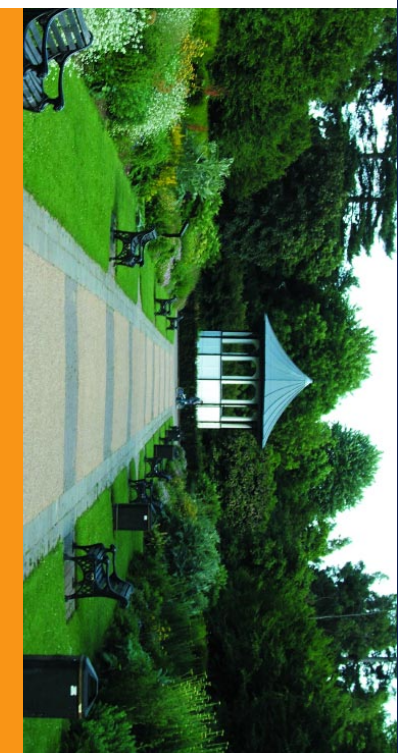




D. At this point if you fancy a rest and some refreshment the footpath off to the right gives access to Scald End Farm Shop and Café but our path goes through a gap to follow the field boundaries on the other side of the hedge maintaining the same general direction and passing Scald End and Acorn Farms. Where the hedge and ditch on the right end, turn right, to follow the field edge past the entrance to Acorn Farm and carefully cross the Thurleigh - Ravensden Road to a footpath downhill through the middle of a field.

E. At the bottom of the field cross a narrow strip of woodland via two stiles and go half left for a short distance, cross a stream at a farm bridge and turn left on a footpath with hedge and ponds on the left side. Cross a farm track and go through a kissing gate into a small paddock to another kissing gate giving access to a path by the side of Thurleigh Church. This leads to the main street, opposite is The Jackal PH and the bus stop is outside the Baptist Church about 1/2 Km to the right as you emerge from the church-side path.

C. Follow the field edge until a junction of bridleways is reached and here go left for a few yards then turn right past a way-mark post and proceed with a boundary hedge on the right side. At the end of the field go through a gap in the hedge, over a footbridge and turn right following the field boundary into a corner. Do not go out of the field at the corner but turn left and follow the field boundary to the next hedge junction. Go through a gap in the hedge and turn immediately left to follow the field edge bridleway. The bridleway bends left and right, (briefly on the other side of the hedge) around the field. Pass a footpath way-mark post on the right and look for one on the left at a footbridge, marking a cross-field footpath. Follow the cross-field footpath and as the other side comes into view head for the corner of a boundary hedge and a bridleway. Go forward on the bridleway with a hedge on your left, through a gap in the boundary and turn right with hedge on your right. At the end of the field the bridleway turns left then right through a gap in the hedge. After going through the gap turn left with a boundary hedge on the left and at the bottom of the field turn left and right over footbridges then follow the field boundary with a hedge on left to the next field boundary.



For full details of walks and rides throughout Bedfordshire, visit www.letsgo.org.uk

Public Transport

There are bus services from Bedford, Bus No. 6/Sun (A&B), No. 7 and Nos. 124/125/126/M50.

Bedford Bus enquiries: Tel: 01234 228337
Traveline Timetable Info: Tel: 08712 002233

Accommodation

There are a number of bed & breakfasts in the area. Please contact: Bedford Tourist Information Centre
Tel: 01234 215226.

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Gateway to the Wolds
BEDFORD, BRICKHILL
to THURLEIGH



About the Walk

This is a six-mile linear walk from the town into the countryside, generally on field edge paths but with some open field sections. There are six stiles but no steep hills. The walk is intended to start at Bedford Park but it can also be accessed from the bridleway that links the end of Hawk Drive, Brickhill to Green Lane, Clapham.

Transport

Thurleigh is on the Bedford – St Neots Bus Service, No. 152, returning to Harpur Street, Bedford. The bus stop in Thurleigh is opposite the Baptist Chapel, at Keysoe Road junction. Bus times are obtainable from Bedford Tourist Office, Bedford Bus enquiries: Tel: 01234 228337 or Traveline Timetable Info: Tel: 08712 002233.

About Thurleigh

Thurleigh Village is on a plateau 250 feet above mean sea level. Its name thought to be derived from the Saxon word "Leah" meaning "clearing". The church with its 12th century tower is adjacent to the remains of an ancient castle motte. Early in the war Thurleigh Airfield briefly became the home of 162 Squadron RAF and later the wartime base of US 306th Bombardment Group that flew B17 Flying Fortresses on 341 daylight bombing missions over Germany and occupied Europe with the loss of many brave airmen. After the war the Royal Aircraft Establishment came to Thurleigh and remained for many years.

Start

The walk begins at Bedford Park. Cars can be parked in Park Avenue, beside the Park or in a car park near the cemetery entrance in Foster Hill Road.

A. Walking from the park, pass the cemetery entrance and precede uphill on a broad path with the cemetery wall on the right side. Cross Brickhill Drive with care and follow the footpath sign (Bunyan Trail) with an open grass area and later allotments on the right side. The path goes downhill, past a small nature reserve then climbs through an area of newly planted trees and on into a pasture. Keep forward in the same direction to pick up a hedge on the left side and go through a kissing gate to cross a wide bridleway. Maintaining the same direction go through a kissing gate into another pasture to yet another kissing gate on the opposite boundary. You are now walking with Clapham Park Wood (Nature Reserve) on the right side.

B. Where Clapham Park Wood ends the footpath angles to the left beside a field hedge and leads to a kissing gate into Clapham Golf Course. Go through the kissing gate and a small area of trees to emerge at the fairway and go diagonally right, over a track to the right side of a clump of bushes and poplar trees. Follow the way-mark sign and carefully cross by a green and sand trap to another way-mark at the corner of a hedge. Now walk along the edge of the golf course with a hedge on the right side. At the far corner of the golf course cross a footbridge. At this point do not be tempted to walk alongside a hedge towards the old chicken sheds and radio mast but maintaining the same direction go diagonally across an open field, heading for a stag headed tree to the right of an electricity pole and turn left on a bridleway on the opposite side of the field.

