

## Woodford – June 2019 (Evening walk)

The evening walk for June was at Woodford village, the south side of the A14. There had been rain during the week but our evening walk promised blue skies and warm sun. A good number of 12 signed in for our evening walk.



The Dukes Arms, now shortened to The Dukes, was our starting point with ample parking in the rear of the pub and around the somewhat spacious village green. At the time of our walk, the local Women's Institute had adorned the village green with many knitted items, including the railings outside the church. It all looked very colourful.



The name Woodford is derived from Wode and Ford, meaning 'the wood by the ford'. It is a large village of two parts - one is beside the river Nene and the other is in the Nene valley. The Saint Mary the Virgin church is noted for its ghost of which there is a framed photograph taken in 1964, along with a mummified human hand which was discovered in 1867 during restoration work. The area around the village has a number of iron stone workings, now worked out, which when in production of iron ore in 1851 to 1886 was served by the now disused railway line running to Twywell for distribution.

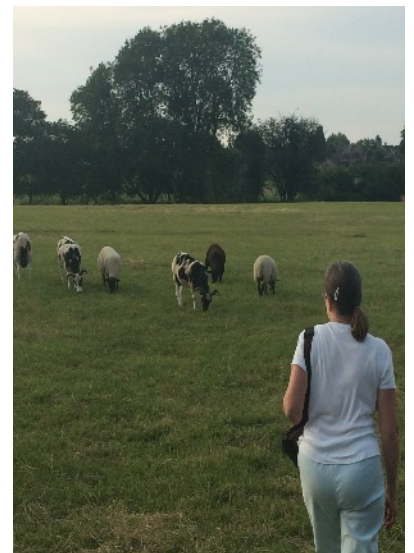


Leaving the village we walked downhill through some lovely Collyweston stone cottages. An easy walk across a grassy meadow led us to a hedge-lined path with shoulder high vegetation, much of which was stinging nettles. Recent rains had given the verbiage a boost and it was now well equipped to give us a bad time. After much bashing with sticks, the 100 yard corridor was beaten into submission. We got away lightly with relatively few stings considering our ordeal.



Emerging onto a concrete farm track the walking was easy for a few hundred yards. Now crossing over the disused railway track we reached Woodford Mill, famous for its tea shop, unfortunately closed at this time. Across from this was Willy Watts Marina with its moorings and day boat hire. The bridge over the river Nene is very narrow here with no footpath. While crossing, notice was taken of the scissor lock gates on the right, but now a quick turn to the left through a swing gate brought us safely to the track around the Kineswell Lake.

Our journey circumvented the water, twisting and turning, and finally brought us back to Woodford Mill. Retracing our way along the farm road, an alternative route to avoid the notorious stinging nettle alley was found using a path through a field of sheep.



The steep climb uphill back into the village wasn't so bad with the thought of a rewarding drink in The Dukes, where we were quickly served with refreshment and food. The beer garden at the rear is made up of a number of covered seating areas some giving privacy, others having a theme.

One wall was adorned with disused urinals filled with flowers, a form of hanging basket substitute. Another wall was adorned with brass place carrying the names of loyal customers now deceased as a memorial garden.



Sitting in the garden with our drinks and food was a very pleasant way to end the evening.