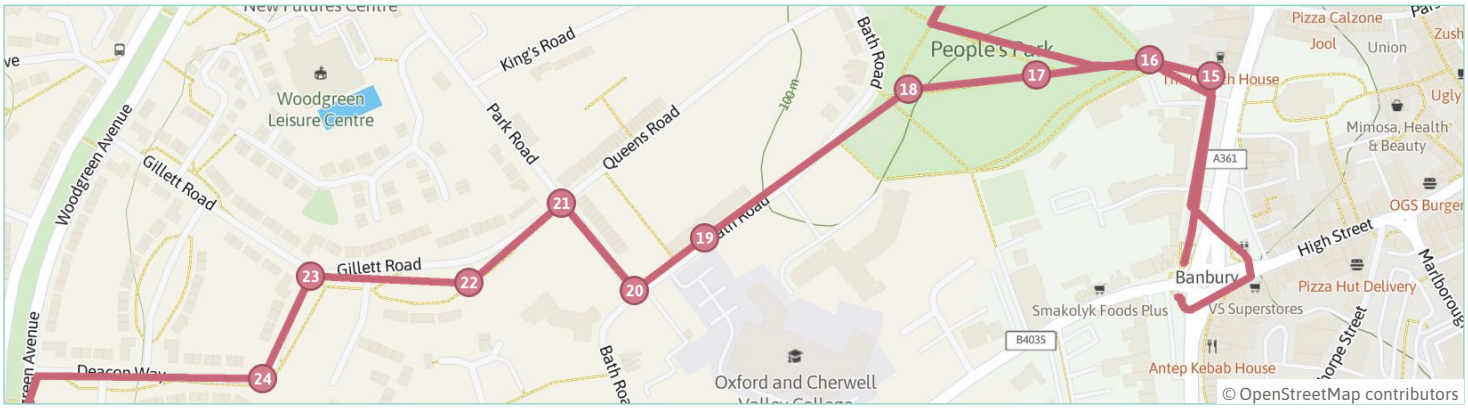

Step 16: Pass the stone gate towers. Veer left, but then take the path on the right. You might see the war memorial up ahead. Walk towards that.

Step 17: Pass the war memorial and continue along the paved path.

Step 18: Straight ahead, you'll see a gate. Head in that direction.

Step 19: Turn left to walk down Bath Road.

Step 20: Next, take your first right onto Park Road.

Step 21: And next, turn left onto Gillett Road. Only a bit more to go before we reach what feels like open countryside.

Step 22: Along Gillett Road, stick to the pavement as it bends away from the road a bit.

Step 23: Turn left onto Deacon Way.

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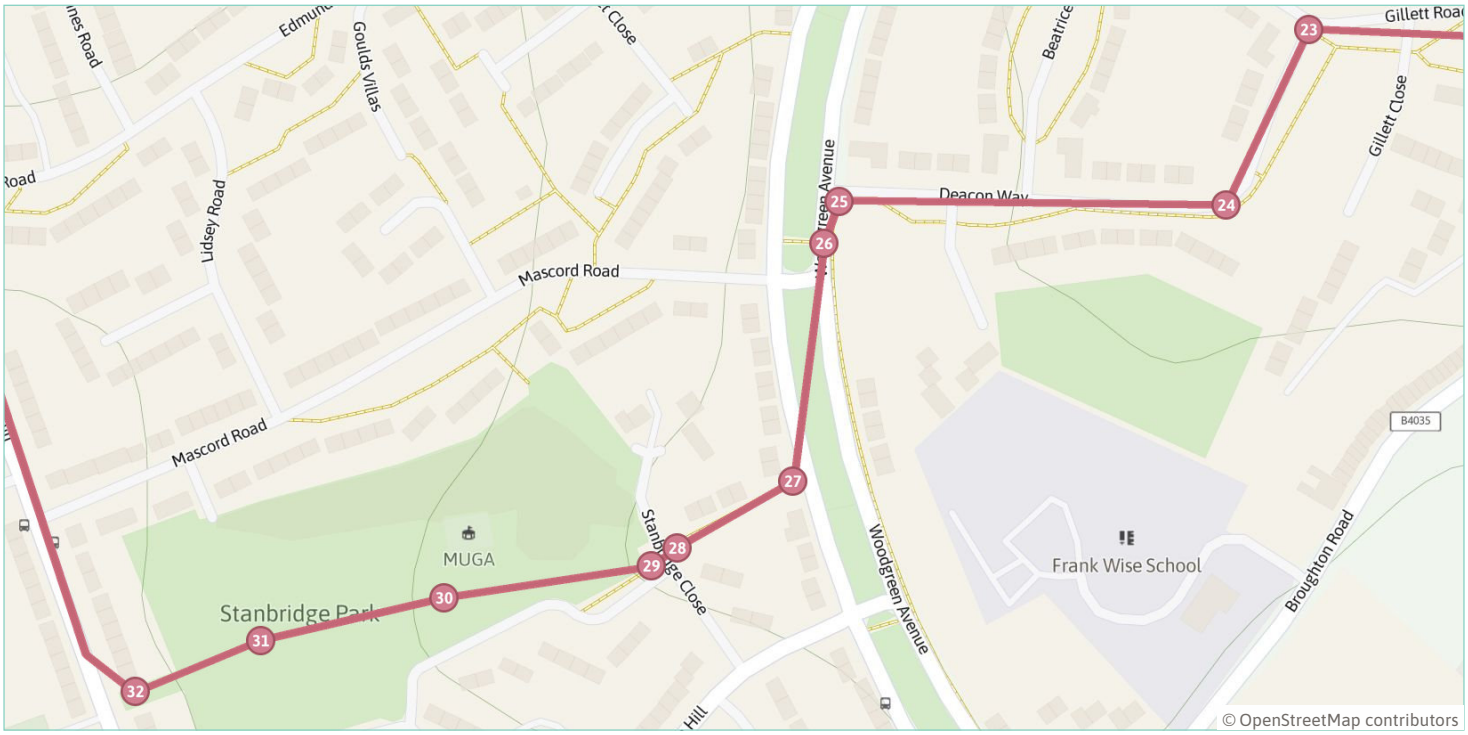
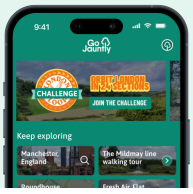


Step 24: Follow the road as it bends round to the right.

