

Flitwick Circular (Full Walk)			Flitwick Circular (Short Walk)		
1 <sup>st</sup> walk check	3 <sup>rd</sup> walk check	4 <sup>th</sup> walk check	1 <sup>st</sup> walk check	2 <sup>nd</sup> walk check	3 <sup>rd</sup> walk check
30 <sup>th</sup> July 2014	11 <sup>th</sup> March 2018	25 <sup>th</sup> Feb. 2023	30 <sup>th</sup> July 2014	02 <sup>nd</sup> Oct. 2019	
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This walk has been checked as noted above, however the publisher cannot accept responsibility for any problems encountered by readers.					

## Flitwick Circular

**Start:** Flitwick Station

**Finish:** Flitwick Station

Flitwick station, map reference TL 034 349, is 15 km north of Luton, 79m above sea level and in **Central Bedfordshire**.

**Length:** 25.0 km (15.5 mi), of which 6.0 km (3.7 mi) on tarmac or concrete (most of it before lunch).  
**Cumulative ascent/descent:** 194m. For a shorter walk, see below **Walk Options**.

**Toughness:** 4 out of 10

**Time:** 5 ½ hours walking time.

For the whole outing, including trains, sights and meals, allow at least 8 hours.

**Transport:** Flitwick station is on the Brighton to Bedford-Thameslink line, stopping at East Croydon, London Bridge, Blackfriars, City Thameslink, Farringdon, St. Pancras International and West Hampstead Thameslink. Journey times from St. Pancras to Flitwick (four trains per hour) are from 46 minutes Mon-Sat and from 50 minutes Sundays.

**Saturday Walkers' Club:** Take the train closest to 9.30 hours.

**OS Landranger Map:** 153 (Bedford & Huntingdon)

**OS Explorer Map:** 193 (Luton & Stevenage)

### Walk Notes:

This Central Bedfordshire walk just north of the easterly end of the Chilterns initially follows the tranquil Flit River along the shady wooded fringes of Flitwick Moor, one of the most important wetland sites in the south east of England, and then veers away from the river through a couple of quiet villages, en route passing the Grade I-listed De Grey Mausoleum in Flitton and the also Grade I-listed Wrest House and Gardens in Silsoe. This is followed by a longer stretch through rolling fields with views to the Greensand Ridge. After crossing the Flit near Clophill the walk leads up the Greensand Ridge, descending for lunch back into Clophill. After lunch it's back on to the ridge for a long stretch through and along Maulden Wood, at times with far views south to the Chiltern Hills. The highlight of the return route from Maulden to Flitwick is the passage through Flitton and Flitwick Moors, including a stretch along a narrow path through the very heart of Flitwick Moor.

A much shorter option, with less ascent as well, is described (rated 1 out of 10).

A very short out-and-back to the De Grey Mausoleum and Wrest Park is possible; pubs in Silsoe and Flitton – or the Café in Wrest Park – would provide nourishment (12.3 km/7.7 mi).

### Walk Options:

A pre-lunch **shortcut** cuts 7.2 km (4.4 mi) and 120m of ascent/descent and has a rating of **1/10**.

**More than a handful of bus lines** connect **Clophill** to either Flitwick, Bedford or Luton Stations.

**Bus Lines 200 and FL1, 4, 5 and 10** connect **Flitton** (3.2 km into the walk) and **Maulden** (6.1 km from the end) to Flitwick (mon-Sat).

### Elenvenses and Lunch (details last updated 27/02/2023)

**The White Hart** Brook Lane, *Flitton, Bedfordshire, MK45 5EJ* (01525 862 022,

<https://www.thewhitehartflitton.co.uk/>). The White Hart is located 3.2 km (2.0 mi) into the walk.

**The Jolly Coopers** Wardhedges, *Flitton, Bedfordshire, MK45 5ED* (01525 303 648). The Jolly Coopers is located 4.0 km (2.5 mi) into the walk.

**The Star and Garter** 14-16 High Street, *Silsoe, Bedfordshire, MK45 4DR* (01525 860 250, <https://www.starandgartersilsoepub.co.uk/>). The Star and Garter is located 5.5 km (3.4 mi) into the walk.

**The Stone Jug** 10 Back Street, *Clophill, Bedfordshire, MK45 4BY* (01525 860 526, <http://www.stonejug.co.uk>). The Stone Jug is located 14.6 km (9.0 mi) into the main walk and 7.8 km into the short walk. Open 12.00-15.30 Tue-Thu and 18.00-23.00 Mon-Thu, 12.00-23.00 Fri-Sat and 12.00-21.00 Sun. Food served 12.00-14.30 Tue-Sat. It is a 16<sup>th</sup> century building which became a public house in the early 1900's. Its name may have something to do with the local quarry stone which the building is mostly constructed from. Run by the same family since 1981, the freehouse is nestled on a quiet rural lane and has benches along the front. Repeatedly voted North Bedfordshire Pub of the Year by CAMRA.

