

Last walk check	
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## Watton-at-Stone Circular

**Start and finish:** Watton-at-Stone station

**Length:** 20km (12.4 miles)

**Time:** 5½ hours. For the whole outing, including trains, sights and meals, allow at least 8½ hours.

**Transport:** Trains go from London Kings Cross to Watton-at-Stone, journey time is 45 minutes.

**OS Landranger Map:** 166

**OS Explorer Map:** 193 and 194

Watton-at-Stone, map reference TL 300190, is in **Hertfordshire**, 8km south east of Stevenage.

**Toughness:** 2 out of 10

**Walk Notes:** The short cut is a late option in the walk, more for those who find that they are tiring. An 800-metre section of the short cut is along a twisting road.

### Walk options:

**a) Short ending.** You may shorten the walk by 3.3km to 16.7km. Follow the main walk directions until [5], and then follow the Short ending directions at the end of the main text.

**Saturday Walkers' Club:** Take the nearest train to 9.45am from Kings Cross Station to Watton-at-Stone. If stopping at the earlier lunch stop at Benington, take the nearest train to 10.45am.

## WALK DIRECTIONS

**[1]** Go up the steps to exit the station, to then go down the road towards Watton, your direction 70 degrees.

After 400 metres at a mini roundabout T-junction, turn left for 30 metres, to then turn right down Mill Lane. In 35 metres cross a bridge and in 30 metres a second bridge over the river Beane. 25 metres further on, turn left along a footpath, passing to the left of a metal fieldgate. In 30 metres go over a car wide concrete bridge to turn right, your direction 340 degrees, along a footpath with a ditch stream on your right hand side.

**[!]**After 270 metres, turn right up some steps through a wood. At the top of the steps you emerge into a field with fencing (enclosing the Jubilee Wood Project) and turn left along its left-hand side, bordered by the wood. In 250 metres at the corner of the wood on your left, follow a bridleway post to fork right up a wide fenced-in track, your direction 320 degrees.

In 100 metres at the far side of the field, follow the footpath down into a wooded area, and round to the left. After 60 metres turn right along a footpath (with a wooden rail on its left side), leading to a main road after 20 metres.

Cross this busy road with care to go up through a wooded area, to emerge into the corner of a field to go along its left-hand side (bordered by a ditch stream), your direction 10 degrees. In 450 metres at the left hand corner of the field, cross a car wide track to continue up the left-hand side of the next field (bordered by a ditch stream). After 320 metres ignore a bridleway up off to your left, to cross over into the next field. In a further 400 metres at the end of the field, with the corner fencing of the adjacent field ahead, go along a footpath, between the field fencing on your right and a wooded

boundary on your left, your direction 40 degrees.

After 45 metres turn left, to go up a zigzag path into the next field, to continue in the same direction now along the right hand side (with a wooded boundary) of this next field, your direction 40 degrees.

In 60 metres fork left across this field (marked by a bridleway post), your direction 10 degrees. After 280 metres go through a gap in the hedgerow into the next field, to follow a bridleway post in the same direction towards some double metal fieldgates (leading onto a road).

In 100 metres cross over the road, to take a footpath to your right (passing by a double metal fieldgate on your left), up a narrow shingle track, your direction 50 degrees.

After 1.1km the path joins a car wide tarmac track leading to Burn's Green. In 240 metres you reach a crossroads **[2]** with **The Lordship Arms** on your left-hand side.

If not stopping at the pub, go over the crossroads to continue up Hebing End, your direction 80 degrees. After 350 metres just past a pond on your right hand side, you reach a path junction, where you veer right along a car wide public bridleway, your direction 110 degrees.

After 80 metres follow the track round to the left, to continue down a car wide track on the left-hand side of a field, your direction 60 degrees. In 240 metres at the left-hand corner of the field, follow a bridleway post ahead into the upper corner of the next field to go down its left-hand side. In 250 metres at the bottom left hand corner of this field, veer left into the next field to go down its right hand side.

**[3]** After 40 metres *just before a footpath bridge, turn right* through a metal gate into the corner of a field, to go along its left-hand side, your direction 140 degrees. In 400 metres at the left-hand corner of the field, go through a wooden gate (left of a wooden fieldgate) to turn left across a footbridge and continue in your prior direction veering left towards the left hand corner of this next field. After 240 metres at the left-hand corner of the field, go through a metal gate (left of a metal fieldgate), to cross a car wide concrete bridge to go up a bridleway on the left hand side of a field, your direction 120 degrees. In 250 metres, continue up through a wood.

In 220 metres (having previously emerged from the wood), *at a T-junction with an earth track lane turn left*, your direction 100 degrees. In 250 metres you pass by Pear Tree Cottage on your right hand side, to reach a triangular road junction. **[4]**

There are now two alternatives. (i) Continue with the standard route, or (ii) Take the route via Haultwick ~~for lunch at The Rest and Welcome~~ (this will add 1 km).

