

Radcot Bridge Cottage

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History of Radcot

The name Radcot may derive from *'cottage by the road or ford'* and is mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086 as *'two family units with 24 acres of farmland'*.

Among the willow trees and undergrowth at the side of the A4095, just metres north of Radcot Bridge Cottage, are hidden remnants of 11th century wharves as Radcot was once the most direct and convenient location for loading Cotswold stone, from quarries just outside Burford, and, later, wool onto barges heading down the Thames to Oxford and London. What is now a quiet backwater was once a hive of noisy industry until the advent of the railway in the 19th century.

Just north of the wharves lie the remnants of the ditch which once surrounded the curtain wall of a small castle built in the early 12th century by Matilda, daughter of Henry I and granddaughter of William the Conqueror, presumably as a defensive fortification of such a vital river crossing. However on Henry's death in 1135 Matilda's cousin, Stephen, son of Henry I's sister, Adela, declared himself king supported by the English church. Matilda's husband encouraged her half-brother, the powerful Robert of Gloucester, to support her claim to the throne which in September 1139 triggered a civil war known as *'The Anarchy'*. In 1142 King Stephen's forces swept east from Cirencester, besieged and captured Matilda's Castle before closing in on their rival Royal faction trapped in Oxford Castle. Reputedly dressed in white to be camouflaged in the snow, Matilda escaped the siege just before Christmas, first across the frozen river to Abingdon-on-Thames then Wallingford and Devises before finally returning to France in 1148.

By the late 13th century much of the keep and curtain wall of Matilda's Castle had been demolished and the stone re-used. The manor house which replaced it was also mostly gone by the 15th and 16th centuries, possibly partially incorporated into nearby Radcot House by the mid 17th century. In 2009 a partial excavation of Matilda's Castle was featured in the television program *'Time Team'*.

Matilda may not have achieved the throne but her son did as Henry II. His accession, in 1154, after 15 bitter years of civil war, settled the country into a sufficiently secure state to warrant the long-term investment of replacing Radcot's three wooden bridges with ones built from local stone in around 1200. Of the three, Pidnell Bridge, the northernmost, is a mid-Victorian replacement, one was rebuilt in 1787 to accommodate the widened Thames and Severn Canal leaving the third, Radcot Bridge, which is almost in its original state making it the oldest surviving bridge over the Thames.



Originally built with three pointed arches, the central section was rebuilt in the 1390s in the aftermath of a skirmish which may have been minor but was the catalyst for a change in the course of succession to the English throne.

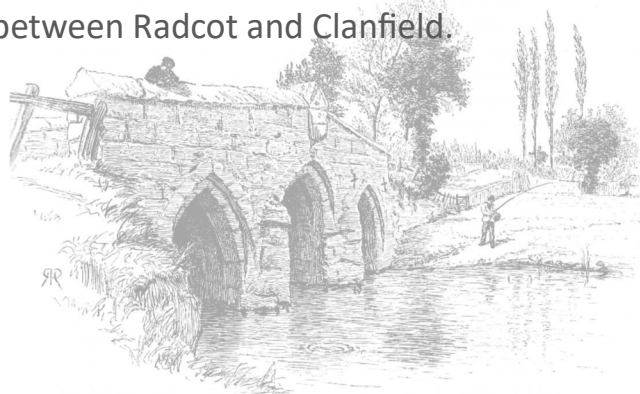
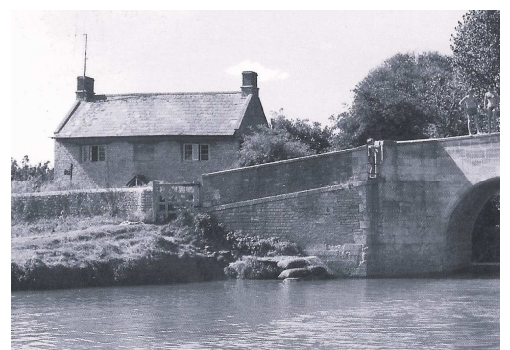
In an effort to defend and consolidate his position, Richard the II (1367 - 1400) dispatched his chief favourite, Robert de Vere, Duke of Ireland and 9th Earl of Oxford, north to raise an army to bring back to London. Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester - and Richard's uncle - blocked routes to London forcing de Vere and his troops south. Richard FitzAlan, Earl of Arundel and Surrey, blocked the local roads from Burford to Witney and the crossing point over the Thames at Newbridge forcing de Vere and his men towards the last remaining crossing point over the Thames at Radcot. On December the 20th, 1387 de Vere and his men reached Radcot Bridge only to find it had been sabotaged. With one set of opponents in front, Gloucester's men fast approaching through the fog from Clanfield behind and unable to cross the partially dismantled bridge, Robert de Vere recognised impending certain defeat. He abandoned his horse and sword, threw off his armour and swam off downstream leaving his men to surrender to be either executed or exiled for treason.