**The Flying Horse** 2 The Green, *Clophill, Bedfordshire, MK45 4AD* (01525 860 293, <http://www.theflyinghorse.co.uk/>). The Flying Horse is located 15.2 km (9.5 mi) into the full walk and 7.2 km into the short walk. Open all day every day. Food served all day every day. It is set in a barn conversion, with food served either in the comfy bar area or in the restaurant in the barn. The large terrace and garden at the back are subjected to some road noise from the nearby A-road junction.

**The George Inn** 6 George Street, *Maulden, Bedfordshire, MK45 2DF*. *Maulden, Bedfordshire, MK45 2DF* (01525 841 559, <https://thegeorgemaulden.com/>). The George is located 18.3 km (11.4 mi) into the full walk and 11.2 km into the short walk. Open 16.00-22.00 Wed-Thu and all day Fri-Sun. Food served 17.00 onwards Wed-Thu and all day Fri-Sun.

**The White Hart at Maulden** Ampthill Road, *Maulden, Bedfordshire, MK45 2DH* (01525 43 404, <https://www.thewhitehartmaulden.co.uk/index>). The White Hart at Maulden is located 19.0 km (11.8 mi) into the full walk and 12.3 km into the short walk. Open all day Tue-Sun. Food served 12.00-14.30 and 18.00-20.30 (-21.00 Fri-Sat) and 12.00-17.00 Sun.

### Tea (details last updated 27/02/2023)

**The George Inn** and **The White Hart at Maulden** See above (about 6 km from the end of the walk).

**The Crown** Station Road, *Flitwick, Bedfordshire, MK45 1LA* (01525 713 737, <http://www.crownflitwick.co.uk/>) The Crown is located 700m from the station. Open 12.00-14.00 (not Tue) and 17.00-23.00 Mon-Thu and all day Fri-Sun. Food served 12.00-14.00 (not Tue) and 17.00-20.00 daily.

**The Swan** 1 Dunstable Road, *Flitwick, Bedfordshire, MK45 1HP* (01525 754 777, <http://www.swaninnflitwick.co.uk/>). A village local & commuter pub, located next to the railway station.

**The Bumble Bee** Coniston Road, *Flitwick, Bedfordshire, MK45 1QY* (01525 717 212, <https://www.greeneking-pubs.co.uk/pubs/bedfordshire/bumble-bee/>). A Greene King pub.

**The Lounge Coffee Shop** 2 Coniston Road, *Flitwick, Bedfordshire, MK45 1LX* (01525 716 177, <http://www.theloungeflitwick.co.uk/>). Open 8.30-17.00 Mon-Sat and 9.30-16.00 Sun.

## Notes:

### Flitwick

Flitwick, pronounced 'flittick', is a small town and civil parish in Central Bedfordshire, England. It is mentioned in the Domesday Book as "a hamlet on the River Flitt". Flitwick is famous for its Flitwick Manor House, currently used as a hotel. There is also physical evidence of a Norman era motte-and-bailey castle site, locally known as "The Mount".

### Two Moors Heritage Trail

A way-marked 8 km (5 mi) walk along the Flit River as well as through the remaining parts of Flitton and Flitwick Moors, part of what was once a much larger wet moorland, long used for peat extraction.

### The Flit River

The River Flit flows through Flitwick, then past Greenfield and Flitton and through Clophill, Chicksands, and Shefford, before meeting the River Ivel at Langford. Its name is not ancient, but rather a back formation from Flitton (other sources though attribute the name to Anglo-Saxon 'Fleot'; meaning fast flowing stream as in the now hidden river Fleet in London, giving its name to Fleet Street).

### Flitwick Moor Nature Reserve

Now a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and one of the most important wetland sites in the south east of England, it is managed by the Wildlife Trust who owns the majority of it. It has formed where the Greensand Ridge lies close under the clay and chalk, allowing water in the underlying aquifer to come to the surface in a series of chalybeate springs (mineral spring waters containing salts of iron, which give the water its reddish colour). Deep deposits of peat built up here during thousands of years of growth of reeds and sedges, which died and fell into the relatively oxygen poor mud and water where they did not fully decay. The outcome was a series of "mires" along the river Flit. Flitwick Moor, the largest valley mire in Bedfordshire, is the sole survivor of these.

The whole of the Flit Valley from Westoning to Shefford would have been largely peat bog 200 years ago. The peat deposits are under 2,000 years old however, as Roman finds in the area are from below the peat layer. Peat was later dug from the moor for industrial use as a filter for coal gas. The wagons carrying the peat ran on movable rails and the peat was then taken to gas depots in towns to the north. This only stopped with the discovery of North Sea gas.

