



MARATHON ROUTE
(Yellow)

26.3
Miles

FAIRLANDS VALLEY CHALLENGE – July 2021

Please show your Route Card to the officials at each check point.

Should you be forced to retire from the event, please do so at the next check point, where we will arrange for transport back to the start as soon as possible. If you become hopelessly lost or are in difficulty, you can contact the organisers on the emergency number: **07753 581541**.

Key: AH - ahead	TL - turn left	fpath - footpath	CP - checkpoint
L - left	TR - turn right	bway - bridleway	GR - grid reference
R - right	cont - continue	WP - waymarker post	X - cross
BL - bear left	junc - junction	opp - opposite	SLOT - same line of
BR - bear right	yds - yards	thru - through	travel
Imm - immediately	KG - Kissing Gate		

Please note that the tarmac cycleways are sometimes quite wide, but do not confuse them with roads.

GR 255 247

Section A - Marriotts School to Watton

At school gates TR down Telford Ave to end, ignoring side turnings. X over Faraday Rd and take RH main path thru wood, to L of bin. At gap TL on concrete path to X grass to L of Phoenix Nursery. Down road to end, pass concrete bollards and trees to main road. TL down cycle track passing bus shelter to Chells Way. **X with great care**. AH keeping L on cycle track up hill to reach small road. X road and AH up grassy track grassy track to new development where TR and take enclosed path and follow to footbridge. **(1 Mile)**

Over footbridge & cont AH to road thru black posts. **(Routes split here)**. TL down hill to junc where TR. Follow road past The Crown pub. Approx 150yds past pub and just after farm gate (*Lord's Farm*), to footpath signs. TL through gate taking permissive path between barn on left and field, through gate and turn right up hill. At top of hill by power poles cont SLOT to follow path downhill along LH field edge, hedge on L to reach FB. Cross FB, TL and follow path up hill to road. X road to path opp (TAKE CARE HERE). Follow path uphill thru wood, At gap in trees on left, go through gap on left up into field and follow path round to R, with hedge/trees on R, field on L to reach KG. Thru KG to X track by building on L (approx 25 yds).

Bear R up track between buildings passing 'CCL Woodworkers' on L. At end of buildings on R, & opp house on L, TR along concrete track & follow to road, where TL. At bottom of hill, where road bears left uphill, TR on public byway (Cotton Lane) & cont to track junc by double electricity pole & small building on L.

TR along stony track & follow as it wends it way uphill, bearing left at the top, then pass thru hedge gap & cont to road (sign Byway 34). Cont SLOT along road as it goes downhill & then uphill to road junc. TL & cont for approx ¾ mile downhill toward Watton. (Suggest crossing to RH side of road to face any oncoming traffic), X bridge over bypass. X to LH side of road & TL at FP sign (Mill Lane) down narrow path & cont AH ignoring side turnings to exit from wood. Straight AH down hill & BL at corner of fence. Follow track, fence on L, ignoring side turnings to emerge on tarmac path. TR to checkpoint 80 yds at Scout Hut.

Check Point 1, GR 300 194 - 5.35 miles (opening times 9:00 - 11:30)

Section B - Watton to Chapmore End

TR from Scout Hut on tarmac track thru concrete bollards (signed Bypass) & cont uphill on track. At fpath (signed Watton House) by large tree, TR on fpath & cont uphill thru woodland & up steps to emerge from trees. TR & follow edge of wood, then fence, then wood, ignoring all side paths, to emerge on road. TR on fpath over bridge & cont to mini roundabout. X road (**with great care**) to go thru KG opp. Go SLOT up field to further KG to pass thru churchyard. At church doors TL to road. X, TL and at small grass triangle TR up Perry Wood Lane, then TL on track (signed 1 Stapleford). At gap by Woodhall Estate sign, go thru & AH ½L thru young trees then field to enter woodland. Cont on fpath thru trees to emerge by WP in field. Cont SLOT over field to track where BL to pass wooden garages to road. X (**with great care**) to entrance of Woodhall Park. **(6.98 miles)**

Cont AH down drive, over bridge then TR to cont to R of buildings thru KG to junc. TR over bridge along track. Over further bridge then BR over grass to KG in fence. Thru & follow path over brow of hill & down to KG following river. Thru & follow path with bushes & river on R. When reaching wooden bridge on right, TL thru KG & cont uphill to reach KG. Thru & uphill thru woodland. When emerge from trees cont SLOT over open field. At WP cont AH over field to reach track. TR on track and ignoring all paths to L and R cont on track thru KG to reach road. **(8.57 miles)**

Imm TL on fpath up hill thru field to go thru gap in hedge to road. TR on road & at bottom of slope, 40yds past SLOW sign, TL on bway, trees on R. At edge of wood BR, keeping hedge on L, to enter enclosed path between gardens to emerge on road. TL to reach checkpoint by pond & Woodman Public House.

Check Point 2, GR 328 165 - 9.72 miles (opening times 9:30 to 12:30)

Section C - Chapmore End to Stapleford

Retrace steps along road & cont on road to L corner where cont AH on track (Byway 22) between hedges to reach open area where BR across field on RH track to edge of wood. cont on track, wood on R. At fpath junc BL, on Bridleway not Byway, between hedge & fence (passing large gap on R) to next junc where cont AH down gravel track, ignore path on L, then at Y junc take L path uphill, to reach road. TL and in 10 yards TR on fpath into trees by wooden barrier. TL & follow path round to R, past barrier & cont to L of small car park down to road by posts.

