

Paths of Old

Walk 9 – Market Harborough to Old

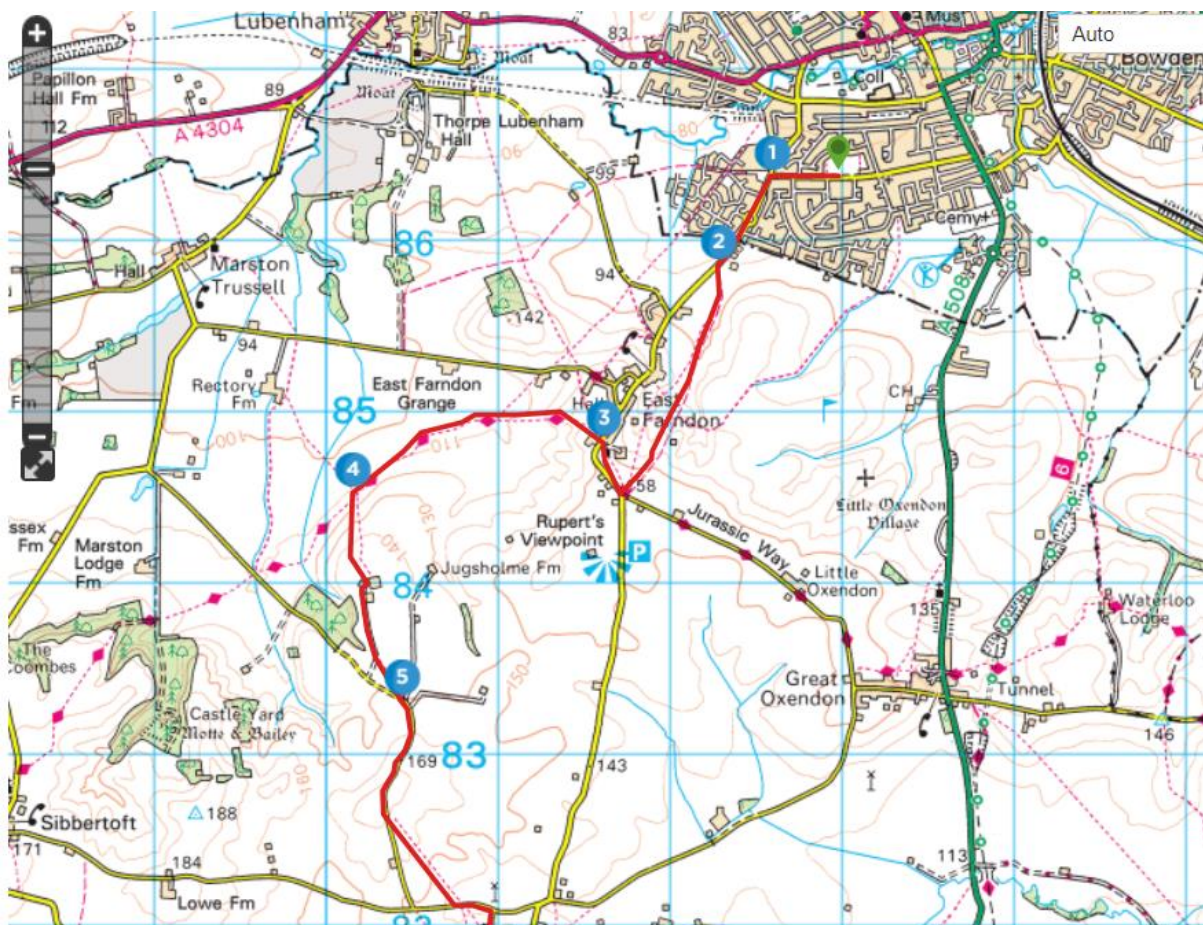
Distance:	16.25 miles
Grade:	Moderate - Strenuous
Start / Finish:	Market Harborough / The White Horse, Old
Map:	OS Explorer 223 Northampton & Market Harborough
Things to see:	Beautiful villages, superb views.
Summary:	<p>This is a longer route through some of the more picturesque local villages, starting in Market Harborough and ending in Old. It makes a great two-day “circuit” with Walk 10, a second Old to Harborough route which makes use of completely different paths.</p> <p>At around 16 miles it’s a fairly full day’s walking, but there’s nothing too difficult underfoot and the grading is more to reflect the distance than the difficulty of the terrain. Despite there being some busy sections, most notably on the Brampton Valley Way, there are some quiet paths too, and that means plenty of birds, animals, plants and butterflies to be seen. There’s even a small nature reserve as well.</p>