The moor was at one time famous for its water: Flitwick Water, which between the 1890's and 1950's was bottled and sold as an iron rich blood tonic. The moor is now exceptionally important for its mosses with over 130 species of bryophytes (mosses and liverworts) – more than Wicken Fen in Cambridgeshire which is four times its size. It is also nationally important for its fungi with over 500 recorded species – again more than Wicken Fen. You can also see Cotton Grass, more usually seen on upland peat bogs, and in late spring some areas are carpeted with Golden Saxifrage.

### St. John the Baptist Church, Flitton

The church dates from the 15<sup>th</sup> century, but there was a church on the site in 1261, and Flitton is mentioned in the Domesday Book, spelt 'Flictham'. It is built from local sandstone, which does not weather well, making it costly to maintain. It was paid for by Edmund Lord Grey of Ruthin, Earl of Kent, who lived at Wrest Park, Silsoe.

### De Grey Mausoleum

Among the largest sepulchral chapels attached to any English church, this cruciform mausoleum houses a remarkable sequence of 17 sculpted and effigied monuments, spanning nearly two and a half centuries (1614-1859), to the De Grey family of Wrest Park. It is built of brick, whitewashed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, topped by a parapet to match the Gothic style of the earlier medieval church and a Grade I listed building now in the guardianship of English Heritage.

The mausoleum owes its origins to the 'little Chappell or buryall place' added to the church of St. John the Baptist in Flitton by Henry Grey, the sixth Earl of Kent, in around 1605 in accordance with his will as a final resting place for his family and descendants. He had inherited an impoverished title, as a previous Earl had squandered most of the family fortune through lavish living and gambling, but carefully rebuilt the family finances. His will stipulated that his memorial should not only celebrate his achievements in life, but act as a reminder to future generations to mind their money!

This started the accumulation of one of the greatest collections of family funerary monuments in England. The church itself had been built by the family one hundred and fifty years earlier.

Their monuments clearly show changing attitudes towards death and bereavement from the 17<sup>th</sup> century to the Victorian period as well as changing styles of funerary architecture. The De Grey family members were not actually buried within their tombs, but instead in vaults beneath the stone floor of the mausoleum.

Open on selected days during summer, check updates here: <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/de-grey-mausoleum-flitton>

### **Wrest Park**

...comprises Wrest House, a Grade I listed country house, and Wrest Park Gardens, also Grade I listed, formal gardens surrounding the mansion. It is now managed by English Heritage.

The present house was built in 1834-39, to designs by its owner Thomas de Grey, 2nd Earl de Grey, an amateur architect and the first president of the Royal Institute of British Architects, who was inspired by buildings he had seen on trips to Paris and based his house on designs published in French architectural books. Wrest has some of the earliest Rococo Revival interiors in England. Reception rooms in the house are open to the public.

Wrest Park has an early 18<sup>th</sup> century garden, spread over 92 acres, which was probably originally laid out by George London and Henry Wise for Henry Grey, 1st Duke of Kent, then modified by Lancelot "Capability" Brown in a more informal landscape style. The park is divided by a wide gravel central walk, continued as a long canal that leads to a Baroque style pavilion designed by Thomas Archer and completed in 1711. Boundary canals were altered to take the more natural shape by Capability Brown who worked there 1758-60, and who also ringed the central formal area with a canal and woodland. During the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Bath House, an orangery and marble fountains were added.

<https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/wrest-park/>

### **Greensand Ridge**

The ridge of Greensand is a distinctive feature that rises markedly from its surrounding clay vales through Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire. It is an area of gently rolling hills and small valleys, heavily wooded in parts. In many places it has been planted with conifers, but there are still areas of important habitats such as heathland, acid grassland and ancient woodland remaining. Sandstone from the ridge has been used locally for building for hundreds of years, giving the towns and villages of the area their distinctive appearance. Extraction of the sands has led to a large network of quarries in the area, which is cut through by the valleys of the rivers Flit and Ouzel.

### **Cainhoe Castle, Clophill**

A Norman motte-and-triple-bailey castle, possibly built on the site of an Anglo-Saxon settlement, by Nigel d'Albini, a Norman knight, whose family is known for having been deeply involved in the crusades. The family governed most of Bedfordshire from here. It is nowadays a Scheduled Ancient Monument also comprising an associated moated site, fishponds and a field system. The remaining earthworks of the castle are still clearly visible. The castle and the small village that had built up around it were occupied until the time of the Black Death (1348), when all the inhabitants died of the disease.

