

STEVENAGE OUTER ORBITAL PATH

STOOP Walk 9. 5 miles. Featuring STOOP Nine

This is a gentle walk in pleasant countryside to the north of Stevenage. It is about 3½ miles long and takes only a couple of hours to complete. There are no stiles to negotiate and a choice of pubs welcomes you at each end. You can make a longer walk of about 7 miles in total if you walk all of the way to Stevenage Town Centre. You can follow the route on OS Explorer Map 193.

Link Bus: 101/80 from Stevenage Centre Bus Station Stop C
Alight at the Bucks Head pub

To join STOOP Nine:

Cross the road to the footpath on the opposite side. Turn left and follow the road in the same direction of travel. Six minutes of brisk walking, or thereabouts, will bring you to a roundabout junction.

Note: Do take particular care here. At the beginning of this stretch of STOOP you first walk alongside – and then cross - a busy stretch of road with fast moving traffic and there is no provision for pedestrians. It is usually best to walk facing the traffic until you reach a safe crossing place.

STOOP Nine: Little Wymondley to Graveley. 3.5 miles. Start Point: TL208275.

From the roundabout junction turn right to walk along the road signed to Great Wymondley. Your route leads uphill along this road for about 300 yards. Look out for a bridleway signed to your left at a bend in the road and turn left on to this well marked track.

Here, a STOOP roundel points your way straight ahead. Continue along this clear path - which passes beneath a railway - for about half a mile. Cross the road at Spring Cottage (207288) and continue on to the track opposite. You can see ponds on your left as you walk.

Follow this pleasant track for about 250 yards then turn sharp right on to a waymarked path and continue, with the pylons ahead. There is a stream on your right hand side. Eventually this track brings you to a hedge, with a road on its far side.

Note: A diversion is possible at this point. Turn right along the road. After about 300 yards you will reach the Green Man pub at Great Wymondley.

Turn left, keeping the hedge and road to your right, climbing gently uphill. After about 300 yards you meet a small spinney and a gap in the hedge. Go through this gap to the road. Cross the road to the footpath opposite and turn right. You have now reversed your direction, but still have the hedge and road on your right.

Soon you reach a well defined, well used track (215291). Turn left here and continue along this path for half a mile until you meet a footpath/cycleway. Turn right on to it. The noisy A 1(M) is to your left and you are converging with it. Eventually you reach a road (228284) and turn left to pass beneath the motorway.

Take the path signed to your right. Continue on this path, passing Milksey Lane on your left. Soon you pass houses. Turn left on to Oak Lane. This leads you very shortly to Graveley High Street and two pubs. Both the Waggon and Horses and the George and Dragon await you, though you might like to linger a while to watch the ducks on the pond. The bus stop for the bus home is across the road (231279).

Link Bus: 55/54 to Stevenage Bus Station

To continue to the end of STOOP Nine, join STOOP Ten or return to Stevenage via Link Path 8 follow the directions below:

Cross the road from the pubs and turn left then right to join Church Lane. Follow this lane to the junction leading to the church.

Here you leave STOOP to join Link Path 8.

Link Path 8 : Graveley to St Nicholas Church. 1.5 miles.

At the junction bear right and follow the road as it bends to the right. As you reach a timber framed cottage look out for a footpath on your right (236278), signed B197. Turn right here and continue with the hedge on your right to a waymarked post. Turn left. With the hedge now on your left, continue along a clear path to another waymarked post at the field edge. Turn right and follow this path to a waymark post at the next field edge (240272). Turn right here on to a path between a wire fence and a hedge. Follow this path round through a gap in the hedge then head straight across the field towards houses and a finger post at the field edge (237267).

Note: A right turn here brings you shortly to the main road. Turn left, and cross the road to reach Lister Hospital and local bus services.

Turn left to continue on to the church. Go into the church yard, turning right at a cross path and leave by the lychgate. This marks the end of Link Path 8 (241262).

To Stevenage Bus Station: (An extra 40 minutes varied town walking)

Cross the open area in front of the church and cross Rectory Lane - take care here. Turn right down Rectory Lane then first left down a broad avenue. Follow this over the footbridge, on to the High Street and turn left. Continue along the High Street to its end where it meets another footbridge and cross to the rear of a Tesco store and the New Town. Your route to bus and train services is straight ahead, past Tesco on your left, and on, alongside the Leisure Centre, where you will see signs directing you to bus and train stations.