

# Woburn – Eversholt

**Walk:** 8.3 miles/13.4km **Time:** 3 hours.

This walk will take you through the wooded parkland of Woburn Abbey and the Safari Park allowing you a glimpse of some of Bedfordshire's unusual larger wildlife.

## Woburn Village

Following three major fires between 1595 and 1724 which destroyed the earlier mediaeval settlement, major rebuilding works took place in the 18th century giving this pretty village a distinctive Georgian character.

There are a good selection of public houses, shops and tea rooms and just off Bedford Street stands the old church of St Mary, now home to Woburn Heritage Centre which contains a museum of the local history of Woburn and a tourist information point. The 19th century church of St Mary in Park Street is considered to be one of the finest Victorian buildings in the county.

## Woburn Abbey

The history of the Abbey dates back to 1145, and was originally a religious house for Cistercian monks but in 1538 the Abbot, Robert Hobbes, was found guilty of treason and the monastery was confiscated. In 1547 King Edward VI granted Woburn Abbey to Sir John Russell but it took 70 years for it to become a family home. In 1694 during the reign of William and Mary the head of the family was given the title of Duke of Bedford and today it is occupied by the 15th Duke of Bedford and his family..

## The Russell Family

Through the generations members of the Russell family have been prominent parliamentarians, great art patrons and involved in social reforms of the 19th century.

Anna Marie 7th Duchess of Bedford is said to be the originator of the great British tradition of afternoon tea. In the early 1800's she initiated the idea of having tea in the late afternoon to bridge the gap between luncheon and dinner, which in fashionable circles might not be served until 8 o'clock at night.

Mary, the wife of the 11th Duke of Bedford, also given the unofficial title of 'The Flying Duchess', was a keen ornithologist, an accomplished skater, marksman, canoeist, mountaineer and photographer. A lifelong interest in medical matters led her to establish a hospital at Woburn where she became the Theatre Sister and taught herself radiography. She took up flying in her sixties with an enthusiasm which led her to take part in world record-breaking flights to India and the South African Cape. The duchess died in tragic circumstances in March 1937 aged 71 after leaving Woburn Abbey in her De Havilland Gipsy Moth on a short, solo flight towards Cambridge to view floods in the Fens. A search was arranged when she had not returned by tea-time but sadly her body was never recovered.

## The Deer Park

The Abbey is set in a beautiful 3,000 acre deer park with 10 species of deer roaming free. These include Red, Sika, Fallow and Muntjac deer as well as Milu or Pere David deer introduced in 1894 from the Imperial Herd of China and saved from extinction at Woburn.

Landscaped in the 19th century by Humphrey Repton, the park has remained mostly unchanged and contains

many magnificent, ancient oak trees within the extensive grasslands.

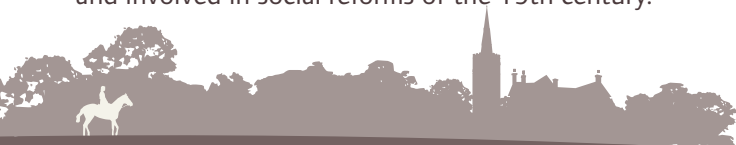
Other features remain from the early 20th century near Milton Wood, where a series of small ponds were constructed for ornamental bird species. Near Basin pond is a tree known as Abbot's Oak, said to be the tree where Abbot Robert Hobbes was hanged.

Woburn Safari Park opened in 1970, and today is an award winning attraction making a valuable contribution to conservation. You may be rewarded by the sight of elephants, tigers, camels or bears (safely within their enclosures) as you follow this walk.

## Eversholt

A pretty traditional village whose name means "wood of the boar" its village hall overlooks the cricket pitch and 12th century church of St John the Baptist. There are thirteen "Ends" or hamlets to the village and many comprise of old stone built houses. The Domesday Book of 1086 lists Hugh de Beauchamp as the Lord of the Manor of Eversholt whose descendants continued to own property in the area until the 13th century when the land passed to Woburn Abbey.

At various points along the way you may join part of the Greensand Ridge Walk; this is Central Bedfordshire's 40 mile linear route passing through some of the most attractive parts of the county.



Circular walks

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## Healthy walking

Why not get out and get healthy? There is no better way to start than by taking a walk. Just 30 minutes a day can improve health and well-being, reduce the risk of heart disease, help to prevent diabetes, improve muscle strength even reduce anxiety and depression. So make today the day you start to enjoy Bedfordshire and enjoy good health. For information on healthy walking log on to [www.walkingforhealth.org.uk](http://www.walkingforhealth.org.uk)

## Planning your walk

The car park opposite St. Mary's Church in Woburn is the suggested starting point and the walk is described in an anti-clockwise direction. However, you can begin at any other point and walk in either direction. For local information call in at the Heritage Centre and Tourist Information Point off Bedford Street.