### **Clophill Eco Lodges**

The lodges are community-funded and -built and intended to provide overnight accommodation for walkers, artists and general visitors to the area, residential courses as well as being a group space for heritage, eco and craft activities. There is an on-site warden to ensure the long term maintenance and preservation of the facilities, as well as supporting the activities which take place there. <https://www.clophillecolodges.co.uk/>

### **Old St Mary's Church, Clophill**

St. Mary's is now picturesquely ruined and a designated Ancient Monument, but the remains still stand proud in its hilltop location above the village on the Greensand Ridge, providing for commanding views to the east and south from the ruined tower. It was eventually replaced by a new church down in the village and is now used as a mortuary chapel. The churchyard possessed the unenviable reputation of being a haunt of body snatchers, and many human bones have been dug up in the fields of nearby Brickwall Farm. It also attracted some interest during times of occult revival and was the scene of a couple of particularly grisly black magic ritual during the 1960s.

The tower is occasionally open for ticketed tours, with all proceeds going towards the communal Eco Lodges project. To book: <https://www.clophillecolodges.co.uk/tower-tours>

### **Greensand Ridge Walk**

A linear way-marked 66 km (41 mi) walk, following the outcrop of the Cretaceous (142-65 million years ago) Lower Greensand through Bedfordshire, starting at Leighton Buzzard, passing Woburn Abbey and Ampthill Park (where it connects with the John Bunyan Trail) and finishing at Gamlingay on the border with Cambridgeshire.

### **Ailesbury Mausoleum & Crypt**

The impressive octagonal mausoleum and crypt were built in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century by Thomas, Earl of Elgin, in memory of his second wife Diana, daughter of the Earl of Stamford.

Mausoleum and crypt are occasionally open to visitors during the summer months.

## WALK DIRECTIONS

Alight from the train in **Flitwick Station** on platform 2 or 4, and leave up some steps and down to and then *through the station building* and follow a signed footpath up to road level and *turn hard left* back to the railway bridge. Cross the road and *turn left* along the pavement to cross the railway line over the bridge. In 40m you cross a roundabout and *turn half right* along **King's Road**, to the left of a **War Memorial** (100°). In 580m continue in the same direction at a four-way junction along **Greenfield Road**. In 100m pass **Flitwick Mill House** on the right and cross the mill stream. In 15m *turn left* into a meadow through a metal kissing gate, (with a footpath signpost and a **Two Moors Heritage Trail** marker post). Follow a meandering path with the millstream on your left. Pass a couple of yellow-topped poles along the way and enter woods with **The Flit River** on the right. In 90m pass an information board about **Flitwick Moor Nature Reserve** on the left.

In 360m – by a wooden bench on the left – ignore a grassy track turning left. In 320m continue in the same direction at a three-way footpath junction by a concrete bridge on the right. In 160m *turn left* through a wooden kissing gate frame and follow a barbed wire fence on the right with a meadow behind. In 50m walk through a wooden kissing gate into a large meadow and *veer slightly to the right* towards the river (35°). In 210m leave the meadow (**Maggots Moor**) and **Flitwick Moor Nature Reserve** in the far-right corner through a wooden kissing gate past an information board to cross **The Flit** on a two-railed concrete bridge and continue along a gravel path curving to the right. In 90m walk through a wooden kissing gate to the left of a wooden field gate and *turn left* at a junction with a gravel lane, passing an info panel on **The Flit Valley Walk**. In 60m, where the gravel bridleway turns left, **[!]** you *fork right* with a footpath marker post across a brook and through a wooden kissing gate frame into a field. Cross the field on a usually well-cleared path (40°) and in 120m leave it on the opposite side by a yellow-topped pole to continue along a narrow fenced path between hedges.

In 260m *turn right* over an un-railed wooden plank bridge over a ditch and through a metal kissing gate into a pasture. *Turn left* along the hedge towards the houses of **Flitton**, broadly in the same direction as before. In 90m leave the field through a metal kissing gate to continue along a path between a hedge on the left and a fence on the right. In 175m emerge through a wooden gate onto a road (**Brook Lane**) opposite **St. John the Baptist Church, Flitton**. *Turn right*, pass **The White Hart, Flitton** on the right and in 30m *turn left* at a T-junction along **High Street**, passing the church entrance as well as the **De Grey Mausoleum**. In 250m ignore **Flitton Hill** turning left and continue along the right-hand pavement of the road (now called **Wardhedges Road**) up into **Wardhedges** hamlet. The pavement changes side once more and in 530m you pass **The Jolly Coopers** pub and *turn left* at a T-junction with **Silsoe Road**.

