



MARATHON ROUTE

**26.3**  
**Miles**

## FAIRLANDS VALLEY CHALLENGE – July 2023

Should you be forced to retire from the event, please do so at a 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 58151**.

You may wish to install OS Maps on your phone to use the GPX files.

You may wish to install What3Words on your phone to help you to the next checkpoint should you get lost.

Key:	AH – ahead	FP - footpath	CP – checkpoint
	L- left	bway – bridleway	GR – grid reference
	R – right	cont – continue	WP- waymarker post
	BL – bear left	junc – junction	X – cross
	BR – bear right	yds – yards	SLOT – same line of travel
	TL – turn left	imm – immediately	thru - through
	TR –turn right	KG – kissing gate	opp – opposite
	W3W- What3Words	encl - enclosed	

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

**Start: Marriotts School - GR 255244 - W3W . ///rings.cotton.park**

### Section A - Marriotts School to Watton

At school gates TR down Telford Ave to end, ignoring side turnings. X over Faraday R and enter woods to L of bin, and take right hand path thru wood. At end TL on concrete path, then AH to X grass in front of Phoenix Nursery. AH down road to pass concrete bollards and trees to cycle track by main road. TL down cycle track passing bus stop to road.(Chells Way) X with great care. AH opp uphill to reach small road. X road and AH up grassy track to just before road (Blackwell Close). TR and take enclosed path and follow to footbridge.

X footbridge and cont AH on FP to black posts at road. **(Routes split here)**

TR on road. TL at T junc (Tatlers Lane). TR by house No 15, with green garage doors, into small lane, signposted No Through Road and Public Footpath/Aston. Follow to end at tall metal gate. Go thru KG to L of tall gate then thru further 3 KGs and over footbridge.

Follow fenced path uphill. Thru gap, X lane and AH on encl path to road. X road and TR on path (Footpath 22, New Park Lane). Stay outside wooden fence. TL at corner. At end, TR thru gap and along path. At WP, AH on encl path to sports field. Pass to right of play area and on to path.  
**(Routes split here)**

TL downhill to junc where TR. Follow road past The Crown pub. Approx 150yds past pub and just after farm gate (Lord's Farm),(DO NOT GO THROUGH FARMYARD) to footpath signs. TL thru gate taking permissive path between barn on left and field, thru gate and TR uphill. 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 uphill to road. X road to path opp (TAKE CARE HERE). Follow path uphill thru wood to WP. 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 and pass to L of containers.

Bear R on 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.

TR along stony track & follow as it wends it way uphill, cont on to road (sign Byway 34). Bear R along road as it goes downhill & then uphill to road junc. TL & cont for approx  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile downhill towards Watton. (Suggest crossing to RH side of road to face any oncoming traffic), X bridge over bypass.

40m after bridge, X road and follow Byway sign (Mill Lane) down narrow path & cont AH ignoring side turnings to exit from wood. Straight AH downhill & 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 on L.

### **CHECKPOINT 1 - WATTON SCOUT HQ - 6.0 miles**

**GR 300194 - W3W: ///inch.zips.wins**

**OPEN 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 FP (signed Watton House) by large tree, TR on

FP & 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 FP over footbridge & cont to X road by mini roundabout (**with great care**). Go thru KG opp and 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 Stapleford 1). AH thru gap in fence. At gap by Woodhall Estate sign, go thru & AH ½L thru young trees then field to enter woodland. Cont on FP 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**) and thru entrance of Woodhall Park. (6.98 miles) 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 and immed 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 bear L to reach track. TR on track and ignoring all paths to L and R cont on track thru KG and on to reach road. (**8.57 miles**)

Imm TL on FP uphill 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.

## **CHECKPOINT 2 - CHAPMORE END - 10.0 miles**

**GR 328165 - W3W: ///hears.damage.behave**

**OPENING TIMES 9:30 TO 12:30**

### **Section C - Chapmore End to Stapleford**

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

X to FP opp & go up between fences, TL up to KG, 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 gap into woods & cont with wood on L downhill to WP where TL thru gap. At track TR & cont round L bend to

reach FP on R, by wooden seat and WP on L. TR down FP 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 AH 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. 80 yds, where road bends L, TR on rd (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 to village hall **(with great care)**.

### **CHECKPOINT 3 - STAPLEFORD VILLAGE HALL - 14.0 miles**

**GR 309169 - W3W: [///invite.ideal.kite](http://invite.ideal.kite)**

**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 woods. TL, follow edge of wood. TL 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, thru gap to WP on R. X middle of field 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 ("The Old Dairy") 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 red-topped 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 (hidden) WP BL, for approx 100 yds to where track continues out 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 BR to checkpoint.

### **CHECKPOINT 4 - TEWIN - 18.3 miles**

**GR 272147 - W3W: ///barn.filer.dated**

**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 and WP. 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 X track and AH thru KG & cont along backs of houses to go thru another KG. Cross grass area to R of cream house to reach road.

TL on road to junc. X to road opp (White Horse Lane). AH past pub (White Horse!) 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 TR at FP sign on R (Datchworth Green). AH thru trees to emerge at green. TL and L again at Cricket nets (signposted "Robbery Bottom Lane"). AH 120yds to WP where TR to X sports field to gap in fence, then X field to reach road junc. TR and X road to TL into Village Hall car park. TL at end of car park to checkpoint at Datchworth Scout Hut.

**Check Point 5 - DATCHWORTH 21.4 miles**

**GR 265184 - W3W: ///cycles.bond.giant**

**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. thru kissing gate, SLOT towards church, fence on right, playing field on left. thru gap in hedge. Cont up RH side of field and at corner TL up field towards Church. At tarmac path TR and follow edge of churchyard to road. TL.

Cont 0.5 miles on road, ignoring side turnings, to house on RH bend where cont AH onto track (bway 24, to Stevenage). 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 and Roebuck Gate. Cont 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 passing cross paths to bench with bin. Bear slightly R over grass, aiming for gate in far corner passing to L of round copse of trees. Thru gate and AH under underpass. X cycle track & cont, bearing R, up narrow path into trees. Cont 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 Cycling Hub), smaller lake and wooden bridge with 3 "No Cycling" bollards on left. Cont on main path, to pass bin and bench on right. As path swings L, cont AH up and across grass 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 255244 - 26.9 miles**

**WELL DONE**