

Walk 1: Linton Water Tower and Hildersham

Type: Circular.
Distance: 9 miles.
Extra Care: No side footpath on Linton Back Road for $\frac{1}{4}$ mile.
Start: By the entrance to Abington Campsite on Church Lane (531492).

Follow the footpath signposted “Gt Abington $\frac{1}{2}$ ” which runs beside the campsite to the river. Cross the footbridge into the recreation ground.

Continue walking ahead with the hedgerow close to your right until you reach Great Abington Church.

Go through the gate and follow the track which leads to your left to Abington High Street.

Turn right into Abington High Street. Follow the road until you reach the T-junction with Pampisford Road.

Cross Pampisford Road and follow the footpath signposted “Gt Chesterford 4”. This footpath follows Chalky Road and will take you through what used to be the Land Settlement Association small-holdings. You will pass North Road and South Road to your right. When you leave Chalky Road behind you, keep walking uphill to the footpath which crosses your path at a T (527461).

At this point, turn to look at the view behind you over the gently rolling landscape of South Cambridgeshire. On a bearing of 68° is Linton Water Tower, the most prominent area landmark. The water tower is the main objective of our walk. From where you are standing, a short distance to the west is Abington Park Farm.

Follow the footpath easterly towards the wood $\frac{1}{3}$ mile ahead. Walk past the wood keeping it to your right.

Shortly after you leave the wood behind you, a hedgerow will cross your path. Turn left and, keeping the hedgerow to your right, walk for approximately 50 yards then turn right (537457) and follow the path keeping a thin belt of trees to your left. (The OS map may show the footpath to be on the other side of these trees.) You will now be walking along the line of electricity pylons.

Walk downhill, leaving the wood behind you, until you reach a track crossing your path at right-angles (543454).

Here you take the footpath on a bearing of 60° towards Linton. This footpath will take you towards the pylons. Shortly after you pass under the pylons you will need to pass through a hedgerow. The gap in the hedgerow is not always obvious but it is about 50 yards before the hedgerow meets another hedgerow from the left. Once through the hedgerow continue to walk downhill towards Linton.

You will pass Linton Zoo close to your right. Climb a stile into a field and walk across the field towards the water tower. On the far side of the field climb another stile and continue on the path ahead until you reach the main A1307.

Cross the A1307, turn right, and walk until you reach Linton High Street (558466). Walk along the High Street until you cross the river.

Once over the river, turn left into Symonds Lane. Do not follow Symonds Lane as it curves round to the left. Instead, head uphill into Hillway, and walk until you meet Linton Back Road.

Turn right into Back Road and walk until you have passed the cemetery on your left. Immediately after passing the cemetery, turn left and follow the bridleway signposted “Balsham $2\frac{1}{2}$ ” (564470). The path begins well but soon starts uphill, and can be very muddy in wet weather.

Climb up and up through overhanging hedgerows until, suddenly, you have Linton Water Tower (567479) before you.

Follow the bridleway westerly to your left. You will now have the water tower to your right.

Walk on and you will pass a wood close to your left. When you reach the end of the wood you have another magnificent view of south Cambridgeshire in front of you. Ahead, in the distance, you will see the hangers of the famous World War 2 airfield at Duxford, now a part of the Imperial War Museum.

Shortly after the wood the bridleway will turn left (563479). Follow it downhill until you rejoin Linton Back Road.

Turn right into Linton Back Road and follow it past the traffic derestriction signs. Be very careful because there are no footpaths or grass verges to walk on from this point.

Approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile from the derestriction signs take the footpath to your left signposted “Linton $\frac{3}{4}$ ” (556478). At the time of writing, this signpost was well hidden in a tree.

Follow the footpath: you will come to the River Granta, which you can either ford or cross by a footbridge.

When you have crossed the Granta, go through the gate. Walk following the footpath ahead of you and keeping the hedgerow to your right.

Walk until you reach a stile with a hedgerow facing you (554475). Climb over the stile and turn right. You will shortly pass under the line of electricity pylons. Keep following the footpath with the wood to your left. Soon after you leave the wood you will pass a sewage farm on your left — keep walking! You will have the river behind the hedgerow on your right. To your left and about a quarter of a mile away you will see a windmill, without its sails, which has been converted into a house.

When you reach the track which leads to the converted windmill, cross the track and keep following the path with the river to your right towards the village of Hildersham.

When you reach Hildersham, climb the stile (545484) and cross the field diagonally to the far left corner. Follow the path and cul-de-sac through houses to reach the road which runs through Hildersham.

Cross the road, turn right, and walk past the Pear Tree public house towards the river bridge.

Cross the bridge and turn left to follow the footpath signposted “Abington $\frac{3}{4}$ ” (545486), keeping the river on your left. The path leads you over a footbridge crossing the river.

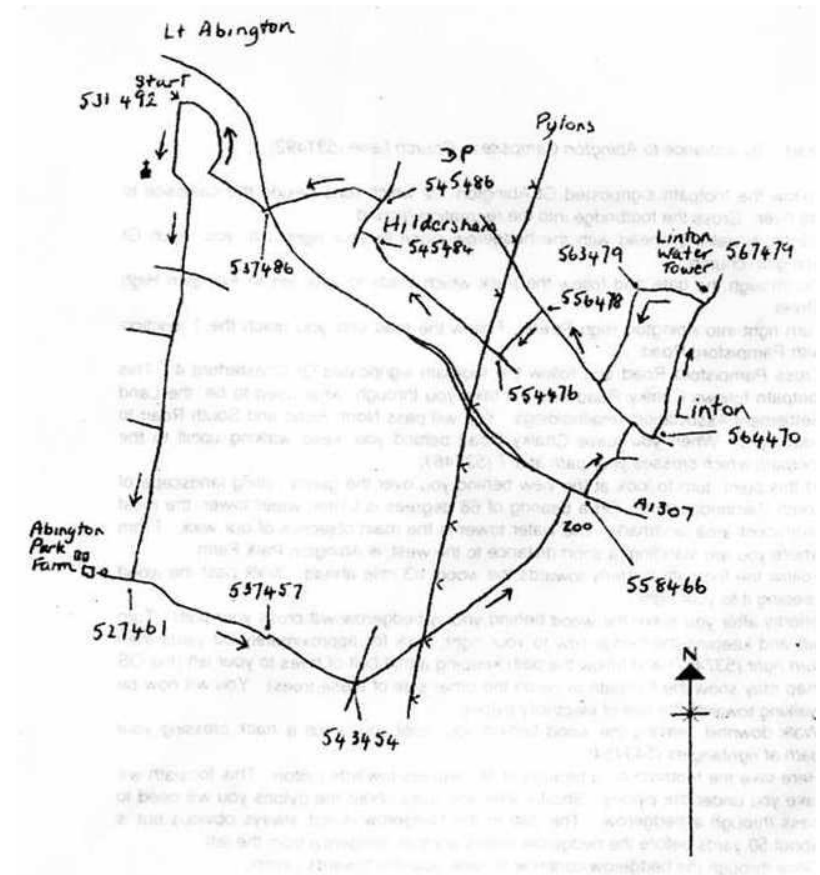
When you have crossed the river follow the way-marked path across three fields until you reach the main A1307 (537486).

Cross the A607 to take the footpath through the gates directly opposite. Walk on until you reach the road leading into Abington.

Turn right towards Abington. Walk until you reach the High Street.

Turn right and follow High Street past the Three Tuns public house and over the river until you reach the junction with Church Lane.

Follow Church Lane until you arrive at the campsite (531492).



(Not to scale.)