**In 50m you have a choice:**

**For a Shortcut**, continue along the road and pick up directions at the end of the text.

**For the main walk**, *turn right* to cross the road and walk through a hedge gap with a footpath signpost into a large field, which you cross on a gravel-and-earth path (115°). In 200m on the opposite side of the field continue in the same direction along a car wide track, soon with a hedge on the left. Here you get views ahead to **Silsoe** village and to the right of the village to the easterly end of **The Chilterns Range**. In 750m pass a **horse-compatible metal field gate**. In 50m continue along a tarmac lane, ignore all ways off and in 450m cross the **High Street**, with **St. James the Great, Silsoe** church opposite to the right and **The Star and Garter** a little further along. Continue under a line of trees along the grassy pavement of **Park Avenue** with a bridleway signpost (Gravenhurst 1½). In 150m walk between two gate houses and through a large gate



into the grounds of **Wrest Park and Gardens** towards a long tree lined avenue. Ignore a Public Bridleway turning right immediately, but continue along the grassy pavement and in 60m over a road bridge to cross the **A6**, which runs in a cutting here.

Continue in the same direction, but *to the right* of the right line of trees, providing you with views of **Wrest House** and of the wall running around the extensive grounds of **Wrest Park Gardens**, both Grade I-listed in their own right. In 350m you cross a tarmac lane and in another 50m a second one. In 120m follow a path into bushes and in 35m emerge on a tarmac lane in front of the entrance to **Wrest House**. Follow the curved lane past the house and in 100m follow a narrow tarmac path through hedges, in 15m continuing along the tarmac path past a car park serving **Wrest Park Enterprise Centre**. [Note the **Coffee Shop** inside **Capability House**, the last building on the right (Mon-Fri, serving hot soups and small meals): through the revolving door, to the right of the reception and in 20m through a door on the right.] 90m after passing **Capability House** continue in the same direction along a car wide gravel lane at a three-way bridleway junction, where the tarmac road turns right.

The lane curves left in 400m, gently rises over a brow, and passes **Gravenhurst Lodge**. Once over another brow you get clear views to the easterly end of **The Chilterns** (Pegsdon Hills, SWC Walk Hitchin Circular). In 530m *turn right* along **Clophill Road** into **Upper Gravenhurst**, now with views of the church in **Shillington**, dubbed 'The Cathedral of the Chilterns' by **John Betjeman**. In 185m *turn left* along **High Street**. In 110m, just after passing the village hall on the left, followed by a footpath signpost, **[!]** *turn left* along a tarmac drive. Continue in the same direction (40°) for 210m, first past some houses, then along a grassy path between garden fences and later through a wooded area, then along a fenced path with a pasture on the left. Immediately after this **[!]** *turn left* with a footpath marker post, with a hedge on the left and a small paddock on the right (310°). In 15m ignore a footpath turning right and walk through a metal kissing gate into a large pasture.

Continue in the same direction along the left-hand boundary, with more paddocks on the right. In 130m the path veers right to pass to the right of a line of large bushes into the narrowing end of the field. In 70m leave the field through a metal kissing gate and continue along the left-hand fenced grassy boundary of the next field. In 230m leave the field in the far-left corner at a footpath marker post (ignore a permissive path turning right) and continue on a grassy path in the same direction between arable fields. In 200m cross a gravel lane in the direction of a footpath signpost into a large arable field and cross it along a usually well-cleared path in the previous direction (295°). From the brow of this field, you get views back to **The Chilterns** as well as ahead to the **Greensand Ridge**. In 300m enter the next field with a marker post through a hedge gap and *veer left* across it on a usually well-cleared path towards its far-left corner, just left of **Cainhoe Manor Farm**. In 370m enter a grassy area by a marker post and continue along its left-hand boundary hedge. In 40m you *turn left* through a hedge gap and *turn right* along **Clophill Road** (310°).

In 620m cross the **A507** carefully at a T-junction and enter a large grassy field through a metal kissing gate with a footpath signpost. This is **Castle Hill**, site of the Norman motte-and-triple-bailey **Cainhoe Castle**, the remaining earthworks of which are still clearly visible to the right around a spur with sloping ground on all sides, most impressively though when leaving the field on the opposite side. Veer slightly to the left across this area (320°) and in 310m walk through a metal kissing gate into a large field. *Veer right* towards a fence corner and in 65m follow the fence line, with the field on the left and **Clophill Lakes** on the right (formerly quarries and a planned nature reserve). Follow the fence around to the right and after 550m in the far-right field corner *turn right* along a grassy track between trees (55°). In 110m *turn left* with a marker post

and cross two arms of the **Flit River** over two-railed wooden bridges 40m apart. Continue on a narrow path and in 230m emerge onto a road through **Clophill** village.

Cross the road and continue along a residential road a little to the left (**Townshott**). In 110m *turn right* at a T-junction. In 50m follow a fence on the right along a grassy path with a footpath signpost where the tarmac lane turns left to houses. In 40m *turn left* and uphill at a junction with a gravel-and-earth track between trees. Ascend the **Greensand Ridge** along this track with a steep sided wood on the right. In 70m ignore a stepped path turning right into the wood. In 150m the path levels out and in a further 50m ignore a footpath turning off left through a metal kissing gate. Pass **Clophill Eco Lodges** on the left and the entrance to the churchyard and ruin of **Old St. Mary's Church** on the right, with several splendid info panels and a spiral staircase to the top of the tower providing commanding views to the east and south (ticketed access, with all proceeds going to the Eco Lodges Project).