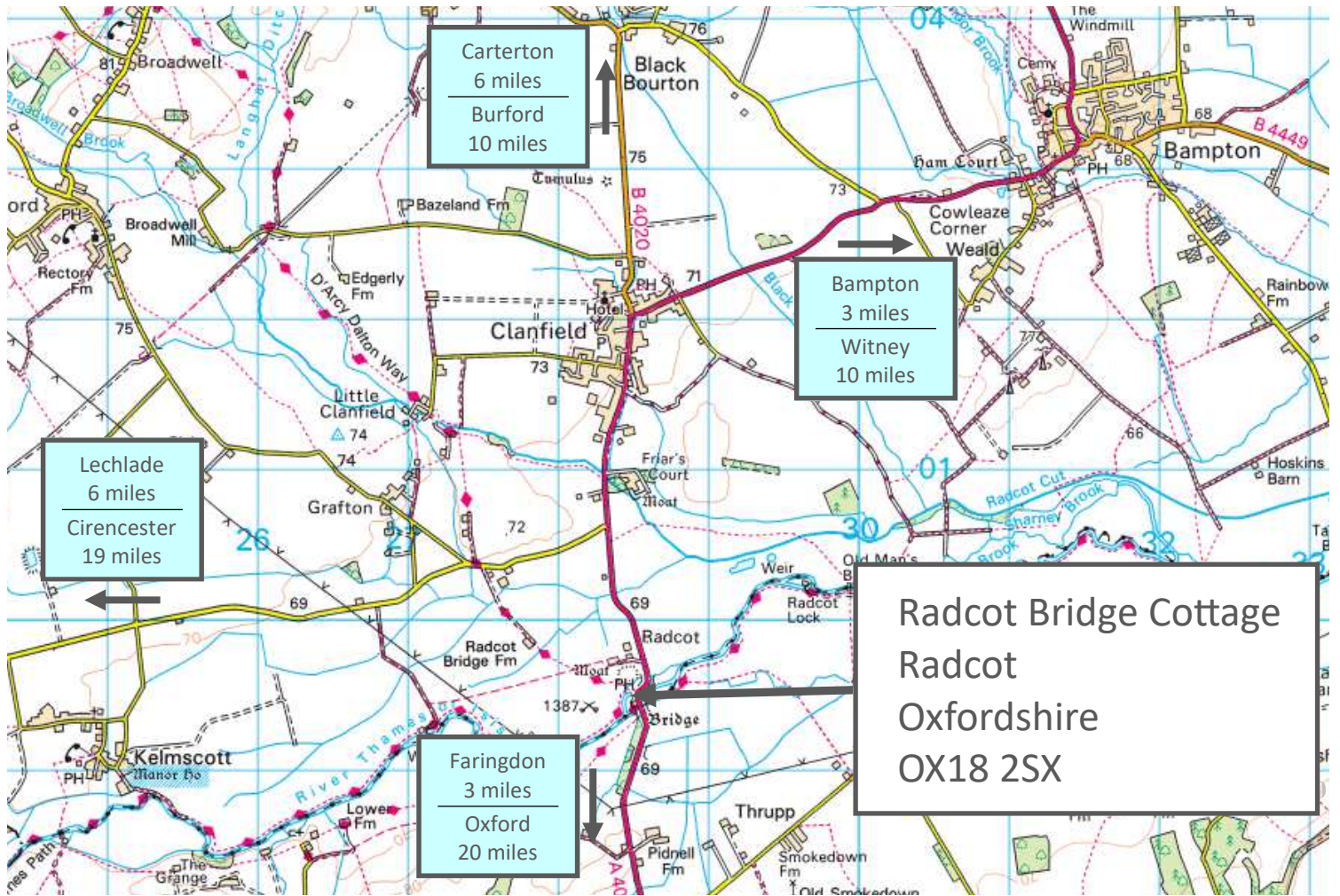
The removed central section of Radcot Bridge was reconstructed in 1393 but to a lesser standard of craftsmanship with the flattened central arch that can still be seen today.

