

## WATLINGTON AND ITS MIDSOMER MURDERS LOCATIONS A SELF-GUIDED WALKING TRAIL

Watlington is the 'real England' brought to your screens through the ITV detective series, Midsomer Murders - with one or two ghosts of its own! Watlington sits in the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, surrounded by countryside walks and agricultural land full of local produce. With quirky places to stay and plenty of options to eat-in, take-out or picnic locally, enjoy the delights of Midsomer. Look out for food and drink labels, 'Made in Midsomer'.

Only 30 minutes from Oxford, less than an hour from Heathrow, Watlington is easy to get to but feels a million miles away from the bustle of motorways and city centres.

### GETTING HERE



Arrive by taxi from the nearest train station or take a bus for a very leisurely ride. Bus numbers: from Henley (125), High Wycombe (121) or Oxford (T1). See [www.rome2rio.com](http://www.rome2rio.com) and Google Maps.

Further copies of this leaflet are available from [info@watlingtonba.com](mailto:info@watlingtonba.com) or download online - [www.visitmidsomer.com/town-walking-trails](http://www.visitmidsomer.com/town-walking-trails)

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## VISIT MIDSOMER



### Watlington Oxfordshire

MIDSOMER MURDERS  
LOCATIONS WALKING TRAIL  
Follow in the footsteps of DCI Barnaby

[www.visitmidsomer.com](http://www.visitmidsomer.com)

# WATLINGTON - A MIDSOMER MARKET TOWN



Being in Watlington is like being in a scene from the fictitious Midsomer; a quintessential England of traditional pubs, stone churches and thatched barns, in the heart of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

A strong community with regular markets, bell ringing and village festivals, Watlington is a very English market town. Friendly residents pop in and out of the bustling Granary deli café, creating a vibrant and welcoming air. A surprising array of shopping and dining is to be found in what is reported to be 'England's smallest town'. People come from far and wide to buy chocolates, cheeses and meat, and enjoy spectacular countryside walks.



A stopping place for foodies, Watlington's shops and restaurants are building a range that's exclusively *Made in Midsomer*. Cheeses, pickles, fruit juices, eggs and meat are sourced from surrounding fields, farms and orchards, accompanied by beers and wines from the region. Residents love the small local produce markets, which take place three days a week.

## Staying in Midsomer

Author Alistair Sawday describes Watlington as 'a stone's throw from the big smoke yet wonderfully rural'. Indeed, this may be one of the reason's the producers of Midsomer Murders love the area – it has countryside to take your breath away, but it's very easy to get to. Some have even been enticed to move here!

And at the end of the day, there is good food and a bed to be had at The Fat Fox, one of three local pubs, where the saying goes, 'no one is a stranger here for long'. Celebrating the town's links to the TV show, the landlord at The Fat Fox has put together a Midsomer accommodation offer, which includes a copy of *Roaming Midsomer*, in which author, Chris Behan has written a 5-mile Midsomer country walk, starting in Watlington.



## EATING & DRINKING

- The Granary Deli [www.granarydeli.co.uk](http://www.granarydeli.co.uk)
- Tutu Delicious [www.tutudelicious.co.uk](http://www.tutudelicious.co.uk)
- Calnan Brothers [www.calnanbrothers.co.uk](http://www.calnanbrothers.co.uk)
- The Fat Fox [www.thefatfoxinn.co.uk](http://www.thefatfoxinn.co.uk)
- The Chequers [www.thechequerswatlington.co.uk](http://www.thechequerswatlington.co.uk)
- The Carriers Arms
- Fruit and Veg market at the Town Hall – Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturday mornings
- Watlington Co-op Groceries
- Kingfisher Fish and Chips Take Away
- The House of Spice Indian food

