

Refreshments, Parking and Toilets

You can park at the mill's car park throughout the year during the hours displayed on the entrance gate, the mill site has toilet facilities and picnic tables. The Swan and The Prince of Wales public houses at Bromham have kindly agreed to allow parking for walkers who take refreshments there. Please inform the landlord if you intend to leave your car.

Public Transport

A frequent bus service operates between Bedford and Bromham and Bedford and Stagsden for information contact Traveline 0871 200 22 33 or www.transportdirect.info. The closest train station is 3 miles away at Midland Road, Bedford.

Ordnance Survey Maps

The route is covered on Ordnance Survey Landranger Series map 153. It is also shown on Explorer map 208. Both are available from local bookshops and some petrol stations.

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
- Keep dogs under close control
- Consider other people

www.countrysideaccess.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 parts of the walk are unsuitable for wheelchairs and difficult for pushchairs.

Did you enjoy the walk ?

If you have any comments about the walk or encounter any problems please contact Borough Hall, Bedford MK42 9AP or e-mail row@bedford.gov.uk

Other walks

Find out about more of Bedfordshire's walking and riding routes as well as nature reserves and country parks by visiting

www.lets-go.org.uk



Circular walks

No.2

Bromham and Stagsden

Approx 6 Miles / 9.5 km Time: 3 hours



This gentle walk explores the undulating countryside between the villages of Bromham and Stagsden. It offers contrasting views of the landscape and an insight into some of the local history.

Bromham Mill

Part of the present mill dates from the 17th century although a watermill has probably occupied the site since before the Domesday Survey in 1086.

Alongside it stands Bromham Bridge. First mentioned in 1224 but extensively altered in 1813 and 1902, its 26 arches span the River Great Ouse which in previous times was rich in eels providing a substantial income for the miller. There was also a blacksmith shop on the site and an apple orchard that supplied hard wood for the gear teeth of the mill. The water wheel and machinery have been restored and there is an art gallery, café, craft sales and shop. Current opening times are displayed in the mill yard or Tel: 01234 824330 or visit www.bedford.gov.uk Leisure and Culture.



Water Standpipes

Standpipes were installed in 1935-6 as part of a scheme to supply water to parishes not yet connected to mains water. Look out for examples of the lion head standpipes at Bromham and Stagsden manufactured by Messrs Glenfield and Kennedy of Kilmarnock.

Flora and fauna

In early summer the verges and banks of the A428 village bypass are a mass of colourful wildflowers. This was the first extensive sowing of wildflowers on new road verges in the county. Sowing was carried out to improve the appearance of the cutting and the variety of wildlife found there. Listen and look out for Skylarks and woodpeckers as well as hares as you cross the fields.

Ridge and Furrow

Ridge and furrow earthworks are clues to past arable agriculture. In medieval times most arable land was cultivated communally in long strips, each usually consisting of two or more ridges. The peasants did all the farm work on strips belonging to the Lord of the manor but also tenanted a few for their own use. Most individuals had their strips scattered across the common fields of each parish where they were intermingled with those of others so that good and bad soil was shared out equally. The ridges are usually reverse 'S' shaped rather than straight as a result of preparing to turn the plough. Ridge and furrow earth works can be seen in Bromham Park and at Stagsden.

Hanger Wood

Hanger Wood is an ancient wood, referred to as far back as 1200. Hanger means 'wooded hill' and it lies right along the Stagsden parish boundary having survived medieval woodland clearance for agriculture. During the Middle Ages, Hanger Wood would have provided timber for Stagsden village. It consists of mainly deciduous oak & ash woodland along with some rowan, hornbeam and aspen as well as a fabulous display of woodland flowers in the spring.

Stagsden

Stagsden is a small village with charming thatched cottages and a 13th century church dedicated to St Leonard. During the 19th century Stagsden was a centre of lacemaking and had two lacemaking schools. By the turn of the century it was no longer economical to compete with machine made lace and lacemaking by hand became a purely recreational pastime.

Planning your Walk

Bromham Mill is the suggested starting point and the walk is described in a clockwise direction. However, you can begin at any other point and walk in either direction.