Step 25: When you get to Woodgreen Avenue, turn left.

Step 26: Almost immediately, at the bus stop, carefully cross the avenue when clear. Make use of the central island! Turn left on the other side.

Step 27: Cross over Mascord Road and, after a bit, a paved path appears on your right. Take this towards the lovely Stanbridge Park.



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Step 28: Take the short staircase or ramp up towards the recycling bins.

Step 29: And enter the park here. There's no defined path, but generally head across the field and up the hill.

Step 30: Take your time in the park. We love taking a few extra minutes to sit or stand in the grass and simply take in the natural world around us!

Step 31: As you get nearer to the top, this radio tower comes into view and points you in the right direction.

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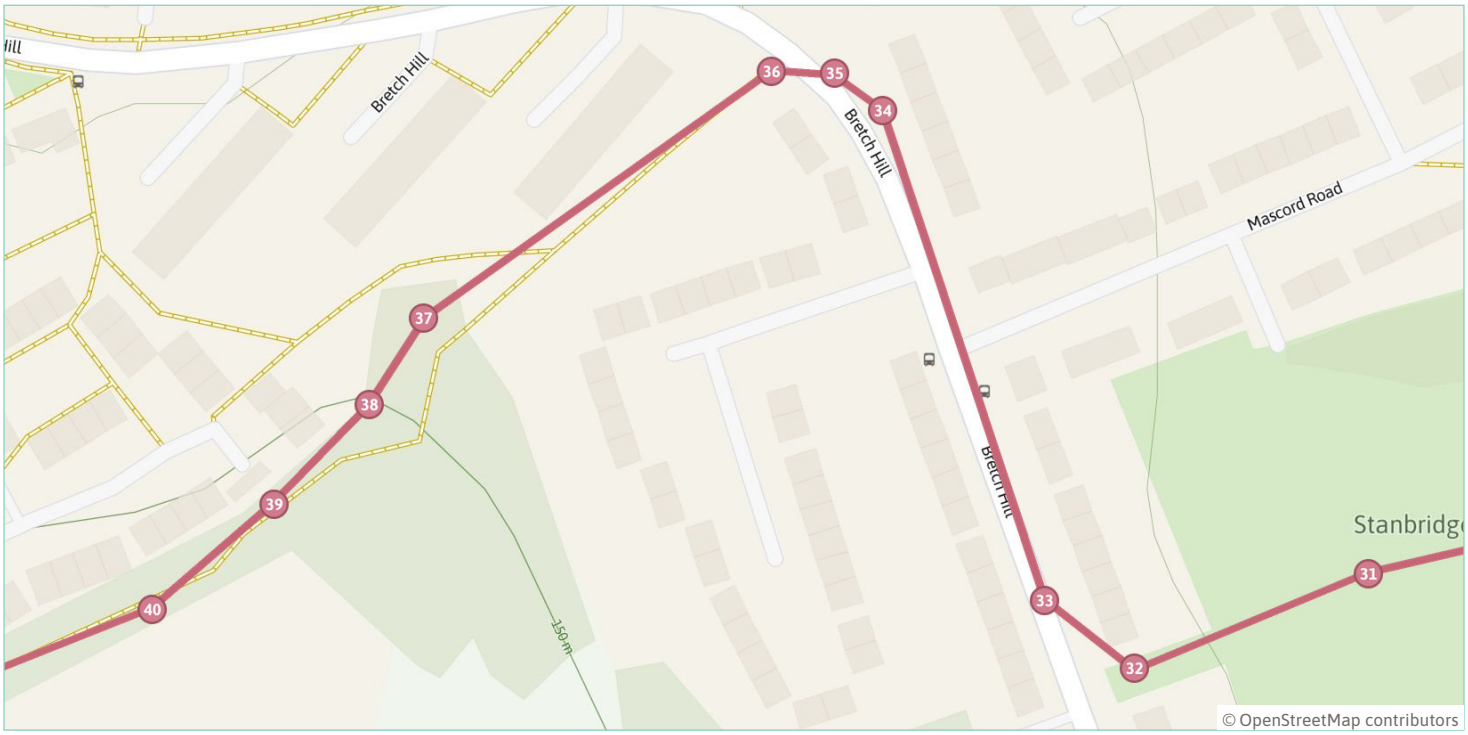

Step 32: You're looking for this gate at the top of the park. Head through it, and turn right.

Step 33: Next comes a short stretch on the pavement along Bretch Hill.

Step 34: You'll pass a marker for the "Pink Diamond Trail". This is a local neighbourhood health walk, designed by Cherwell District Council.

Step 35: There are three of these walks in Banbury, encouraging people to get out and explore their local areas. These walks are also in the Go Jauntly app, if you'd like to try them out.

Step 36: On the left-hand side of the road, after Hampden Close, you'll see a paved path. Cross Bretch Hill carefully and head down this path.

Step 37: The pavement turns to gravel and then to grass. Keep following along the edge of the trees until you almost reach the fence.

Step 38: Then, you'll see an opening in the trees. It'll take you into a clearing. Head up the brief steep incline here to your right.

Step 39: From here, join up with a dirt track through the woodlands that will lead you all the way to the Fringe route.

