



Harrold, Sharnbrook and Felmersham

This figure-of-eight route visits four villages built in local stone & thatch, and explores the lake in Harrold-Odell Country Park

Essential Facts	
▪ Route distance:	14.0 km (8.8 miles)
▪ Approximate time:	3 hours 30 mins
▪ Optional shorter route:	8.5 km (5.3 miles)
▪ Approx. total ascent:	54 metres
▪ Start point Grid Ref:	SP 995 596
▪ GPS Ref:	SP 99511 59645
▪ Recommended O.S. Map:	Explorer 208
▪ Toughness Rating	The Chilterns 2

Please see the notes on Toughness Ratings at the end of this report

**Up For A
CHALLENGE ?**
 Take a Great Walk and **HELP**
 your favourite charity with
A Donation
An Individual Walk
A Team Effort

Full Info from the Great Walks web site

THE ROUTE

The walk starts from Sharnbrook, at a small car park opposite the Post Office at the junction of High Street and Church Lane.

From start point, **S**, head south-west along Church Lane, passing the church on your right, and take the second turning on the right into Lodge Road. At a T-junction, turn left into Yelnow Lane. Where the lane bends right, turn left into a wood on a path marked Ouse Valley Way. Leaving the wood, turn half left and follow a path diagonally across a field to join a bridleway. Reaching a lane, turn left. At a T-junction, cross the main road and turn right, on the footway. Opposite The Bell public house in Odell, turn left off the main road into Horsefair Lane, passing The Bell on the left, at **A** (the walk may be shortened here).

When Horsefair Lane becomes a bridleway, follow it through Harrold/Odell Country Park. Passing the visitor centre on the right, cross a main road and join a footpath opposite, through a graveyard. (A short detour left on the road reaches the historic Harrold Bridge.) Leaving the graveyard through a wooden gate continue ahead for about 20 metres to a crossroads. Turn right into Church Walk. Reaching the High Street, turn left, passing The Magpie public house on the right. Follow the High Street to the village green, with its eighteenth-century hexagonal 'Buttermarket', and circular 'Lock-up' or prison.

Continue past the green along the High Street. Immediately before The Oakley Arms public house, turn right into Brook Lane. Where the lane narrows to a footpath only, at **B**, turn right over a stile and cross a small field to a kissing gate, where four footpaths intersect. Follow the sign marked Dove Lane. Cross a track and enter a field. Cross diagonally, half right, to a gate in the far corner and turn right. After about 50 metres, turn left over a brook, and follow a path with a lake on the left and housing on the right. Emerging onto a road, turn right. At a footpath sign on the left-hand side of the road, cross the road and enter Harrold Country Park. Reaching the lakeside, follow the path left and continue around the lake. At the far end of the lake, reach a bridleway and turn left, briefly retracing the route up Horsefair Lane to The Bell, at **A**.

Pass The Bell, keeping right past a row of cottages and turn right at the bottom of the hill through the grounds of Odell Mill. Note the metal water wheel at the far end of the house. Cross the river on a footbridge and about 300 metres beyond the river, turn left onto a footpath. Follow the path beside a hedge and over several footbridges. Where the hedge turns right, keep straight on, pass through a gate and continue along the riverbank. Cross a footbridge and follow the path sharp right until it joins a road, at **C**. Turn left, and continue into Felmersham on the roadside verge. Keep left with the road and descend to Felmersham Bridge.

Cross the river and turn right along the riverbank on the far side of the bridge. Through a gate, follow the path left. Cross over a footbridge and continue right past the Wildlife Trust nature reserve on the left. Cross a ditch at the far end of the reserve and continue along the edge of a field. Where a path joins from the right over a footbridge, avoid a track to the right and strike half left across the corner of the field. Cross a ditch, at **D**, and continue through a gate on a fenced path. Pass a converted windmill on the left. On reaching the main road, turn left into Sharnbrook High Street, continue past the pub, The Swan With Two Nicks, and return to the car park, at **S**.



The Village Lockup



Felmersham Bridge

Refreshment

The Bell
Public House
Horsefair Lane, Odell
Tel: 01234 720254
Meals and bar snacks

The Magpie
Public House
54 High Street, Harrold
Tel: 01234 720071
Ales & food

The Muntjac
Public House
71 High Street, Harrold
Tel: 01234 721500
Meals and snacks

The Swan with Two
Nicks
Public House
High Street,
Sharnbrook,
Tel: 01234 781585
Food & ales

The Oakley Arms
Public House
98 High Street, Harrold
Tel: 01234 720002
Meals and bar snacks
available

Tea-zels
Visitor Centre Café
Harrold/Odell Country
Park, Harrold
Tel: 01234 721525
Refreshments and
meals



The Bell

LOCAL INFO

Paul McCartney is said to have visited Harrold in 1968. Being bored with the trip down the motorway, his entourage supposedly decided to take to the back roads, and picked out Harrold from the roadmap as having an interesting name. They visited the local pub and apparently performed 'Hey Jude' on the pub piano, more than a month before it was recorded, and two months before it was released.