For centuries Radcot was an important shipping point for barges to be loaded with stone and wool, and in the 18th century the old three-arched bridge was deemed too narrow so a wider river channel and the Canal Bridge, with its distinctive bend at its apex, were built north of the cottage.

During the World War II the Thames was regarded as a frontier and concrete pillboxes can be seen at regular intervals along the river route. One of these is on the corner of the paddock where the river forks towards Radcot Bridge and Canal Bridge, another is the field now used as a car park for the Swan Inn.

Radcot Bridge Cottage was built in the late 18th / early 19th century. Originally a simple two-up, two-down cottage it was part of Lord Berners' Faringdon estate. The cottage has since been owned by a succession of different people and when sold again in 2003 it was significantly extended and modernised. The cottage came back on the market in 2020 and was purchased by local landowner Charles Willmer and it is now part of the Friars Court estate which farms land between Radcot and Clanfield.





Local shops and services

Convenience	The Swan Pub operates a small shop offering basic supplies from the pillbox in the car park opposite Radcot Bridge Cottage. Opening times are seasonal.	
Village Shop	Blake's Kitchen, OX18 2SH, located in the middle of Clanfield (<i>1½ miles</i>) Micro-bakery and café. (8.30am to 4.00pm, Monday to Saturday)	
Post Office	Clanfield	in Blake's Kitchen (8.30am to 12.30pm, Monday to Saturday)
	Faringdon	in McColls Newsagent, Market Square, SN7 7HU (<i>2½ miles</i>)
Supermarkets	Bampton	Co-Op (every day 7.00am to 10.00pm), OX18 2JH (<i>4 miles</i>)
	Carterton	Aldi, Asda, Morrisons, OX18 3HA (<i>6 miles</i>)
	Faringdon	Aldi, Tesco, Waitrose, SN7 7GQ (<i>3½ miles</i>)
Butcher	Bampton	Patrick Strainge butchers, Bridge Street, OX18 2HA (<i>4 miles</i>)
	Faringdon	Pat Thomas butchers, Market Place, SN7 7HL (<i>2½ miles</i>)
	Lechlade	Cutler & Bayliss, 4 Oak Street, GL7 3AX (<i>5½ miles</i>)
Church	Clanfield	St Stephens, CoE, Pound Lane, OX18 2QZ (<i>2 miles</i>)
	Faringdon	All Saints, CoE, Market Square, SN7 8AD (<i>2½ miles</i>)
	Faringdon	Blessed Hugh, RC, Marlborough Street, SN7 7JE (<i>3 miles</i>)
ATM	Bampton	in the Co-Op, OX18 2JH (<i>4 miles</i>)
	Faringdon	in Tesco, SN7 7GQ (<i>3½ miles</i>)
	Cash may also be withdrawn at the Post Office	
Fuel	Carterton	ASDA (in the town centre), OX18 3HQ (<i>6 miles</i>)
	Faringdon	ESSO (just off the A420), SN7 8LA (<i>3½ miles</i>)
EV charging	Carterton	Black Bourton Road car park, OX18 3ND (<i>6 miles</i>) Connection types: 10 x tethered Type 2; 2 x socketed Type 2
	Faringdon	Southampton Street car park, SN7 7DX (<i>2½ miles</i>) Connection types: 10 x tethered Type 2; 2 x socketed Type 2
Taxi's	Faringdon Cars, 01367 243838, www.faringdoncars.co.uk Charlie's Travel, 01993 845253, www.charliestravel.co.uk	

Radcot Bridge Cottage is in rural location so it is highly advisable to book taxis hours in advance of any departure or return journey





Blake's is a third generation, family-run, bakery-café, food store & Post Office located in the heart of Clanfield. They serve delicious breakfasts and lunches and make their own cakes and savouries, sandwiches and hot food and are proud to bake their own bread from scratch.

Every day they mix, shape and bake a variety of real bread; including slowly fermented sourdough, brioche, ciabatta and focaccia. Their malt crunch sourdough won 'Best Multigrain Loaf' at the World Bread Awards in 2019. They are also renowned for their cinnamon buns, which won a silver award at the World Bread Awards, and a family-own recipe for lardy cake.

It's possible to walk to Clanfield via a public footpath approx. 2½ miles. The route is shown on a map hanging on the wall of the kitchen of Radcot Bridge Cottage.