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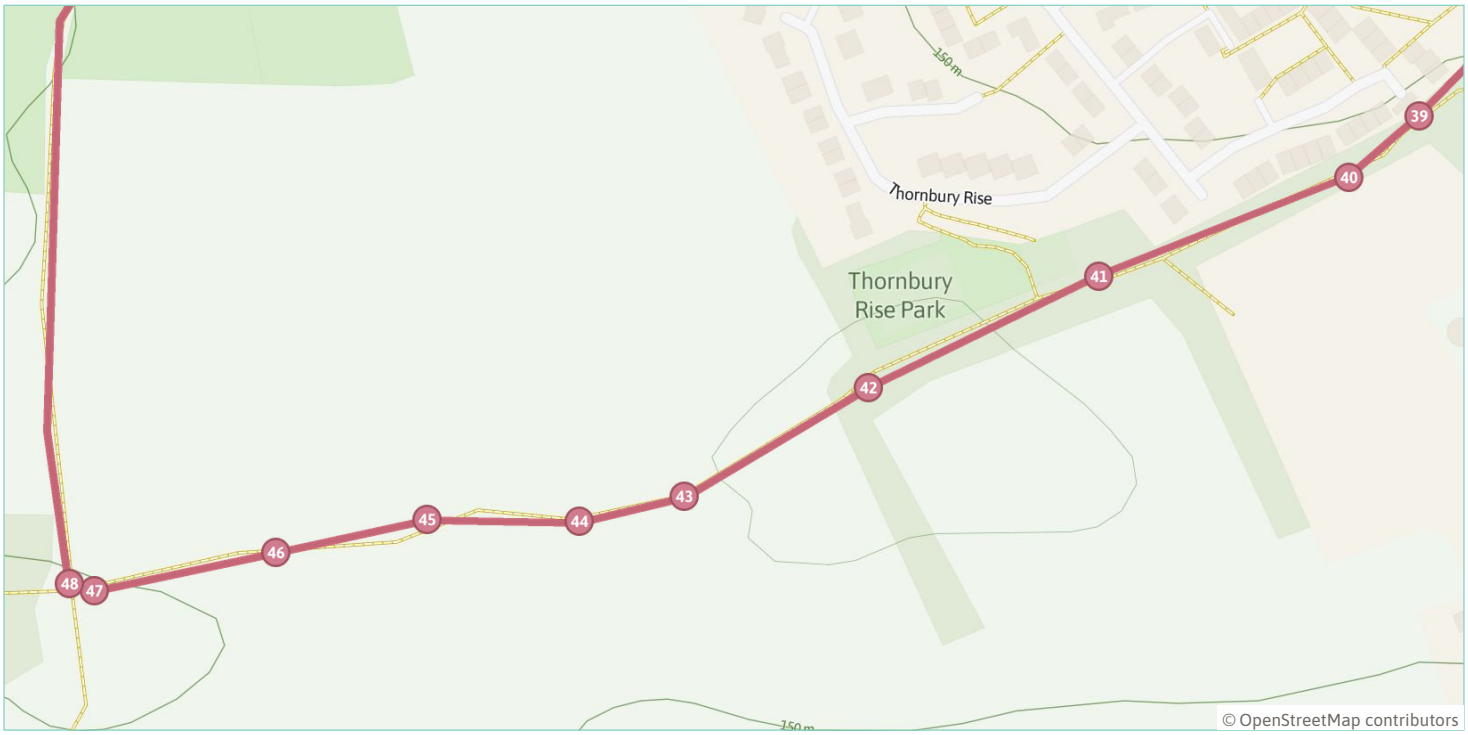

Step 40: Look out on your left for this retro water tower structure!

Step 41: Stick to the dirt track as you walk away from the built up areas behind you.

Step 42: 🚨 June 26 update. This area now looks very different to the photos due to a new housing development. A walker reported that you have to follow the yellow gravel path.

Step 43: And just like that, we're in the countryside! Only a few minutes ago the area felt quite built up.

Step 44: Take a few minutes. What can you hear? See? Smell? It's good to be outdoors!

Step 45: Follow along the edge of the field. In the corner is a patch of trees with a gate. You can just walk around it to the right.

Step 46: Past the gate, turn left and then immediately right to follow the edge of the next field.

Step 47: Keep straight ahead towards the woodland in the corner.

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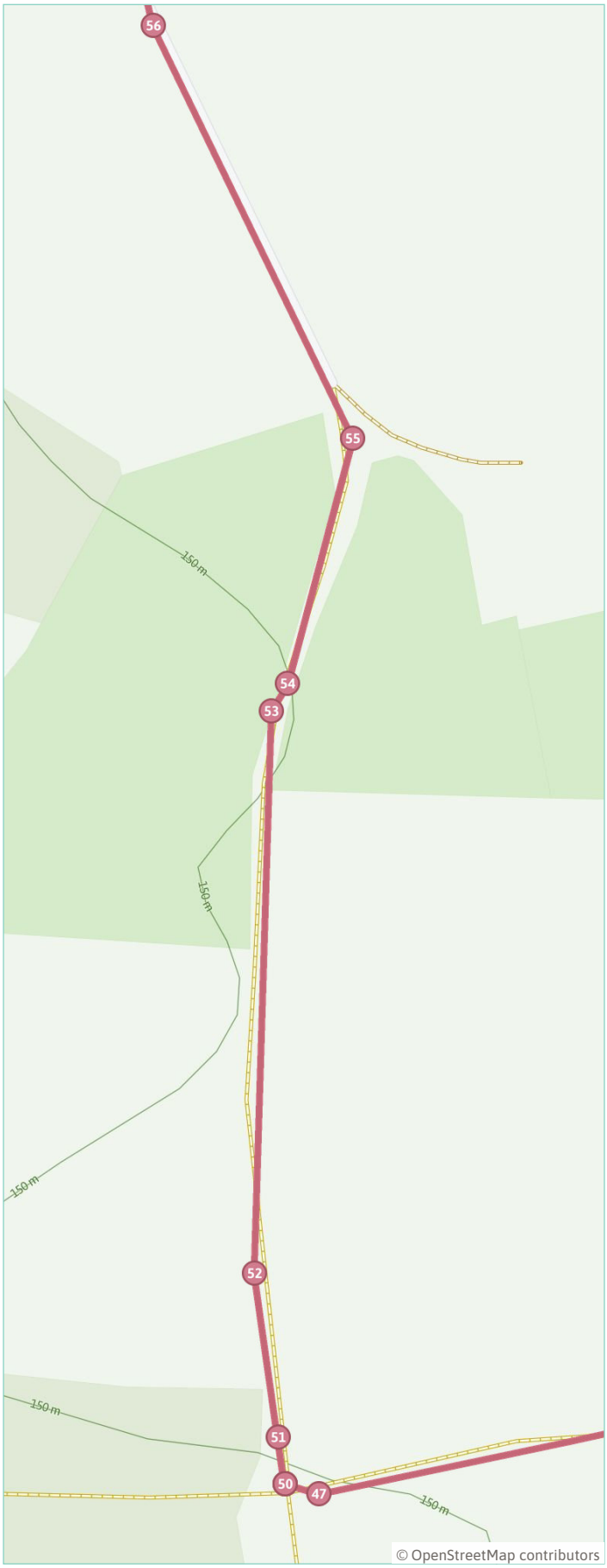
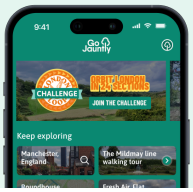


Step 48: Turn right and head uphill through a short stretch of woodland. You're now on the Banbury Fringe route.

