

OXFAM Walk for Water 2019: 15 mile route Instructions

← ↖ ↑ ↗ → indicate approx positions of Oxfam “Herts Hike” routemark arrows

OS Grid References are shown as: {2 Grid letters 3 figures (easting) 3 figures (northing)} e.g. {TL 189 149}

To walk the 15 mile route you should set out from Walk HQ by 1030 and should have passed through C2 (Wheathampstead) outbound by 1230.

Section 1. All routes up to Marshal Point 1

Turn left ← onto the Scout Hut drive then left ← onto main bridleway, then almost immediately right ↗ through kissing gate into Heartwood Forest. Go ahead gently uphill on the diagonal gravel path ↑ . Where the gravel path divides left and right at a signpost, take neither! Go straight ahead on the grass ↑ towards a second signpost on the skyline. Here turn left ← onto a track, soon passing on your left a seat dedicated to Matt Risby. Continue straight ahead ↑ towards a wood, passing Mouse carving and Woodland Arch on your left . At the corner of the wood, cross straight over another track ↑, continue ahead with the wood on your left until a kissing gate (“Brian’s gate”). Turn right through gate → and cross the field on a broad path to another kissing gate. Go through, turn left ← on track for a few yards to the edge of a wood. Turn right → and continue on the grass, with the wood lying on your left. Continue ↑ on the path which curves left and goes gently downhill until you reach **Marshal Point M1** {TL 162 122}

Routes divide here, so check which direction you need – don’t just follow the people in front!

The 3 milers go straight ahead ↑ downhill, whilst **all others turn right →**

Section 2: Marshal Point 1 to Checkpoint 2 (8 & 15 mile routes)

Having turned right at M1, **continue** along the boundary of Heartwood until you reach another Woodland Trust kissing gate {TL163 123}. Go through ↑ and down the path for a few yards then branch right ↗, walking towards the green grass of Nomansland Common. Walk along the Common for about ½ a mile ↑. Carry on past the public car park on your left (do NOT cross the road here) aiming for the road signs and red bin in the distance ahead near the main road. Arrive at **Checkpoint C1** {TL 174 124} ***Please show your Walker Reference number.***

Here the 5 mile route separates from the longer ones. This sheet describes the 8 mile route. Ask for a copy of the 5 mile instructions if you need them. Cross the road **WITH GREAT CARE.**

The 5 mile walkers now turn right **whilst all others head straight on** ↑ aiming for the house seen beyond the cricket pitch. Alongside the pitch, notice the historic puddingstone in the semi-circular bench ↑ . Leave the pitch, aiming at the Wicked Lady pub, and see the Historic Wheathampstead board. Turn left ← onto the Cricket pavilion tarmac drive. Walk almost to the pavilion and red bin, then turn right → onto a woodland path ↑. Carry on straight ahead ↑ ; in a slight clearing carry on ↑ ignoring tracks to left and right. At next crossroad of tracks, turn right → to leave the wood and emerge into a field at the north side of the Nomansland woodland. {TL173 128}

Go straight ahead ↑ by the side of the field, following a short section of power line. At the top of the field turn right → by the last power line pole. After a few metres the path bears left ↖ into a woodland strip. Follow the path for a while. Emerge into an open space and continue straight on ↑ uphill towards houses. At a wire enclosure, you reach a permissive path sign; carry straight on ↑ alongside the fence. Near the houses, fork right ↗ to a gate/gap. Go through, turn left ← onto the asphalt path and continue alongside the main road for 50 yards to Butterfield Road.

