

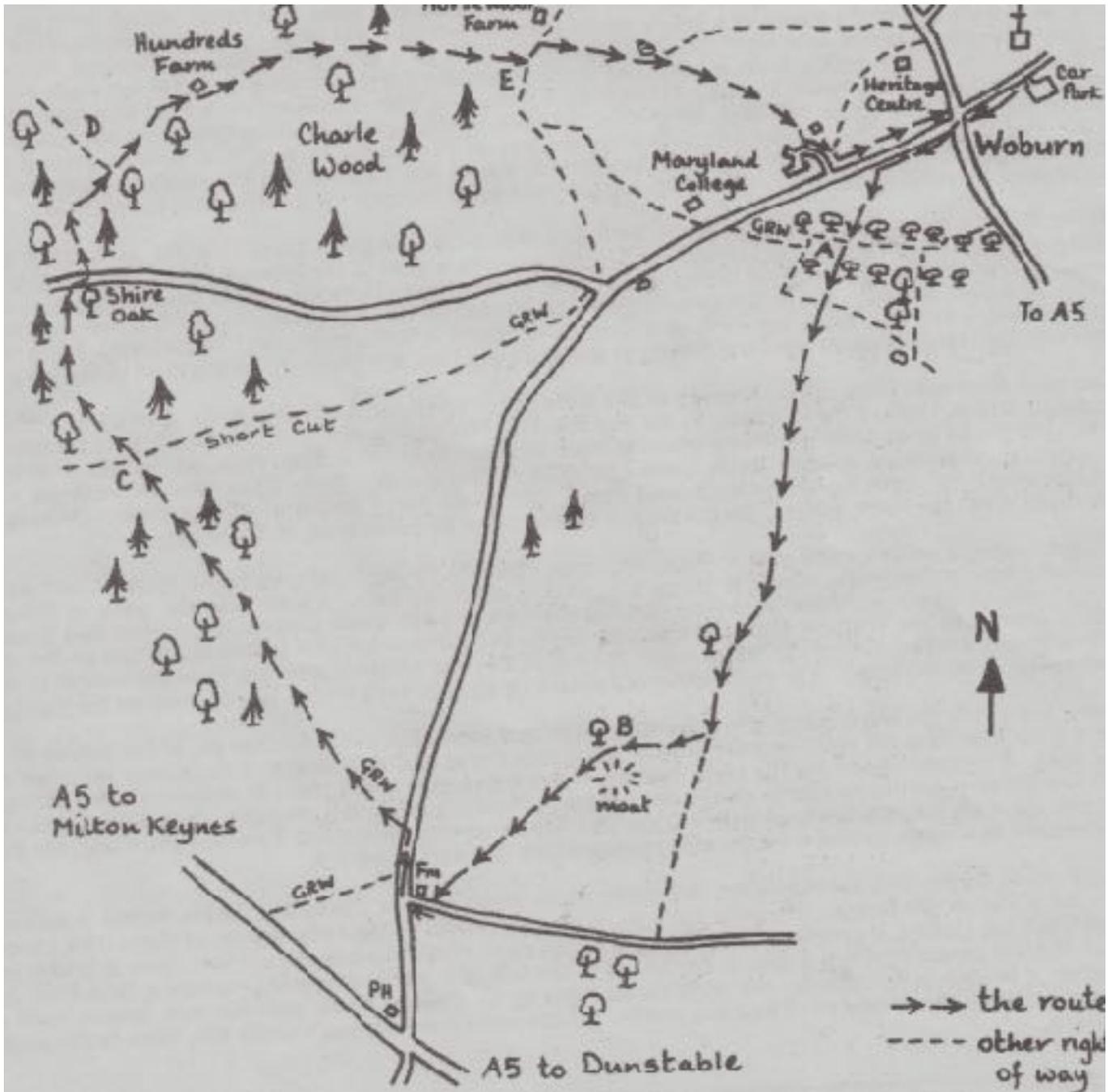
Woburn Walk Number 1

The Blue Walk *Maisie's Way*

One of a series of circular walks each starting at the FREE car park in Park St. Woburn
The walk is way marked by white arrows with the Woburn Walk logo in green.

