

## Midsummer Ramblings

Just after midsummer's day a group of WI ladies met in the main car park at Burford for an evening walk through some of our stunning, local countryside.



The path now goes down Dean Bottom to the medieval village of Widford. The 13<sup>th</sup> century church is all that is left of this village.

Leaving the car park we walked back to the High Street, turning right to cross the River Windrush, heading towards Fulbrook. Here we took a detour along Church Lane and through the churchyard, following the path to the left, over a stile and through a field of belted Galloway cows and calves, coming out into Upper End. Crossing the A361 we turned left and followed the path for a short distance to a way-marked path to the right.

### On a Clear Day...

The clearly defined path gradually ascends the hill, through bushes and, after about 500 yards cuts across a field of wheat. Passing through two hedges and two more fields the path eventually joins a track to the right, which cuts through Widley Copse.

As you leave the trees there are splendid views towards the Berkshire Downs. We were blessed with a beautiful clear evening so could literally 'see for miles and miles'. The track drops gently down past a row of cottages and just beyond Payne's Farm turns right to join another uphill track. Reaching the road turn right and look out for a stile on the left where the road is in a dip.

The church of St. Oswald was built on the site of a Roman villa and contains a mosaic floor, near the altar, which was discovered in 1904.

### And so to the Royal Oak

Follow the path towards the right and through a gateway at the far side of the field, through a gate and turn left.

Crossing the River Windrush we walked briefly along the road; look out for the footpath on the right, which takes you back to walk along the riverbank.

Meandering along the river in the evening was a delight, no traffic sounds, only birdsong to cheer us and none of us were too troubled by mosquitoes!

The path once again joins the metalled road, which was once the main road to Witney. Reaching the Great House on the left you can either turn right down Guildenford and head back to the car park or, much more sensibly pick one of the many hostelries in the town and treat yourself!. For us it was a well-earned drink in the Royal Oak, a pub that retains its old world charm, not having been 'tarted up' by the big breweries.

Our thanks go to Rosemary Wilson for organising and leading the walk.

**Christine Halliday**