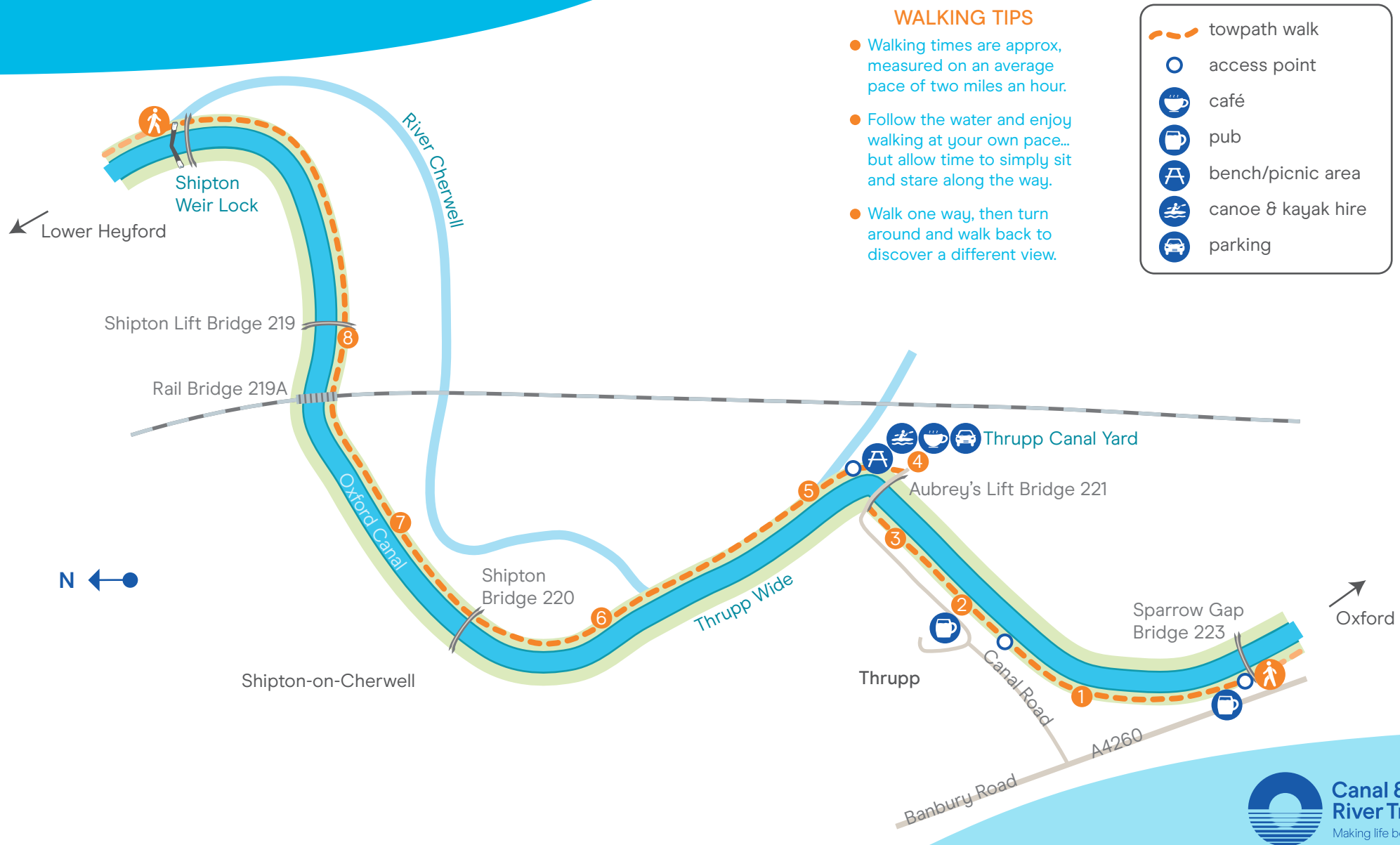


Oxford Wellbeing Walk


Thrupp to Shipton Weir Lock

walk time 45-55 minutes
distance 2.4km / 1½ miles




The Walk - Step by Step

The canal village of Thrupp attracts boaters and walkers, drawn to its unspoilt waterways landscape in a countryside setting, and of course its pubs and teashop. The great canal engineer James Brindley, known as the father of the canals, built the Oxford Canal in the late 1700s in his characteristic winding fashion, flowing around the land's contours, so there are many meandering swoops and swirls along this leafy rural part of the Oxford. Your route treads through glorious greenery in an unspoilt waterways landscape worth every step you pace.

-  The walk sets off from the leafy surroundings of the Grade II-listed Sparrowgap Bridge.
- 1** Moored visiting boats line the towpath and the canal looks green as overhanging trees are reflected in its water. Curving through the trees, the canal then straightens up as it approaches the hub of Thrupp village.
- 2** A row of Grade II-listed stone terraced cottages mirrors a row of moored boats in the water and the historic Boat Inn, also Grade II-listed, is to your left.
- 3** There are open fields on the opposite side and the towpath runs parallel with the road between here and Aubrey's Lift Bridge, so be aware of any traffic.
- 4** After crossing the lift bridge, the towpath continues on the opposite side of the canal while the road enters Thrupp Canal Yard. This beautiful space is filled with historic buildings related to the canal's trade heritage, including a row of thatched cottages called Salt Row, so-named after one of the cargoes carried by boats along the Oxford Canal.
- 5** Back on the towpath a picnic area is perfectly placed to gongoozle or watch boating activity as boats steer round the sharp bend to negotiate the lift bridge. As

you negotiate a gate on the towpath, on your right you'll notice a run-off from the canal down to the River Cherwell below.

- 6** Your surroundings open up with fields beyond and glimpses of the river below. This stretch is called Thrupp Wide as the canal widens before narrowing again through trees towards Shipton Bridge, a short walk from the village of Shipton-on-Cherwell.
- 7** The towpath is narrower and feels more rural despite some village gardens leading down to the canal. Across the canal are the remains of the short railway tunnel of a now disused railway before you walk under the current railway's bridge.
- 8** A Grade II-listed wooden lift bridge, set in isolated surroundings, is an important remainder of the rare Oxford Canal lift bridges. The towpath is lined with wild flowers and the hedgerows are teeming with life.
-  Expansive views over farmland accompany the canal as it swirls again towards Shipton Weir Lock and Bridge. The River Cherwell and the Oxford Canal merge below the lock for a few miles. This is a great spot for a picnic before you retrace your steps back along the towpath to Thrupp, enjoying this walk from a different viewpoint.

CANAL: Oxford

START: Sparrowgap Bridge
OS Grid ref: SP480154 Postcode: OX5 1JU

FINISH: Shipton Weir Lock
OS Grid ref: SP487170 Postcode: OX5 1JT

DISTANCE: 2.4km / 1½ miles

APPROX TIME: 45-55 minutes

PUB/CAFÉ: Jolly Boatman by Sparrowgap Bridge, Boat Inn & Annie's Tea Room near Aubrey's Lift Bridge

PARKING: Nearest car parking – Thrupp (postcode: OX5 1JZ)

TRAIN: Nearest train station – Oxford
National Rail Enquiries
Tel: 03457 484950 www.nationalrail.co.uk

BUS: Traveline
Tel: 0871 2002233 www.traveline.info

