

## Goring Superloop – 7 km | 4.5 miles

A gentle traffic-free walk on good paths; *can be muddy in winter*. Start at the Wheel Orchard car park – SU599680 – sat.nav. “Goring, Station Road”

① Leave the car-park past the Catherine Wheel pub, and turn left onto Station Road. Follow the pedestrian priority lane up to the station, and turn right onto the path alongside platform 1.

② Cross the railway via the footbridge, and exit past the ticket office (the station is an open station so no ticket needed). Turn right onto Gatehampton Road. Cross over at the car park, and follow the pavement for 200m to the entrance to the Sheepcot recreation ground.

③ Walk up into the field and onto the grass next to the tennis courts. Carry straight on across the field bearing right to the gate in south-eastern corner.

④ Follow the well-defined footpath up between a mature hedge on the left and the fence on the right. In summer there will be a profusion of wild flowers on the bank under the hedge, and pyramid orchids in the field on the right. Keep going through a gap in a hedge into a more open field, alongside the Goring Parish burial ground on the left. Follow the path round the edge of the field and drop down to the gate at the far end.

⑤ Go through the small kissing-gate, and immediately ahead of you there is another gate that takes you into Great Chalk Wood. Go into the wood, and follow the broad track that leads gently up hill between large trees. In spring-time, several huge mature cherry trees will be in flower.

⑥ After about 800m, you meet a narrow bridle way coming down from the southern part of the wood, turn sharp left here, along a rather rough section, until you meet another bridleway in about 100m. Turn left again here, and walk up on a broad track with a much better surface. The beech woods on the left are carpeted with bluebells in springtime. As the path levels out, you emerge from the woods and a straight section brings you up to the B4526.

⑦ As you get to the road, turn right onto the permissive path; this runs inside the hedge, so that you do not have to walk on the busy main road. Follow the line of the hedge on the left – the bank here is also rich in wild flowers, particularly stitchwort with distinctive star-like flowers.

⑧ At the end of the permissive path turn left on the farm track, and **cross the road with care** – the drivers may be doing 60 mph on this stretch and may not expect walkers. On the other side of the road, walk through the old Park Farm yard to a wide gate on the left of the large barn. There is a small yellow footpath marker on the gatepost. Follow the estate access road down through Park Wood – the verges here are planted with daffodils and narcissus.

⑨ At the end of the drive, you will see another footpath marker on the left. Follow this down a narrow track between a fence and a tall beech hedge to the quiet lane at the end. Turn left here and walk gently down hill. In January, you will see a large bank of snow-drops beside the road.

⑩ After 200m there are some cottages on the right, and a line of mature horse chestnut trees begins on the left. Climb up onto the bank on the left, and follow the well-maintained path that runs between the trees and the fields on the left for about 500m.

⑪ At the end of the chestnut tree walk, you will come to a footpath finger-post that points you back to the village along an old track. Follow this track for about 700m, between the woods on the left and garden fences on the right.

⑫ Eventually, you emerge through a gate into a open meadow, usually with ponies grazing. Follow the path round, bearing gently left, to a new gate. Leave the meadow and look for a short narrow path ahead on your left between two tall fences. This emerges onto the gravelly end of Fairfield Road; cross straight over, bearing left to join a tarmac path that leads you to the top of Lockstile Way.

⑬ Follow Lockstile Way downhill to the corner with Valley Close, and look for the narrow path that goes straight on. As you might guess, you are following the line of an old footpath that was here long before any of the houses was built.

⑭ Come out of the alley, and turn right into Farm Road, which leads you down to the Wallingford Road, just at the bridge over the railway. Cross the road carefully to the left hand side of the bridge, and go over the railway into the central part of the village.

⑮ Turn left into Red Cross Road and walk down past the surgery and the hardware shop to Station Road. If you are going home by train, turn left here for the station, otherwise turn right and re-trace your steps back to the Catherine Wheel pub and the car park behind.