### **(i) Standard route**

*Turn right down the lane, and in 40 metres (where the lane curves to the right), fork left* up a footpath (which can become overgrown in high summer), along the left edge of a lightly wooded area with a fenced off field on your left, your initial direction 170 degrees. In 100 metres you emerge from the wooded area into the corner of a field, to continue along its left-hand side.

After 150 metres, follow the footpath round to the left, to continue down the left-hand side of the field, toward Dane End Village, your direction 120 degrees.

After 320 metres at the bottom left hand corner of this field, you reach a footpath junction.

There are two alternatives. **(i.i)** Go via All Saints Church, or **(i.ii)** via Dane End village and pub / restaurant: The Boot

**i.i) Via All Saints Church.** Cross over into the next field, and *turn left along the left-hand side of the field*, bordered by a wood. In 250 metres *at a T-junction with a lane, turn right* for 50 metres, to then turn right into a churchyard. If not visiting the church, follow the footpath for 40 metres to exit the churchyard passing by an old primary school building on your right, to turn right down the pavement alongside Church Lane. In 400 metres at a T-junction with Munden Road, cross over to continue in the same direction up a bridleway. Rejoin the route at [4] below.

**i.ii) Via Dane End village.** Crossover into the next field and *veer right across a large field*, your direction 170 degrees. In 400 metres at the lower right hand corner of the field, go through a metal kissing gate to go down an enclosed path. After 160 metres (having crossed two roads along the way), *at a T-junction with a road turn left*. After 20 metres you pass by **The Boot** pub / restaurant on your left-hand side. If not stopping, continue up the road. In 180 metres, you pass a road off to your left (Windy Rise), to then immediately fork left up along an elevated tarmac path, parallel to the road down to your right. In a further 200 metres the tarmac path leads down to Church Lane. *Turn right* to reach a T-junction with the main road and cross over to go up a bridleway across fields. Rejoin the route at [4] below.

### **(ii) Route via Haultwick**

*Turn left up the lane*, your direction 70 degrees. After 60 metres you pass by a pond on your left-hand side. After a further 150 metres *turn left, along a*

*tarmac lane*, your direction 350 degrees. In 100 metres (having passed by a tennis court on your right), *turn right* along a shingle car wide track (marked by a footpath signpost), your direction 50 degrees.

In 80 metres at the end of the shingle track go through a metal kissing gate into the corner of a field to go across it, your direction 70 degrees, (passing by a small cricket pavilion on your left).

In 120 metres go through a metal kissing gate into the next field to continue across it. In 150 metres on the opposite side of the field, go through a metal kissing gate, into the next field to veer slightly left to go along its left hand side, your direction 60 degrees. In 300 metres at the left hand corner of the field go to the right of a redundant stile into the left hand corner of the next field, to continue along its left hand side (bordered by a hedgerow), your direction 40 degrees.

In 150 metres at the left-hand corner of the field, pass by a redundant stile on your right into the next field to continue in the same direction along its right hand side. In 50 metres at the corner of the field follow the footpath round and down to the left. In 60 metres *turn right through a wooden kissing gate into the corner of a small field* to go along its (lower) left-hand side, your direction 50 degrees. *After 100 metres go through a wooden gate in the left-hand corner of the field to continue up a car wide track.*

*In 90 metres at a t-junction with a road, turn right.* In 130 metres you reach a small Green, passing by the **closed** Rest and Welcome on your left.

In 120 metres *fork right to cross over a stile* (to the right of a metal fieldgate) *into the corner of a field* to go across it, your direction 210 degrees. In 370 metres go through a wooden gate (left of a metal fieldgate), into the corner of the next field. Veer right across it, aiming for a wooden kissing gate (30 metres to the

left of a mini pylon pole), on the far side of the field, your direction 200 degrees.

After 250 metres go through the wooden kissing gate into the next field, to continue in the same direction across this field, (with a mini pylon cable run off to your right). After 150 metres at the left-hand corner of the field go over a stile, into the next field to go along its left-hand side, (bordered by a hedgerow), *towards a church.*

In 250 metres at the left hand corner of the field go through a wooden kissing gate, to cross over a lane to *enter the churchyard* to follow the footpath to the main entrance of the church. If not visiting the church, follow the footpath for 40 metres to *exit the churchyard* passing by an old primary school building on your right, *to turn right down the pavement alongside Church Lane.*

In 400 metres at a T-junction with Munden Road, cross over to continue in the same direction up a bridleway.

