

# Marsworth

An easy 4 mile walk along the base of the Chiltern Scarp, passing through areas of archaeological interest and return along the Grand Union Canal

## Circular Walk

### Directions

- From the car park, carefully cross the B489 and join the canal towpath beside the White Lion public house.
- Follow the canal in a north westerly direction, eventually branching left for a short distance to follow the Aylesbury Arm (the left canal fork) and cross over the Watery Lane bridge.
- Re-join the main branch of the canal at the next bridge, and then leave it once more to head north across the fields, passing to the left of Manor Farm.
- At the old airfield the route turns towards the east. Follow the waymarking to the road, heading south before turning left to pass under the railway line.
- Keep the railway to your right and rejoin the Grand Union by a swing bridge. Having re-crossed the railway line, the canal should now be followed for a little over a mile before reaching the bridge at Manor Farm. Continue along the towpath to the next bridge, then turn left through the village of Marsworth.
- Bear right along Church Lane and then turn left at the signpost, pass an old nissen hut to the left and head out across fields back to the canal.

There are several public houses along the route, which serve food at lunch time.

Refreshments are also available at the towpath shop at Marsworth.



### Features of Interest

1 The Aylesbury Arm of the Grand Union Canal was opened in 1815. The canal engineers soon realised that the new branch would impose a severe strain on the water supplies in the main canal and the Tringford and Startops End Reservoirs were dug to meet the extra demand. The reservoirs have taken on many features of natural lakes although some plants found here such as orange foxtail and mugwort are relics of a time when the Marsworth district was undrained and marshy.

Many interesting birds are present including the great crested grebe which has come back strongly after being driven to the brink of extinction by the millinery trade.

2 An unusual feature in this section of canal is the staircase lock; two locks with the bottom gates of one forming the top gates of the next.

3 The earthworks are all that remains of De La Hay Manor House and associated village. From the air, the village plan can clearly be discerned.

4 The route crosses the site of the wartime Marsworth Airfield, home initially to a squadron of Wellington bombers, followed by the USAF with their Flying Fortresses and Liberators. There was also an underground bunker and Churchill was a regular visitor towards the end of the war.

5 Southend Hill is the site of an Iron Age Hill Fort, and the trees on the south facing slope conceal a series of cultivation terraces or lynchets formed around a thousand years later. The lynchets developed when arable land was scarce and the hillside was ploughed, shifting the soil so that it built up into terraces.

6 The walk passes under what was originally the London and Birmingham Railway completed in 1835.

7 The route now follows the Grand Union Canal, opened in 1805. Towards the middle of the 19th century, the canal began to suffer severe competition from the adjacent railway and in order to increase the speed at which barges could pass along the canal, new locks were dug alongside existing ones and bridges were rebuilt to give double arches. The canal in this area is very popular with local anglers; several species of coarse fish being found including bream, roach and tench.

8 Marsworth's Church of All Saints was renovated in 1880 by the Rev. F W Wragg, the work being undertaken by the vicar and some of his parishioners.

Among other notable buildings are the 17th century Old Manor and its associated timber-framed barn which can be seen in Church Lane.

9 The bridge by the White Lion was altered in 1838, when a second arch was built to cross a duplicate lock, since filled in.

Follow the Countryside Code:

- Be safe, plan ahead and follow any signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants and animals and take

your litter home

- Keep dogs under close control
- Consider other people

Further Information:

Rights of Way & Access, County Hall,

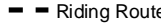



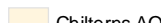

Aylesbury, HP20 1UY

Telephone: 01296 382171

Email: row@buckscc.gov.uk



# Marsworth Circular Route

-  Riding Route
-  Footpath
-  Promoted Route
-  Open Access
-  Chilterns AONB
-  Bus Stops

W E  
S N

0 0.15 0.3 km

Cheddington

Cultivation Terraces

Southend Hill

Great Seabrook

Pitstone



4

Cheddington Road

3

Marsworth Airfield

Lower End

7

Grand Union Canal

Lower Icknield Way B469

Marsworth

2

Aylesbury Arm

Wingrave Road

Startop's End

1

Start



College Lake Wildlife Centre



Startopsand Reservoir

Marsworth Reservoir

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