

Standon Nr. Ware Walk 3:

Walk 3: To The Friars, Balsams, past the Wilderness, and back.

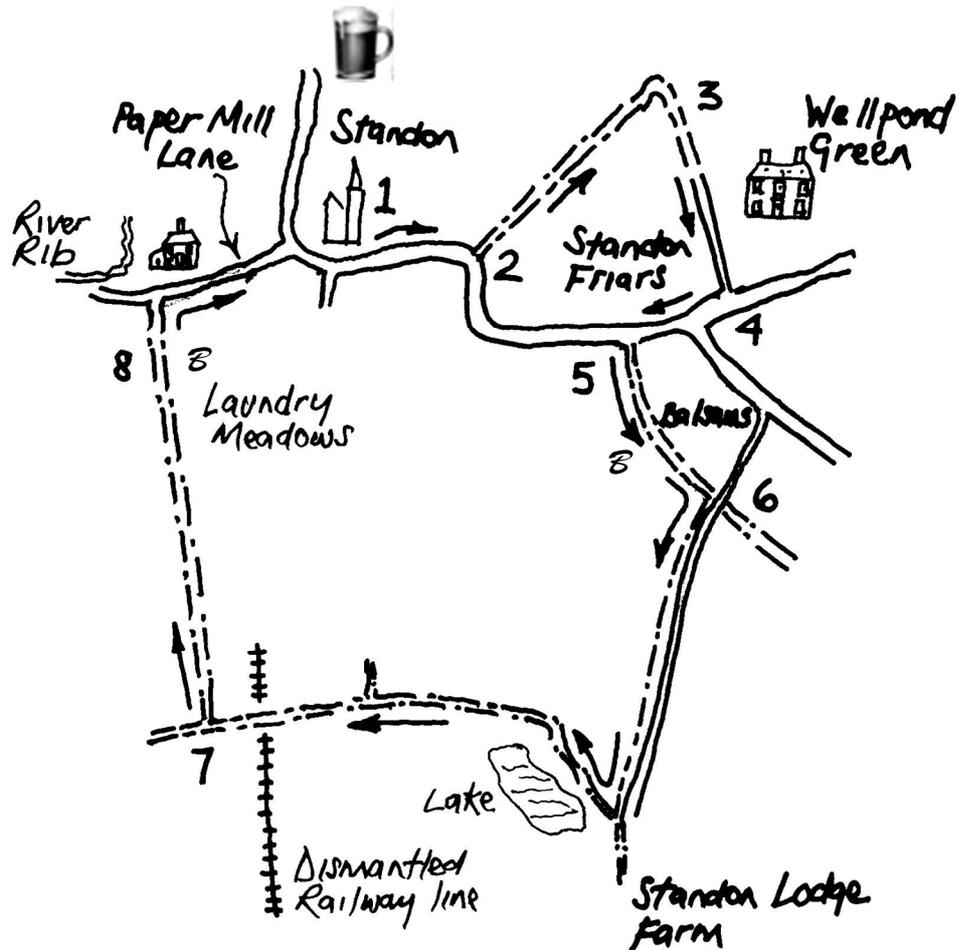
In Autumn and Winter you will need boots or wellies for this one – it can get muddy and in Summer watch out for the nettles. However your reward will be fabulous views, beautiful countryside and wildlife, and a sight of Canary Wharf and the Shard!

Distance and time needed: 3.7 miles, just under 2 hours.

Refreshments: The Bell (Pizzas & Pub food) 01920 318659

The Heron/China Garden (Chinese Food) 01920 821236

The Star (Pub food) 01920 823725



= Pub

⌘ = Bench suitable for a picnic!

1 Starting at St Mary's Church in Standon High Street, walk past Knights Court (see Walk 12 for information). The pavement will run out at Rose Cottages, so be very careful walking along the Hadham Road past Green Leys Cottages, particularly as you approach the sharp right-hand bend.

2 As you reach the last bungalow on the Hadham Road, "Springfield", you will see a public footpath sign and, as the road turns right, the footpath clearly visible ahead of you between the two hedgerows. The 'green lane' will soon open out into the field; go up this field, keeping the trees and ditch to your right. This path is usually easy to follow but it can become very muddy in Autumn and Winter.

3 At the end of the field, just before the woods, turn right through a gate. Walk up this field, keeping close to the field boundary on your left. You will find another gate ahead of you leading into a farmyard. Please remember that this is a mixed working farm so fasten all gates securely, keep your dog on a lead and under control at all times, and do not drop litter (there is a wonderful view back over Puckeridge on your right!) Walk across the yard, with the barns on your left, until you reach a third gate. Go through this gate, and keeping the pond on your right, walk up the metalled track to emerge on Chapel Lane.

4 Turn right onto the road. In the field on your right there are earthworks which are probably the remains of medieval fishponds connected to the preceptory at Standon Friars.

Shortly after you have crossed the junction with Hadham road turn left over a wooden bridge.

You can get a good view of the surrounding countryside from this bridge (and if it is clear, straight ahead on the horizon, the unmistakable shapes of Canary Wharf, the 'Gherkin' and the Shard in London).

5 Cross over the bridge and walk across the field to the hedge which divides the field, keep the hedge on your right. You will see another wooden bridge ahead of you providing a crossing over the stream. Continue over this bridge and, with the park like area with a small lake on your left, walk straight ahead, up the hill past a seat (ideal for a pic-nic) with the inscription “We live here with this lovely view, sit here and enjoy it too” and the barn on your left. Keep the hedge on your left until you come to a waymarked gap in the hedge. Go through the hedge and turn right onto the drive leading away from the house, “Little Balsams”.

The name Balsams may also be connected to the Knights Hospitaller preceptory at Standon Friars as a place where herbs might have been grown for the community.

This driveway will emerge onto the metalled track which leads from the Hadham Road to Standon Lodge Farm.

In the field on the left hand side of the track some late Iron Age pottery and a bronze thistle brooch were found, probable evidence of an Iron Age settlement.

6 Turn right (with a sign saying ‘Footpath leading to BW21) and proceed down the avenue of trees, to the wood called The Wilderness on your left, at Standon Lodge Farm. At the bottom of the hill, turn right with onto a bridleway, keeping the lake and conifers on your left, and walk back towards Standon. Follow this path and as you go downhill you will cross over the dismantled Buntingford branch railway line and, as the path levels out again, come to a cross path with the bridleway which runs from Paper Mill Lane to Latchford.

The Buntingford line was built in 1863 and ran from St. Margaret's near Ware to Buntingford, carrying four trains a day in each direction, as well as goods trains. The last one ran in 1965.

7 At this junction turn right, through the gate, follow the obvious path through a second gate. Keeping close to the right hand boundary fence, continue through the Laundry Meadows (a bench on your right just before you exit on to the land is ideal for a pic-nic) to Paper Mill Lane.

Paper Mill House is so called because paper was made from rags here from as early as 1703. Laundry Meadows are so called because the rags were laid out across the fields to dry. Women and children sorted rags collected by their men folk and removed any extraneous objects such as pieces of metal or buttons. It has been recorded that when the mill pool was drained a very thick layer of buttons covered the bottom!

Go through the gate onto Paper Mill Lane, turn right and proceed along the road to merge onto the High Street by the Pudding Stone across the road from the Church.

The Standon Pudding Stone is not in its original site. It was moved to its present site in 1904 from outside the Star pub, but before this it may have stood on the site of the present church as a ‘great stone’ or meeting place where ancient Britons would gather to decide matters of interest to the community. For more information see the Standon Historical walk. On www.walkinginherts.co.uk/hertford.php

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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