**[4]** In 70 metres cross a wooden footbridge, to continue up the bridleway between fields. After 400 metres you pass under a mini pylon cable run, and in a further 160 metres (having passed by some farm buildings on your left hand side), go through a metal gate and *turn right along a lane.*

*After 45 metres turn right along a car wide, concrete track* (footpath), *the entrance to Whitehill Golf Club*, your direction 200 degrees. In 320 metres go to the left of a metal fieldgate, to continue down a concrete track *past the golf club house on your right hand side*, and a wood on your left-hand side. *In 80 metres follow the concrete track round to the right*, your direction west, towards Lodge Farm. *After 160 metres follow the track round to the left*, (passing by a cream painted house on your right hand side), your direction 220 degrees.

*In a further 140 metres* (having passed by a pond on your left-hand side), *follow*

*the car wide track round to the right, to then veer right to go along a concrete track between stables to reach the corner of a field.*

Go along its fenced-in left-hand side, your direction 270 degrees. In 110 metres (by a large oak on your left), follow the field edge round to the right passing to the left of a metal mini pylon pole after 30 metres, to continue down the left hand side of the field.

**[!]**After 60 metres *cross over into the next field to turn half left down across it*, your direction west, to go under a mini pylon cable run (between two mini pylon wooden poles) after 130 metres. In a further 25 metres at the lower far side of the field, go down some steps to cross over into the next field, to follow a footpath up the left hand side of this field, your initial direction 210 degrees.

In 200 metres ignore a footpath (marked by a post) to the right down across the field. After 320 metres at the upper left-hand corner of the field, turn left to go up into the next field, to then turn right to continue in your prior direction along the right hand side of this field, (following a line of mini pylon poles on your right) towards Sacombe church, your direction south. After 370 metres at the right hand corner of the field, cross over into the next field to continue down its left-hand side, (now with the mini pylon cable run on your left).

After 350 metres cross over a lane, to follow a lane leading up to the church.

In 280 metres at the top of the lane **[5]**, you have a choice.

If you wish to shorten the walk, follow the Short Ending directions at the end of this main text.

Otherwise for the main walk: Follow the lane round to the left, and where the lane curves to the right, continue ahead for 10 metres, to go through some black metal gates into the churchyard.

Beyond the front entrance of the church, exit the main entrance of the churchyard through some black metal gates and after 30 metres go up a car wide shingle bridleway, (bordered by a wooded area on its right), your direction 160 degrees. In 370 metres you pass by Sacombebury Farm buildings on your right hand side, to join a car wide tarmac track and veer slightly right, your direction now 200 degrees. In 100 metres veer right (along a car wide tarmac track), your direction south west.

After 550 metres at a path junction **[6]**, *turn left* (marked by a footpath post) along a car wide concrete track, *towards a wooden kissing gate* (to the left of a double metal fieldgate), your direction 140 degrees. In 60 metres go through the kissing gate into the corner of a field, to go along its left-hand side. After 380 metres at the left-hand corner of this field, continue in the same direction up a hedgerow enclosed car wide grass track.

In 400 metres, *by a single story brick farm building on your left, turn right* (marked by a footpath post to your left), to go *up a shingle car wide track*, your direction 250 degrees.

After 550 metres, *just before the track leads to some houses, fork right along a fenced in grass path*. After 100 metres go through a wooden gate to come out to a playing field, and *turn left* along its left hand side, your direction south. After 100 metres at the left-hand corner of the field, go through a wooden gate to continue along a fenced in car wide grass track, to a T-junction with a road after 60 metres, with **The Robin Hood** pub directly opposite.

If not stopping at the pub, *turn right, to reach a T-junction with a main road* after 150 metres. *Turn right for 10 metres*, to then *cross this main road* with care, to go down some steps to reach a footpath junction (marked by a signpost), and *continue ahead into the left hand corner of a field*, to go along its left hand side,



your direction 260 degrees. In 70 metres you go under a mini pylon cable run, to continue up the left-hand side of the field.

**[!]** After 400 metres by the corner of a hedgerow on your left, continue across the field, your direction north west, for 40 metres, to then follow the footpath round to the left, your direction south west.

**[7]** In 350 metres, *turn right along a lane*, your direction 250 degrees. In 350 metres at a T-junction, continue ahead into a field to follow a footpath down across it, your direction west.

In 250 metres exit the field and *turn right up a car wide shingle track*, your initial direction 20 degrees. In 350 metres you pass by a pond and Southend Farm on your left. In a further 150 metres, where the track starts to curve to the right, *turn left* (marked by a footpath post) *into the corner of a field*, to go along its left hand side (with a wooded border), your direction 300 degrees.

**[!]** In 150 metres just before a "Woodhill Estate – No public access" sign, *fork right* (marked by a footpath post on left hand side), to slice the corner of this field, your direction 340 degrees.

After 230 metres at the edge of the field, follow a footpath (marked by a post) into a wood, your direction 320 degrees. In 100 metres where the grass car wide track curves to the right, continue ahead (marked by a footpath post) down a narrow path through the wood, your direction 260 degrees.

