

## STEPPING OUT

### A series of walks in the East Leake area.

This year I am describing walks that will take you along all the 27 rights of way in the parish of East Leake. Each footpath is given an official number and in any contact with the county or parish footpath authorities it is useful if you can indicate the footpath number.

So far in this series since January I have covered footpaths nos: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 19.

This month's walk takes you along footpaths 10, 10(a), 10(b) and 10(c). Originally this was just a single footpath (No 10) which was the first part of the direct footpath over the hill to Bunny. Footpath no 10 went as far as the parish boundary. It then continued as Costock footpath no 6 before crossing another parish boundary as it continued on towards Bunny. The building of the Stonebridge estate and more recently the new school has caused the footpath to be fragmented and diverted and that is the reason it is now four footpaths rather than just one.

#### **Footpaths 10, 10(a), 10(b) and 10(c)**

##### **Meadow Park to the parish boundary on Ash Lane**

##### **3½ miles return. Allow 1½ hours**

Footpath no 10 starts at the entrance to Meadow Park by the sculpture. It goes over the bridge then alongside the playing field and bowling green and through the car park to emerge onto Gotham Road. You turn left along Gotham Road and turn right into Stonebridge Drive. On reaching the **second** entrance to Carlton Cres on your left you turn into the crescent and footpath 10(a) goes between Nos 61 and 63. The footpath is well surfaced and goes alongside the boundary fence of Harry Carlton School. At the end of the footpath it joins the track of Sheep Plank Lane at a T junction. Turn left along Sheep Plank Lane and you will reach another T junction at Lantern Lane.

Almost immediately opposite footpath 10(b) is indicated by a fingerpost. You enter the field by a stile and head diagonally across the field to a gate with a stile alongside on the left. From here the path goes diagonally across the next field. You make for a gap in the hedge just to the left of the farm buildings of Taft Leys. There is a stile here and duckboards across the ditch. This brings you out onto the lane and immediately across is another stile and fingerpost directing you along footpath 10(c).

The first field is usually arable. When a field is cultivated the farmer has a duty to make the line of the path clear on the ground and reasonable for walkers. The path goes diagonally to the left where you will find a gap in the hedge and a stile as footpath 10(c) continues into the next field.. At the end of this field you cross a ditch and then climb the hill to a fingerpost on the hilltop to your right. It is to the left of the big trees on the skyline. The fingerpost directs you along the ridge until you come to a stile on

your left. Go over the stile turn right and then left as footpath 10(c) continues as a field-edge path around two sides of the field. This brings you to the track to Hill Top Farm. Turn right along the track and you reach the parish boundary just before you get to Eglantine Vineyard on your right.

If you want to continue along the footpath all the way to Bunny you take the footpath signalled by a fingerpost on your left. This takes you through the field behind the house. This is Costock footpath no 6 which after a short distance crosses the next parish boundary into Bunny. It goes through Bunny New Wood and down the hill to the Fairham Brook. On reaching the brook you can turn right towards

Bunny or left along a bridleway which eventually leads to Gotham

If on the other hand you continue along the track it will bring you to Ash Lane.

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