

Standon Nr. Ware Walk 9:

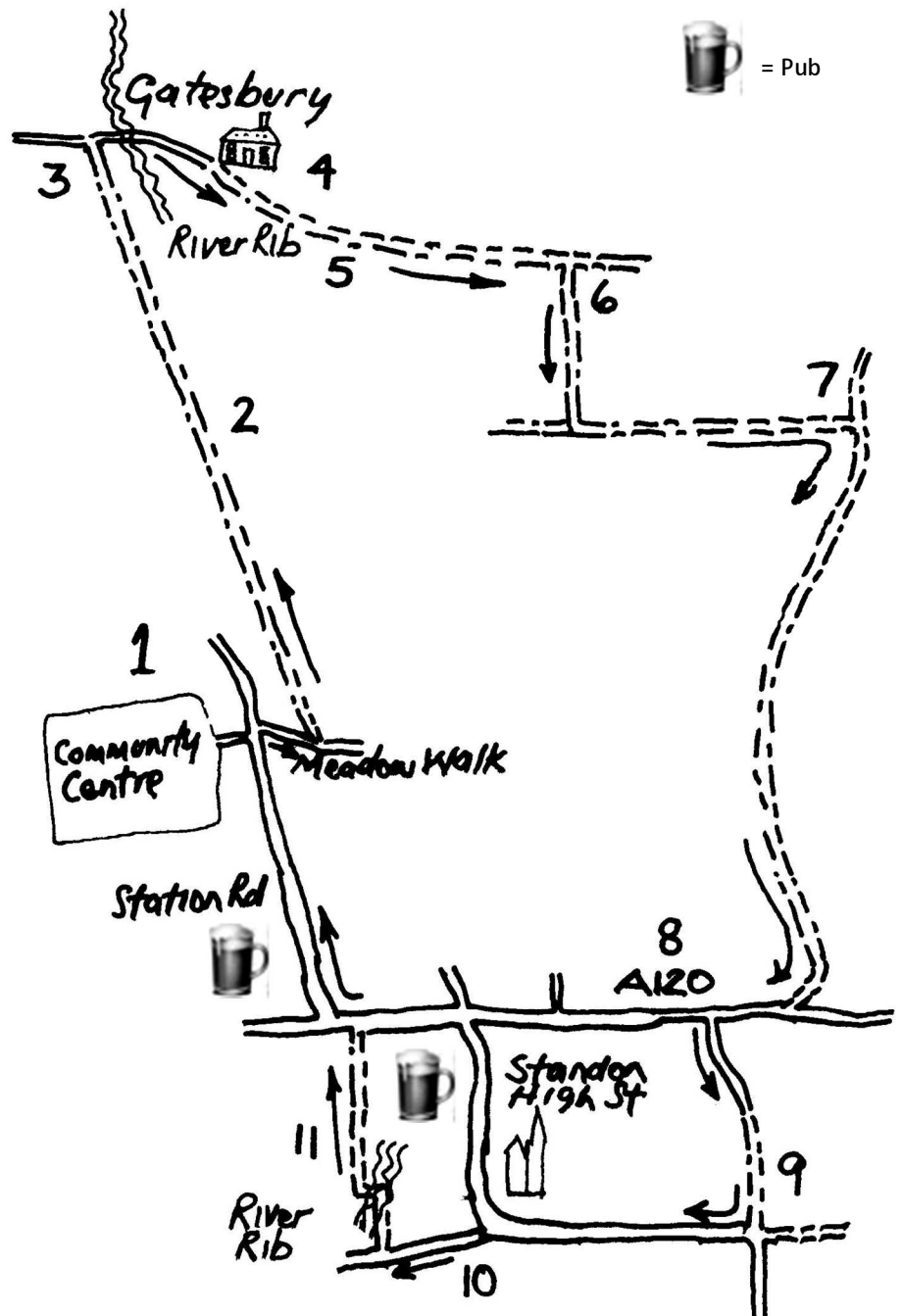
Over Gatesbury way.