After 80 metres go down some steps, and through a wooden kissing gate to cross a field, your direction 290 degrees. In 100 metres on the far side of the field, go through a wooden kissing gate **[8]**, to turn right along a path with the river Beane on your left, your direction north. In 180 metres go over a wooden step stile to cross a brick wall (or alternatively through the wooden gate on the right), and follow the upper footpath, with the river down to your left.

In 300 metres go through a tall black metal kissing gate. After a further 70 metres, cross a car wide wooden railed bridge over a tributary of the river Beane, to follow a car wide track round to the left, to then cross a brick sided bridge over another tributary, to follow the car wide track round to the left.

**[9]** In a further 80 metres go through a wooden gate as you pass by Home Farm on your right hand side. At the end of Home Farm buildings, *turn left over a brick bridge* over the river Beane, to follow the main driveway up to the main road.

In 370 metres exit Home Farm through a brick pillared entrance, to cross the main road with care, to go up a car wide shingle driveway curving round to the right. In 50 metres you emerge into a field, to *fork right off the car wide shingle track to go up across the field*, your direction 310 degrees.

After 350 metres on the far side of the field go through a gap (marked by a footpath post and to the right of a redundant stile) to continue along a footpath through a wooded area. In 70 metres pass to the right of a redundant stile into a field, to turn half right across this field, aiming to the left of a house on the far side, your direction 300 degrees.

After 320 metres at the left-hand corner of the field go through a derelict wooden gate to go through a lightly wooded area. In 60 metres you emerge from the wooded area to *go down a car wide shingle track*.

*In 80 metres at a T-junction with a lane, turn right* down it, and after 130 metres at a T-junction, veer left to *enter a churchyard*. If not visiting the church, *turn right* (in front of the main entrance) for 90 metres *to exit the rear of the churchyard* through a wooden kissing gate (left of a wooden fieldgate), into a small field.

Turn half left towards a metal kissing gate 70 metres distant, to slice the field corner, your direction 25 degrees.

Go through the metal kissing gate to follow a footpath between gardens. After 60 metres go through a wooden gate to go up the right hand side of an allotment. In 140 metres at the right hand corner of the allotment, follow a car wide for 70 metres, to reach a T-junction and turn right down towards the High Street. In 50 metres you reach a T-junction with the High Street, with **The Bull** pub opposite.

Turn left up the High Street. After 120 metres you pass by **The George and Dragon** pub on your left-hand side, the recommended tea stop. 40 metres past the George and Dragon, turn left through some white painted bike blocking barriers to go up a footpath. After 50 metres fork right and in 25 metres ignore a fork to the left, to continue ahead. After 45 metres the tarmac footpath is now parallel with the road down to your right.

In 120 metres fork right down to the main road, to cross over it, and turn left up the pavement to reach Watton station after 280 metres.

### a) Short ending

Follow the main walk directions until [5].

Turn right down a car wide bridleway, your direction west. In 350 metres at a T-junction with a road, turn left. In 800 metres at a T-junction with the main A602, cross over with care to go through two wooden bollards and fork left down though the wood, your direction 200 degrees.

In 140 metres go over a step stile over a brick wall, into a field to veer slightly to the right across it, your direction 260 degrees, following a fairly indistinct footpath marked by posts along the way. In 500 metres go through a wooden kissing-gate and in a further 30 metres

turn right along a sand car wide track, your direction 290 degrees.

In 130 metres at a staggered car wide crossroads, turn left along a car wide shingle track. In 350 metres go through a wooden gate to the left of a cattle grid as you pass by a bridge down to the left, with the track curving round to the right, to then cross a brick sided bridge over a tributary to the river Beane.

You now follow the main walk directions from [9].

## Lunch and Tea places:

**The Boot** Mundon Rd, Dane End, SG12 0LH (01920 437034) Located 7.8 km from the start of the walk. Open lunchtime Tue-Thu, noon-2.30pm; closed Friday; Sat-Sun noon-11pm/10.30pm. Food: Tue-Wed pre-book only. Thu noon-2pm; Sat noon-2.30pm; Sun 1-4.30pm. Closed all day Monday. (Groups please phone to book.)

**The Bull** 113 High St, Watton-at-Stone, SG14 3SB (01920 831032)

**The George and Dragon** 82 High St, Watton-at-Stone, SG14 3TA (01920 830285)

**The Lordship Arms** Whempstead Road, Benington, SG2 7BX. (01438 869665) Snack menu, baguettes etc. served noon – 2pm. Located 4.4 km from the start of the walk.

~~**The Rest & Welcome**, Haultwick, SG11 1JF (01920 438323) – closed end year 2012.~~

**The Robin Hood** Ware Road, Tonwell, SG12 0HN. (01920 463352) Food served noon – 2pm. For groups larger than 6, please phone ahead. Located 14 km from the start of the walk.