To keep the description to reasonable lengths, the following notes are not quite as detailed as for some other walks. They should be good enough to follow this route, though, and I intend to refine it in places in future, but for now I recommend taking the paper Ordnance Survey map (OS Explorer 223 Northampton & Market Harborough) with you as well.

Point	Description
1	<p>The walk starts wherever you park or alight the bus in Market Harborough. If travelling by car, a good place to park is opposite the Royalist pub on Western Avenue (postcode LE16 9PL).</p> <p>The first thing to do is make your way to Farndon Fields farm shop – from the parking on Western Avenue, with the pub and shops on your left walk to the end of the road. From here, take the road to East Farndon keeping to the pavement on the left-hand side of the road.</p>
2	<p>Shortly after the houses end on the left-hand side, take the footpath on the left. Cross two fields. The path then splits – ignore the one to the right and carry on ahead, soon tracking a hedge on your right. When the field opens up beside a telegraph pole that signals a crossroads of paths, keep ahead – uphill – and re-join the hedge, again with it on your right.</p>

	<p>Follow this until it joins a gravel track and continue until you reach the road. Turn right, and immediately right again into a field. There are two paths indicated – take the left-hand one, signed Jurassic Way, and cross the field. Go through two small wooden gates and into the churchyard. Follow the path round to the front of the church, go down the tarmac path and on to the road.</p>
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<p><i>Did You Know?</i></p>	<p><i>The Jurassic Way is a long-distance footpath that runs for approx. 90 miles between Stamford and Banbury. It broadly follows the outcrop of golden Jurassic Limestone that runs along the northern boundary of Northamptonshire and on into the Cotswolds and gives rise to the characteristic honey-coloured villages of the area.</i></p>
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<p>3</p>	<p>Cross a small triangle of grass, then head up the driveway of a house – Red Brick Cottage – keeping to the right-hand side of the drive. Go through a metal gate and cross a stile, then head for a 3-way fingerpost shortly ahead. There are great views across the valley from here.</p> <p>At the 3-way signpost turn sharp right and head for a stile in the corner of the field. The path then heads downhill, crosses a couple of stiles then goes ahead with the hedge on your left. Just before the end of this large field, go through a gap in the hedge and keep going beside the hedge with it now on your right.</p>
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When the hedge turns sharp right, head diagonally left over the field, cross a small plank bridge and keep ahead over the next field with the hedge on your right to a kissing gate.