Step 49: The Banbury Fringe walk is a 12.5 mile route that goes around the outskirts of Banbury.

Step 50: The full route is in the app if you're interested.

Step 51: Head towards the clearing up ahead.



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Step 52: Next, you'll be following quiet farm tracks and roads towards Drayton.

Step 53: Along the way, you can take in countryside views where you feel miles from built-up areas.

Step 54: Continue with the hedge on your right and paddocks on your left.

Step 55: Walk straight through the gateway and join a fenced, surfaced track.

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Step 56: Remember not to feed livestock you come across in the countryside and keep your dogs well clear.

Step 57: Continue straight on the farm road through the fields. On your right is being prepared for development but left there are still fine views.

Step 58: Further along on your right, you'll see a large new housing development in the distance.....

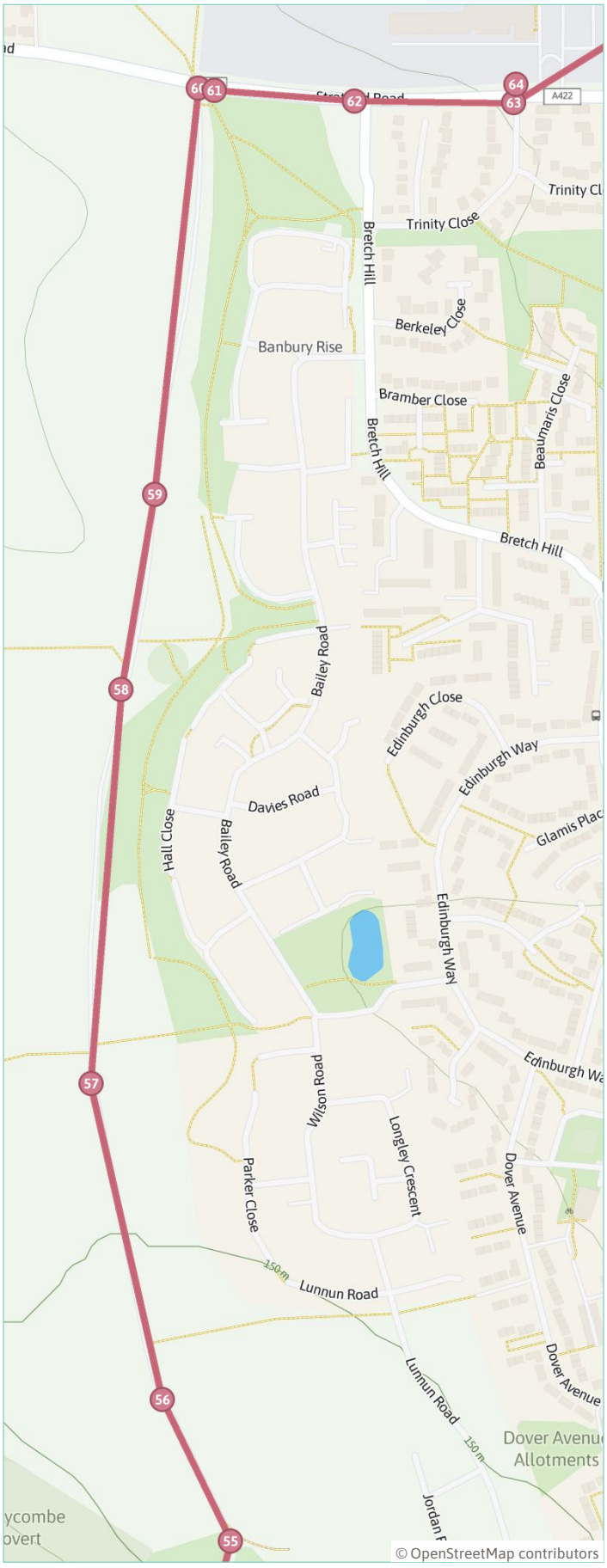
Step 59: .....which is hidden from view in places. As you approach the main road ahead.....

Step 60: .....be aware of vehicles ahead and behind you. On reaching the road, follow the sign and turn right.

Step 61: Stick to the pavement for this next bit.

Step 62: Carefully cross Bretch Hill.

Step 63: Cross the road here and turn right to continue following the pavement.



