

GENERAL INFORMATION

This is one of a series of six linked walks in and around Stotfold, a small Bedfordshire town close to the borders of Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire.

Stotfold is thought to have gained its name when northern cattle drovers broke their journey to London down the Great North Road and penned their animals [stots] in enclosures [folds] before continuing their journey south.

Each individual walk covers two to four miles and can be linked to form longer routes. The area is generally level and the walks are easy, although not all will be accessible to wheelchairs or baby-buggies.

The walks were produced by TEASEL – the local conservation group. A combined map of all the walks showing how they are linked and notes on interesting flora and fauna which you are likely to see at different seasons can be found on the TEASEL website: www.teasel-info.com.



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PARKING

Many of the walks start from a car-park but if this is full, please show consideration for any traffic and local residents.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Buses run through Stotfold from Hitchin, Letchworth and Shefford. For further information, contact: Arriva Customer Services – 0844 800 44 11.

Arlesey Station, just 1½ miles away, has East Coast Main Line services from London and Peterborough.

OTHER WALKS IN THE AREA

Local libraries have information on other local and more long-distance walks. These include:

Kingfisher Way: Baldock to Tempsford

Greensand Ridge Walk: Leighton Buzzard to Gamlingay

Letchworth Greenway: 13½ miles around the town

USEFUL MAPS

Ordnance Survey Landranger Series, 153 @ 1:50 000

Ordnance Survey Explorer Series, 193 @ 1:25 000

FURTHER INFORMATION

There are various pubs and shops in the town which provide refreshments. There is a public convenience in the High Street.

Remember to obey The Countryside Code – keep to the footpaths, close all gates behind you and keep dogs under control.



Design & layout: Cedric Morgan, Ad-Lib Graphics • 01462 731845

TOWN, CHURCH AND RIVER

2.8 miles/4.4 Km

3

Linked, Short Walks in and around **STOTFOLD**



- 1 Astwick's Ancient Church and Ruined Mill
- 2 The River Ivel
- 3 Town, Church and River
- 4 To Radwell Lake
- 5 Stotfold: Old and New
- 6 Wide Open Spaces and Water

Walk No. 3

2.8 miles/
4.4 Km

TOWN, CHURCH AND RIVER

Start at Malthouse Lane Car Park [GR 221373]. Links with Walks 1, 2, 4, 6.



From the car-park walk past play equipment away along the left edge of the field. Walk around a fenced games area on to a path beside the football ground. Halfway along the pitch leave the path to walk across the top of *Silver Birch Avenue*. Follow on to a footpath with a small factory on your left.



At the road, turn left, then left again into *Astwick Road*. At the Crown turn right, The Green is on your left. When you reach thatched *Hucklebury Cottage* [A] turn left down *Rook Tree Lane*. Continue ahead past Kings Baptist Church until you reach a footpath sign on your left between houses.

Point of Interest

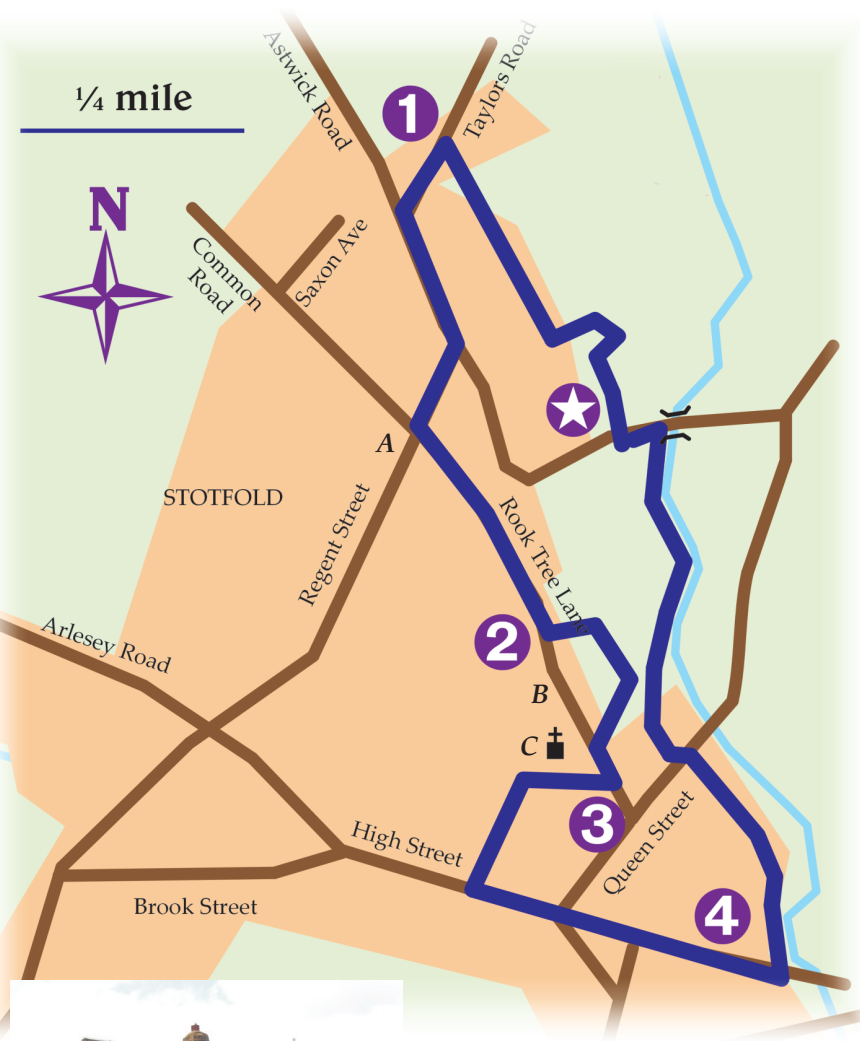
[A] *Hucklebury Cottage* was built about 1680 as a farm labourers' cottage. It is hard to imagine, but the 1841 Census lists **thirteen** people living there!



Take the signed footpath on your left and walk to the right of the Old Baptist Chapel. Turn right along the field-edge.

Turn left and then right beside fenced school grounds, then go right to pass through a gap in the hedge into a meadow. Turn right towards a field gate and kissing-gate, the square church tower is ahead.

Leave the meadow through the kissing-gate, an old house with zig-zag roof tiling opposite you [B]. You are back on *Rook Tree Lane*. Turn left, cross the road and reach a signed tarmac footpath leading up to St. Mary's Church [C].



Hucklebury Cottage

Point of Interest

[C] The main part of St. Mary's Church was consecrated in 1150, but it is likely there was a church on this site in earlier times, as in 1890 a Saxon coffin containing a skeleton was excavated here during restoration work.

Point of Interest

[B] The Tithe House was built in the 1750s. This is one of the oldest houses in Stotfold and was where local people paid their tithes to the Lord of the Manor.



Pass to the left of the church on a tarmac path, leaving the churchyard with a square red-brick building which was Stotfold's first established school, on your right.

Turn left into *Church Road* and left again when you reach the *High Street*. Continue ahead into *Baldock Road* and walk up to the bridge over the river.



At the bridge turn left along the riverside path and stay on it until you reach *Mill Lane*. Go left, cross the road and soon turn right to pass a small car-park beside work-unit buildings. Go through the squeeze stile ahead, staying on the path to pass another squeeze stile beside a yellow-topped marker-post.

You are back at the gap you went through earlier near the school grounds. Bear right through it to stay near the river. Walk ahead, ignoring paths to your left; the river appears again beside you. Follow the path beside it to the road. The car-park where you started is across the road, a few yards to your left.