



Location Map

Acknowledgements

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Illustrations by Nigel Fletcher

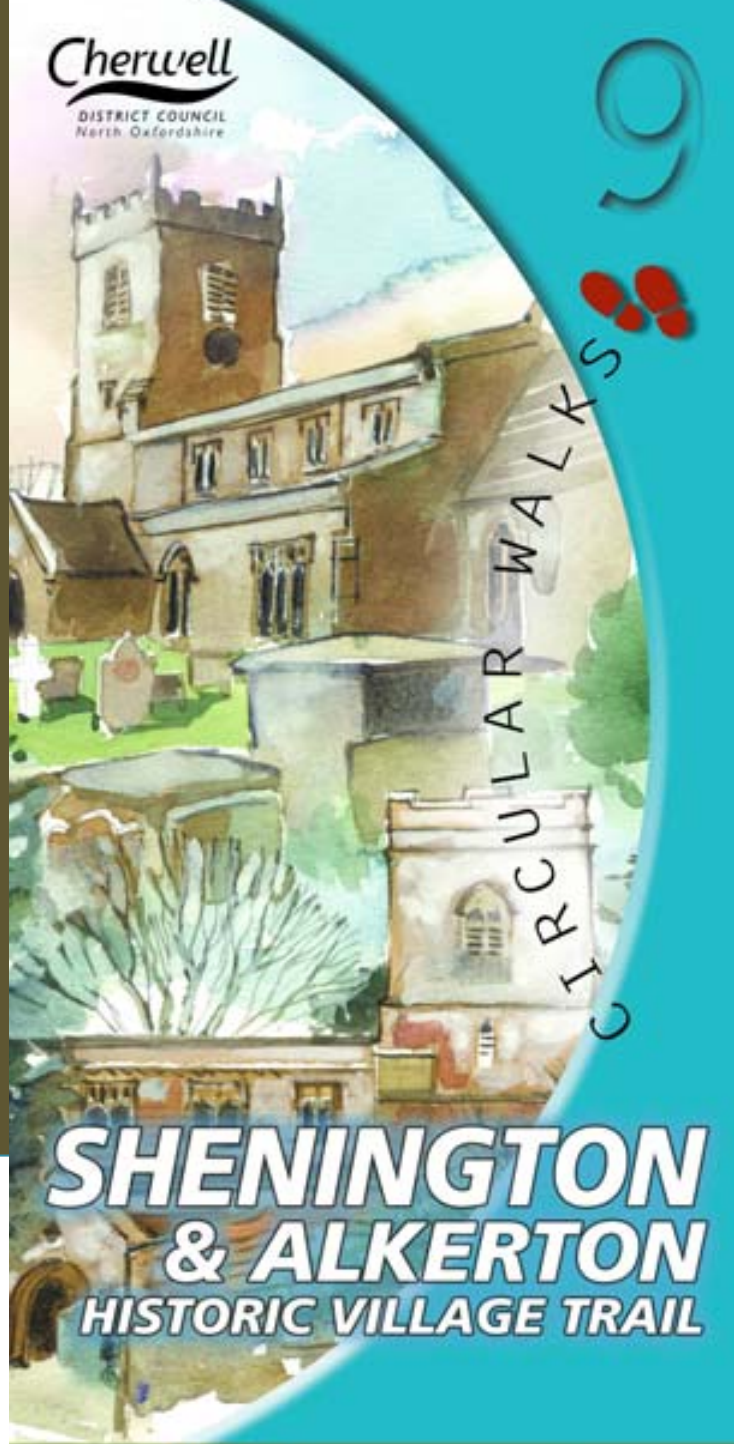
Thanks are due to the following for help in preparing this leaflet:
The Landowners, whose co-operation helped to make the walk possible
Villagers with long memories
Fellow Parish Councillors who provided support, advice and encouragement

Additional Information

All of Cherwell District Council's circular walks and rides are published on the Council website and can be downloaded free. Leaflets can be purchased from Banbury Tourist Information Centre (01295 259855). For further information about circular walks and rides, guided walks and grants available for countryside access projects, please contact:-



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Cherwell District Council
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Introduction

Shenington with Alkerton Historic Village Trail

Shenington and Alkerton lie six miles out of Banbury off the A422 Stratford upon Avon Road. Travelling towards Stratford, you will see a sign post for the villages on the left of the A422 almost two miles after Wroxton. There is

no designated parking in either village. Please park considerately so as not to inconvenience residents or other road users.



The Anglo-Saxon villages of Shenington and Alkerton

are mentioned in the Domesday Book and both have Norman churches. Alkerton has always been part of Oxfordshire but Shenington was an isolated part of Gloucestershire until 1844.

The two parishes were merged in 1970. On the western edge of the Parish, Shenlow Hill, at 227 metres above sea level, is the highest point on Edgehill and commands fine views to the Malvern Hills in the west and to Northamptonshire in the east.

