

STEVENAGE OUTER ORBITAL PATH

STOOP Walk 8. 3.5 miles. Featuring STOOP Eight

This is an easy 3½ mile walk which the energetic may easily extend by walking from the town to Symonds Green at the start. The paths are well maintained, there are no stiles and you visit St Ippollitts where there are seats on the pretty village green for a picnic. You can follow your route on OS Explorer Map 193.

*Note: This short walk is easily lengthened if you walk to the Crooked Billet (beginning of Link Path 7) instead of taking the bus. The Crooked Billet Pub is marked by * in the text. Directions for both routes are given below.*

1. Link Bus to Symonds Green. Link Bus: SB8

Stevenage Bus Station (Stop C). Alight at Eastbourne Avenue

*Go down the footpath ramp and turn left. Walk to the end of this road, turn right, then right again at Symonds Green Lane. Cross the common to the Crooked Billet Pub. **

2. Stevenage to Symonds Green on foot (About a 40 minutes walk)

From the bus station follow the signs for the trains. Once through the booking hall, turn right down the ramp and follow the footpath alongside the railway. Turn left. Past Fulton Close, turn right. Go under the underpass ahead and turn left. After about 75 yards, just before the bus stop to your left, turn right and follow the narrow footpath round to pass under the road at the next underpass (No 21). Turn right again.

*Your route is now straight ahead on the footpath/cycleway alongside the busy dual carriageway. After about 4 minutes of purposeful walking, turn left into Meadoway. Follow this footpath straight ahead. At the end turn right (there is no footpath for a few yards) and then straight ahead again, soon to pass Eastbourne Avenue on your right. Walk straight on across the Green to the Crooked Billet Pub.**

Link Path 7: Stevenage (Symonds Green) to Amshoebury. 1.1 miles. Start Point: TL221250

From the Cooked Bille* cross the road by the side of the pub and take the footpath to your left. Follow the Green, with the motorway audible high above to your left and bear left under the motorway. Follow the clear path ahead to a kissing gate visible in the hedge. Go through the gate and follow the path ahead, diagonally left across the field. Cross the track and continue on the path, half right, through another field towards farm buildings at Almshoebury (207253). In the farmyard, follow the signs directing you left, round the buildings, and go through the gate.

This marks the end of Link Path 7.

STOOP Eight: Almshoebury to Little Wymondley. 2.4 miles.

Turn right out of the farm gate and follow the path. As the trail starts to go downhill, take the left hand path along the farm track and follow it to a row of cottages on your right. After the last cottage, take the path on your left (205260), with the hedge on your right. After about 300 yards the path turns right through the hedge and crosses a small field diagonally left to reach the road at Little Almshoe cottages.

Turn left on the road and then, very shortly, take the road on your right. Keep on the road, uphill for 200 yards or so. Where the road turns right (202263), continue straight on, to a broad track. Continue on this track to reach a road (199268). Turn left on to the road and then take the road on your right. This leads to St Ippollitts, with its broad Green on your right and the church (198272) on your left. Keeping the village green on your right, find the path on your right on the far edge of the green. The path descends steeply with a school on your left, between houses to an open field.

Drop down to Ash Brook at the bottom, cross the brook and turn right on to a well marked path. On reaching a wood the path turns sharp left then right round the edge, with the wood on your right. (There is an alternative path through the wood.) Continue along this route, soon to pass beneath the busy A 602.

Bridleway 16 emerges at a busy road (208275) and here you cross the road to the footpath opposite. Turn right to meet the road junction roundabout at Little Wymondley.

This marks the end of STOOP Eight.

You now head back for the bus to Stevenage.

***Link Bus: 101 or 80
To Stevenage Bus Station via Lister Hospital and the Old Town***

Note: It is no more than ten minutes walk to the bus stop in the village centre (two pubs)

Cross the road ahead with care and then walk straight ahead, past the 30 limit sign. Keep to the footpath on the left hand side of the main road, where there is a culvert alongside on your left. You will soon meet the first bus stop. Do consult the timetable here.

If time allows, a brisk walk straight ahead along the road will lead you to the Plume of Feathers pub, a sheltered bus stop and the end of another good walk.