

# Rural Rambler

By Steve

A series of walks around Marsworth and the local countryside.

All the walks in this series can 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. 9 Rushmere Country Park

This walk is a little further afield than usual being near Linslade and the village of Heath and Reach in Bedfordshire (less than half an hour's drive from Marsworth) but it is worth the journey. It is a great place for children and walking the dog and in hot weather it is shady and cool. Although designated a Country Park it is very natural with a range of scenery and, being located on the Greensand Ridge, is generally dry underfoot. There are two centres providing refreshments (breakfast, lunch, snacks drinks etc) and ample parking. Access is via the A4146 Leighton Buzzard by-pass. Post Code is LU7 0EB. (<https://www.greensandtrust.org/About-Rushmere/>).

The walk outlined below is 3 miles and gives an overview of the area but there are numerous alternatives, pick up a map from the Visitor Centre and explore. There is one short section of quiet road but otherwise it is all off road.

The route is easily followed, in fact the most difficult part is starting off on the correct path! With your back to the map sign outside visitor centre at the main entrance take the path beside the car park past the bicycle rack. Keep straight on, bearing left after 100m (where the main path goes right), taking you behind the overflow car park. After another 100m you will meet the Greensand Ridge Walk (Point A, signposted here as Rushmere Horse Route). Turn right and follow the path through the trees along the western boundary of the park with views across the adjoining fields. After approx. 700m pass through the gate and then to the left of the pond (point B). Keeping left climb some gentle steps eventually coming out of the trees at a path junction with a notice board and finger post. Turn right (Point C, signed Public Bridleway/Greensand Ridge Walk) and take the route uphill. Continue straight on (ignoring other crossing paths) and you will come to the northern edge of the Country Park (D).

Take the gravel track with cottages on the left and the Stockgrove House clock tower on the right. Continue until this track reaches the Brickhill Road (E). Turn right for 200m and, on the left, take a path over a bank beside the car park and gate (F). Follow gently downhill through the trees until you go through a gate and into a meadow. The path through the meadow takes you back to the road and the Stockgrove entrance to the park. Stop at the café for refreshments/toilets if required (G).

Leaving the café head diagonally uphill (signposted 'oak wood') across open land and then into oak trees. When a stand of pine trees are met (H) turn left downhill, through a grassy glade and on to the edge of the lake. At the lakeside turn right, past

the old boathouse and continue along the valley bottom until you meet a fence and gate. Turn right up a fairly steep hill (point I, finger post to Great Brickhill) until you reach a major junction of paths. Turn left through the small gate, then with the children's playground (fort gates and totem poles) in front of you take the major path on the left (J).

Follow this all-weather path back to the start passing the 'Ridge Riders' cross country cycling area on your left and a giant chair on your right.