Alternatively, to drive, turn left on the main road and head into Clanfield, approx. 1½ miles. Turn right in the village when you see the blue sign for the FREE village car park. It's then a short walk up the main street to Blake's.

www.blakeskitchen.com



Blake's Kitchen

Main Street, Clanfield, Oxfordshire,
OX18 2SH

Opening times

Monday - Saturday

08.30 - 16.00

Sunday: Closed

Post Office hours

Monday - Saturday

08.30- 12.30

Sunday: Closed

Takeaways

If you want to stay in and not cook there are a few takeaways in the area. Some do offer a delivery service however please understand Radcot Bridge Cottage is in a rural location so don't be surprised if you have to wait for over an hour for your food to arrive (especially if ordering at a peak time). It can often be easier, and quicker, to order by 'phone (or on their website if available) and collect in person.

If arranging a delivery the postcode is OX18 2SX and say the cottage is between the two bridges with traffic lights, near the Swan pub at Radcot, on the main road from Clanfield to Faringdon. You may need to go outside to look out for the driver as they have been known to miss the cottage / drive entrance.

Some menus have been left in the drawer below the microwave but please check websites as menus and prices can change.

Fish & chips takeaway

Rainbow Fish Bar, 7 London Street, Faringdon, SN7 7AE (3 miles)

Open from 11am - 10pm Monday to Saturday (closed Sunday)

Collection or delivery

01367 243572

On-line menu & ordering available

www.therainbowonline.uk

Pizza takeaway

Caprinos, 1 Marlborough Street, Faringdon SN7 7JE (3 miles)

Open from 11am - 11pm every day

Collection or delivery

01367 243666

On-line menu & ordering available

www.faringdon.caprinospizza.co.uk

Indian & Thai restaurant and takeaway

The Snotty Mehmaan, Littleworth (on A420), SN7 8PW (4½ miles)

Open from 5pm - 10pm Sunday to Thursday (closed Monday)

5pm - 10.30pm Friday to Saturday

Collection only

01367 242260

On-line menu & ordering available

www.snootymehmaan.com

Chinese takeaway

Peking Chef, 8 The Tower, Carterton, OX18 3JG (6 miles)

Open from 5pm - 10pm Monday to Thursday (closed Tuesday)

