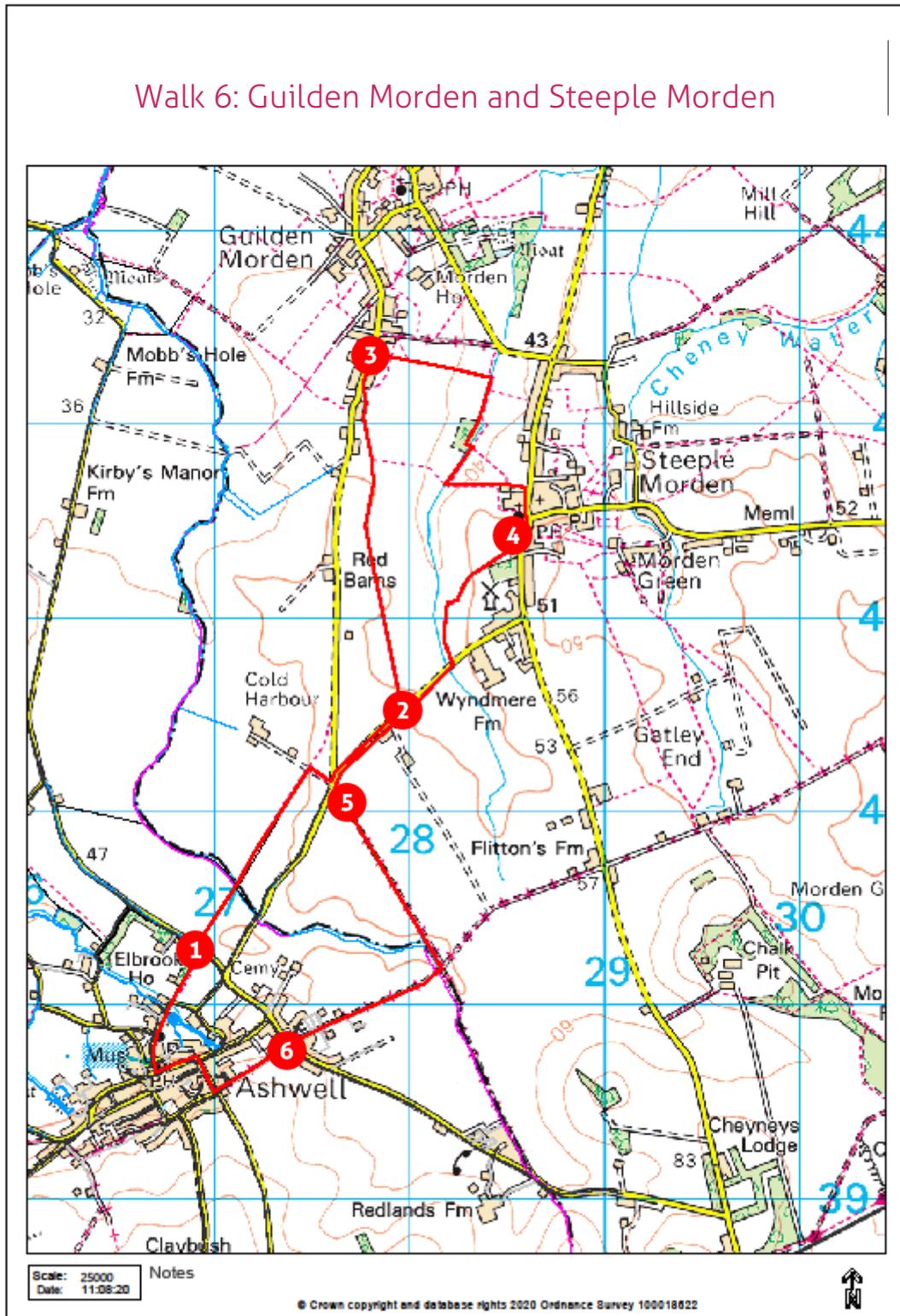


ASHWELL WALKS

Walk 6: Guilden Morden and Steeple Morden



Length and timing

11 Kilometres (7 miles), about 2hrs 10 mins walking briskly, 3hrs 20 mins at leisure

A flat walk with long straight stretches across open fields and some roadwork. There is an uphill stretch near the end.

