

## Walk 1: Ashenbury Park & Charvil Country Park

This circular walk explores Ashenbury Park, Loddon Nature Reserve and Charvil Country Park. The lakes and woodland are reclaimed from old gravel workings and are now havens for wildlife. Don't forget to take binoculars and a bird book. You will see some magnificent examples of Isambard Kingdom Brunel's railway viaducts spanning the many branches of the river Loddon. The walk features unsurfaced paths which may be muddy. There is one stile. **Warning:** after periods of prolonged rainfall the paths through Loddon Nature Reserves and Charvil Country Park (points 6 – 10 and 11 – 13) may be flooded in places and will certainly be extremely muddy.

### Length

4.2 miles (6.8 km). Allow 2 hours plus stops.

### Starting Point(s)

<b>Car</b>	<b>Ashenbury Park Car Park</b> (free), Denmark Avenue, Woodley, RG5 4RX OS Grid Ref: SU 7719 7406. w3w: ///billiard.refrain.liner
<b>Bus 13</b>	<b>Lunds Farm Road</b> stop. Walk back 80m the way that the bus came, over Brandon Avenue to a point opposite Denmark Avenue. Cross the road. The car park entrance is 25m along Denmark Avenue on the right.
<b>14</b>	<b>Lunds Farm Road</b> stop. Walk 50m in the direction of bus travel to Denmark Avenue. Turn left. The car park entrance is 25m along Denmark Avenue on the right.
<b>127/128</b>	<b>Waggon &amp; Horses</b> stop. Thames Valley Buses. On Old Bath Road. Join the walk at point (11). Buses go from Reading, via Woodley, to Twyford and onwards (and back).
<b>Train</b>	<b>Twyford Station</b> is on the Reading to Paddington line. Walk down Station Road, left to Church St, left into the High St which becomes the Old Bath Road, and join the walk at the Waggon & Horses pub. This is between points (10) and (11) and is 750m from the station.

### Refreshments

<b>Heron on the Ford Pub</b>	At point (5).
<b>Waggon &amp; Horses Pub</b>	Between points (10) and (11).
<b>Various Cafes &amp; Pubs</b>	In the centre of Twyford. Turn right on the main road just after at point 10 and walk 250m

### Route Instructions (See map below for numbered points)

1



From the entrance to Ashenbury Car Park follow the car park road to the left to the main park entrance. This is point (2) below.

2



Go through the yellow barrier into the park. (There is a children's play area to your left.) Continue straight ahead on a tarmac path. The path becomes gravel and enters a wood. Continue on the path which comes to another wood in front of you as the path bears right. There are two black benches on your left 'hidden' in the edge of the wood out of your line of sight. Where the wood on your left ends come to a fork in the path. This is point (3) below.

3



Turn left and walk on the path with the wood on your left to come to a black litter bin. Continue in the same direction across the grass (be careful not to stray left to the table & chairs) to reach the trees. Turn left at the trees and walk with them on your right. Come to a litter bin. Turn right to reach a wooden barrier and the exit to the park. This is point **(4)** below.

4



Cross Beggars Hill Road (unsigned) and enter Lands End Lane opposite. Walk along Lands End Lane. Just before the end of the road and to the right of the pub car park, reach a footpath fingerpost on your right. This is point **(5)** below.

5



Take the footpath: it passes behind the Heron on the Ford pub. Continue on the path and cross the river at a footbridge (Giddy Bridge). Keep on the path: it bears right to run parallel with Whistley Mill Lane. Reach a stile. Go over the stile in the corner of the field. Cross a footbridge (Coppers Bridge) to reach a road. Continue in the same direction for 20m to reach a path on your left. (footpath sign). This is point **(6)** below.

6



Turn left onto the footpath and walk past a lake on your right and the another on your left. After about 750m come to railway arches. This is point **(7)** below.

7



Go through the arches and immediately turn right to follow a public footpath through Loddon Nature Reserve. After 200m the path turns sharp left to a low-level public footpath marker. Do not follow the wide path straight on but turn right for 10m to reach a public footpath signpost next to the river. This is point **(8)** below.

8



Turn left at the signpost and walk with the river Loddon on your right – the path hugs the riverbank and can be very muddy. Ignoring paths to the left, reach a footbridge where the path turns right. This is point **(9)** below.

9



Go over the bridge and follow the path past a 3-storey brick apartment building on your left the reach another footbridge. Cross the bridge, go up concrete steps, cross the road (Weaver Way), go down concrete steps and follow the path to soon meet the main road. This is point **(10)** below.  
*You are now on the outskirts of Twyford village. As its name suggests, Twyford developed where the two branches of the River Loddon could be safely crossed. These crossing points were instrumental in attracting trade and travellers between the west of England and London, first with pack-horses, then wagons and stagecoaches.*

10



Turn left, go over Silk Lane and after 120m, reach the Waggon & Horses pub on your left. Go past the pub. Where the footpath ends, cross the busy road with care to take the pavement on the other side and continue in the same direction. After crossing the second road bridge (with white railings) come to a lane on the other side of the road. This is point **(11)** below.

11



Carefully cross the road and take the lane. Go through a yellow barrier to enter a gravel track. Bear left across an open space and enter Charvil Country Park (by a sign board). Turn right and follow the footpath ignoring a path coming in from the right. At a T-junction turn right. The Old River will be on your left-hand side. *(The Old River is the original course of the River Loddon.)* Continue following the path by the river until the path opens out, then bear left in the direction of the railway. Reach a small footbridge with railway arches beyond. This is point **(12)** below.

*Charvil Country Park covers 75 hectares. The area of former gravel pits and remnant pastures is in the flood plain of the lower Loddon Valley between Twyford and Charvil.*

12



Go over the footbridge and through the arch. Ignore the path to your right and come to a metal beam barrier and wooden kissing gate. Go through the gate and continue in the same direction. After about 600m pass a ford on your left. Turn left through a kissing gate to exit Charvil Country Park. Turn right at the road in front of the Heron on the Ford pub and soon reach the T-junction with Land Ends Road. This is point **(13)** below.

13



Turn left and retrace your steps to the end of Lands End Road and the entry to Ashenbury Park. (Point **4** on your outward journey.) This is point **(14)** below.

14



Cross the road, go through the wooden barrier and continue straight ahead on a public footpath. Continue on this path for 600m, passing an open area with benches by a lake on your right, until you reach a house on your right and the end of the fences left and right. This is point **(15)** below.

15



Turn left and cross the bridge made of railway sleepers and enter Ashenbury Park. Turn right by the litter bin. Keep to the right-hand side of the park to reach a tarmac path by a litter bin. Turn right and soon reach a yellow barrier. This was point **(2)** on your outward journey. This is point **(16)** below.

16



Go through the barrier into the car park and journey's end.