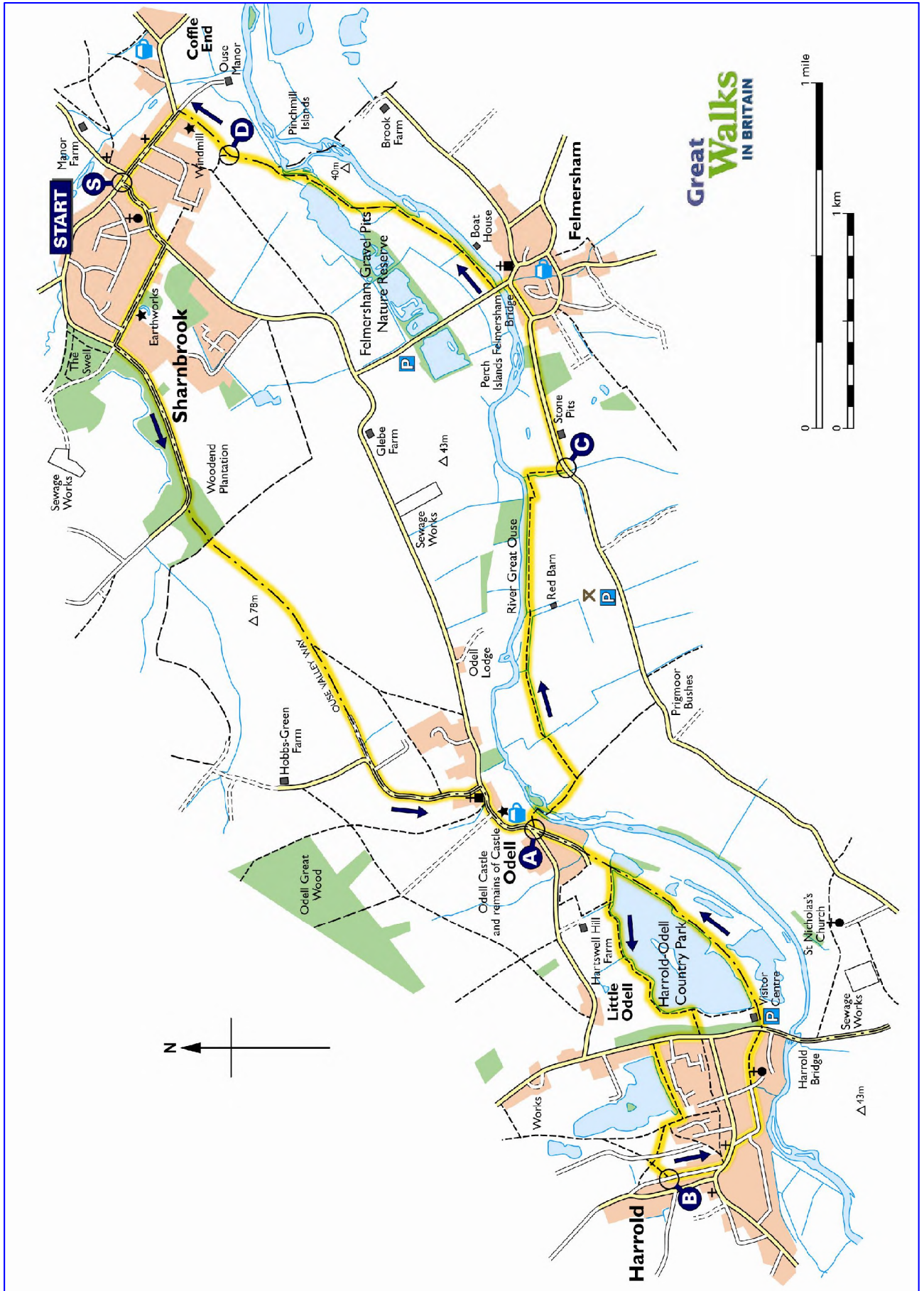
Harrold-Odell Country Park lies between the villages of Harrold and Odell. The park is an area of over 140 acres of water meadows and lakes adjacent to the River Great Ouse. It was built on the site of former sand and gravel workings. At the Harrold entrance, in Carlton Road, there is a visitor car park and a café.

Over 160 species of birds have been recorded on or around the 'Grebe' Lake. They include common species of geese and rarer visitors such as the bittern and little egret, as well as terns and kingfishers. Many wild flowers grow in the Nature Reserve, including bee, common-spotted, and marsh orchids.

A bridge has been documented at **Harrold** since 1136, when the village was known as Harewold. It has six arches over the river, a causeway, and nine more arches over the flood plain. There is also a raised causeway for pedestrians. The bridge is so long and narrow that it is controlled by traffic lights. An unusual post provides two push buttons at high and low levels so that pedestrians and equestrians can access them, as at a pedestrian crossing.