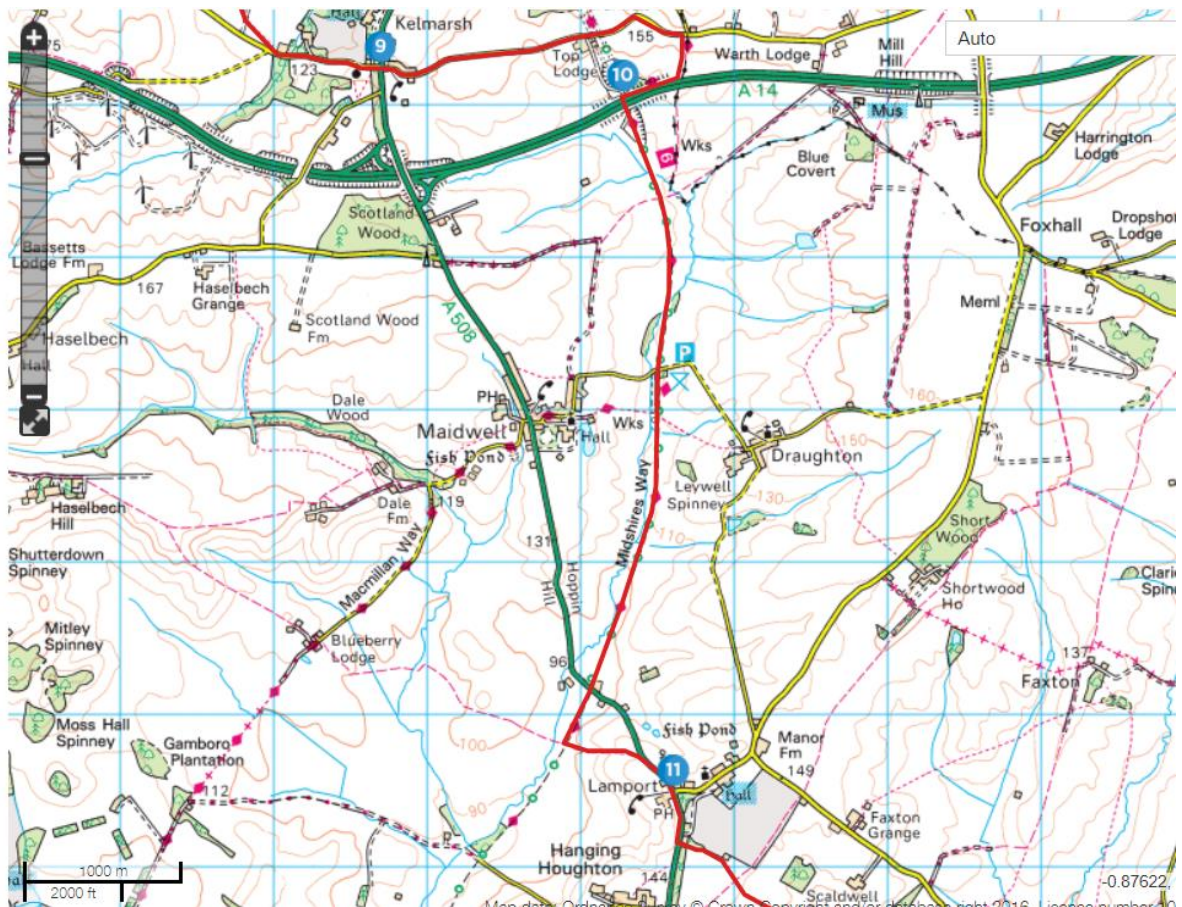
4 Keep ahead for a short way to a stile on your right. Here, turn LEFT and go diagonally up the hill towards the top right-hand corner (you can't see this from the bottom of the hill but can estimate where it should be). The path can be quite indistinct here. On reaching the corner, go through the gate and carry on beside the hedge to another gate where you exit on to a track by Twantry Farm. Carry on along the track until you cross a cattle grid, then bear slightly left over the field to the far corner where a stile exits on to the road.