5pm - 11pm Friday to Sunday

Collection or delivery. Cash only

01993 840202

On-line menu available, order over the 'phone

www.pekingchefcarterton.co.uk



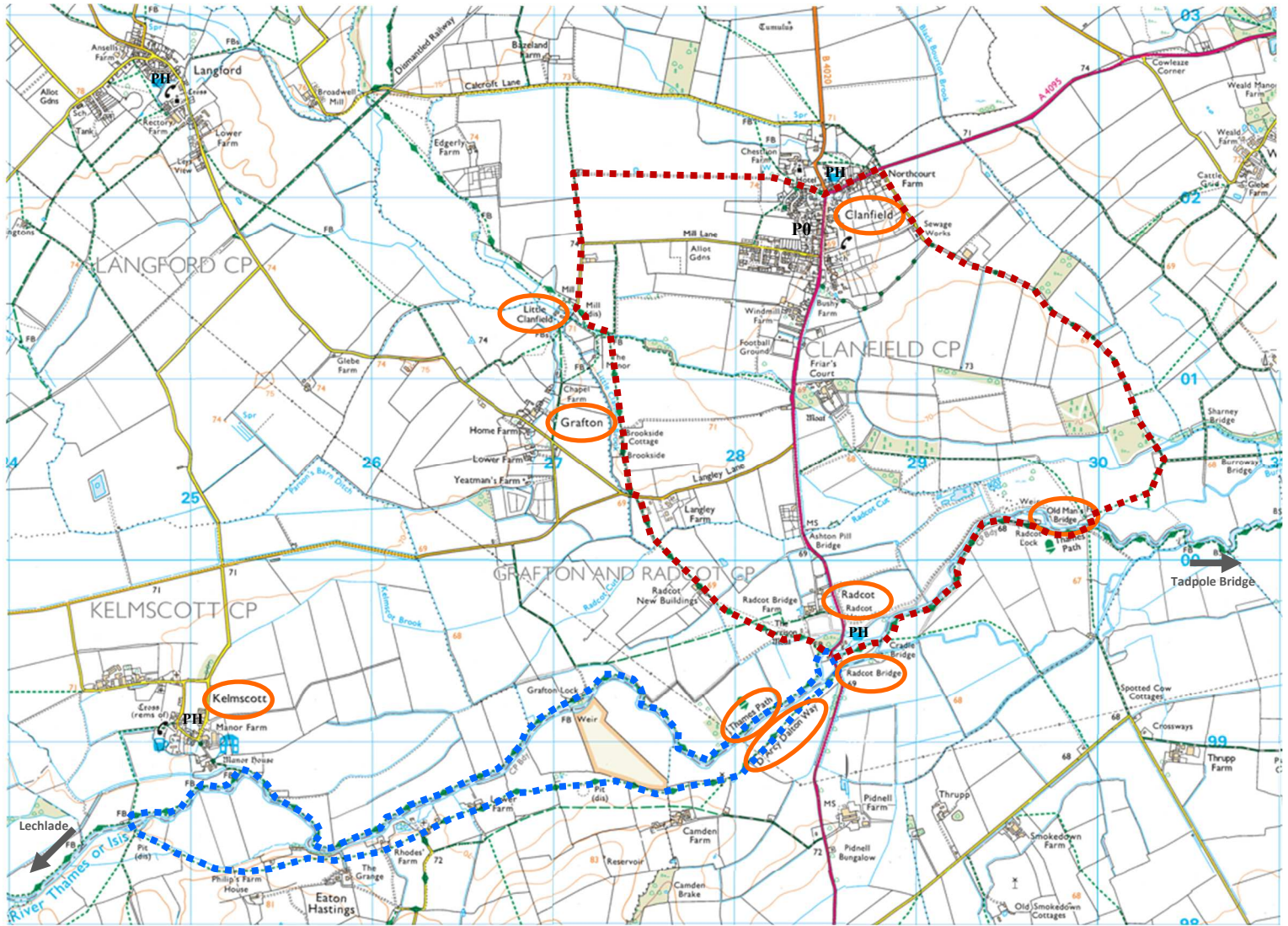
Pubs and places of interest

Check websites for open times (distances are approximate and by car)

- Ye Olde Swan, Radcot, 01367 810220 (100 yards) www.yeoldeswan.co.uk
 - Clanfield Tavern, OX18 2RG, 01367 810117 (1½ miles) www.clanfieldtavern.net
 - The Bell Inn, Langford, GL7 3LF, 01367 860249 (3½ miles) www.thebelllangford.com
 - The Plough Inn, Alvescot, OX18 2PU, 01993 842281 (3½ miles) www.theploughalvescot.co.uk
 - The Plough Inn, Kelmscott, GL7 3HG, 01367 253543 (4 miles) www.theploughinnkelmscott.com
 - The Trout, Lechlade, GL7 3HA, 01367 252313 (5 miles) www.thetroutinn.com
 - The Trout at Tadpole Bridge, SN7 8RF, 01367 870382 (6 miles) www.troutinn.co.uk
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- Faringdon Folly Tower, Faringdon, SN7 7AQ (3 miles) www.faringdonfolly.org.uk
- Kelmscott Manor, Kelmscott, Oxfordshire, GL7 3HJ (4 miles) www.sal.org.uk/kelmscott-manor
- Aston Pottery, Aston, Oxfordshire, OX18 2BT (5 miles) www.astonpottery.co.uk
- Cotswold Woollen Weavers, Filkins, GL7 3JJ (6 miles) www.cotswoldwoollenweavers.co.uk
- Buscot Park (National Trust), Buscot, SN7 8BU (8 miles) www.buscot-park.com
- Cotswold Wildlife Park, Bradwell Grove, OX18 4JP (8 miles) www.cotswoldwildlifepark.co.uk
- Burford, car park, OX18 4DN (10 miles) www.cotswolds.com
- White Horse Hill & Wayland Smithy, Uffington, SN7 7UK (10 miles) www.nationaltrust.org.uk/white-horse-hill
- Cirencester, car park, GL7 2DA (19 miles) www.cirencester.co.uk
- Oxford, car park, OX1 2BQ (20 miles) www.oxfordcity.co.uk
- Blenheim Palace, Woodstock, OX20 1PP (20 miles) www.blenheimpalace.com
- Bourton-on-the-Water, car park, GL54 2AY, (24 miles) www.bourtoninfo.com
- Bath, car park, BA1 2NE (54 miles) www.visitbath.co.uk





Walking (a map is over the page showing the route of each walk):

Suggested routes; downstream

1. From the cottage cross the road and walk downstream along the Thames footpath. After 1 mile you'll pass Radcot Lock. 300 yards beyond the Lock is an arched wooden footbridge, Old Man's Bridge.