Turn left ← into Butterfield Road. After 200 yards cross Butterfield Road and turn right → into Wick Avenue. After house number 39A, turn right → onto an asphalt path. At the end of the path turn left ← to continue gently downhill on a sloping path above the main road. After a little way descend by steps to street level, turn left ← and continue down into the village and past The Swan pub to the corner with Church Street. Go a few yards up Church Street away from the busy junction before crossing → with due care **Marshal Point M3** {TL 177 139} (*Unlikely to be manned all day*)

Returning to the High Street, pass the lych gate to St Helens church. (*You may like to go inside to see the windows and monuments inside this lovely building*). Proceed ↑ to the foot of the hill (*Charlies Coffee Shop is just 70 yds further on, past the Pharmacy and the mill stream*); cross the street by the zebra crossing → . Turn right → between The Bull public house and the Jessamine

garage into East Lane. Walk past the public car park ↑ (*note there are public toilets available here*) and past the Women's Institute Mead Hall ↑. Keep left ↶ as the road carries on gently downhill past the new houses in Meads Lane and emerges in the river meadows ↑.

Cross the river by the footbridge, turn right → and follow the path along the river bank until it climbs to join a bridleway (Lea Valley Walk). Turn right → and follow this. After passing through two gates the path bends right → then descends through another gate to a gravel track and **Checkpoint C2** {TL 185 142}

Checkpoint C2 {TL 185 142}

Please show your Walker Reference number at the Checkpoint

At C2 routes separate. 8 mile walkers turn for home (Sections 5 & 6).

15 Mile walkers head further north, following instructions for Section 3 and 4.

Section 3. Checkpoint C2 (Wheathampstead) to Ayot St Lawrence - (15 mile route only)

Turn left ←, go through the underpass and then on up the gently rising track, ignoring the bridleway to the right. Go straight on past the metal gate ↑. Keep straight on over the junction where the Ayot Greenway goes right on the old railway line and walk on ↑ until you reach the road. **Marshal Point M4** {TL 189149}

Cross the road, WITH GREAT CARE, and follow Footpath 40 (Signed: Gustard Wood 1¼ mile) immediately opposite ↑. Keep beside the fence, along the edge of the field up to the metal kissing gate in the corner. Go through the gate ↶. (*This was Lamer Park Golf Course but is no longer in operation*). Continue on with the trees on your left and barbed wire fences on both sides ↑. Walk for some distance ↑, always guided by fences. At a meeting of tracks bear right ↗ on a broad path fenced on both sides. Continue on until you reach a metal kissing gate; go through and onto a track.

[NB route now changes from the pre-2018 version, which continued along this track].

Turn right on track → for just 30 metres then turn left ← through the gate onto Footpath 38 into woodland. Continue ↑ through a field, and at a lane go straight across ↑ at the metal kissing gate. Pass through woodland ↑ on a wide track ↑. On meeting a wire fence, the path bears left ↶. Continue ↑ as the path meanders through woodland and then ↑ follows the wire fence.

Go through ↑ a kissing gate to a T-junction of paths {TL 177166} and turn right → onto Footpath 36. Walk with a wood on the right and through another kissing gate ↑. Continue by the wood, now with a view across the field on the left to farm buildings. At end of field, ignore the kissing gate and footpath 15 which lead left; go through the kissing gate on the right ↑, then immediately back left again ← to continue in the original direction. Ignore "Public Footpath" 41 to the right - go ahead ↑ through gate (path not numbered). Pass between fields with horses on the right, and wooded land to the left. Continue through a wooden gate ↑ where the footpath is again labelled 36.

At a crossroad of tracks go straight across ↑ into woodland, your path now called 13, signed for Ayot St Lawrence. Follow the track ↑ by a wire fence to:

Checkpoint C3 {TL 191166} *Please show your Walker Reference number.*

Turn left ← and go up 5 steps ↑ (still on Footpath 13), and continue along the righthand side of the field with the hedge on your right until you reach the road. Turn right → at the road and after about 50 m turn left ← [Signposted: To The Church] along a gravel track. Pass the brick end wall of the church, then branch right ↗ on the path following the fence around the back of the church; follow it around to the church notice board {TL 192169} (*break off here to go inside the church grounds and look inside the building if you wish*)