**HARROLD, SHARNBROOK & FELMERSHAM
G.P.S. WAYPOINTS**

WAYPOINT NAME	MAP REF		CO-ORDINATES		ELEVATION: Metres
HAR S	S	SP	99511	59645	55
HAR A	A	SP	96521	57700	45
HAR B	B	SP	94907	57123	44
HAR C	C	SP	98190	57591	43
HAR D	D	SP	99652	59169	44



MAP LEGEND					
	Great Walks route		Church with tower		Spot height - metres
	M6 Motorway		Church with spire		Information centre
	A23 Main road		Other place of worship		Parking
	B2116 Secondary road		Cathedral / Abbey		Public convenience
	Minor road		Building		Public house
	Other road		Built up area		Picnic site
	Track		Woodland		Camp site
	Footpath		Sand, shingle or mud		Major tourist feature
	Bridleway		Water feature		Other tourist feature
	National trail				
	Railway				

Safety First

Safety should always be your first priority in planning and undertaking a walk, whether on your own or leading a group. Please read these Safety First and Walking Our Routes notes.

Lead a group of other walkers only if you have leadership and navigational experience adequate for the 'worst case' conditions which may be encountered on the particular walk, bearing in mind the terrain, possible weather and navigational demands.

Weigh up the capabilities of your party, in terms of fitness and walking speed. Adjust your time expectations accordingly.

Ensure all your party are adequately clothed for the weather and conditions. Footwear is particularly important. Clothing must protect against cold, wet or strong sun according to the time of year.

Emergencies are quite rare, but it is essential to think ahead about what to do if someone in your party sustains an injury. Will you have a First Aid kit? Is there a qualified First Aider in the party? How could help be summoned in a serious eventuality?

Refreshment, particularly water, can be vital. Dehydration in hot summer conditions can be rapid, and frequent intake of fluids is essential.

On tougher walks it is a good idea to tell someone where you are planning to go – and when you expect to be back. Remember - mobile phones often lose reception in mountainous or isolated areas.

All our walks use legitimate routes: Public Rights of Way, Public Footpaths, Bridleways, Permissive Paths, Access Land, Byways and Roads.

Road walking calls for particular care. When there is no defined footpath or verge wide enough for safe walking it is usually best to walk on the right – facing oncoming traffic. An exception may be a tight bend, where walkers would be more visible on the left.

Occasionally you may find a public footpath blocked or unuseable. It is perfectly in order to take the shortest available diversion without damaging crops, perhaps around a field margin.

It is courteous to close gates after passing through, sometimes even if the gate was open when you arrived – particularly if it is obvious livestock may escape.

Mutual respect for farm animals is to be encouraged! Don't frighten or annoy them, but equally don't put your party members in danger or discomfort. You certainly wouldn't be the first walkers to go round the outside of a field of frisky bullocks.

Dogs should always be kept on a lead anywhere near farm animals, and under close supervision elsewhere in the countryside.

Walking Our Routes

Our walks are designed to be negotiated using the route directions in conjunction with the map section provided. We suggest walkers also take the Ordnance Survey Explorer or Outdoor Leisure map recommended for each walk.

On mountain, moorland and open heathland walks it is **ESSENTIAL** to have navigational expertise and tools, including the recommended Ordnance Survey map(s).

Take care to observe any cautions in the route description; exposed paths, areas liable to flooding etc.

Consider conditions before setting off. Will heavy rain have made a water meadow impassable? Will frost or snow make a path slippery?

When navigating the route look for clues to confirm you are in the right place. Are map features where you would expect on the ground? Are features mentioned in the text where expected? If you suspect you may have taken a wrong turn, take action sooner rather than later. It is better to re-trace to a known point rather than carry on regardless with the possibility of becoming increasingly confused.

All our routes are carefully checked before publication, but features can change on the ground – sometimes surprisingly quickly. Footpaths may be re-routed, buildings can appear or change significantly and these days pub names seem to change frequently.

The approximate time given for each walk is based on an average walking speed of 2.5 miles per hour (4 km/hour), plus an allowance for ascent, descent and any difficult terrain.

Total ascent is the approximate total ascent over the whole walk.

GPS users can enter in the waypoints provided in each of our walk reports. It is important to read our guide **Introducing GPS for Walkers**, available as a PDF file from the Great Walks in Britain web site.

Remember that GPS is a great navigational tool, but only one of those available to the navigator. Never dispense with conventional map and compass – and the training and skills to use them, especially on mountain, moorland or open heathland walks.

TOUGHNESS RATINGS

All our **Chilterns** routes can be undertaken by reasonably fit walkers able to utilise our map segments, together with the route guidance notes. Always consider recent and forecast weather.

Each walk has been allocated a **Toughness Rating**:

1. Easier walks with modest ascent and generally on well defined paths. There may be stiles or narrow gateways to negotiate.
2. Routes which are more demanding. They may include more ascent and possibly paths which are looser or more difficult underfoot.
3. More strenuous walks with some steep sections, higher paths or places which may be wet and boggy.
4. The most demanding walks in this edition. There may be prolonged steep ascents. Conditions may be challenging underfoot.

Toughness Ratings are allocated in the context of the terrain in the edition area. For example a walk rated as demanding in the Chilterns may be equivalent to an easier or moderate route in the Brecon Beacons.