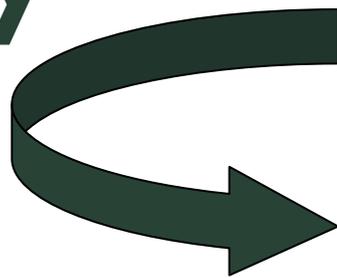


# Oxfordshire Way

## Points of interest from Charlbury to Stonesfield

To be used in cross-reference with the letters marked on the map.



### Points of interest

**A** **Charlbury** lies in the valley of the Evenlode. Originally the whole area was forested. As the forest was cleared, Charlbury became a market town and the land was farmed. Tracks connected the town to Enstone, Chipping Norton, Burford, Witney, Stonesfield and Woodstock. Most of these became the roads of today but there are several places where the old track remains and the road has taken a different path. Sheep farming, in the fields beyond the farmhouses' working strips, gave rise to the gloving industry, which flourished until quite recently. The Great Western Railway arrived in 1853 and **Charlbury station**, designed by Brunel, became an important stop on the Paddington/Worcester line. The station is now a listed building. Almost the whole of the centre of town forms a conservation area. The **church** is dedicated to St Mary the Virgin; some of the Norman arches of the original building survive, but the church was enlarged in the thirteenth century and restored in 1874. Other buildings include the **Friends' Meeting House** (1779), the **Methodist Chapel** (1823) and the **Baptist chapel** (1823). Church Street used to be the site of the **market**, which extended behind the Bell Hotel. The **fountain** in the tree-lined green Playing Close, was erected in 1897. Anybody interested in the history of the area can visit the small **museum** adjacent to the Corner House, a community building donated to the town after the war.

**B** **Stonesfield** has an Early English **church**, which suffered what was referred to as 'lunatic restoration' when in 1876 a new north aisle was built, completely destroying the small scale of the church. The stone roof tiles of the villages and towns of Oxfordshire, are known as **Stonesfield slates** because they come from the parish of Stonesfield. The mining of these stones stopped early in the twentieth century and they can now only be obtained at great expense and good luck when an old house or barn is demolished. You can still see a few signs of the old quarrying operations. Most were small and only worked by two or three men, either in the sides of steep valleys or holes in the ground around 60 feet deep with galleries leading off them. Large stone slabs were brought to the surface and left for the frost to split them into thin layers, after which they were fixed to battens in the roof. The village is well-known to geologists for the remarkable **fossils** found in the neighbourhood. There is a fine **Georgian manor house**, with a large garden occasionally open to the public.



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