With your back to the church notice board, turn right ↗ through a kissing gate onto a footpath marked "Hertfordshire Way clockwise". Keep going straight on ↑ with the church behind you, proceeding ahead ↑ to a bench named for June and Archie Laing. Go through two gates ↑ and across gravel to reach the road. A few yards ahead on the left is the old, ruined church

*(Why not break off to walk around the grounds; and the **Brocket Arms** is 100 yards on beyond the ruined church, offering various refreshment options.)*

At the road turn right → and follow as it curves left past a telephone box, TAKING DUE CARE as there is no set footpath. Come to the sign for “Shaw’s Corner” and take the road to the left ↖ (Bride hall Lane) passing the garden of Bernard Shaw’s house. Again TAKE CARE on this stretch of road. Go on to a double bend and

Marshal Point M5 {TL 194 166} *May not be manned all day*

Section 4. Ayot St Lawrence M5 return to Checkpoint C2 (15 mile routes)

Cross the road **WITH GREAT CARE** and just past the house called “Amesbury” take the public bridleway ↑ (signed: Public Bridleway 1, Codicote Road ¾, Ayot Greenway 2). Continue along the bridleway ↑ approx. 1 mile ↑ until you reach the Codicote Road, and

Marshal Point M6 {TL 203 154}

Cross the road **WITH GREAT CARE** going left a few yards to join another bridleway ↑, with a wood on the left and a field on the right. Go through a gate ↑ and continue straight ahead along the curving path as it keeps close to the wood to your left. Ignore a track leading into the wood →. Continue along the edge of the wood. After 200m the path enters the wood and after a further 200m enters a field ↑.

After about 60 m, the path goes left through a hedge ← into another field. Now follow the path with the hedge on your right ↑ to the old railway embankment and bridge. Do not pass under the bridge but immediately before it, turn right → up a slope to join the path along the old railway track.

Turn right → here and continue along the old railway track, passing under another bridge. Where the path comes out of the cutting keep straight on ↑. Keep going ↑ until you reach the second black and white Ayot Greenway marker, then turn left ← downhill on the track (bridleway). Continue ↑ to the bottom of the field and a T-junction of tracks. Here turn right → and keep along the track (Lea Valley Walk) as it becomes a grassy path with a hedge to your left. After a waymark sign, the path narrows: at one point it divides but both lead to the same gate ↑. Go through the metal kissing gate into a long meadow and follow the path along the fence, keeping near the river, to the left of the telegraph poles, until reaching another kissing gate ↑.

Go through the gate and continue along the left hand side of the field, then follow the path as it bears away from the fence and heads for a signpost (or greyish looking pole) and a small gap in the wooden fence across the field. Go through the gate here and turn right → along the path between two wooden fences. Turn left at the end ←, go down some steps and you will be back at the underpass. Turn left ← on to the track, go through the underpass, and C2 is 100 yds ahead.

You are now back at **Checkpoint C2** where you rejoin the 8 mile walkers.

Please show your Walker Reference number again at the Checkpoint.

Section 5. Homebound, Checkpoint C2 to Hammonds Farm (8 mile and 15 mile walkers)

Turn right → and follow the gravel track, Sheepcote lane, as it crosses the River Lea by a small bridge and then becomes a tarmac road ↑. Continue up the lane and cross over the Marford Road, taking due care.

Marshal Point M7 {TL 185

137}

Carry straight on ↑ into Dyke Lane, and continue uphill to the Information board at the entrance to the Devil’s Dyke on your left. Pass through the metal gate ↑ to enter the pre-Roman earthworks. Carry straight on into the deepening ditch, over a wooden boardwalk at one place. Follow the Dyke to a flight of wooden steps; go right here → Footpath 24, back up to the road and to **Marshal Point M8** {TL 183 133}

TAKE GREAT CARE both looking and listening for traffic as you emerge onto Dyke Lane once again.

