

## Walk 3. (10) Colne Brook and Ankerwycke

07 March 2010 – 10am start



The Datchet  
Health Centre

We meet in the car park opposite Wraysbury Village Hall

Ref: TQ 005742

### Directions to meeting point

From Datchet, drive along the Horton Road (B376) and turn right at the mini-roundabout down Welley Road towards Wraysbury. After about a mile, the road bends sharp left and passes The George PH. Soon after, turn left into The Green alongside the cricket ground. After about 200yds, turn right into the car park opposite the Village Hall.

### Walk description

This walk is about 4½ miles long and is flat. It passes some of the Wraysbury lakes (old gravel pits) and alongside the meandering Colne Brook. It then passes through National Trust pasture land at Ankerwycke where there are good views of Runnymede on the other side of the Thames. The walk passes the ruins of a priory and beside the Ankerwycke Yew, one of the oldest trees in England. In early Spring, this area is covered in snow drops.

Walkers may wish to stop at the George PH for refreshments at the end of the walk.

**Guest walkers are very welcome to join us. Please remember however, that they will be expected to contribute £1.00 to the charity 'Friends of the Datchet Health Centre' on the day of the walk.**

1. Walk out of the car park and turn right along the road. Cross the old ford using the footbridge and at the main road, turn right beside the Perseverance PH. On reaching the Baptist Church on the right, **cross the High Street with care** and walk down the foot path signed on the other side of the road. The path eventually runs between a gravel lake on the right and domestic back gardens on the left.
2. Follow the main path to reach the buildings of Tithe Farm. Continue along the gravel track to the main road. Turn right, but for safety's sake, do not cross the road bridge ahead. Instead, follow the track down towards the railway station, and cross the railway by using the pedestrian steps on the left.
3. Exit the station car park and **cross the road with care** to reach the pavement on the other side. Turn right and cross the bridge over Colne Brook. Immediately after the bridge, **carefully cross the road** again to walk down the signed foot path opposite. Follow the riverside path which eventually runs alongside the railway on the right. This is a narrow path and there are nettles! After about 300m at the pedestrian railway crossing, climb the stile on the right and **cross the railway with care**.
4. On climbing the stile on the other side of the railway, follow the signed footpath that veers left, keeping a small pond on the right side. Keep to the main path signposted no.4, as it runs between the lake on the left and Colne Brook on the right. Follow this path for about ¾ mile to reach a stile and steps that emerge on to a busy road.
5. Turn right and **cross the road with great care as it is busy**. At the junction of roads opposite, walk down Hythe End Road. **Although this is a residential cul-de-sac, beware of traffic as there is no pavement**. Continue along the road as it bears sharp right and follow it for about ¼ mile to its far end. Pass through the gate at the end and turn left along the foot path to reach the river Thames.
6. Follow the path right and continue along the river path through woodland. The path eventually emerges from the trees and continues along the edge of a field. At this point, instead of going through a wooden gate ahead, veer right along a wooded path. The remains of St Mary's Priory are on the left and soon after, the Ankerwycke Yew is on the right. **The priory was founded in 1160 and was Benedictine in origin. The Tree Council has calculated that the yew tree is well over 2,500 years old – one of the oldest trees in the country. The council has designated it as one of the 50 most important trees in England. The tree was at least 1,700 years old when the priory was built! Some historians believe that the Magna Carta was signed close by; others argue that it was signed on the other side of the river.**

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- Follow the path as it passes through an avenue of trees. In early Spring, there is a blanket of snowdrops in this area. The path reaches a gate. Turn left through a kissing gate. Follow the edge of a field and then turn right over a board walk beside a gate. The ground is marshy here. Walk ahead to the next gate after which take the path that veers left diagonally across the field. It leads to another gate that opens on to Magna Carta Lane.
- Turn left down the lane. After about 200 yards, just before the houses, turn right through a gate into a field. Follow the path across fields towards Wraysbury Parish Church of St Andrew, whose spire is visible in the distance. The path passes through a series of gates but maintains the same direction towards the church.
- Enter the church yard through a metal gate and follow the path round to exit via the lych-gate. Walk down St Andrews Close and turn right at the main road. **Cross the main road with care** and pass the George PH on the left. Turn left down The Green and pass the cricket field on the right. The car park is on the right opposite Wraysbury Village Hall.

