

The **TFCNR** is a 50-mile countryside walk. We celebrate the splendid villages and scenery of our county. Northamptonshire is an under rated area for walkers. Let's put that right!!

Come with us now... The route is largely off road. So ready to open a few gates. Even climb a few stiles. Let us all venture forth and enjoy the **GREAT OUTDOORS**

We start and finish at **PITSFORD WATER VISITOR CENTRE** near Brixworth, Northampton. This lap of our walk will be **clockwise**. Heading first North East along the North shore of the lake. In a couple of miles, we cross the causeway then gently up and through **HOLCOT** a lovely village.

Travel east past the new deer park near **HANNINGTON**, now in their 5th year of calving. Over the A43. At the end of the first field go south between **HARDWICK WOOD** and **SYWELL WOOD**. South along the side of Sywell Wood then along Glebe Road into **MEARS ASHBY** follow the arrows over the stream and through the Churchyard, it is magnificent. Outside Mears Ashby Hall, join foot paths heading South West. **SYWELL RESERVOIR** is to our right hand side.

Enjoy the peace and the history that is **ECTON** village. The Church is well worth a visit. South over the A45 and over the river **NENE** we rise into the lively village of **COGENHOE**. South East from Cogenhoe towards **The Firs**. Evidence of past quarrying activities; Including **The Jerusalem Steps** up a former quarry stone face. **WHISTON CHURCH** is a powerful feature to our left. We go through **CHADSTONE** then over the impressive drive of **CASTLE ASHBY HALL**.

Continuing South East. **YARDLEY HASTINGS** is memorable. The roadside stream through the village. Chase Park Road takes us South passing **YARDLEY CHASE** with a strict **exclusive** access policy! At Manor Farm we reach the old **Ravenstone Road** this takes us West through the villages of and **HORTON** and on into **PIDDINGTON**. Both worth a visit and both quite different.

South now there is a treat in store **SALCEY FOREST**. A well-kept network of paths and trails. Such a rich history. Peace and flora and fauna all round us. Best of all they have a welcoming and completely **inclusive** access policy. (Maybe they should be talking to their neighbours at The Chase!) Our time in Salcey is a treasure, happy families, walkers, pony trekkers and cyclists there is plenty of room for all.

We glimpse **Salcey Lawn**. Pause at **The Milking Oak** then... the magnificent **Beech Avenue** down towards our M1 underpass taking us safely West.

Elms Farm and Hartwell End Farm then Stonepit Farm all guide us past the **Medieval Village of Hartwell**. North West paths bring us to the peaceful **ASHTON** if it is time to rest,

this is the place. A couple of paths through **Vale Farm** worth mentioning. An over attentive shepherd looking after 30 ewes for his daughter let's hope they have delivered her lambs by now! And a horsey lady landowner, 'you are most welcome to follow the path but the water will be over your boots...feel free to follow our drive and keep your socks dry!' Friendly and helpful. **Thanks folks...**

West and South we join the **Grand Union Canal** at **Lower Lock Farm**. At the tow path we turn North to **STOKE BRUERNE**. Our path leaves this boaty scene up by the Church and West to the Monastery at **SHUTLANGER**. North now Showsley Belt, the path rises gently over the tunnel then back down to the towpath and into **BLISWORTH** an attractive and busy village with a seat by the Church for all. The path North West up to Gayton Road for a safe crossing of the A43 Opposite Gayton Wood Farm entrance we go West over the impressive bridge and disused railway to **Gayton Wilds House**.

Tiffield Road takes into **GAYTON** a delightful village well worth a look. The Church and fine views all round from Gayton Hill. The path goes North downhill to **Anchor Farm**. We re-join the canal towpath towards **BUGBROOKE** access to the village is by 50 new steps down from the aqueduct! The cricket field and some well landscaped meadows take us past cottages and the fine Church At Manor Farm our path goes North then West to the busy **Heygates Bugbrooke Mills** paths North East take us safely under the M1 to **HARPOLE** another fine Northamptonshire village At the Church we turn left heading North West to open countryside. Fine views from **HARPOLE HILL** then on to the pretty hamlet of **NOBOTTLE** past Yew Tree Spinney then Yew Tree Farm to a couple of the finest villages on the planet. **HARLESTONE** with Harlestone Church then **LOWER HARLESTONE**. An area where time stands still, thanks to the power of **ALTHORP** less than a mile to the North North East under the railway then up through **HARLESTONE FIRS** through **CHURCH BRAMPTON**.

Up **BRAMPTON HILL** pause to enjoy the views. Then the path back down to **The Red House** North East now a path. Then Merry Tom Lane. Crossing the Brampton Valley Way. Now up towards **BRIXWORTH**. Recent development to the South provides a pleasant return to...the **PITSFORD WATER VISITOR CENTRE**. Well done surely it's time now for a cuppa'

Well done to you all a very happy 50-mile walk thank you for joining us.

We have passed 10 cafes and pubs along the way.

Check before you set out these things can change day by day.

Have a look at Ordnance Survey Explorer Maps sheets 223 and 207 we are marked on them.

Let us know what you think.

Best wishes from **THE TEN FOOT CLUB**.