Once on Dyke Lane, turn left ← to reach Beech Hyde Farm in a short distance and continue past it on Dyke Lane for 25 m, until you turn left ← onto Footpath 15 into a large field. Follow the field boundary with a hedge on your left and then (at a yellow waymark sign) continue on between hedges on each side.

Emerge onto Beech Hyde Lane opposite “Old Beech Hyde”. Taking due care, turn right → onto the lane and walk for 75 m until, as you come to the end of a fenced wooded garden and a telegraph pole, there is a footpath on the left ← (“Public Footpath 14, Lemsford 2 miles”). Take the path which leads towards a wood. Enter the wood ↑ by a waymark sign and follow the well defined path straight ahead ↑ towards Coleman Green Lane. Arrive at:

Checkpoint C4 {TL 189 125}

Again, please show your Walker Reference number at the Checkpoint.

100 m to the left you will find the John Bunyan pub, so named because the famous preacher and writer stayed at a cottage close by. Just the chimney stack of the cottage still remains.

Cross straight over the lane ↑ TAKING DUE CARE and ahead to a field gate. At the gate two footpaths diverge; take the right fork ↗ to follow the path with the hedge on your right. At the gap, go right ↗ along the edge of the field with the hedge on your right. Follow the footpath across the field to the edge of Titnol’s Wood. Do not enter it but turn right → keeping to the Hertfordshire Way.

After a stile, continue straight on ↑ with the wood to your left and a field on your right. Then follow the fence of the house on the left to a kissing gate where you turn right → onto Hammonds Lane.

Take due care on the lane which is generally quiet but does have some traffic.

Follow Hammonds Lane for around half a mile, which will take you past a junction with Tower Hill Lane on the right, then a gravel track on the left, and finally Hammond's Farm to your right. The 5 mile walkers rejoin you here.

Section 6. Final Homebound, Hammonds Farm to Scout Hut (5, 8, 15 and 20 routes).

Continue downhill from the farm, and where the lane curves to the right at a large log, look for the Hertfordshire Way branching off left ↖ onto a footpath. Follow the edge of the field, close to the hedge on your right towards a small wood.