**Opening Times: Easter – October: Monday-Friday**  
2.00-4.30pm **Sat/Sun & B/Hols** 10.00-5.00pm  
Only open weekends in October. Telephone: 01525 290631 or visit [www.woburnheritagemuseum.co.uk](http://www.woburnheritagemuseum.co.uk)

## Refreshments, parking and toilets

Woburn has several good pubs and a wealth of restaurants and tea rooms where you can enjoy a wonderful range of refreshments, and there is plenty of parking available at the free car park opposite St. Mary's Church.

## Public transport

A regular bus service operates between Leighton Buzzard and Milton Keynes, for information contact

Traveline 0871 200 22 33. There are railway stations at Aspley Guise and at Woburn Sands..

## Ordnance Survey maps

The route is covered on Ordnance Survey Landranger Series map 165. It is also shown on Explorer map 192.

## Did you enjoy the walk?

This is one of a series of circular walk leaflets produced by Central Bedfordshire Council. If you wish to request a leaflet, give us some feedback or report any problems encountered, please contact us on **0300 3008305** or e-mail us on [recreational.routes@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:recreational.routes@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

## Tips for enjoying your walk

Parts of the walk can become muddy especially after heavy rain, so strong waterproof footwear is recommended. Take care where conditions are rough and do let someone know where you are going. Please be aware that much of the walk is unsuitable for wheelchairs and difficult for pushchairs.

## Other walks

To discover more walks in Central Bedfordshire visit [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/countryside](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/countryside) or [www.letsgo.org.uk](http://www.letsgo.org.uk)

Or why not explore the Greensand Ridge by following the fabulous Greensand Ridge Walk, a walk that passes through many of the area's most valuable landscapes and historic towns [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/greensand](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/greensand)



### Walk

- |                        |                            |
|------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 Sandy and Everton    | 7 Rushmere and Stockgrove  |
| 2 Old Warden           | 8 Cranfield                |
| 3 Silsoe - Shillington | 9 Totternhoe               |
| 4 Ampthill - Maulden   | 10 Dunstable Downs         |
| 5 Ampthill - Millbrook | 11 Whipsnade               |
| 6 Woburn - Eversholt   | ■ ■ ■ Greensand Ridge walk |



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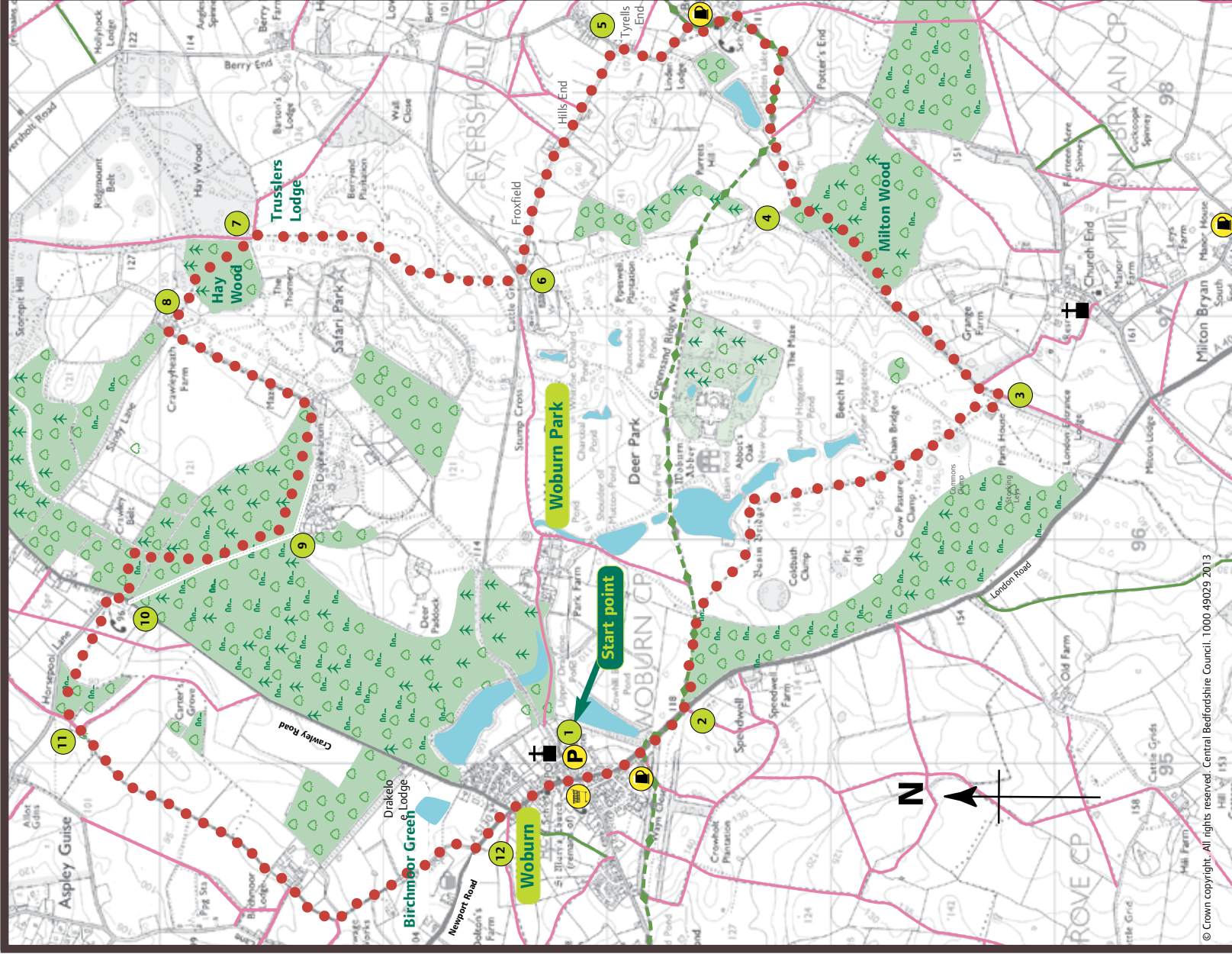
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# Walk 6