In 10m *turn left* downhill along an earthen path past a concrete block bike barrier, with a wooden fence on the left. In 210m *turn right* uphill at a road junction along **Great Lane**, where a **Greensand Ridge Walk** (GRW) signpost points back and a footpath joins from across the field on the left. In 100m *turn left* with a GSW signpost along **Kiln Lane** and in 290m *turn right* with a GRW signpost along **Old Kiln Lane** where Kiln Lane turns left. In 25m ignore a bridleway turning right into a field. In 300m pass a missing field gate and continue between trees. In 35m **[!]** *turn left* off the track through a metal kissing gate with a footpath signpost and continue along the left-hand boundary of a grassy field. In 110m leave the field through another metal kissing gate and down some steps and keep descending through horse paddocks, in 30m continuing along the approach lane to the stables. In 30m continue in the same direction with the fence on the left, where the lane turns right and up. In 15m enter a wood through a metal kissing gate while in 90m a car wide forest track joins from the right. In 35m continue along **The Slade** (a tarmac lane) into **Clophill**. In 190m *turn right* at a T-junction with **Back Street**. In 65m find **The Stone Jug**, the recommended lunch pub on the right.

After lunch *turn right* along **Back Street** (i.e.: continue in the pre-lunch direction) and in 210m *turn right* along a wide earthen path with GRW and footpath signposts, with houses on the right and a wooden fence on the left and an old quarry behind it (340°). **[Unless you want to progress to the alternative lunch option, or want to link up with the shortcut route, in this case: continue along the road and in 30m *turn left* along **Readshill**. In 180m *turn right* along **Beverley Court & Beverley Gardens**. In 25m *turn left* along **Beverley Court**. In 90m continue through a small car park and in 50m reach **The Green**, with a convenience store away on the left and **The Flying Horse** to the right. After lunch re-trace your steps to **Back Street**, or pick up directions in the **Shortcut** chapter from **The Flying Horse** onwards.]**

In 210m *fork left* through bike barriers with a footpath marker on a steeper path and in 20m *veer left* with the path (285°). In 80m climb some steps to then reach the fringe of the wood at the plateau level in another 30m. Leave the wood through bike barriers into a grassy field and *turn left* along its boundary. In 150m *turn right* in the far corner with the field boundary. In 150m continue through an often overgrown area to the far left corner and in 35m walk through a metal kissing gate into the adjacent field and follow its left hand grassy boundary. In 50m *turn right* with the field boundary, now with a steep sided slope on the left, and the **audible dual-carriageway A6** down below. In 175m *turn left* down into the wooded slope with markers and in 35m *turn right* and up **Deadman's Hill** along the grassy **pavement of the A6**, with a wall on the right.

In 330m *turn left* and cross the split A-road to continue through a usually open metal field gate along a car wide **Forestry Commission** gravel lane into **Maulden Wood** with a GRW signpost on the right. In 100m pass a **Faith Woodlands** marker on a low pole

on the left, where a forest track joins from the right (a Luton-based initiative aiming to help people from all backgrounds to enjoy and learn more about nature and the countryside). In another 110m pass **Forest Lodge**. In another 55m **[!]** *turn right* off the concrete-and-grass lane along an easy-to-miss narrow earthen path up a small bank into the wood, with a GRW marker 10m away on a pole. In 5m the path *turns left* (260°) and in 35m it starts descending. In 50m *turn left* at a path junction. In 80m cross a bridleway and in another 40m cross a brook on a two-railed wooden bridge. In 15m *turn left* out of the wood with a GRW marker post on the right through bike barriers onto a grassy path. The Shortcut joins from the left. *Turn right* along the path.

**\*)** Follow the fringe of the wood with a barbed wire fence on the left and a grassy field behind it along the undulating **Greensand Ridge** for 670m, ignoring all ways off (in 340m passing a thatched octagonal house where an alternative to the potentially overgrown path runs 20m to the left). Enter a large pasture through a metal gate to the left of a wooden field gate and go up its fenced boundary. In 75m, from the top of the gentle rise, you get splendid views of **The Chilterns** as well as of the prominent hilltop **Water Tower in Pulloxhill** (SWC Walk Harlington to Flitwick). In 150m *veer right* through a metal gate into the wood on the right with GRW and C.R. markers. In 150m *turn left* with the usual markers at a five-way junction of forest paths along a narrow path shaded by trees either side (285°). In 200m walk through a metal kissing gate into **Maulden Church Meadow Local Nature Reserve** and *bear left* (220°) through it.