5	Turn left along this quiet road, gaining height. After approx. 600 metres, at the brow of the hill, take the footpath on the left into a large field and follow in the direction indicated by the fingerpost. On reaching the hedge, go through a small gap with a broken stile and carry on in the same direction to reach a stile just to the left of a wide gate and exit on to the road. Turn left, then at the next junction take the road on the right into Clipston. Follow the road past the chapel and Peg's Lane on your right. Soon after, look out for the footpath sign on your left and follow the alley to exit on to Naseby Road. Turn left to reach The Green where there are benches ideal for a rest stop.
6	From The Green, head down hill on High Street, past a school and some thatched cottages on the right, to the church on the corner. Here, go right into Kelmarsh Road then left down a gravel drive beside a small white cottage just after Bassett Way. A short way down the drive, turn right on to a narrow path between a house and garage and follow this to a kissing gate.
7	From this gate there are two paths. Take the left-hand path (effectively straight ahead) and follow in a straight line through two fields. At the junction of paths, keep straight on through the hedge and cross the next field. Go over the stiles and plank bridge and keep ahead as the path aligns with a hedge on your right. Go uphill, cut through a gap in the hedge, then continue uphill gently tending away from the hedge (which is now on your left) to the brow of the hill.
8	Cross the stile at the brow of the hill and follow the path diagonally right across four fields to reach a track. Cross the track, go through a gap in the hedge and take the path diagonally across the next field to reach the road. Turn left and follow the road gently uphill to Kelmarsh passing the church on your right (there is a bench by the church porch if you fancy a rest) to reach a crossroads.
9	Carefully cross the main road and follow the lane for about 1¼ miles. On the way you pass a round brick air shaft for Kelmarsh tunnel which runs beneath these fields. When you reach a road junction, follow the footpath sign on the right into Midshires Covert (a good place for a break or picnic lunch). Keeping the hedge on your right, follow it to the corner, go through the gate on the right and follow the path downhill beside the A14 to reach the Brampton Valley Way.

<i>Did You Know?</i>	<i>Midshires Covert is a small, privately-owned wood planted in 2009 and which shows former agricultural land in the process of being re-wilded. The public are welcome to visit, walk, relax, use the picnic tables or even camp overnight. Please follow them on Facebook for more details.</i>
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10	If you want to look at the Kelmarsh tunnel, turn right here – the entrance is approx. 200 metres. Otherwise, turn left, go under the bridge and follow the Brampton Valley Way for approx. 2½ miles through the car park at Draughton Crossing and on to reach the main A508 at Lamport Crossing. This is a busy road, so cross carefully and continue for another ¼ mile to a crossroads of paths. Turn left, through a gate, and climb the hill with the hedge on your right to reach the A508 again. Cross to the far side and follow the pavement uphill to reach Lamport High Street on your left.
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11	Cross the A508 to the Lampion Swan pub and follow the pavement beside fields until you see a finger post on the far side of the road soon after the gates to Lampion Hall (signed for Scaldwell).
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	<p>Take this and follow the track until just after a small clump of tress on the right where the path goes off to the right across a field. Follow this, then go through the gap in the hedge ahead and follow a clear track as it goes downhill with the hedge on your left. After passing through a line of trees near the bottom of the hill, take the path diagonally right and follow this in a more-or-less straight line until you reach a stile. Go over the stile and follow the path to the road. Turn right and follow the road round to where the Green opens up to your left and you see a bench beside the phone box.</p>
12	<p>From the phone box, head gently downhill on School Lane. Cross the stile at the end and head diagonally downhill to a plank bridge and, shortly afterwards, a stile. Go diagonally left up the field to another stile that exits on to a gravel track. Turn right along the track and, ignoring a gate and track on your left, go ahead through the left-hand of two gates into a farmyard. Keep ahead and cross a stile beside another gate into a field.</p>



13	<p>From here, aim for the bottom left-hand corner of the field, go over two stiles and turn immediately right across a plank bridge. Head diagonally left towards a gap three-quarters of the way up the field. Go through this and continue uphill to the hedge. Keeping the hedge on your right go through a gate, continuing ahead until you reach a double stile on your right. Cross these and head diagonally left to cross another double stile. From here, cut through the old hedge line on your right and aim for a stile on the far side of the field in a wooden fence beneath trees (the stile is on the far side of a noticeable circular depression). Exit on to the road and turn right, following it into Old.</p>
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Remember: for the benefit of all please keep to the path, close all gates behind you and keep dogs on a lead, especially around livestock.