

# 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. 10 Studham: Queen Elizabeth Platinum Jubilee Walk. 3.8 (alternative extension of 5.5) miles

This lovely walk is within the Chilterns AONB and based in the village of Studham in Central Bedfordshire. It starts and ends within the village and traverses the surrounding countryside and local landmarks. The walk is generally well signposted, includes open fields and woodland and is easy going with kissing gates and one stile, some sections are muddy in wet weather. The walk outlined below is 3.8 miles (6 km) with the option for a 2.2 mile (3.6 km) extension. Two pubs, The Red Lion and The Bell, in Studham provide useful watering holes.

Studham is about 10 miles from Marsworth. Take the B489 from Ivinghoe towards Dunstable, turning right at the roundabout by the dental surgery then left up the hill (B4540) to Whipsnade Zoo. After passing the zoo turn right at the next roundabout and follow the road through Holywell to Studham. Park opposite the war memorial on the common.

The walk commemorates Queen Elizabeth's Platinum Jubilee and the following description is based on the walk leaflet created by the Friends of Studham Common ([www.foscomm.org](http://www.foscomm.org)) which can be freely downloaded from the Chiltern Society <https://chilternsociety.org.uk/free-walks-leaflets/> .

### The Walk

From the War Memorial opposite the Red Lion pub, follow the footpath along the common, keeping to the right of the goalposts, into woodland and continuing straight on until you come to the village school and School Cottage. Pass to the left of the school, with open fields to your left and continue on the same footpath until reaching Valley Road (point A). Cross the road and, after 250 yards, pass through a kissing gate, immediately after which turn right over a stile (B) and onto a section of the Chiltern Way. A short walk across a field will lead you alongside and then into woods. Just into the woods turn right then after a few yards join a track up to the 13th century St Mary's Church.

Enter the church gate and look around this very well kept churchyard, leaving via the kissing gate in the left hand (NW) corner of the churchyard (C) and turn right to join a footpath along the side of fields. After the second field, approx. 300 yards, turn left beside the hedge (Point D, signposted) and follow the footpath downhill to Dunstable Road.

Carefully cross the road onto the pavement opposite and turn left towards Holywell. After 100 yards take the footpath on the right (point E, an easy to miss narrow

entrance beside 'Longyards' farm) uphill and into more woods. Follow the footpath into open countryside and then into further woodland alongside the Holywell housing estate.

Turn right (F) and follow the footpath through a small wood and then across a large arable field and a small copse. After crossing the field, the footpath goes alongside further woodland and then passes between a small collection of houses and a Scout Activity Centre, before ending on the Byslips Road (G). Take great care, the road is winding and has no footpath. Turn left along Byslips Road and after 130 yards turn right on the footpath into Byslips Wood (H). As you walk through the wood note the many mature oak trees on your right, seemingly planted to mark an old boundary and many showing signs of coppicing in their youth. Turn right at the end of the wood finally coming out onto a well-worn track (point I, marked '16' on the waymark post).

To take the alternative route of an extra 2.2 miles (1.7 miles on the Chiltern Soc. leaflet but I measured it somewhat longer) turn left on the track, which becomes a footpath between hedges. Follow for 0.8 mile until reaching a road and Hollybush Lodge. Take the right turn signposted to Beechwood Farm B&B. After approx. 0.5 mile turn right at Beechwood Home Farm and walk past farm buildings and cottages, through a dilapidated kissing gate and onto a good track through the woods. This track ends at a junction with a flurry of 'No Footpath' signs, the route is straight ahead on a narrow path into the woods and marked with a yellow capped waymarker. Eventually coming out of the woods turn right and after a few yards join the main route at point M on Studham Common.

If staying on the main route, turn right on the track from point I, gently downhill until a water treatment works is reached. Just past the works a gap in the hedge on your left takes you on to Studham East Common. Continue up the hill on the edge of the common to point M and then follow the path west along the top of the common until you reach a small, car park on Byslips Road (N). Take care crossing the road to enter Middle Common. At this point, follow the path diagonally across the Common, through the Jubilee Copse, planted to celebrate Queen Elizabeth's Silver Jubilee, and returning to the start of the walk.