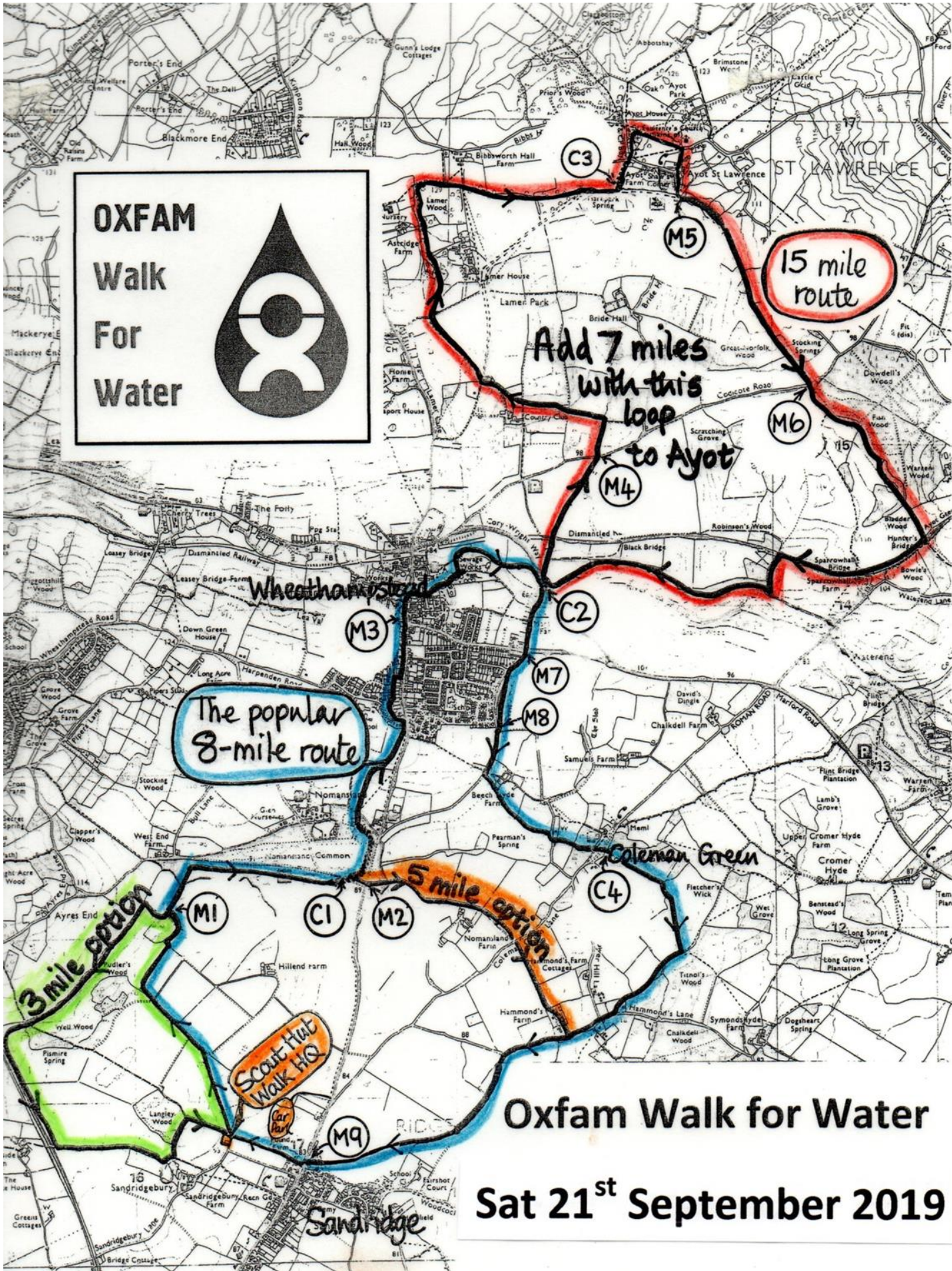
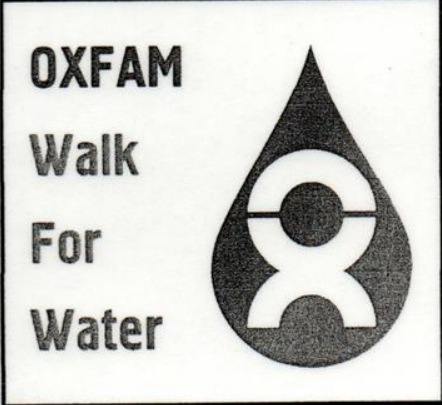
Continue straight on ↑ as the path enters the margin of the wood. After a little way the Hertfordshire Way emerges from the wood and turns left along a field margin ←. *The fenced area of field to your right is Heartwood Forest land, and young trees have been planted there.*

You will now see the houses of Sandridge coming into view. Carry straight on ↑ to Langley Grove. Cross the road with great care and carry straight over ↑ onto the footpath. After a few minutes, at a waymark post, take a small path which forks off to the left ↖ to cross a tarmac drive by a small zebra crossing (take care) and emerge into the grassy churchyard of St Leonards. The path forks, and keep to the right ↗ aiming for the lych gate arch at the front of the church. From the lych gate go straight on ↑ past the Queen's Head pub to the bus shelter at the main road and **Marshal Point M9** {TL 171 106}

Cross the main road, **WITH GREAT CARE**, and walk a few yards to the right → to the drive of Pound Farm. Go straight along the bridleway through Pound Farm ←, leaving the large barn to the left ↑. Follow the bridleway on gently uphill, past the Heartwood Forest welcome sign ↑ until the Scout Hut comes into sight again.

Congratulations on finishing your walk!

Go inside to register back and enjoy your tea!



Oxfam Walk for Water
Sat 21st September 2019