## SHOPPING IN MIDSOMER

- K is for Kitchen [www.kisforkitchen.co.uk](http://www.kisforkitchen.co.uk)
- The Rhubarb Tree [www.therhubarbtree.co.uk/watlington-shop](http://www.therhubarbtree.co.uk/watlington-shop)
- Watlington Arcade
- Watlington Pharmacy
- Bella Luce Lighting
- Drapes Design [www.drapesdesign.co.uk](http://www.drapesdesign.co.uk)
- Kitchen Design [www.cucucine.co.uk](http://www.cucucine.co.uk)
- Watlington Post Office

## MOVING TO MIDSOMER

- Move Forward [www.moveforwardrelocation.co.uk](http://www.moveforwardrelocation.co.uk)
- Griffith and Partners [www.griffithandpartners.co.uk](http://www.griffithandpartners.co.uk)
- Robinson Sherston [www.robinsonsherston.co.uk](http://www.robinsonsherston.co.uk)

## STAYING IN MIDSOMER

- The Fat Fox Inn [www.thefatfoxinn.co.uk](http://www.thefatfoxinn.co.uk) +44 (0)1491 613040
- Nicky Smallbone B&B [nickysmallbone@gmail.com](mailto:nickysmallbone@gmail.com) +44 (0)7973 422064
- The Creamery [www.uniquehomestays.com](http://www.uniquehomestays.com)
- White Mark Farm Camping & Caravan [www.whitemarkfarm.co.uk](http://www.whitemarkfarm.co.uk) +44 (0)1491 612295
- Further accommodation in Midsomer can be found by searching Wallingford, Thame and Henley on [www.southernoxfordshire.com/accommodation](http://www.southernoxfordshire.com/accommodation)

Soak up the atmosphere of England's rural towns and villages that make up the fictitious Midsomer by taking a guided tour or following the Midsomer driving trails with 50 filming locations, 20 Midsomer villages and miles of spectacular scenery, see [visitmidsomer.com](http://visitmidsomer.com)

### Other attractions in the local area include:

Greys Court (National Trust, open all year and a filming location for Midsomer Murders and Downton Abbey); Nuffield House, Stonor Park and Waterperry Gardens; Ridgeway and Chilterns walks, excellent for spotting red kites; or a day out in nearby Henley, Oxford or Bicester Shopping Village.

Check out: [visitmidsomer.com](http://visitmidsomer.com); [visitchilterns.co.uk](http://visitchilterns.co.uk); [experienceoxfordshire.org](http://experienceoxfordshire.org)



# WATLINGTON AND ITS MIDSOMER MURDERS FILMING LOCATIONS

## ONE-HOUR SELF-GUIDED WALKING TRAIL

**1** Start in Hill Road (free) car park (OX49 5BD). Exit through the pedestrian gate by the noticeboard and turn right. Ahead, the row of flint cottages, dated 1865, was Watlington's first hospital. Turn left to cross the main road onto the High Street.

**2** The buildings on the High Street reflect Watlington through the centuries. In the past, High Street was home to no less than six pubs - see if you can spot which buildings they were. Look left to Calnan Brothers butcher's shop, a 300-year old building with its traditional Tudor herringbone brick frontage. Calnans appeared as Dorset's Family Butchers in *Judgement Day*. There is an iconic scene when DCI Barnaby and Sergeant Troy stand inside the shop asking questions about the murder, with clear scenes of butchering in the background. Step inside and stand where Barnaby stood - 'X' marks the spot'. Calnans draws people from far and wide for its Gold Award sausages and often puts on a 'Sykes sausage roll' to celebrate its Midsomer connections. Grab a bite to eat, or take home a piece of England!

**8** Go through the lych-gate and into St. Leonard's Church, a vital part of the local community. Soak up the atmosphere inside this 13<sup>th</sup> century stone church filmed for *Ring Out Your Dead*. This episode featured the systematic killing of Midsomer Wellow's bell ringers the week before a big competition. St. Leonard's was filmed both internally and externally, the church tower was shot in Bray and the bells themselves hang in Monks Risborough. In this episode, Downton Abbey's Hugh Bonneville played the part of Hugh Barton.