The walk visits two quiet picturesque villages, both with pubs, and a small wooded nature reserve.

Directions

With your back to the Parish Church lych gate go right along Mill Street and cross the little bridge over the River Rhee. Go through the gate that you will see straight ahead and follow the path up to the road.



The track goes up to Northfield Road from Mill Street

1 At Northfield Road cross over and pick up the track that cuts straight over the field going north east. On the other side there is a ditch and a footbridge, and a still bigger field to cross.

When you reach the access road to Coldharbour farm, turn right up to the road

junction. Take the road straight ahead that points to the left.

Keep a lookout for traffic. This is easy as visibility is good.



Leave the road where the fingerpost indicates

2 500 metres from the junction there is a fingerpost pointing left along a right hand field margin. Go along that track and keep straight across a large open field.

After skirting round the back of some houses you come onto the road through Guilden Morden. Turn right (north east) and follow the road through the village for 250 metres.

3 At this point you have a choice. Hidden well on the right hand side is a covered path heading east toward Steeple Morden. You can tell you have found it because there is a finger post.

You can either take this or carry on to the Three Tuns pub a little further up the road on the left and retrace your steps once refreshed.

The covered path soon comes out onto open fields. Cross two and over the ditch. Once over, turn immediately right and follow the line of the ditch south until you reach the edge of a small wood.



The path on the right leads through White Wood Nature Reserve

One path goes left, following the edge of the wood and another on the right takes you through White Pond Wood nature reserve. There are several paths through the reserve but it is too small to really get lost. Try and stay close to the ditch.

When you cross the footbridge you are almost out of the reserve. Bear right after the bridge.

On leaving the wood keep following the path by the ditch. After a short distance (250 metres) it will take a sharp left turn up the meadow toward the tennis courts and on to the Recreation Ground car park.

Walk through the Ground to the road and turn right, going past the church of St Peter and St Paul, and the Waggon and Horses pub. Just a few metres further on the right there is a grassy gap between houses marked by a fingerpost that you need to go through.

4 Follow the path around the back of the houses and gardens, straight on, then left and right until you see the track cutting diagonally across a field. as you are turning an outside corner.

Cross the field, Look back, you should be able to see the mill, no sails on it these days, though. After crossing the field take the path through scrub land that winds round to the left and reaches the road.

Turn right along the road and keep going up to the junction that you crossed earlier on in

the walk. Don't forget to watch the traffic, as before.

5 This time at the junction pick up the track on your left, heading south east. I don't know if it is just me, but there always seems to be more wildlife here than in other areas of open farmland: kites, larks, rabbits, hares and so on. I won't mention the rats.



From the road junction the track heads south east to Ashwell Street

At a crossroad of tracks, go right. This is Ashwell Street, a wide grassy path, track and road that runs from Bassingbourn cum Kneesworth in the east, going all along the southern boundary of Ashwell village. Keep on the grassy path as it becomes a tarmacked lane.

6 Cross straight over Station Road, where Ashwell Street becomes a track again and goes uphill. This section is known as 'The Ruddery'. Just before the top there is a break in the trees on the right, marked by a gate. It provides a good view of the village and the countryside beyond.



Turn right into Kingsland Way and down the hill

Once over the top, at the crossroads turn right into Kingsland Way. This road goes all the way down to the High Street, with the United Reform Church on the corner.

Turn left at the High Street and, almost immediately, right into Hodwell. The road bends sharply left, then goes past the Old Rectory until the churchyard, the church and the end of your walk come into view.



A warm day in early August: time to harvest