

ITINERARY

Literary Legends & On-Screen Locations along the Great West Way

Discover a journey through England's Great West Way where literary heritage, iconic landmarks and celebrated screen locations combine to create unforgettable experiences. From the elegant Georgian streets that inspired literary legends to grand estates, historic cities and picturesque landscapes featured in film and television. This 6-day suggested itinerary brings stories to life for both groups and FIT visitors.

Day 1: Reading & Henley-on-Thames

Begin in **Reading**, where visitors can explore the historic **Reading Abbey Quarter** and discover the site of the former Reading Ladies Boarding School, attended by a young Jane Austen. The Abbey ruins, gateway and surrounding heritage quarter provide fascinating insights into medieval and Georgian England.

Continue to the riverside town of **Henley-on-Thames**, known for its elegant architecture and quintessential English charm. The town and surrounding countryside have featured as filming locations in the long-running TV series *Midsomer Murders*, with visitors able to recognise familiar streets, pubs and countryside landscapes. Guided *Midsomer Murders* tours offer fans the opportunity to explore iconic filming locations while discovering the area's rich history and rural character. There's also a Henley Literary Festival which takes place annually in October.

Overnight: Venue Henley Greenlands Hotel

Day 2: Oxford – Within Easy Reach

Take a detour off the route to spend the morning exploring **Waddesdon Manor** with its magnificent French Renaissance-style château and landscaped grounds. With its opulent interiors and spectacular gardens, it continue to attract filmmakers from around the world. It has appeared in major films and TV series including *The Crown*, *Downton Abbey*, *Rebecca*, *The Queen*, *Cinderella* and *Queen Charlotte: A Bridgerton Story* to name a few.

Nearby is **Blenheim Palace**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of England's most impressive country houses combining magnificent architecture, landscaped parkland and cinematic grandeur. It has featured in productions including *Bridgerton*, *Harry Potter*, *Mission Impossible*, *007*, and *Gulliver's Travels*. Visitors can explore the State Rooms, formal gardens and extensive parkland while learning about its connections to British history.

Overnight: Courtyard by Marriott Oxford South



Jane Austen Festival, Roman Baths

Day 3: Bath

Journey back to the route to the **UNESCO World Heritage City of Bath**, one of Britain's most celebrated literary cities and well known for featuring in *Bridgerton*. The Royal Crescent, Holburne Museum, Beauford Square and **Bath Assembly Rooms** are amongst those recognised frequently and the capital's streets breath-taking Georgian buildings created the perfect backdrop in the series.

Begin your day at **Mary Shelley's House of Frankenstein**, an immersive attraction exploring the life and legacy of the author who created one of literature's most enduring characters – Frankenstein.

Pop next door to the **Jane Austen Centre**, where visitors can discover Bath through the eyes of one of England's best-loved novelists. Those visiting in September may wish to coincide their trip with the internationally renowned Jane Austen Festival.

Opening in 2027, experience Georgian high society at the newly restored **Bath Assembly Rooms**, where visitors can immerse themselves in an interactive Georgian Ball experience, bringing the city's fashionable 18th-century social scene to life.

If time allows visit **Roman Baths**, having recently been named one of the world's best visitor attractions, securing a prestigious TripAdvisor Travellers' Choice® Best of the Best Award. The historic site reflects the Roman origins that inspired writers for centuries and forms part of the elegant Georgian cityscape associated with authors such as Jane Austen.

Or jump on a **Bath City Sightseeing Bus** to see Bath's elegant crescents, terraces and streets, which have appeared in countless period dramas, including *Bridgerton*, *Sanditon*, *Persuasion* and *Wonka*. This city a must-visit destination for literary and screen enthusiasts.

Overnight: Brooks Guesthouse Bath, Roseate Villa Bath or Hampton by Hilton Bath City or Hotel Indigo Bath.



Parade House, Trowbridge



Day 4: Corsham, Lacock & Trowbridge

Visit the historic market town of **Corsham**, whose beautifully preserved streets have become a popular filming location. Corsham has recently gone back to the 1980s as the hit adaptation of Jilly Cooper's *Rivals* (on Disney+) was filmed in the town. It starred Aidan Turner, who knows the town well having visited previously to film BBC One's *Poldark* TV series.

Head to the beautiful village of **Lacock** which has featured in *Harry Potter*, *Pride & Prejudice*, *Downton Abbey* and many other TV and film productions. Be sure venture into the **National Trust's Lacock Abbey & Fox Talbot Museum** – home of photography.