In 50m *fork left* (195°) and in 50m pass to the right of a pond, and then to the left of a clump of trees. In 270m leave the meadow through a wooden kissing gate by an information board. In 30m *turn right* through a metal gate into the church yard of **St. Mary the Virgin, Maulden** with the **Ailesbury Mausoleum & Crypt** to the right of the church. Leave the church yard on the other side of the church in the south easterly corner through a metal gate and down towards **Maulden** village along a tarmac path between fences (230°). In 200m, at a road junction and opposite **The Bothy**, *turn right* towards **The George Inn**. In 20m *turn left* along **The Knoll**, a tarmac lane. In 60m continue to the right of houses along a wide tarmac path. In 100m you reach **Ampthill Road**. [**The White Hart at Maulden**, an **early tea option** and a **lunch option on the short walk**, is 300m down the right along the road].

Cross the road and continue 10m to the right along a gravel lane with a footpath signpost on the left. In 50m walk through a metal gate to the left of a wooden field gate and continue along a grassy path. In 140m go through a metal gate into a grassy field and follow its left hand boundary, with allotment gardens on the left a little below. In 110m cross a tarmac lane and continue a little to the right along a grassy path with a footpath signpost. In 90m cross a car wide track and continue along a narrower grassy path, with allotments on the right and a fence and trees on the left. In 70m *turn left* along a tarmac lane. In 180m pass the entrance to **Duck End Nature Reserve** (the remnants of **Maulden Moor**) on the right. [A circular route through it is shown on an info panel 30m to the right.] In 75m walk through a metal kissing gate left of a metal field gate and continue along a grassy track between fences. Ahead you see the church tower in **Flitton** – passed in the morning – and **Pulloxhill Water Tower**.

In 320m *turn right* at a three-way footpath junction along a car wide gravel farm track between fences in the general direction of a large white silo in **Flitwick**, with **Flitwick Wood** behind it. In 260m *turn left* with a footpath marker post at a three-way farm track junction. Over the next 400m walk through three metal gates, as you pass **Black Moor Farm** (Business Park). Cross **New Road** and continue with a footpath signpost a little to the right along a narrow earthen path with a brook on the left and a brick wall on the right. In 70m walk through a usually open field gate and continue to the left of a metal bar fence with **Brookside Farm** on the right. In 75m the fence ends and you continue in the same direction along a field boundary. In 60m you *veer right* across the



field with a footpath marker post along a usually well-cleared path (due S). In 130m on the opposite field boundary go through a metal kissing gate and continue through a grassy area towards a road. In 30m *turn right* along the grassy road verge and in 30m cross the road. Cross a stile in a gap and *veer right* across a grassy field (190°). In 90m *turn left* through a metal gate and cross a two-railed concrete bridge over a brook into **Flitton Moor (Local Nature Reserve)** ignoring a footpath continuing in the same direction on this side of the brook.

*Turn left* along a grassy path (the **Two Moors Heritage Trail**) with a fence on the right, and *turn right* immediately with the path. In 180m – with the informative **Flit Valley Discovery Centre** on the left – *turn right* at a T-junction, with the **River Flit** on the left and **Flitton Moor** still on the right. In 620m *turn left* with a bridleway marker post over a two-railed concrete bridge across the river and leave the **Two Moors Heritage Trail**, which continues ahead along a field boundary. In 120m *turn right* with the path where a footpath joins from the left. You are now part-reversing the morning route: in 50m the path continues on tarmac. In 30m you *turn right* through a wooden kissing gate to the right of a wooden field gate along an earthen path with garden fences on the left and trees on the right. In 90m cross a two-railed concrete bridge over **The Flit** and walk through a wooden kissing gate into a large meadow (**Maggots Moor**), part of **Flitwick Moor Nature Reserve**. Ignore the path turning left along the fence and take the equally obvious path *straight across the meadow* (initially 260°).

On your left the **old course of The Flit** is marked by meandering depressions, edged by trees growing on the old river-banks. In 90m *fork left* where the path splits. In 170m in the far corner walk through a set of metal gates either side of a two-railed wooden plank bridge and *turn right* with a footpath marker in a meadow along its right-hand side. In 65m walk through a wooden kissing gate in the meadow corner and continue with a footpath marker along a raised boardwalk. In 120m you reach a two-railed wooden plank bridge over a stream and **[!]** *turn left immediately before it* along a narrow and bumpy path through the moor, over tree roots and with bogs and streams to the sides, with the streams rusty looking from iron oxide.

**[Don't take this path in fading light or darkness,** in that case: cross the bridge and continue in the same direction, in 200m *fork left* – about 40m before a car park on the fringe of the wood – and in 100m *turn left* at a T-junction with a path along the fringe of the wood. In 200m at a four-way track junction the main route joins from the left. Keep straight ahead across the junction and continue below: "In 110m emerge from the...".]

