

Walk 3: Sandford Park, Ashenbury Park & Alder Moors

This mainly flat around the eastern part of Woodley starts at the Museum of Berkshire Aviation (itself worth a visit, see www.museumofberkshireaviation.co.uk) and links Sandford Park, Ashenbury park, Alder Moors and other small green spaces. Wherever possible pedestrian paths have been used. Many of these have tarmac surfaces. However, the paths through the parks are gravel or grassy and may be wet, muddy and slippery during wet weather.

Ashenbury Park, in the northern part of the route was once a rubbish tip. The southern part of the route is through the area known locally as the 'Airfield Estate'. Here all of the roads are named after mid-twentieth century aeroplanes (Spitfire, Comet, etc). The area is the site of a former military airfield opened in 1929, used during World War Two and closed in 1953. Prior to the war, a Miles aircraft factory was built at the airfield. The wartime airfield comprised a grass landing area 1000 by 800 yards across, equipped with aircraft hangars and accommodation for over 500 Royal Air Force personnel. Its role in World War two was as a base for Elementary Flying Training School courses. In 1931 Douglas Bader, who was to become a famous wartime pilot lost his legs after an accident flying acrobatics from Woodley.

Length

3.5 miles (5.6 km). Allow 1 hr 45mins hours plus stops.

Starting Point

Car	Berkshire Museum of Aviation Car Park (free March 2021), Mohawk Way, Woodley, RG5 4UE. OS Grid Ref: SU 7768 7299. w3w: ///vows.chins.gaps
Bus 13	Herald Way stop – almost opposite the museum car park entrance). Join the walk at point (2) .
14 19c	Herald Way stop – cross the road, walk back 75m to the roundabout. Turn left and join the walk at point (3)

Refreshments

Heron on the Ford pub. Go along Lands End Lane from point (18). Adds 800m to the walk.

Route Instructions (See map below for numbered points)

1





Walk down the entrance road to the museum to meet Mohawk Way. The No 13 bus stop is opposite. This is point (2) below.


2





Cross the road and turn left. At the roundabout turn right into Miles Way. Keep to the right-hand side and after 40m just before the pavement ends come to metal railings on your right. This is point (3) below.


3  Turn right, go through the railings and take the narrow footpath to soon reach Mitchell Way. Turn left into Mitchell Way then bear left and left again into Dowding Close. Keep to the left-hand pavement and at the end take the footpath in the same direction with a grassed area on your left. Soon reach a point where footpaths cross. This is point **(4)** below.


4  Turn right and take the footpath past the end of Armstrong Way and continue straight ahead through the car parking area to reach Comet Way (House 8a will be on your right.). Cross the road and immediately turn left into Victor Way. After 40m reach Scott Close on your right. This is point **(5)** below.


5  Turn right into Scott Close. Take the left-hand pavement to reach a grassed area on the right. Follow the road round to the left and reach a turning area, with No 11 in front of you. This is point **(6)** below.




6  Take the footpath from the turning area on the right-hand side – it runs parallel to No 11 to reach Nimrod Close. Turn right then left (by No 37 Nimrod Close) to reach Hurricane Way. Cross the road, turn right and after 50m come to Lysander Close. This is point **(7)** below.

7  Turn left into Lysander Close. Ignore the first turning left and follow the road round, ignoring the first turning right, to reach the hammerhead. Take the path on the right-hand side with Nos 69 & 71 on your left and a grassed area on your right to reach the car park to Woodley Piazza shopping parade. Turn right and go through the car park, through the red/white barrier to reach Headley Road East. This is point **(8)** below.

8  Turn right and soon reach a point where Headley Road East turns sharp left and becomes Tippings Lane. There is a turning with metal railings on your right. This is point **(9)** below.

9  Go through the railings and take the broad path beyond. Walk along the path – there is play equipment on your left – for 250m to the end where it meets Hurricane Way. Cross the road and turn right. After 30m reach a gap in a low brick wall (opposite Donaldson Way). This is point **(10)** below.

10  Go through the gap in the wall and into Blanchard Close. Where Blanchard Close turns sharp right by a lamp post at no 28, turn left into a park area with play equipment in its centre. Walk clockwise around the park and come to the second footpath approximately 1/3 around the park circumference. This is point **(11)** below.

- 11**  Take this footpath and, skirting across the hammerhead to Marathon Close, continue in the same direction on a footpath to reach Hurricane Way. Cross the road diagonally right to reach a gravel path by a lamp post. This is point **(12)** below.
- 12**  Take this path which leads to Alder Moors woods on the edge of Ashenbury Park. Cross a concrete bridge over a small stream, ignore paths left and right and follow the path which bears uphill and slightly left (effectively straight on). At a T-junction turn right. Come to a clearing with a tree in the middle. This is point **(13)** below.
- 13**  At the tree bear left up the slope towards a clearing with a wood opposite you and to the right of the path. After about 150m there are two park benches to your right at the edge of the wood. Follow the path around to the left towards another wood. This is point **(14)** below.
- 14**  Go to the right of the wood. The path becomes a gravel track in a shallow cutting between trees and can be wet. At the end of the wood come to a litter bin on your left. Continue on the path to reach another litter bin on the right just before a play area. This is point **(15)** below.
- 15**  Turn right at the litter bin and go across the grass passing the play equipment on your left. Continue clockwise to eventually reach another litter bin. This is point **(16)** below.
- 16**  Turn left at the litter bin and go through a gap in the hedgerow. Cross a railway sleeper bridge over a ditch take the path on your right between fences. Go along this path, ignoring a gate on your left, until the end of the fence on your right. This is point **(17)** below.
- 17**  Turn right and head slightly left directly across the grass towards the highest point of the park. Reach a bench and chairs with a rubbish bin to their right. This is point **(18)** below.
- 18**  Go between the table and the bin and walk downhill straight ahead towards the trees and houses on your left where the exit to Ashenbury Park can be found. (Be careful not to stray left or you will end up back by the lake!). Reach a litter bin and go through the bushes to a path. Turn right and soon reach a wooden barrier onto Beggars Hill Road. This is point **(19)** below.

19



Go through the gate and turn right onto Beggars Hill Road. (Lands End Lane is opposite.) After 400m the road narrows at a barrier. This is point **(20)** below.

(The Heron's Ford pub is at the far end of Lands End Road, a diversion of 800m there and back from point 18.)

20



Continue on the road, it soon becomes a path, and after about 500m reach a sharp right turn. Follow the path right and, ignoring a path joining from your left, reach metal railings where the path crosses Mohawk Way. This is point **(21)** below.

21



Go through the railings, cross the road and through railings on the other side. Continue on the tarmac path. At the triangular green space fork left and soon reach Sandford Park (the heart of the old airfield). There is a play area on your right. Follow the path round the left-hand side of the path to reach a gate. This is point **(22)** below.

22



Ignore the gate and follow the path right around the park parallel to Mohawk Way to the end of the fence. Go through the gate and onto the pavement. Continue in the same direction to the No 13 bus stop. This is point **(23)** below.

23



Cross the road and walk down the entrance road to the museum car park and journey's end.

If you need the No 14 or No19c bus, continue along Mohawk Way from the No 13 bus stop to the roundabout. Cross the road and continue in the same direction along Colemans Moor Road for about 75m. The bus stop is on the far side of the road opposite Herald Way.