Either

2. Walk on following the river downstream along the Thames Path, after 1½ miles you'll pass Rushey Lock. After another mile you'll reach Tadpole Bridge where there is a Public House, The Trout. Return back to Radcot the same way you came.

Return journey distance approx. 7 miles

Or

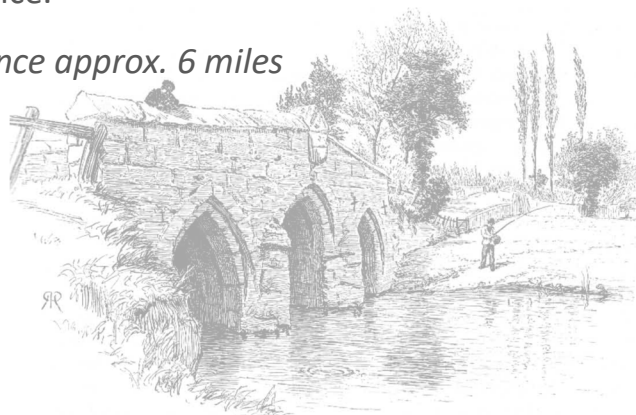
3. Walk over Old Man's Bridge, take a right fork and walk diagonally across the large grass field along the public footpath to the stile in the top far-right corner of the field beyond which is a rough single-track country lane called Marsh Lane. Take the left fork and follow Marsh Lane for 1½ miles and you'll reach where the main road enters the village of Clanfield. Turn left into the village - 300 yards at the crossroads is the village pub, the Clanfield Tavern. Alternatively turn left at the crossroads and Blake's, the village deli and bakery, is 200 yards on the right.



To return a different route to Radcot at the crossroads head up Pound Lane towards St Stephens church. Walk 20 yards up the church path then bear left and follow the path along the left side of the meadow - after 300 yards, at the end of meadow the path becomes a long, straight farm track which stretches ½ mile across a large arable field. There is a clump of trees with a pond half way along the track.

At the end of the track turn left and follow the lane to Little Clanfield. When you see the signs for the d'Acry Dalton Way follow this footpath as it leads back to Radcot. The footpath crosses a couple of fields then goes along a driveway to a road. At the road bear left then immediately turn right up the driveway to Radcot Farm House. At the end of the drive the footpath crosses another field and you'll see the back of Radcot Bridge Cottage in the distance.

Circular walk - distance approx. 6 miles



Walking (a map is over the page showing the route of each walk):

Suggested routes; upstream

4. From the cottage turn left, cross the bridge and walk upstream following the Thames footpath. After 1 mile you'll pass Grafton Lock. Carry on along the footpath, after 1½ miles you'll reach the quiet village of Kelmscott. If you walk into the village you'll pass Kelmscott Manor, former home of William Morris, the textile designer, poet and artist. The house is open on select days of the year. You can also venture to the small church in Kelmscott to see William's, and his wife Jane, resting place.



There is a public house in Kelmscott, The Plough.

You can either return the same way you came or continue on along the Thames footpath. After ½ mile you'll reach the wooden footbridge 'Eaton Bridge'.

Either

5. To return to Radcot cross the bridge, bear left and follow the public footpath signs. The path passes across farmland and some fields may have livestock in them. The route goes through the hamlet of Easton Hastings and ends at the main road by Radcot Bridge.

Circular walk - distance approx. 6 miles

Or

6. Continue along the Thames path towards Lechlade. After 1 mile you'll pass Buscot Lock. From here you can walk to the village of Buscot where there is a teasshop, normally open 11.30am to 4.30pm Wednesday to Saturday but these times may be seasonal.

Return journey distance approx. 10 miles

7. Continue along the Thames path towards Lechlade. After 1 mile you'll pass the pub, The Trout, and St Johns Lock, the highest lock on the River. Continue along the Thames path for another mile to reach the town of Lechlade.

Return journey distance approx. 14 miles



Walking, farmland and livestock

When walking across farmland and fields please do not stray from the public footpaths or into farm buildings and ensure all gates are kept closed.