Circular walks

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### Please follow these tips to keep you and your dog safe:

- 🐾 Always keep you dog in sight and train it to come back when called.
- 🐾 Never let your dog chase wildlife or grazing animals – it could get injured too.
- 🐾 Unless you're already friends, keep you dog away from other people and either dogs – not everyone loves your dog as much as you do!
- 🐾 Always clean up after your dog.
- 🐾 Look out for horses, cyclists and runners – for everybody's safety its best to put your dog on a lead as they come by.
- 🐾 Follow all local signs about grazing animals.

### Key

- ..... The walk
- Footpath
- Bridleway
- Greensand Ridge Walk
- 🌲 Woods
- ⛪ Church
- 🅑 Parking
- 🏪 Local shop
- 🏠 Public house

This is one of a series of circular walk leaflets produced by Central Bedfordshire Council. For further information and availability please contact us on 0300 300 8085.



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## Countryside code

- Be safe – plan ahead and follow any signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them

- Protect plants and animals, and take your litter home
- Consider other people.

- 1 From the car park on Park Street, turn left and head out of the village via George Street towards Ivy Lodge.
- 2 At Ivy Lodge go through the gate to enter the deer park, then at the next gate follow the circular walk markers around Basin Pond to where the footpath meets the track. Turn right keeping the bridge to the Abbey behind you. The track bears to the left at the grass triangle but follow the waymarking signs straight ahead past Paris House; the half timbered house to your right.
- 3 Leave the deer park through an iron gate and walk through the small copse, bearing left at the waymarker heading towards Milton Wood. Follow the path through the wood. Exit the wood and turn left following the signs.
- 4 Follow the path around to the right to meet the Greensand Ridge Walk and either turn left to return to Basin Pond via Woburn Abbey, or turn right to continue the circular walk. Cross the bridge and pass the four arm signpost before continuing over another bridge toward the road. At the road turn left into Eversholt village.
- 5 Follow the road through Eversholt, turning left onto Woburn Road at Tyrell's End follow the road uphill to Froxfield via Hills End.
- 6 At the road junction bear left into the Deer Park, cross the cattle grid then turn immediately right and follow the signposting for the circular walk.
- 7 Cross over the open ground, keeping the surfaced track on your left. At Trussler's Lodge cross the cattle grid and turn left onto the track through Hay Wood and continue along the footpath towards another bridge.
- 8 Cross the Safari Park entrance following signs for Safari Lodge. Pass the red telephone box then cross the road to take the footpath on the left opposite the 'quarantine buildings'. Follow the footpath left through the gate and along the edge of the Safari Park. Head past the Elephant enclosure, through another gate and on through the woodland to the road.
- 9 Follow the waymarkers along the road towards Crawley Lodge, bear right towards Crawley Belt, then cross the road and follow the path through the wood.
- 10 At Crawley Lodge, pass through the gate and cross the A4012 bearing right and then left up Horsepool Lane.
- 11 Approximately 30m after the road junction turn left through the gate and cross the arable field towards the woodland. Pass through the woodland following the waymarkers, crossing a bridge. At the track, turn left and follow the path past Birchmoor Farm and onto Birchmoor Green.
- 12 Follow the road at Birchmoor Green to the A5130 Woburn Road and bear left and continue back in to the village to the car park at the start of the walk.

