

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

This month's walk is along the river Soar from Kegworth to Redhill with a return via Ratcliffe-on-Soar and Kingston-on-Soar. The circular walk is just under 5 miles with the option of a 1½ mile circular extension to the point where the River Soar joins the River Trent.

**Kegworth, River Soar, Redhill, Ratcliffe-on-Soar, Kingston-on-Soar, Kegworth.  
5 miles, Allow 2½ hours.**

The walk starts at Kegworth shallow lock which is on the right side of the road just before the Anchor Inn as you come into Kegworth along Station Rd. from the East Leake direction. There is a small car park alongside the lock.

From the bridge over the canal take the steps down to the lock and walk along the path with the lock on your right. A notice indicates that the lock is used to control potential flooding in the winter months. At other times both gates are left open.

Just after the lock, cross a footbridge over the river. You are now walking along the bank with the River Soar on your right.

You keep to the riverside walk for almost a mile until you see Ratcliffe-on-Soar on the opposite bank. At this point the River Soar wanders off to the right through the village of Ratcliffe. This meander is bypassed by the Ratcliffe Cut constructed in 1877 by James Brindley. The path along the cut goes under the much more recently constructed A453. Towards the end of the cut is the Ratcliffe Lock, after which the river comes back again from its meander through Ratcliffe. The lock drops the water level from that of the cut to that of the river as it continues on its way to join the Trent just a mile further downstream.

From Ratcliffe Lock you continue along the riverbank for another half mile until you arrive at the gate which takes you to Redhill Lock.

(The river itself swings to the left here and if you want to walk the extension you follow the path by the river rather than going through the gate into the area of the lock. The extension takes you to the junction of the Soar and the Trent. You walk along the Trent for a few hundred yards and then turn left along footpaths through the fields back to Redhill Lock.)

For the shorter walk go through the gate and then over the footbridge across the river to walk alongside Redhill lock. You are now in the leisure centre for caravans and boats of Redhill Marina.

Turn right across the bridge over the lock and follow the paved track to the right. Follow this track, keeping to the left of the boat builders and other industrial units. As the track swings right past Grumpy Joe's flooring sales you turn left along the access road.

About half a mile down this access road there is a road junction where the access road goes off to the left to join the A453 and the entrance to East Midlands Parkway station. Your route carries straight ahead under the A453 along the side of the river into the village of Ratcliffe-on-Soar. As you enter the village you swing left and then right at the road junction along the road to Kingston and Kegworth. About 200m along this road, just after the bungalows on the right, look out for a footpath sign on the left which will take you through a tunnel underneath the railway. On emerging from the tunnel the footpath divides in two you need the right hand fork which heads off to the left of the large pylon. You will reach a footbridge with a handrail over a ditch. You then carry on in the same direction and then walk alongside a series of much smaller electricity poles. As the track swings left you take the path signalled to the right across a bridge which brings you into the village of Kingston-on-Soar.

Turn left along the road to the village green and then bear right along the road towards Sutton Bonnington and immediately take the footpath on your right through a kissing gate. The path goes across the field to a stile just to the left of a row of trees. Go over the stile and alongside a concrete silo, through two metal gates and across the next field to the railway embankment. Go through the tunnel under the railway and continue across the field to a stile at a four-way path junction. Continue in

the same direction across the next field and you will come to a bridge which brings you out onto the road just across from your starting point at the Kegworth shallow lock.

Dennis Fox