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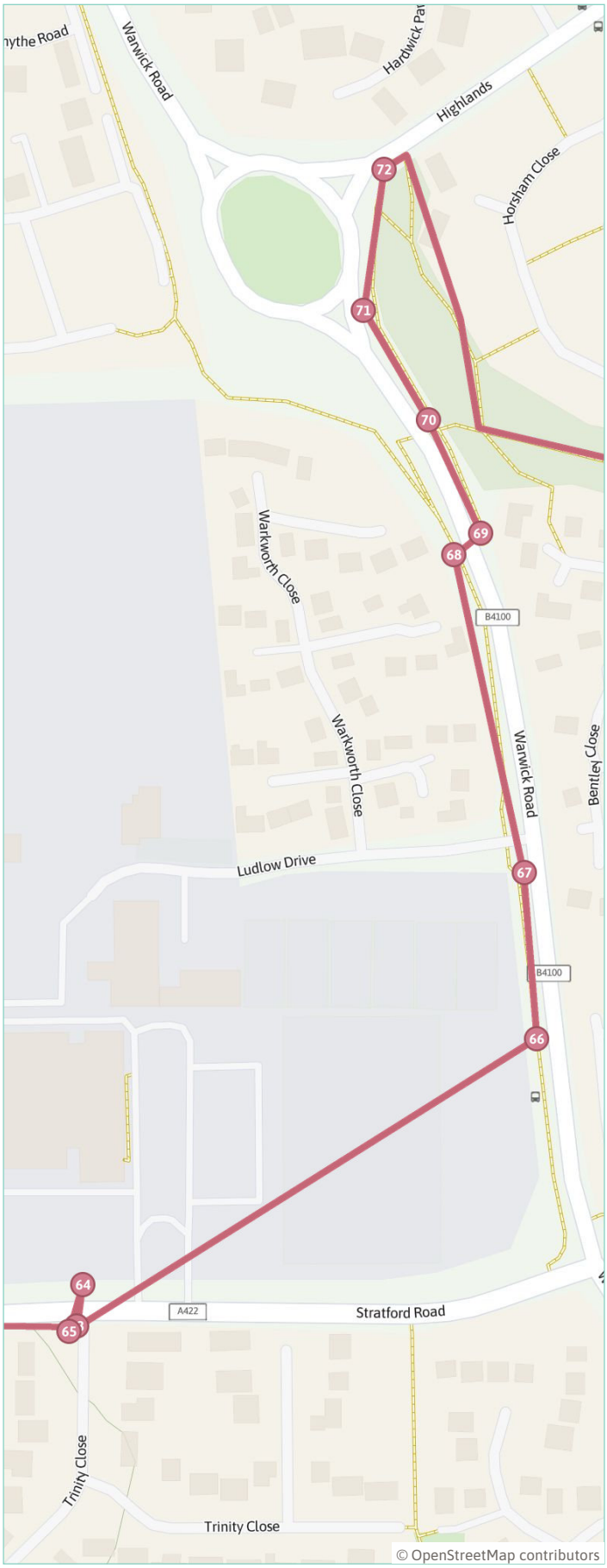

Step 64: Continue following the road on this side. There's no pavement across the entrance to North Oxfordshire Academy, but it starts again shortly.

Step 65: At the big road intersection turn left. You can cut the corner across the wide verge.

Step 66: Rejoin the pavement as you follow Warwick Road.

Step 67: Carefully cross Ludlow Drive.

Step 68: Use the pedestrian crossing light here to cross the main road.

Step 69: Turn left on the other side.

Step 70: On your right, you should be able look over and see the path down below. That's where you're headed.

Step 71: You just have to walk around to get down to that level.

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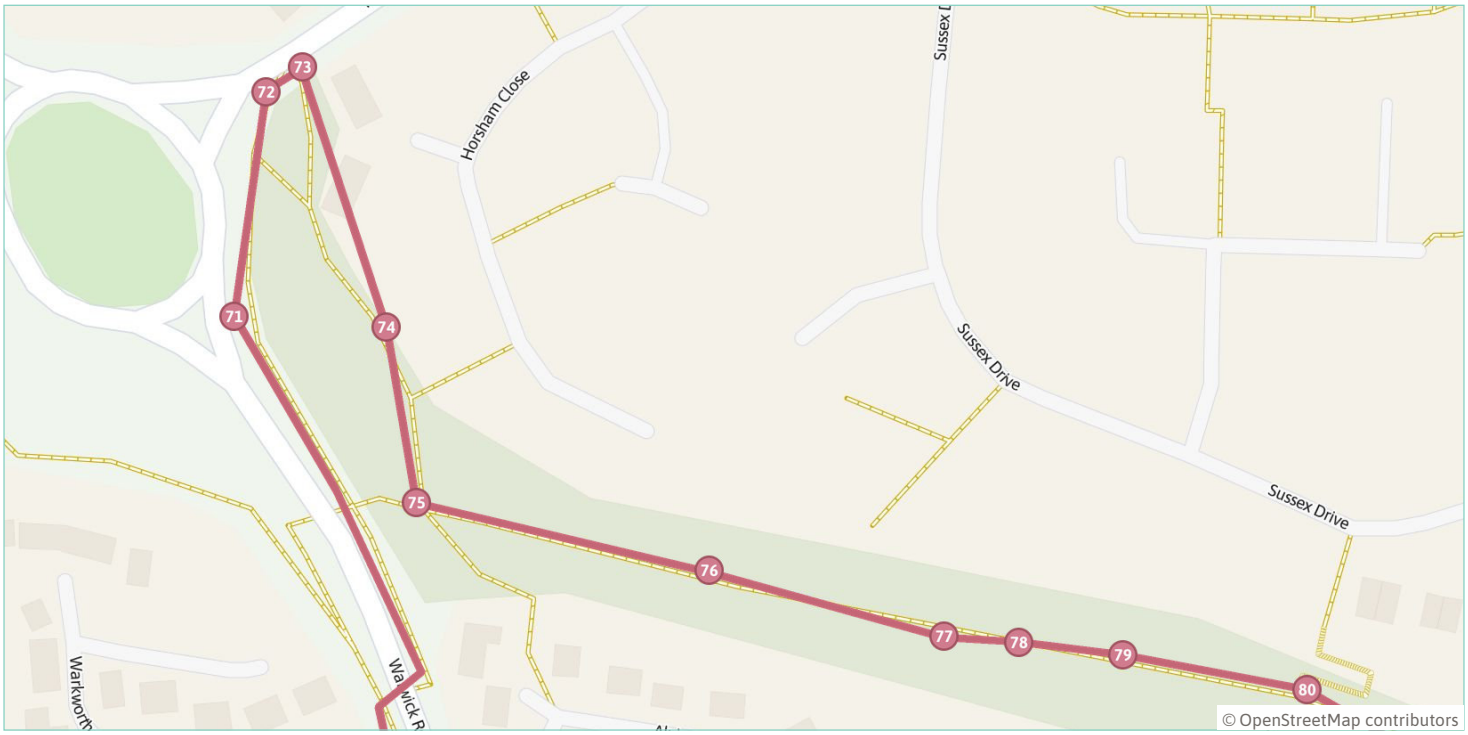


Step 72: Turn right at the roundabout. After a short distance turn right in front of the houses onto the path.

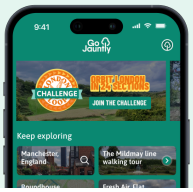
Step 73: Follow the path as it slopes gently down towards the Mineral Railway path.