In 25m cross a railed wooden plank bridge and in 310m *turn right* at a track T-junction. In 170m *turn left* at a four-way track junction with a **Two Moors Heritage Trail**-marker on a yellow-topped pole with a fence on the left (and still through trees), where a track joins from the right (the fading light alternative route). In 110m emerge from the wooded area and continue along a field boundary which soon curves right. In 175m *turn left* with the boundary towards the houses of **Flitwick**, where a footpath joins from the right across the field. In 140m *turn right* at a T-junction with **Moor Lane** and in 55m reach **Maulden Road** and *turn left along it*. In 80m cross **Kings Road** (the **direct route to the station** turns right along this busy road) and continue along **Station Road**. In 175m reach the recommended (pub) tea stop **The Crown**. Follow the road for 550m to a roundabout with the station on the left.

#### Here either:

- *turn left* and in 50m *turn right* through a wall gap into **Flitwick Station** (*turn right* to Platform 1);
- *turn left*, cross the railway bridge and find **The Swan** pub on the left;
- or *turn left*, cross the railway bridge and walk down **Coniston Road** to reach **The Bumble Bee** pub in 150m, and in another 50m the recommended **Lounge Coffee Shop** on the corner of a superstore building.

**Shortcut [Lunch is in Clophill or Maulden]  
(cut 7.1 km, 110m ascent/descent and 1.5 km tarmac before lunch)**

In 50m *fork half left* with a bridleway signpost through a gap to the right of a metal field gate along a car wide gravel farm track, where the road turns right. In 90m *turn left* with a footpath signpost along a grassy path with a hedge on the left (320°). In 220m pass a footpath marker on a fence post on the left, as the path bears left. In 40m *turn right* with a marker post along left-hand field boundary. In 470m cross **Ampthill Road** and continue a little to the right along a car wide gravel farm track past a green metal gate, ignoring a left turn. In 150m continue straight along a grassy field boundary where the gravel track turns left. In 50m continue between trees. In 390m a footpath joins from the right across a field. In 250m go through a wooden field gate and pass some modernised farm buildings and in 80m enter a wood through a metal kissing gate to the left of a wooden field gate, with a steep sided slope on the right.

After 570m along the gravel drive you reach the **dual carriage-way A6** by a service station on the left and *turn left* along the road. On the other side of the service station *turn right* across the road, using a traffic island, and continue along **Old Silsoe Road**. In 35m *turn left* with **Old Silsoe Road**, where **Goodwood Close** continues in the same direction. In 20m cross an arm of **The River Flit** and in 90m continue along a narrow tarmac track in a cul-de-sac as you approach the **A507**. In 15m *turn left* with the fenced in path and use an **elevated bridge** to cross the A-road. In 20m cross the main arm of **The Flit** on a brick walled bridge. In 10m reach the village green in **Clophill**, with a convenience store on the right and a bus stop and **The Flying Horse** on the left.

[For another alternative lunch pub (650m away) and **to link-up with the main walk**: walk into the car park to the left of the former **Green Man** and continue along a tarmac path in the car park corner. In 90m *turn right* along a road. In 25m *turn left* at a T-junction. In 180m *turn right* at a T-junction. In 30m an earthen path turns left with **Greensand Ridge Walk** and footpath signposts. This is the main walk route. A further 220m along **Back Street** is **The Stone Jug**, from where you can pick up the main walk or return to the green to continue the shortcut, with no material difference in distance.]

*Turn left* to pass the **old village lock-up and pound**, the bus stop to the **The Flying Horse** (there is another bus stop around the corner to the left on the **A6**). Past the **Flying Horse**, cross the **dual carriage-way A6** and continue along **Clophill Road** into **Maulden**. In 500m, some way before a three-way road junction, **[!]** *turn right* along a signposted footpath between garden fences. In 150m go through a metal gate and *turn right* to the right of a house. In 20m *turn left* past the house along a narrow gravel path between hedges. In 65m *turn left* at the fringes of **Maulden Wood** at a three-way footpath-/bridleway junction and follow a wooden fence on the left. Follow the fringes of the steep sided wood for about 550m, ignoring all ways off, and curve to the right and gently downhill with the path through a mud-prone area and in 80m go through a wooden kissing gate with a footpath marker on a gate post.

Continue uphill through the wood (10°), along a clear path with rising ground on both sides. Ignore all ways off while passing occasional footpath markers posts. In 550m leave the wood and continue along a grassy path uphill between fields. In 130m *turn hard left* along a grassy path by some farm buildings (**Clayhill Cottages** on the OS map). Follow the path around the left of the buildings, ignoring a wooden kissing gate in a fence on the left into a pasture. In 60m a bridleway joins from the right out of the woods at a yellow-topped pole. In 60m at a left turn a path joins from the right out of the wood through bike barriers. This is the main walk.

Pick up directions in the main text at the asterisk \*).