Gatesbury is the site of an Iron Age earthwork (marked on Ordnance Survey maps), and the area nearby was one of the most important trading settlements in southern England in the 1st century BC. The Roman town of Braughing which stretched from Wickham Hill across Ermine Street and down to Puckeridge was second only to Verulamium in St. Albans. The area was alive with activity for many centuries, so keep your eyes open as you walk.

This walk goes outside the Parish but it gives you an excellent view of Puckeridge across open countryside. It uses several paths which are not included in the other walks.

Distance and time needed: 3½ miles, approximately 1¾ hours

Refreshments: The Bell (Pizzas & Pub food) 01920 739838
The Heron/China Garden (Chinese Food) 01920 821236
The Star (Pub food) 01920 823725



1 Starting in the Community Centre car park in Station Road, Puckeridge, walk down Meadow Walk (opposite the car park entrance) turn left down the signposted footpath. Over the ditch and straight on. Follow the school field boundary right and left along the field edge. At the end of the field follow the path straight on through the spinney and down by the river, you often see rabbits on this stretch.

In earlier times the river was much wider and trading boats would have come via the Thames and the Lea down the Rib to Roman Braughing, bringing wine, pottery and glass from Italy and Gaul.

On the day we checked this walk there was a lot of long tailed tits here – lovely little birds!

2 Walk on between the disused railway line and the river until you come to an open field. The path continues along the top of this field, continuing the line of the old railway until you come a bridge over the river on your right on the driveway to Gatesbury House.

There was a corn mill here in 1656 and Gatesbury House itself dates from the early 17th century.

3 Turn right over the bridge and sluice gates, (there are often buzzards wheeling overhead here and you may see herons and kingfishers from the bridge) continue down the cobbled drive towards the house, over the bridge with

a pond on your right. Keep to the right as you go past the front of the house. Note the duck house on the pond.

4 Pass through the fence gap on the right into the field and walk along the bottom of the field with the fence and water on your right, cross the field track to join a second track going uphill to your left.

5 Bear left and follow the track up the hill, continue on with an open field on your right and a small wood on your left. Note the deep cut valley on your left.

6 When you come to a gap in the hedge on your left, turn right uphill along the permissive path (there is a sign here). At the top of the hill follow the path round to the left – there is an excellent view of Puckeridge and the surrounding countryside from here.

7 As you drop down to the woods, turn right down the slope on to the bridleway in front of a hedge. With the hedge on your left, follow the field edge, over the ditch at the end of the field and straight on up the path between two hedges.

In autumn the spindle trees in these hedges are fruiting. The fruit pod is small and a vivid pink, the seed inside is bright orange - they look manmade and are well worth a visit! Spindle trees are unusual and have many uses, notably for spindles as the name implies, knitting needles, vivid dyes, soap rubber and in herbal medicine.

When you come to the A120 turn right down the hill.

8 After about 100 metres cross the road carefully and turn left up a track (Half Acres) between the houses which is marked as a public footpath. Go straight up the hill and at the end of the houses continue on the path between the hedges.

9 At the end of the gardens, at a T-junction of two paths, turn right and join the road, walk down the hill towards Standon.

10 Opposite the Knight's Court (the timbered house on your right) turn left into Paper Mill Lane.
Note the Pudding Stone under the Oak on the grass triangle on your right.

11 Opposite the water pumping station turn right on the marked footpath (the old railway line again). Cross the river bridge and immediately turn right across the field, along the field edge, through the kissing gate, cross over the A120 at the traffic light control and back along Station Road to your starting point.

Paths in Standon Parish are clearly waymarked. If you come across any problem with missing waymarks, please contact the Parish Paths Partnership: john@walkinginengland.co.uk.

This leaflet has been produced by Standon Parish Council working as part of the Parish Paths Partnership, a programme funded by Hertfordshire County Council's Countryside Management Service (CMS). CMS helps communities across Hertfordshire to care for and enjoy the environment. www.hertslink.org/cms

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The beautiful fruit of the Spindle. Rosy red fruit which open to show brilliant orange seeds.

You can see lots of these in Autumn on this walk, between sections 7 & 8.