Step 74: There are several long and shallow steps. Turn left at the bottom.

Step 75: A long corridor of peacefulness which goes all the way to the Oxford Canal.

Step 76: When operational, the Mineral Railway line formed part of the route serving ironstone quarries in the Wroxton area.

Step 77: It was constructed in 1917 by German prisoners of war to carry the ironstone to the main Great Western Railway line east of the Southam Road.



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Step 78: Operations ceased in 1967 when rail transport became too costly, but ironstone is still quarried in the area and transported by lorry.

Step 79: What sorts of birds can you see and hear as you walk along?

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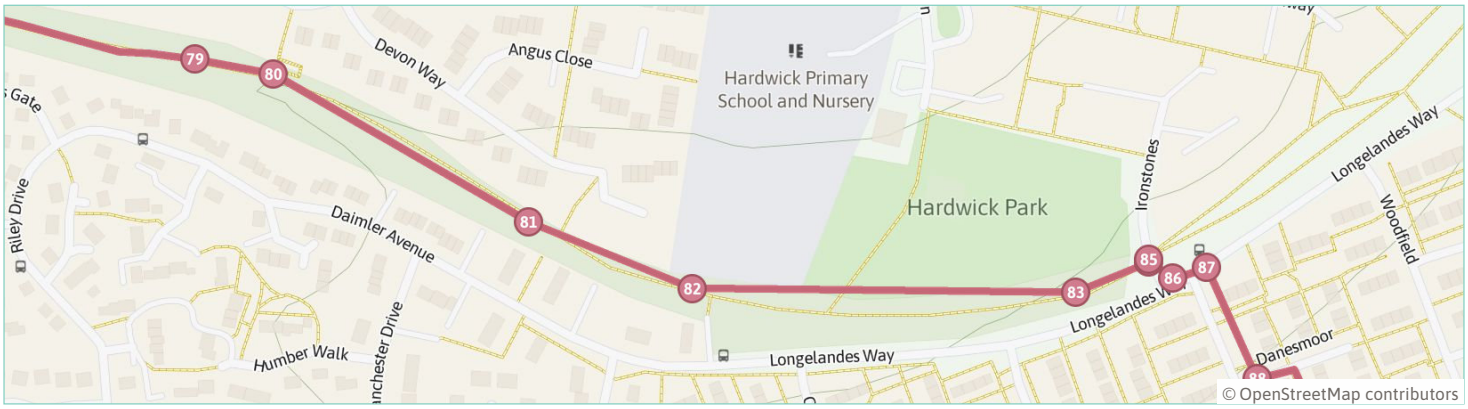

Step 80: One of the exposed rock faces which can be seen along the path has been designated as a geological Site of Special Scientific Interest.

Step 81: Without occasional glimpses like this one, you wouldn't even really be able to tell you're so close to built up areas.

Step 82: Stay straight ahead without getting distracted by side paths.

Step 83: As you emerge from the woods, the path takes you towards the Ironstones road.

Step 84: Use the dropped kerb to cross. The street name - Ironstones - is a reminder of the local quarrying industry.

Step 85: The Fringe route continues straight ahead, but it’s time for us to head back to town.

Step 86: Turn right to head towards Longelandes Way.

Step 87: Carefully cross to the opposite side and walk straight down the left-hand side of Danesmoor.

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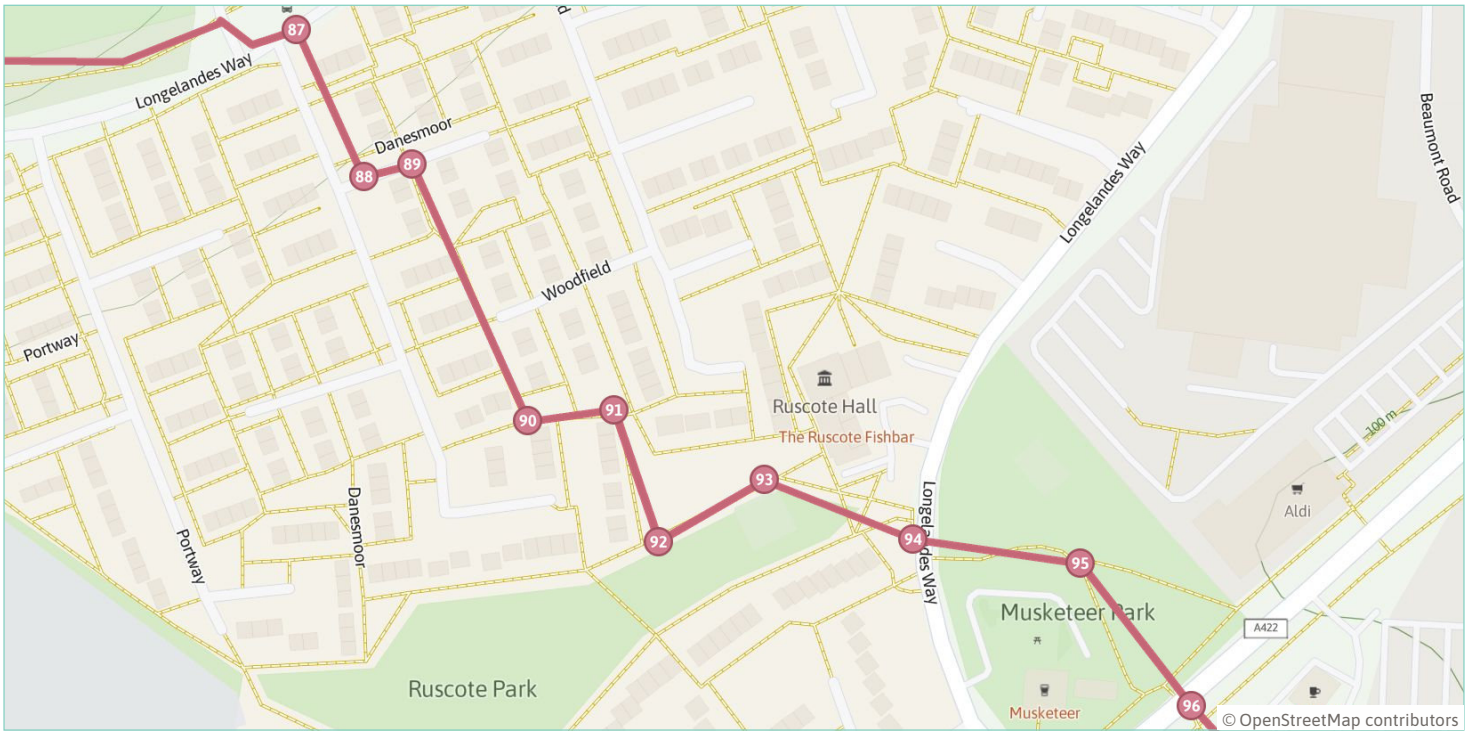

Step 88: Here, turn left. There's no consistent pavement, but it's a dead-end street, so it's very quiet.