Shenington was home to RAF Edgehill during World War II and part of the old airfield is used by a thriving Gliding Club and School. In one corner of the airfield, a go-cart club has operated for many years and has provided schooling for some of Britain's top racing drivers. Since World War II, the largely agriculturally dependent community has become more broadly based. Family



farmers with cereal and dairy enterprises are still the main land users in the parish and large areas have been quarried for iron ore and hornton stone. Several small businesses operate from the old airfield and from a business park on a diversified farm. Every September, Alkerton plays host to the Upton Horse Trials.



The 170 dwellings and 380 or so inhabitants are now without a village shop but are still served by Shenington's Bell Inn and Church of England primary school. Shenington Village Hall, originally established as a Reading Room and Library, now serves both villages and is a venue for club meetings, social events, elections and the local nursery school. The proximity to Banbury and the M40, the School, the beautiful countryside and the charm of the old hornton stone buildings, have combined to make the parish a desirable area in which to settle.



The Bell Inn (01295) 670274

thebell@shenington.freeseve.co.uk

Traditional village pub with a reputation for home cooked food. Wide range of dishes including game (in season) and vegetarian. Listed in the Good Pub Guide, families welcome.

Lunchtimes: 12noon to 2.30pm / Evenings: 7pm to 11pm

Points of Interest

A The Bell Inn has been an Inn since at least 1765, but the building existed as early as 1690. The initials E.S.E. 1700 over the door are those of Symon Edwards. The Edwards family were always masons but wills from 1747 show that they were also brewers. The small stone-framed oval window is a peculiar feature common to several old properties in the village such as Amber Thatch (F2).



B Shenington Village Green is split into several parts by roads. Old maps show a village pond in the area in front of the Bell during the 1700's but it had been filled in by 1813.

C Knapp House was the village shop from the 1860's until 1973.

D Top Farmhouse was formerly one of the village farmhouses in the 1920's, a guest house in the 1930's and is now a private house providing Bed and Breakfast.

E Longworth on the corner of the main Green opposite Top Farmhouse was also previously a farmhouse incorporating a butcher's shop, which closed in 1971.

F Little thatched Thimblestone Cottage appears on Robert Whittlesey's Map of 1732 as a pub called the Nag's Head, whose last landlord, Thomas Barnes, died in 1866.

G Oriel Farm is the old slate-roofed house linked to Thimblestone Cottage by a garage. It was a working farm until 1939 when the Air Ministry commandeered its land. Its name is a potent reminder that from the sixteenth century most of Shenington was owned by Oriel College, Oxford. In 1920-24, Oriel sold the last of its Shenington properties.

H Oriel House another reminder, can be seen on the left-hand side of the Green. College records show that it was leased to Thomas Grime, the Butler to Oriel College in 1569. Oriel House was also used as the Rectory for a period in the 1800's and more recently as a doctor's surgery.

I Senendone House on the corner of Pig Lane is another old farmhouse. Immediately to its left is the site of the Red Lyon Inn destroyed by fire in 1721. In a traditional position close to the Church, this was probably Shenington's original and major Inn.



J Mizpah Cottage, the second cottage down on the opposite side of Pig Market Lane has a plaque on its front wall commemorating the Great Fire of Shenington on 13 May 1721, which swept through the village destroying many of the thatched properties.

K Mill House is a large Seventeenth Century house with a tall stone wall curving round its southern frontage. Together with the barn conversions on it left it was operating as Mill Farm until the late 1980's.

L Fishponds. These ponds were the mediaeval equivalent of modern fish farms. They had certainly gone out of use before 1732, when an Oriel College estate map shows only the field name "Pool Close". The Ponds were restored in 1989.

M Sor Brook was the boundary between the old Parishes of Shenington and Alkerton. It rises just east of the Severn/Thames watershed and joins the River Cherwell at Adderbury. It may take its name from the Sor Family who were sub-tenants in one of the four Shenington Manors from 1132.

N Brook Cottage has four acres of landscaped gardens which were established in 1964 by Kathleen and the late David Hodges. They are often open to the public. You can call Banbury Tourist Information Centre on (01295) 259855 for times and dates.

O Barn House is a Grade II listed building dating from the Sixteenth Century and formerly know as Anderton's Farm.

P Alkerton House is the oldest house in the Parish. Its earliest datestone is 1415, with another of 1633. The initials on this, "BG" may refer to Bret Goodwin who later became Lord of Epwell Manor. The 'Gothic' porch dates from an 1834 restoration.

Q Well Cottage has a wellhead pump outside which gives this road its name - 'Well Lane'.

R Alkerton School House, built in 1871 to accommodate 58 children, was never attended by more than 17. It was closed in 1905 and the children absorbed by Shenington School.



S Alkerton Rectory is a notable example of regional Jacobean architecture. Now a private house, it was built in 1625 for Thomas Lydiat (1572-1646), a Fellow of New College, Oxford, chronologer, cosmographer and Reader (Librarian) to Henry, Prince of Wales (eldest son of King James I, who died in 1612 aged 18). Lydiat was Rector of Alkerton from 1612-1646.

T St Michael's Church, Alkerton was built about 1200AD. A guidebook is available inside the church.

U Adze Cottage. The roadside elevation has a thatched staircase projection on the left. On the rear side, there is a bread oven bulge. A datestone JE/1716 above the entrance is dedicated to John Edwards, a mason, whose father owned the Bell Inn in Shenington.

