

Bottesford Parish Walks

Bottesford is a large village found in the lovely Vale of Belvoir, in NE Leicestershire, very close to the borders of Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire. The village can be approached easily from the A52 or on the A607 then via the small villages of the Vale of Belvoir.

Bottesford originates from old english "ford by the house or building". A wander down Devon Lane will show that this is a very apt name.

Parking: Follow the High Street to Albert Street, then right into Walford Close and park by the Doctors Surgery. (Map Ref: OS Explorer 260 SK 810 392)

Walk 1:

2.7km (1.7miles), allow 45 minutes, accessible for pushchairs & wheel chairs

To start the walk, take Church Street, to the left of the Red Lion Public House, then at the end turn left. Cross Market Street with care. *At this corner you will see Flemings Almshouses of c.1620.*

Walk along the pavement side of Chapel Street. Turn right into Devon Lane, which leads past attractive gardens to the River Devon and the ford. Cross the footbridge and follow around to the right to reach Rectory Lane. Cross the road to the seat by the church wall. *Providence Cottage to your left, dates back to 1723. Opposite is the Earl of Rutland's Hospital, founded c.1590.*

A. Follow the path to the left of Church Yard.

The tower and spire of St. Mary's Church reach 207 feet high. The church is open during the day, and is worth popping in to see amongst other things; the remarkable tombs of the Earls and Dukes of Rutland including the "witches tomb", and the remains of a medieval 'Doom' wall painting above the Chancel Arch.

When you reach a kissing gate, follow the path leading between the two ponds, and through the next gate continuing on the path between the housing and the river.

At the main road turn right, and after a short distance cross the road to the village sign on the Jubilee Green. (Unfortunately, dogs are prohibited from this grassy area. Follow the road around to meet point B).

B. Aiming for the far left hand corner of the green, leave by the gate just behind the trees, and turn right up Easthorpe Road.

Just past the estate cottages follow the enclosed path indicated to the right. The path comes out at the playing fields with an opportunity to have a swing!

The present village hall was built in 2003 on the site of the original Victory Commemoration Hall, a former army building. A time capsule has been placed in the fabric of the new hall to preserve the village memories, past and present.

When you reach the road, turn right and walk towards the Market Cross, village stocks and whipping post, and around the bend back to the Red Lion.

Walk 2:

7.4km (4.6miles) allow 2 hours, undulating, open countryside

To start the walk, take Church Street, to the left of the Red Lion Public House. Follow the road around to the right and cross Fleming's Bridge.

The bridge was named after Dr. Samuel Fleming Rector of St.Mary's Church from 1581-1620, and local philanthropist. This two ribbed segmental arched bridge was constructed to provide safe passage over the River Devon.

Follow the riverside path to the right of the Church, at the gate turn right, between two ponds, and onwards to Grantham road. Turn left and walk along the main road past the cottages and petrol station. Where the road divides, take the quiet back road running behind the long hedge. Then, just before rejoining the main road take the path on the left, indicated by the fingerpost.

1. Follow the track uphill. After the railway and stile cross the field diagonally to the right, towards the hedgerow. With the hedge on your right, walk to the field corner. For the next two fields carry on over the stiles. Soon the footpath meets a bridleway. Follow the path downhill, still with the hedge on your right.
2. Continue right through the tunnel of trees and then take the track on your left.
3. Cross the stream and continue to follow the track around to the left, now with the hedge on your left. In about 200 metres leave the track and turn right onto a path with the field edge on your right. Follow this hedge to the corner of the field and pass through a small gate.
4. Turn left and after 50 metres, turn right across the field to another gate in the hedge opposite. Cross three fields towards Normanton village. Before the path takes you into Normanton, look out for a stile on your left, in the left-hand corner of the field.
5. Cross this and walk uphill with the hedge on your right, to the highest point in Bottesford Parish. Beacon Hill is 61.37 metres high, with splendid views in every direction. Continue downhill along the track until you reach the railway line.
6. Turn half left across Station Road, through the gate, and follow the path towards the river. Just after the next gate turn right, with the churchyard on your left, and pass the seat by the River Devon. Cross the little wooden bridge and then left along Rectory Lane. Continue on into Market Street, to the Cross and village stocks, then left back to the Red Lion.

Useful Information:

Train: Bottesford Station (unmanned), Central Trains from Grantham/Nottingham

Buses: Service 24 & 26 Bottesford-Melton Mowbray, and Service 55 Newark-Bingham and available from Grantham & Nottingham. Please confirm with Traveline (0870 608 2 608) before you travel

Refreshments & toilets: A number of pubs and shops in the village

It is advisable to wear suitable footwear when walking. Stout shoes or walking boots are recommended.

Some stretches of the route follow minor country roads. Beware of traffic approaching from both directions. If possible stay on the verge, if not walk in single file on the right hand side of the road.

Enjoy the walks, whilst observing the Countryside Code.

Walking - Be fit and well

The benefits of walking regularly include; reduced risk of heart disease, stroke, bowel cancer, breast cancer, osteoporosis and obesity. In addition, many people feel better in themselves. Regular exercise is thought to help ease stress, anxiety and mild depression.