X to fpath opp & go up between fences, bearing L then in front of KG TR on enclosed path. Cont down, at Y junc take LH path, fence on L, then up to just before road where TR thru KG & cont with wood on L down hill to WP where TL thru gap. At track TR & cont round L bend to reach fpath on R, by wooden seat on L. Go down fpath to footbridge. X, thru small field & under railway bridge. TR & follow edge of field following fence/ hedge line, bearing R before river, ignoring KG on R, to go thru KG to reach road. **(11.84 miles)**

TR on road and at next junc TL along Barleycroft residential road to end, past House No 21, to path which turns L to go thru KG. AH over field to KG thru & under bridge. AH, river on L, to road where TL. Where road bends L, X into road on R (Do not go under bridge). Where road bears R, cont AH on track past barrier then barn to gate on L. Thru gap by gate & down enclosed path alongside River Bean (approx ½ mile) to corner by churchyard where BL & cont to reach green. TL out of churchyard up road to T junc. TR, X road (**with great care**).

Check point 3, GR 309 169 - 13.47 miles (Opening times 10:00 to 14:00)

Section D - Stapleford to Tewin

Take gravel track to L of Village Hall. AH up track under railway bridge, following between wooden fences thru trees, to exit into field. TL, follow edge of wood. L at corner & uphill. At top TR, bank/hedge on L, cont to end where TL, wood on R. At end of wood BR passing 'Wildlife Conservation Area' sign to X field to WP on R. X middle of field (215 degs) going downhill to trees at bottom. Follow track, bending L then R to T junc. where TR, follow track to road at corner. Follow road to L. On reaching wide track entrance on L (to Farm/stables) TR along bway (Sally Rainbows Dell) into edge of wood.

AH to reach main track junc. TR uphill cont SLOT on main track thru wood passing 2 cross tracks to reach barrier at 4 track junc (white topped red pole on L). **(18 mile route rejoins here)**. Thru TL, thru 2nd barrier. Follow main track which later descends to road at T junc by sign 'Tewin Hill/Queen Hoo'. X to road opp AH (approx ¼ mile). At junc BL to corner (Queen Hoo Hall). Where road turns R, TL on track (house on left) & follow as it passes between fields & enters wood.

Cont AH on main track ignoring tracks/paths to L or R. At WP on L follow to L. At next WP bear L, for approx 100 yds to where track continues onto field edge. Here TR down path which descends to road by sign Queen Hoo Hall. TR and follow road uphill to reach green and checkpoint.

Check Point 4, GR 273 147 - 17.95 miles (Opening times 10:30 to 15:30)

Section E - Tewin to Datchworth

Leave checkpoint & X road to go along track to L of Rose & Crown Public House.(Back Lane) Cont AH following main track to pass to L of pond to TL at junc. Downhill for approx 70yds to gap in hedge on R. TR on path & follow thru trees, ignore path on R, cont SLOT following path along R field edge, wood on R to KG. Thru & cont between fences, then thru KG & cont along backs of houses to go thru another KG. Cross grass to R of cream house to reach road.

TL on road to junc. X to road opp (White Horse Lane). AH past PH on L to go approx 80 yds to FP sign on R (Coltsfoot Lane),before speed de-restriction sign. TR, follow path to reach road. TL on road downhill to FP sign on R (Datchworth Green). AH thru trees to emerge at green. TL and L again at Cricket nets. AH 120yds to WP where TR to X field to gap in fence, then X field to reach road junc. TR and X road to TL into Village Hall car park.

Check Point 5, GR 265 184 - 20.95 miles (Opening times 11:00 to 16:30)

Section F - Datchworth to Finish

Return to road, TL from car park and imm TL on enclosed path. Through kissing gate, SLOT towards church, fence on right, playing field on left. Through gap in hedge. Cont up RH side of field and at corner TL across field towards Church. At tarmac path TR and follow edge of churchyard to road. TL and cont 0.5 miles on road, ignoring side turnings, to house on RH bend where cont AH onto track (bway 24). SLOT down and up track to just before road, where TR on grass verge. Before crematorium X road to Bway opp and cont to barrier at railway bridge. TL up narrow path to top, then TR and follow metal fence on R to corner at path junc. TR down path, under railway bridge and at corner of fence TL.

On grass verge, follow fence for approx 800yds with railway line on L to wooden fence at end. TR between houses then BL to road. Cont down road (Carisbrooke Close) to main road. X **(with great care)** and TL on FP, crossing Ashburnam Walk to reach Roebuck Gate. X road and continue SLOT on cycle track to football ground. X Monkswood Lane and cont on cycle track. At junc TL under underpass, then imm TR under further underpass, then imm TR up cycle track bearing L at top past car park.

Cont on main path until reaching cross paths with green post (on left). Bear slightly R over grass, aiming for gate in far corner passing to L of round copse of trees. Thru gate and cont under underpass. X cycle track & cont, bearing R, up narrow path into trees. Continue to lake.

TR along path, lake to left. At "Water Rescue" pillar, turn ½R up path into small car park. Exit top of car park, and TL. Stay on main path, passing barriers to "Fairlands Valley Park" sign, where keep R on path. Stay on path, passing brick building (Stevenage Cycle Hub), smaller lake and wooden bridge with 3 "no cycling" bollards on left. Continue on main path, to pass bin and bench on right. As path swings left, continue straight up slope to go thru gap in hedges in corner by bin to path. Do not go up steps opp. TR up path and at road TR to go thru school gates to finish.

FINISH, GR 255 247 - 26.30 miles WELL DONE!