Step 89: Look out for the first path on your right. Take this to walk through the estate.

Step 90: Almost to Ruscote Park! Continue straight ahead, then turn left at the end of the path.

Step 91: Next, turn right.

Step 92: Next, turn left. This stretch of path through Ruscote Park is also on one of the Banbury health walks, if you're interested in coming back.

Step 93: Follow the blue footprint markings to the right.

Step 94: Walk towards the traffic lights. Wait for the walk signal before crossing Longelandes Way.

Step 95: Continue into Musketeer Park, and follow the main paved shared use path ahead.

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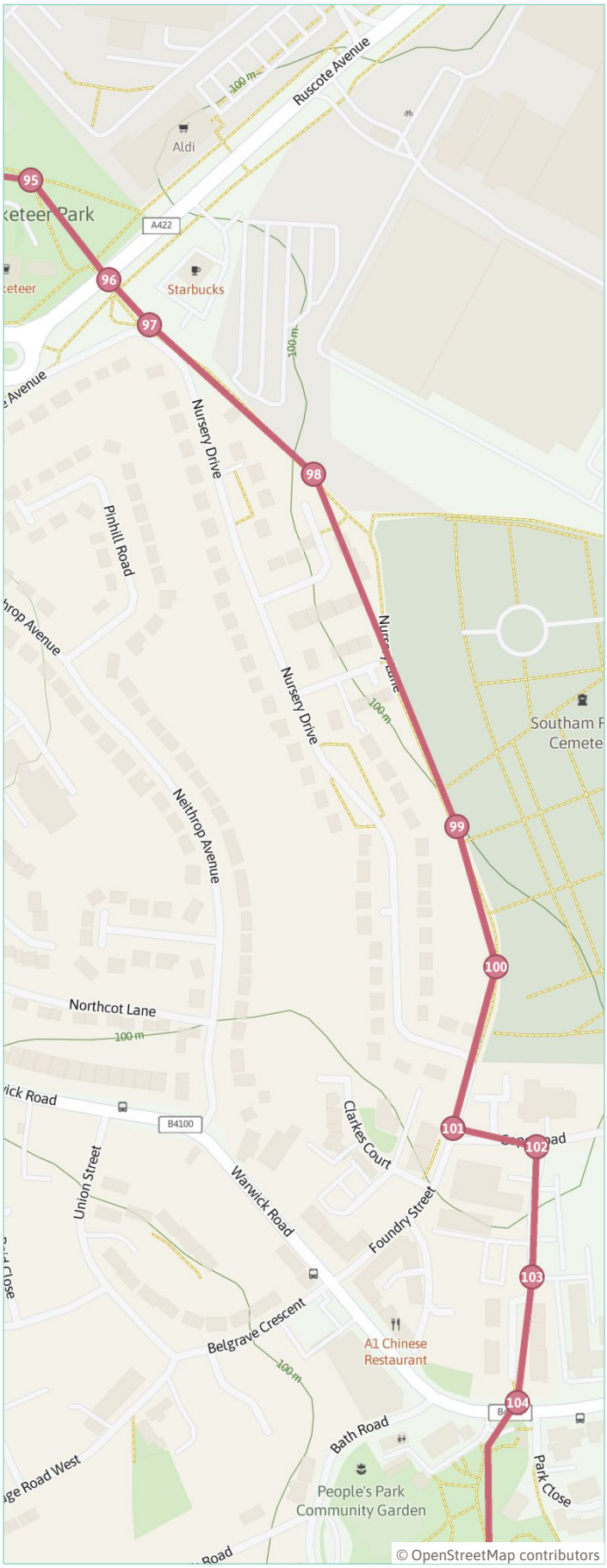
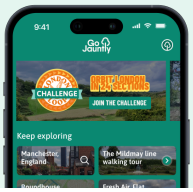


Step 96: Soon, you'll come to another light controlled pedestrian crossing, over Ruscote Avenue.

Step 97: Cross safely here and continue straight on, up the little hill and along the pavement.

Step 98: Stay on the pavement as it bends left away from the road. This will take you along Nursery Lane, past the Southam Road Cemetery.

Step 99: Stay on the paved path that skirts the edge of the cemetery. If you'd like to pop in and explore, you're welcome to!



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Step 100: We'll continue on. The paved path becomes Nursery Drive.

Step 101: Take your first left onto Cope Road. Walk on the pavement on the right-hand side.

Step 102: At the Orchard Health Centre sign, turn right.

Step 103: Continue ahead. Walk straight through the car park.

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Step 104: At the opposite side, use the pedestrian signal to cross Warwick Road.

Step 105: Next, pass the gate to return to the People's Park. We're getting close to the town centre now.

Step 106: The paved path will take you through the park. Stay to the right where a series of paths appear to the left.

