

## **STEPPING OUT – a series of walks near the East Leake Area.**

### **The Reservoirs walk**

This walk links the two largest reservoirs in the National Forest - Staunton Harold and Foremark. Both reservoirs have car parks, visitors' centres, children's playgrounds and sailing clubs.

The walk starts from the visitors' centre at Staunton Harold Reservoir and then goes through the Calke Abbey Estate and Scaddows Farm to Foremark Reservoir. From Foremark Reservoir the walk visits the village of Ticknal and goes through some of the new woods of the National Forest on its way back to Staunton Harold Reservoir.

This is a splendid whole day walk of about ten miles but because it is almost a figure of 8 it is very easy to do it in two halves. The village of Ticknal is at the centre of the figure of 8. This month I will describe the circular loop from Staunton Harold Reservoir to Ticknal and back and next month I will describe the other loop from Ticknal via Foremark Reservoir. So if you want a really good day out save this month's walk and complete the whole figure of 8 with next month's instalment.

To reach the car park at Staunton Harold Reservoir take the A453 past the airport. Turn right at Isley Walton (signpost Melbourne). Go through Melbourne keep left and exit Melbourne on the road going south. Just after you leave Melbourne look out for the road going right signpost Ticknal. Continue straight ahead, the entrance to Staunton Harold Reservoir is on the right just after this junction.

### **Staunton Harold Reservoir; Calke Abbey Estate; Ticknal circular**

**5½ miles allow 2½ to 3 hours**

Exit the car park at the lower right hand corner.

Join the metalled path at the sailing club and follow it alongside the reservoir for 1km to a gate onto Broadstone Lane.

Turn right, follow the road round to the left then turn left on a footpath down hill through the field to a bridge. Cross the bridge and head upwards through the next field to a stone wall. Turn left along the footpath, cross the drive to White Leys and then across another field, over a stile and through a gate in the wall on your right. This takes you into the estate of Calke Abbey. Turn left for a few yards and then turn right along the path downhill with the deer fence on your left.

Go through the gate at the bottom of the hill, cross the outflow from the pond and take the path that swings right along the south edge of the pond. Keep to the path along the edge of two ponds ignoring paths and steps up to the left. The first pond is called Mere Pond, then there is a gate leading to the path along Thatch House Pond. At the end of the second pond turn right and leave the third pond (Betty's Pond) on your left. At the path junction keep left and you will emerge into a wide open meadow with the main entrance drive going through it. Go up hill towards the entrance kiosk and go through a stile in the fence on your left about 100yds before the kiosk.

Take a short path through woodland and then over a stile in the wall into a field. Turn right along the path with the wall on your right to a stile.

In the next field bear left and follow the path in the same direction (west) through two more fields then bear right through another field (towards a double telegraph pole) to emerge onto the road which is the B5006 from Ticknal.

If you are doing the full 10 mile walk you cross the road and continue on towards Foremark Reservoir. This part of the walk via Foremark Reservoir and back to Ticknal will be described next month. But you can take a short cut back to your starting point by turning right along the road and walking into Ticknal village. At the T junction you turn right along the A514 and then in about 300m you turn left towards the village hall and car park. This is the road you come along (in the opposite direction) on the full walk from Foremark Reservoir.

Turn right along Chapel Street. Walk to the end of the lane and through a gap onto the village green.

Turn left near a seat onto a bridleway through a paddock. At the end of the paddock take the path

which branches right from the bridleway, cut the corner of the next field and then go up hill on a well marked track through Vee's wood. Cross a track into an opening and then continue on into the next section of the wood. On emerging from the wood there is a four-way junction and you take the substantial track (bridleway) to the right. This will bring you to the road in about 500m.

Cross the road and continue along the bridleway along the side of Nut Wood until you reach the buildings at St Brides. Here you turn right through the gate and follow this track until it becomes a road serving houses near Hemsley's Barn. You then emerge onto the road.

Turn left along the road and then after 200m turn right down Bog Lane. At the end of the lane go through the stile into Broadstone Holt and turn left along a good footpath which brings you back to the windmill at Staunton Harold Reservoir. Turn right, down into the car park.

Dennis Fox