Some fields may have cows or sheep. If you are not used to farm animals walking through them can be an intimidating and nerve-wracking experience, so here are some tips to help keep you safe:

- If uncertain about walking across the field look for an alternative route.
- If there is no alternative route, stay on the footpath and walk calmly through the field.
- Avoid walking near cows with their calves.
- Be aware that cows are naturally inquisitive creatures and will most likely come towards you to investigate you. If they are approaching at a leisurely pace they are just curious.
- It can seem intimidating when the cows start to follow you but try to keep a steady pace and remain calm. Cows tend to match their pace to yours, so if you speed up they will too in order to keep up with you. Whatever you do don't run as they will probably start running to.
- Cows may attempt to sniff and lick you, this is them taking in your scent and getting a better look as they do not have a good depth of vision.
- If you feel confident enough turn and clap your hands and say something like 'shoo, go away' in a clear confident voice to move the cows away. Bear in mind cows will move away quite skittishly, but will most likely come back, so do not run towards the exit of the field, walk briskly but calmly.
- If you have a dog, keep it on a short lead around cows and sheep - only release it if threatened by cattle so you can both get to safety separately.
- Do not allow a dog to chase cattle or sheep - if the livestock are pregnant it can cause them or their unborn off-spring serious injury.
- Do not chase or cause livestock to run away from you. They can easily jump or go through fences and hedges, escaping the field and risk causing injury to themselves or others.



Accidents & emergencies

The address for an emergency service is;

Radcot Bridge Cottage, Radcot, Oxfordshire, OX18 2SX

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Emergency	call 999
Non emergencies	call 101
NHS Direct	call 111

First Aid	A First Aid box is located on a shelf in the kitchen
Chemist	Boots, Market Square, Faringdon, SN7 7HP
Pharmacy	Faringdon Pharmacy, 3 London Street, Faringdon, SN7 7AE Monday to Friday 7.00am - 11.00pm and Sunday 9.00am - 1.00pm
Minor Injuries	Witney Community Hospital, Welch Way, Witney, OX28 6JJ 10.00am – 10.30pm, seven days a week
A&E	John Radcliffe Hospital, Headley Way, Headington, Oxford, OX3 9DU or Great Western Hospital, Marlborough Road, Swindon, SN3 6BB
Dentist	Walker & Associates, 8 Gloucester Street, Faringdon, SN7 7HY 01367 240514
Doctor	White Horse Medical Practice, Volunteer Way, Faringdon, SN7 7YU 01367 242388
Optician	Haine & Smith, 7 Cornmarket, Faringdon SN7 7HH, 01367 242262
Vet	Elms Veterinary Services, Gloucester Street, Faringdon, SN7 7HY, 01367 242416



PET POLICY

We love dogs however, from personal experience, know they can behave differently when introduced to a new, strange environment. To ensure we can keep Radcot Bridge Cottage at a high standard from one set of guests to the next if you are considering bringing a dog then please read and be aware of the following:

1. We allow one dog and/ or an assistance dog. Please notify us at the time of booking if you are bringing a dog. An additional charge will be made.
2. Please note there are no doors between the kitchen, sitting room, hallway and stairwell. The utility / shower is the only ground-floor room with a door but we would be grateful if you didn't shut a dog in there.
3. Do not leave your dog unattended in the cottage at any time unless you have your own dog travel crate with you which its happy to sleep in.
4. Please bring a dog bed / blanket and we would prefer dogs not to go on the upholstered furniture. If it is likely to please ensure a dry dog blanket or towel is placed over the furniture first. Any dog hair must be vacuumed up before departure (the Henry Hoover is in the cupboard under the stairs).
5. We would prefer dogs to not go upstairs as there are carpets and white bed linen.
6. We can provide dog towels so when returning from a walk wet paws and fur can be thoroughly cleaned and dried before you allow your dog into the cottage's main areas. Do not run dog towels / blankets through the washing machine or tumble dryer as that may leave hair residue which could be problematic for subsequent guests with allergies. We can provide extra dog towels if needed.
7. We can supply two bowls, for food & water, and bags for waste.
8. The grounds of the cottage are not fully secure and a dog could stray on to the road if a gate is left open so please not let your dog roam unattended either in the garden or adjacent paddock/ boat moorings and keep it on a lead when strangers are about.
9. It goes without saying that you must always pick-up after your dog, seal the waste in a plastic bag and put it in the dog-waste bin provided outside.
10. Finally we advise against allowing dogs to swim in the stretch of river by the cottage garden: the currents can be fast and the riverbank is high and steep with few safe places for a dog to get out easily.