Length of Walk: 5.5 miles (8.75kms)

Time: 2.25 - 3 hrs



PLEASE FOLLOW THE COUNTRY CODE

Dogs must be kept under control at all times and gates securely closed

The Blue Walk, 'Maisie's Way', dedicated to Maisie Vaughan:

From the car park the walk turns left, up to and straight over the crossroads, keeping to the left handside of Leighton Street. On the opposite side of the road is the old Town Hall (built 1830). 100 yards past the old fire station the walk turns left, at a finger post, to follow a path between typical Woburn Estate houses (look for the Bedford emblem). Past the houses a grassy track leads to a kissing gate at a belt of trees over which the walk crosses a wide, tree-lined grass avenue (Wayne Close - point A on the map), with good views to the left of the magnificent west front of Woburn Abbey.

Having crossed Wayne Close and another stile the walk clears the trees and keeps ahead over an open, arable field with fine views ahead of a undulating farmscape, typical of this area of Bedfordshire. To the right Maryland comes into sight, built originally in 1903 as a cottage hospital by Duchess Mary, the "Flying Duchess". The path crosses a track and itself becomes a track, running downhill for some distance to an earth bridge over a small stream. From here a path continues uphill across a field to a new stile, 40 yards to the right of a single oak tree. Over this, the path continues on, heading towards a marker post to the left of a large tree, then bears left, following the line of the hedge. Over a stile in the corner it turns right, across the top corner of a grassy field, to a stile in a wire fence and on for 150 yards to a lone tree in a wide pasture (point B on the map) where the remains of a moat indicate early settlement in this area.

Leaving the dry moat, the walk crosses the field to a stile next to a gate. Over this, the path takes a line heading slightly to the right of the distant farmhouse towards a gate in the fence, passing an area of grassy humps, all that remains of medieval "ridge and furrow" ploughing. (Difficult now to imagine this as a small clearing in a vast forest). From the gate, it heads to the left of the farmhouse to another stile. Across a small paddock a last stile takes the walk to a lane along which it turns right, past Whitehouse Farm to the Woburn to Leighton Buzzard road (refreshment at the Flying Fox, 500 yards down the road to the left).

At the road the route turns right, keeping to the wide grass verge on the right. After a short distance the Greensand Ridge Walk (GRW) comes in on the left but this sign is ignored. The walk keeps ahead for another 100 yards or so before crossing over the road to the second GRW fingerpost on the left. Through a gate a grassy, sometimes muddy track leads off towards the woods. Soon trees close in on both sides, providing excellent cover for game birds and deer. The route keeps ahead at all junctions. (Where the GRW turns off to the right, point C on the map, a shortcut can be taken back to Woburn).

The track emerges on to a road, where the route turns right for 50 yards, almost to the "Shire Oak" on the Beds/Bucks border, opposite which it turns left, over a roadside stile. From here the path is followed through trees, across a track and then up through the Marquess Course, the newest and finest of the three courses of the Woburn Golf and Country Club. It branches left just before the 6" tee on the right and then passes another tee on the left to reach the top of the rise where it emerges from the course to meet a track (point D on the map). The walk continues ahead along this track with a belt of trees on the right.

In about 100 yards the track turns into a metalled road and some 200 yards further on, at the corner of the wood, a path branches off right to pass behind Hundreds Farm and downhill to a three-way junction at a finger post. Continue ahead on the right branch along a concrete track, part of a network put down in WWII for military purposes. (Keep an eye open for woodpeckers along this stretch). Over a stile at the top of the rise the walk continues ahead with a fence and new reservoir on the left. Entering the wood, the R runs downhill to a track, (point E on the map) along which the walk turns left.

After 50 yards or so, at a marker post, the route turns right, over a ditch, and heads across a meadow aiming for a gap in the hedge. Through the gap, with good views of the twin towers of the parish church and the Heritage Centre, it crosses a field, keeping to the right of the pond in the corner. Over a bridge and another field, it passes through a gap in the hedge to the left of a power-line pole. Across a final field and left, across a bridge in the corner, the walk turns right up to Timber Lane, past the new houses built on what was once the old timber yard and gas works. At the main road the walk turns left, back to the centre of Woburn

Woburn Heritage Centre gratefully acknowledges the help of Bedford Estates, Woburn Parish Council and local volunteers in creating the Woburn Walks