

Elham, Tye Woods and Ottinge

Distance - 7 miles

Walk 5

This outing follows a section of the Elham Valley Way to Elham village, before curving S.W. via the umbrageous surroundings of Tye Wood. Boyke Lane and the tiny hamlet of Ottinge are visited towards the concluding part of the outing.

Start/car parking - HPB Sibton Park

It would be a great help to future walkers if you could record any inaccuracies you come across during this walk and report them to reception so that appropriate amendments can be made.

Thank you. Happy walking!

WALK

1 - Leave Sibton Park and turn left along the road. After 300m leave the road on the right at a footpath sign, cross the field diagonally right emerging onto a road. Cross the road to enter and walk along the driveway of 'Half Acre' and pass through a wide gate.

2 - Maintain the previous course along the edge of the field, descending towards a stile and footbridge 25m ahead. Negotiate these, turn left (ignore the stile) and join the Elham Valley Way making towards a stile keeping the field boundary on your right (Ignore a stile on the left. This will be utilized during the return section). The next landmark is a brick railway bridge. **(Years ago trains halted in a siding hereabouts, to be loaded with vegetables etc.)**

3 - At this point veer right, towards the architecturally pleasing and well tended gardens of Stonebridge Farm (waymark) rise to cross a stile and turn right along the road. A few paces further on turn left to enter a narrow trackway running alongside a house. Maintain an almost straight course along field edges, crossing an intervening road. When a second road is encountered leave the Elham Valley Way, turning left towards Elham village.

4 - Turn right into Pound Lane (church visit recommended - St. Mary's C13th), then cross the village Square (markets charter granted in 1251), leaving at the left-hand corner to arrive at the main road.

5 - Cross straight over passing to the left side of the Abbot's Fireside (an inn with Monastic and Napoleonic connections - the Duke of Wellington made head-quarters at the inn). At the top of the lane turn left, passing the exquisite Manor House Cottage - then swing right into the continuation of Cullen's Hill.

6 - When the road levels out turn left at a signpost set beside white railings and climb the steps to enter a field. Cross the field towards a kissing gate and continue across the next field, curving gradually to the left, to arrive at another stile. The route continues alongside Collard's Wood, which displays a carpet of bluebells in season.

7 - Cross the field aiming towards Tye Cottage, and hop over a stile, go straight ahead keeping the cottage on your left to enter Tye Wood - another wildflower wonderland in season. When leaving the wood (waymarker) walk directly into the field (via a gate and hug the right hand boundary through a second gate, and then briefly hug the left hand boundary crossing centre of the field). The path gradually curves left towards a stile at the field corner. Now descend diagonally right to another gate and a road - turn left.

8 - Reaching a junction turn left. Pass a house named Coppendale to walk the length of Boyke Lane, all the way to Ottinge. Close to the crossroads is Boyke Manor, constructed originally for the Lode family in the C15th. Also attendant thatched barn.

9 - Turn right along the main road, seeking a stile 50m on the left **(Note: this route has in the past been quite overgrown at this point finding mentioned stiles and footbridge impossible. On getting to the main road it**

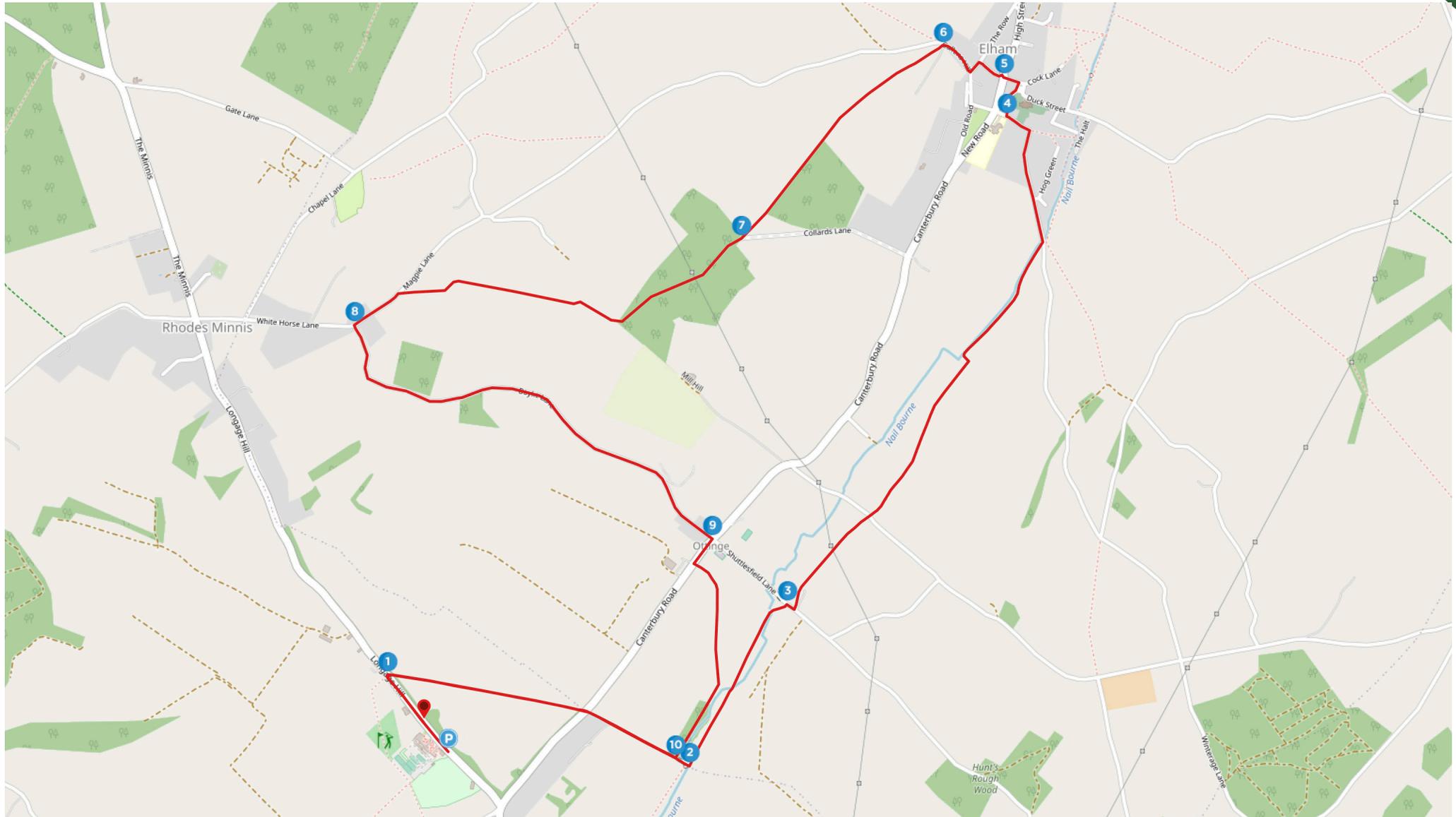
would in these circumstances be better to walk carefully along the road until a stile on your right as mentioned on outward journey is located). Cross the stile, keep to the left into the next field to cross diagonally to the right hand corner and over a small, brick arched footbridge. Follow the plantation boundary to the angle, then strike off diagonally left, across the field, making for another stile and footbridge, through a narrow track to the stile mentioned on the outward route.

10 - Turn right towards the stile and footbridge to retrace footsteps along the field edge etc. back to Sibton Park.

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