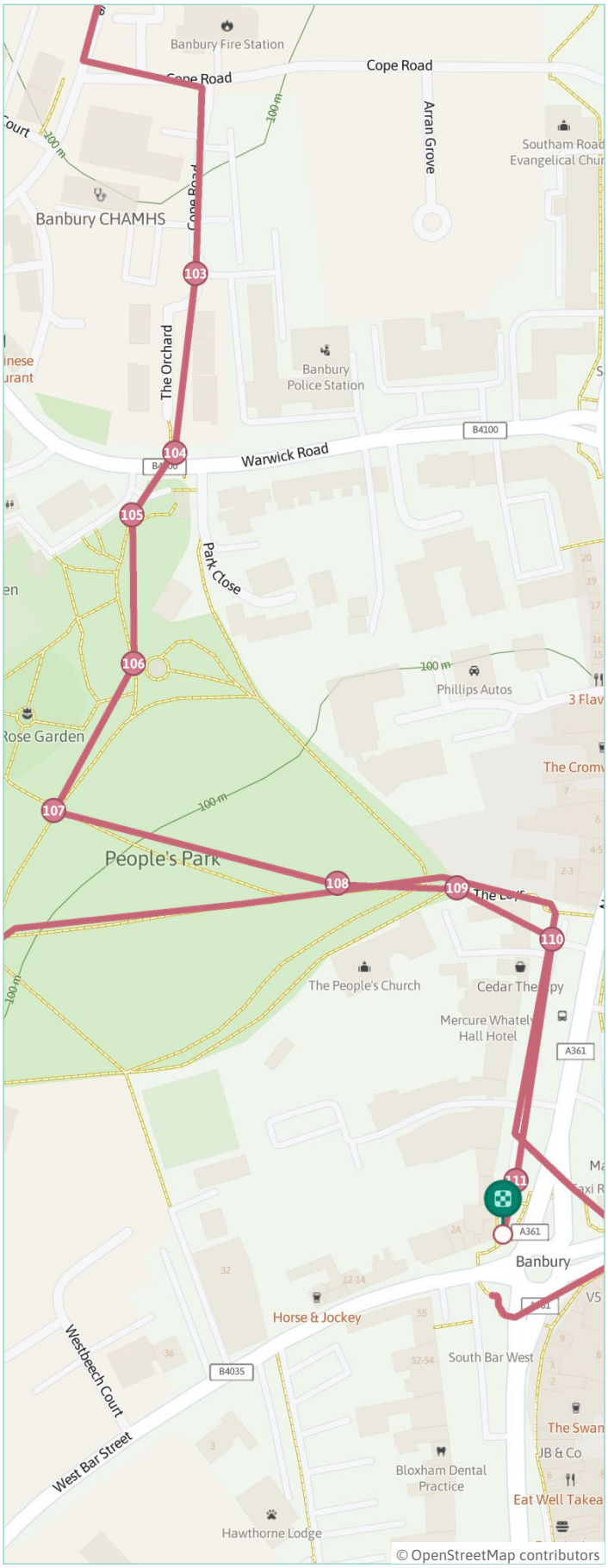
Step 107: At the four-way path junction here, turn left.

Step 108: Pass through the park, past the war memorial, to the stone markers you passed earlier.

Step 109: Retracing your steps now, follow the passage back towards the Banbury Cross.

Step 110: Out of the passage, turn right.

Step 111: And you made it back to the start! Excellent walking today. We really hope you enjoyed this circular walk.



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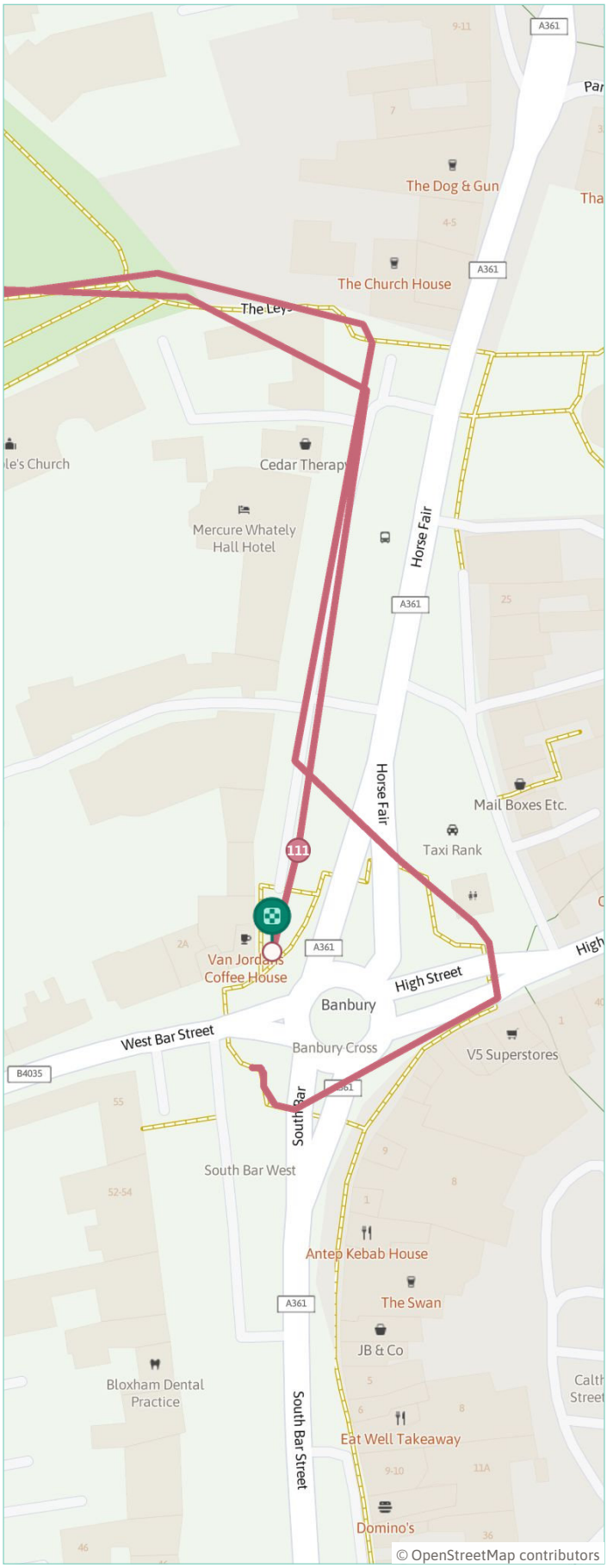
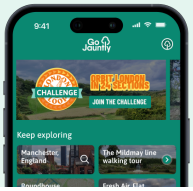


Step 112: Why not try out the other circular walks that start and end here? We hope you enjoyed this one. Each one is different, so there's always more to discover.



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