**12** The Grade II listed Town Hall at the top of the High Street is seen in *Judgement Day*, the episode where Joyce Barnaby is a judge in the Perfect Village Competition. Midsomer Mallow feels it has a good chance of winning until a local thief is brutally murdered with a pitchfork. Revered actors Timothy West and Hannah Gordon appear in this episode as husband and wife, Marcus and Bella De Vere. The Town Hall was built by Thomas Stonor in 1664 to commemorate the restoration of the Monarchy at the end of the Civil War and to provide a grammar school for boys. Parliamentarian, John Hampden billeted his troops in Watlington and battles were fought in the surrounding Oxfordshire countryside. The Town Hall or Market Hall has always been a meeting place for merchants and townsfolk and, today, small markets are held on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.



**3** Continue down the High Street to Watlington Library, which appeared as Causton Library in *Orchis Fatalis*. This is the episode where victim, Madeleine Villiers, and her botanist lover smuggle a rare orchid into Midsomer Malham in time for the Annual Flower Show. The monastery in this episode is nearby National Trust property, Greys Court (open all year).

**4** Opposite, behind the war memorial, is Griffith & Partners' estate agents, run by the same family for 50 years. This becomes 'Midsomer Travel' in *Orchis Fatalis* where Cully is working. Sergeant Scott visits her to check out the travel schedules for Madeleine Villiers in the weeks before she died. During the filming, a member of the public actually came in to book a holiday because the set looked so real.

**5** Turn right into Chapel Street, flanked by traditional flint and brick houses. Once known as Monks Lane, locals talk of a ghostly monk gliding down this street. Keep following the road round and you will arrive at the 16<sup>th</sup> century Chequers Pub, also a filming location, with a small garden to the rear. Retrace your steps to the cruck-framed thatched cottage and take a right into New Road.

**6** At the end of New Road, turn right by the thatched house and walk into the village of 'Lower Warden' from the episode, *A Tale of Two Hamlets*. The poor relation to wealthier Upper Warden, set designers scattered rubbish along the street and brought a scruffy cat on set to lower the tone.

**7** At the end of the street, continue along the footpath. Almost immediately, take the right fork at the small Mansle Gardens. Keep going to the end and turn right at the track.

**9** Return along the track and keep going until you reach another footpath where you turn left. This joins up on the other side of Mansle Gardens and back out onto Church Street.

**10** Coming back onto Church Street, this pretty, sleepy end of town would have looked very different in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries when it housed the town's gas works, tannery and school. Head up Church Street and join the High Street. The Granary on your right appeared as Harvey Crane's antique shop in *Midsomer Rhapsody*.

**11** Walking up High Street, you don't need to be a detective to uncover some *Made in Midsomer* goodies. Head into **The Granary Deli and Café** where Italy meets Midsomer and you can find some of the finest Italian olive oils, pâté, cheeses, olives and chutneys. This is the place to eat-in, take-out or make up a picnic. Robin also loves to stock food and drink from surrounding farms and smallholdings in Midsomer, so look out for the *Made in Midsomer* labels on cheeses, honey, quince jelly, wine, cider and fruit juices. On the wall inside the shop is the Midsomer northern driving trail showing other filming locations near Watlington.



**13** If you want to finish in true Barnaby-style, with a traditional English pint, then turn left by the Town Hall and walk along to **The Fat Fox Inn** for a pint of Oxford Gold. Its Tudor bar and Georgian dining room beautifully define two periods in history and the chef specialises in seasonal food sourced from within Midsomer. Quoted in Alistair Sawday's 'Special Places to Stay', spend a couple of nights and explore more of the countryside seen in the show. There is a Midsomer accommodation offer on the website.



And if this brief journey into Midsomer has left you wanting even more, and you are considering buying your own slice of Oxfordshire's rural idyll, why not contact Jo at **Move Forward**. Her in-depth knowledge of Midsomer and the surrounding area will help you turn dream into reality.