Journey onto **Trowbridge** and enjoy a Jane Austen-inspired afternoon tea at **Parade House**, an elegant Georgian townhouse that celebrates the period's culture and hospitality. Jane Austen dancers perform for visitors having afternoon tea on the last Sunday of every month (pre-booking required).

Overnight: Woolley Grange Hotel, Bradford on Avon

Day 5 – Bradford on Avon & Warminster area

Begin the day at **Iford Manor Gardens**, near Bradford on Avon. Renowned for its romantic terraces, cloisters and Italian-inspired design, the Grade I listed gardens provide one of the region's most atmospheric settings. Their timeless beauty has attracted numerous film and television productions, including *Sanditon*, *The Secret Garden*, *He Knew He Was Right* and *The Winter King*.

Continue to **Longleat House**, one of England's finest Elizabethan stately homes. Home to the 8th Marquess of Bath. The magnificent house has featured in a number of popular TV and film productions including *Emma* and the *Royals*, the Bollywood production of *Mohabbatein* and Rosamunde Pilcher's *The Four Seasons*. **Longleat Safari Park** and its attractions have have, for many years, been the home of BBC's *Animal Park*. BBC's *Animal Park* series. Visitors can discover centuries of history and art, and experience one of Britain's most iconic country estates and popular visitor attractions.

End the day at **Stourhead**, one of England's finest 18th-century landscape gardens and an essential destination for lovers of literature and film. Created as a living work of art, its classical temples, lakes, grottoes and sweeping vistas have inspired visitors for generations. The estate achieved worldwide recognition as the setting for the iconic proposal scene in *Pride & Prejudice*, where Mr Darcy declares his love for Elizabeth Bennet beside the Temple of Apollo and Palladian Bridge. The beautifully composed landscape remains one of Britain's most recognisable cinematic locations and a highlight for Jane Austen enthusiasts.

Overnight: Bishopstrow Hotel & Spa or Old Bell Hotel Warminster

Day 6 – Bristol – UNESCO City of Film

Head to **Bristol**, designated UNESCO City of Film. Historic streets, the harbourside, Georgian architecture and distinctive landmarks have provided the backdrop for productions ranging from period dramas to contemporary television. The city is also home to the world-renowned Aardman animation studio, creators of *Wallace & Gromit* and has also been featured in the acclaimed television adaptation of *Rivals*.

INSIDER TIP

Don't miss VisitBritain's **Starring Great Britain** video to discover the scenes behind the movies and experience destinations through the lens of your favourite characters. visitbritain.org/starring-great-britain

Plus a new '**Starring Bristol**' adaptation created by Visit West, celebrating the city's starring role on screen and its growing reputation as a must-visit film destination along the Great West Way.

Visit the iconic **Clifton Suspension Bridge**, one of Britain's greatest engineering achievements and a spectacular backdrop for film and television productions including *Doctor Who: Revolution of the Daleks* and *Casualty*. The museum (free entry) and guided tours (pre-booking required) reveal the story behind *Isambard Kingdom Brunel's* masterpiece.

Visit **Brunel's SS Great Britain at Bristol Dockyards**, a remarkable achievement of Victorian engineering. Launched in 1843, the world's first great ocean liner invites visitors to step aboard and explore its beautifully restored historic interiors while discovering the pioneering vision of *Isambard Kingdom Brunel* and the ship's extraordinary maritime story brought to life.

With its combination of literary connections, Film and TV productions England's Great West Way gives visitors an inspiring journey exploring the landscapes, stories and places that have inspired generations of writers, filmmakers and audiences for generations.

Find out more about TV & Filming Locations along the Great West Way and Great West Way for Book Lovers.

INSIDER TIP

Go to a Literary Event - Every year, the Great West Way hosts lots of unique literary events, from the splendid week-long **Jane Austen Festival (September)** in Bath to numerous literary festivals. Favourites include **Henley Literary Festival (October)**, **Swindon Festival of Literature (May)**, **Marlborough Literature Festival (Sept)** and **Bath Children's Literature Festival (May)**- the largest festival dedicated to children's literature in Europe. Why not plan your upcoming Great West Way journey to coincide with one of these bookish events?



Travel by Car	Miles/kms by road*
Reading to Henley-on-Thames	11miles / 18km
Henley-on-Thames to Oxford	60 miles /96.5km
Oxford to Bath	75 miles / 120km
Bath to Bradford on Avon	27miles / 44km
Bradford on Avon to Warminster	37miles /60km
Warminster to Bristol	31miles / 50km

*These are the total distances for the day.