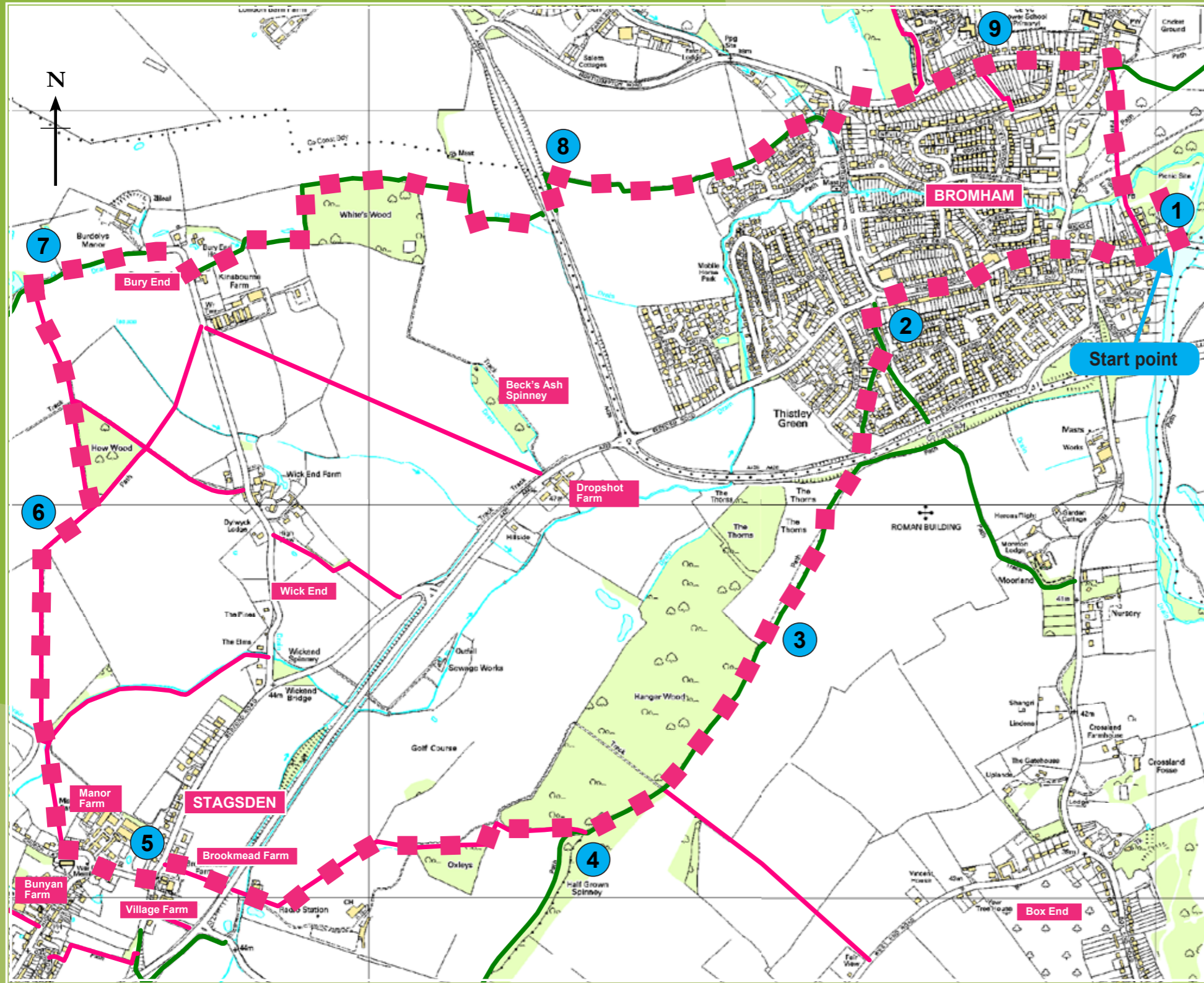


Circular walks



Bromham and Stagsden

Approx 6 Miles / 9.5 km Time: 3 hours



Key

- The walk**
- Footpath**
- Bridleway**
- Woodland**
- Local shop**
- Directions**

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- 1** Leave Bromham Mill by the front gate and turn right on to Stagsden Road. Cross the road and continue along the pavement for about half a mile.
- 2** Turn left down Thistley Lane on the bridleway. Follow the bridleway, turn right where it branches and continue along the lane to the bypass. Take care crossing the bypass. After crossing the bypass follow the sign to the right and through the gate.
- 3** Follow the sign-posted bridleway across the field to the corner of Hanger Wood where it joins a bridleway running along the edge of the trees. This bridleway is thought to follow the line of an ancient trackway between Bromham and Cranfield. Please note there is no public access to Hanger Wood.
- 4** On reaching the golf course continue straight ahead with the wood on your right and the golf course on your left along the edge of a small plantation. Turn left along a gravel path, follow signs for about 50m and turn right keeping the small woodland on your left. Follow the signs across the golf course. Leave the golf course via a bridge and climb steps to cross the bypass. Take care crossing the bypass. Follow straight ahead across the field and along the signed footpath into Stagsden village.
- 5** Turn left and follow the road around to the centre of the village then turn right into Church Lane. Take the public footpath opposite the church, and then walk diagonally across a pasture field with ridges and furrows. Follow signs, ignore the first stile to the right and cross over the next stile.
- 6** Continue straight ahead across an arable field towards How Wood. On reaching the corner of How Wood continue left on the pathway. Cross over the track at the end of the wood and follow the path across arable fields.
- 7** On reaching the tree belt turn right toward Bury End. At end of the bridleway continue straight along the track bearing right. Follow the signposted bridleway to the left through the garden gate and continue along the edge of the garden. Follow signs around the field edge and bear right with White's Wood to the right. At the end of the wood follow signs around field edge. Take care crossing the bypass.
- 8** Continue to follow the signs along the field edges into Bromham village. Go through the gate at the end of the fields and straight ahead to the main road. On reaching the main road, cross over, turn left and follow the pavement round to the right on to Grange Lane.
- 9** At the end of Grange Lane turn right and immediately cross Village Road into Bromham Park signposted to St Owen's Church. Go through the gate next to the cattle grid and on entering the park bear right. Follow the path straight on through the 'kissing gate', over the footbridge and left into Bromham Mill picnic site.