

## Rural Rambler

All the walks in this series can now be downloaded from the Marsworth website where a higher resolution map and in some cases photographs are available <https://www.marsworth.org.uk/the-marsworth-news/rural-rambler/>

### No. 5 Pitstone Hill and Albury Nowers

This month our walk starts a little further from home commencing from the car park on Stocks Road near Pitstone Hill. To get there drive along the B488 through Pitstone and Ivinghoe villages and follow the road past Pitstone Windmill to the sharp right turn, Stocks Rd is straight ahead on the bend. Drive along Stocks Rd for nearly half a mile and the car park is on the right

Distance 4.5 miles, hilly (c. 250 ft of elevation) and some slippery sections when wet.

Starting from the car park, cross the road into the field opposite and follow the obvious path along the fence line. At the corner of the fence turn right and at the next bend in the fence (Point A) bear left up the gentle incline (can be slippery). Follow the path until a gate is reached, pass through the gate and immediately turn right onto a subsidiary path (B) marked by a yellow capped post opposite. The start of this path is not obvious but after walking around the fallen tree trunk it becomes clear. Follow the path downhill through the trees to Down Farm. Alternatively, to avoid this hill, bear right at (A) and follow the grassy track along fence line to the farm.

Walk straight on through the farmyard and take the farm road out, after just a few yards turn left into the field (C), signs on fence posts mark this as a 'permissive path'. This path can now be followed along the edge of the field to a gate and a private house where it takes a dog leg left into the next field. Keep close to the house boundary and after 0.3 mile access to a tarmac road is available on the right (D). Follow this small road until, at the next gate, (E) a signpost points right where the footpath traverses the adjacent fields. Walk across the fields, taking care not to widen the path unnecessarily into the crops, until you reach a track/bridleway (F). Turn right and stay on this track until it meets Stocks Rd at a stable yard (G).

At this point it is possible to shorten the walk by turning right and walking back to the car park along Stocks Road. However the road is narrow and without a footpath. This alternative is not therefore recommended.

Carefully cross the road and enter the trees, the path is signposted to Tring Station and after 100yds or so leaves the woodland and runs along the edge of Stocks Golf Course with woods on your right. Keep to the path until you reach a plethora of signposts showing footpaths and the 6<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> tees (H). Here you should turn right into the woods and follow the path through the trees, you will pass a National Trust/Ashridge Estate sign, currently leaning against a tree, on your right. Stay on the path through the trees until you reach The Ridgeway long distance path (I). This is clearly indicated and you should again turn right, uphill on some steps, onto The Ridgeway path.

We now follow The Ridgeway through the woods of Albury Nowers Nature Reserve (note the informative signs about the reserve beside the path) eventually leaving the woods through a gate at Point J. In this area the path follows earthworks comprising a ditch and ridge, this is Grim's Ditch, an ancient –possibly Iron Age- feature widespread across our part of the Chilterns. Follow The Ridgeway path uphill onto Pitstone Hill, taking care if wet as the bare chalk on the path can be slippery.

This path takes you along the ridge and over Pitstone Hill, providing great views across the Vale of Aylesbury and finally back to the car park.