V Tanners Cottage was originally a Methodist Chapel established in 1819. It is a reminder of the strong influence of evangelical Protestantism at that that time.

W Lower Farmhouse, largely of 18th and 19th Century construction can be identified with the site of the original Sugarswell Manor, the largest of the four Shenington Manors.

X Holy Trinity Church, Shenington was constructed mainly during the 12th to 15th Centuries but the west tower was added later. A guidebook is available in the church.

Y The Old Bakery finally closed in 1954.

Z Cotman House, just seen behind stone walls and mature yews, was once the Rectory. It was partly rebuilt after the fire of 1721 and is notable for an Eighteenth Century stable, coach house, tackroom and brew house.



A2 The former Shenington C.E. School was built in 1871, the same year as Alkerton School House.

B2 Shenington Village Hall was originally a cottage given to the village as a Reading Room and Library in 1911 by the Earl of Jersey, from nearby Upton House.

C2 1 and 2 the Green, a pair of semi-detached cottages, were built in the 17th Century. The right hand cottage is notable for the staircase tower at the rear. Renovation in the 1970's uncovered remains of a cobbler's workshop in the basement of the left-hand cottage. This property was the last village shop between 1971 - 1985.

D2 The Bay is a thatched Seventeenth Century Cottage with a slated bread oven projection on the left.

E2 Rectory Farm is so called because its owner, the Earl of Jersey, gave it to the Church. A working Farm until the 1980's, its barns were converted to domestic dwellings between 1991 - 1997.

F2 Amber Thatch is a late Seventeenth Century residence with a two-storey staircase projection to the rear. It was a Hook Norton Brewery alehouse know as Top Pub from 1898 until 1946.

G2 The Lynchetts is a fine example of mediaeval field terracing and a reminder of the old open field system that existed in the Parish before it was enclosed in 1780. The bridle track is known as Stratford Way and you can follow it for a couple of hundred metres to Shenington Airfield to watch the gliders.

17 After passing the semi detached cottages (C2) on the left you pass The Bay (D2) and Rectory Farm (E2) on the right then Amber Thatch (F2) on the left.

16 On reaching the Village Hall (B2) bear right (back past The Bell Inn which is across the Green on your left) and along Kenhill Road.

15 Leave the churchyard the way you entered and continue up the hill, passing first the Old Bakery (Y) and then the entrance to Cotman House (Z) on your right. The old Shenington C.E. School (A2) is opposite.

14 When you reach the main road, turn right and continue uphill. Cross the road passing Lower Farmhouse (W) then through the gate to Holy Trinity Church (X) on your right.

12 Continue downhill across the road bridge over the Sor Brook. Immediately after the bridge (and just before Tanner's Cottage (V)) turn right over a stile.

10 Cross the road to the War Memorial and then take the tarmac path up to St. Michael's Church (T). On leaving the Church go back down the path, but just after the gates, turn right and go carefully down the stone steps and into the lane below.

9 At the junction with the main road, Alkerton School House (R) is on your left, and facing you across the road is Alkerton Rectory (S).

18 At the end of Kenhill Road is the large field known as The Lynchetts (G2). Double back along Kenhill Road to The Bell Inn, to finish your walk.

13 Follow the path alongside the Brook for about 120 metres to a bridge. Turn left (do not go over the bridge) and follow the field path uphill into Shenington.

11 Return to the main road and walk downhill, passing Adze Cottage (U) on the left.

1 From Bell Inn (A) on Shenington Green (B) walk to the main through road (Rattlecombe), turn right and walk along the front of a short terrace of cottages to the end cottage, Knapp House (C) (on the opposite corner of Stocking Lane is Top Farmhouse (D)).

2 With Knapp House to your back, cross the road onto the Green. Immediately on your right is Longworth (E). Walk along the right side of the Green. Ahead of you is little thatched Thimblestone Cottage (F) connected by a garage to Oriel Farm (G) (Oriel House (H) is across the green to your left).

3 Continue to the bottom corner of the Green and enter a narrow lane (Pig Lane). Senendone House (I) is on the left and Mizpah Cottage (J) is the second cottage on the right.

4 At the bottom of the lane go through a gateway and after another 45 metres go left over a stone stile.

5 Follow the path diagonally downhill, crossing a farm track to a gate by the bottom corner of the field. (Mill House (K) and its associated barn conversions are at the top of the farm track).


6 Go through the gate and turn left along the hedge side. In the field to your left are the Fishponds (L). After about 30 metres go through the next gateway. Walk diagonally across the field then over a stile and a small stone bridge across the Sor Brook (M).


7 Cross over the bridge and into the garden of Brook Cottage (N). With your back to the Brook, walk up the slope then along the left-hand end of the tennis court and up the slope to a stile in the fence.

8 Go over the stile then turn left along the lane (Well Lane) towards Alkerton. Along the lane you pass Barn House (O) on your right then Alkerton House (P) and Well Cottage (Q) on your left.



KEY

Route 

Points of Interest 

Wooded Area 