

FAIRLANDS VALLEY CHALLENGE – July 2026

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 a GPX viewer app 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.

All distances are approximate.

This is the countryside. Some signs and WP may be hidden by overgrown undergrowth!

Please note that the GPX files and text descriptions have been updated for 2026. Please use the updates.

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

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

Some cycleways have a narrower footpath next to them for pedestrians. Others are shared cycle & pedestrian paths.

PLEASE BRING YOUR OWN MUG/BOTTLE. CUPS ARE NOT PROVIDED AT DRINK STATIONS

Start: Marriotts School - GR 255244 - W3W [///rings.cotton.park](https://www.what3words.com/rings.cotton.park)

This is the 26 mile route

Section A - Marriotts School to Watton

At school gates TR down Telford Ave to end. X over Faraday Rd 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. **NEW HERE!!** TR (on short section of cycle track) to pass defibrillator, and then TR down path. TL thru underpass and follow L. X Marlborough Road. AH and X Cromwell Road. Follow R. AH on shared path alongside fences. **Beware cycles.** At end, take 2nd L down hill, fence on L. BR thru underpass. Keep AH on lane. At junc, AH along Tatlers Lane.

Soon after LH bend, TR into small lane (signposted No Through Road and Public Footpath/Aston). Follow to tall metal gate at end. Go thru KG to L of tall gate then AH 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 FP22 (signed 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)**

At corner of play area fence, by concrete bin, cont AH on encl path (signed footpath 22) thru barrier to road. Cont SLOT, onto encl FP, and AH to road. TR to road junc. X and take Stringers Lane opp. After approx 100m, imm after House 1A, TL into FP 24 (signed Sacombe Corner Wood), then thru barrier, down to exit into field. Cont SLOT, then down to WP in far corner. Cont AH and at next WP bear R uphill. Cont past gardens to reach road.

TL and cont on road. In 600m (30m after "Waterbridge" on L) TL downhill. At T junc TR **on busy road** and cont on road 1 mile to X bridge over bypass.

40m after bridge, X road and at bridleway sign (Mill Lane) go down narrow path & cont AH ignoring side turnings to exit from wood. Straight AH downhill & BL at path junc. Follow track between trees and on to emerge on road. TR, and 50m TL thru small car park to Scout Hut.

CHECKPOINT 1 - WATTON SCOUT HQ - 5.4 miles

TOILETS AVAILABLE IN THE SCOUT HQ

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

OPEN 9:00 - 11:30

Section B Watton to Chapmore End

TR from Scout Hut on tarmac road thru concrete bollards (signed Bypass) & AH uphill on track. Just before (hidden) FP sign (signed Watton House) by large oak tree, TR on path BEFORE oak tree. In 25m, TL up thru gap. In 5m, TR on encl path. Now on middle of 3 paths. Pass 2 WP then uphill thru woodland & up steps to emerge from trees. TR & AH on path to emerge on road. TR on FP, over footbridge & cont to X road to war memorial(with great care). TL and then R to go thru KG and up field thru further KG to pass thru churchyard. At church doors TL to road. X, TL and then TR up Perrywood Lane. TL on track (signed Stapleford 1). AH thru gap in fence on encl path. At gap by Woodhall Estate sign, go thru & AH ½L thru trees then X field to enter woodland. Cont on FP thru trees to emerge by WP in to field. Cont AH over field to track where BL to pass wooden garages to road.

X (**WITH GREAT CARE**) and thru entrance of Woodhall Park. 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. Cont up track for 1km. Thru KG. AH and on down to road junc.

Imm TL on FP uphill (signed Stoneyhills) thru field towards house, to go thru gap in hedge to road. TR on road 150m, at bottom of dip, TL on Bridleway 2 (signed Waterford Heath), trees on R. At corner, by bench, thru gap, and AH hedge on L. Enter encl path at WP between gardens to emerge on road. TL to reach CP by pond after Woodman Public House.

CHECKPOINT 2 - CHAPMORE END - 9.5 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. Cont AH on track (Byway 22, signed Sacomb Road) between hedges to reach open area where AH keeping right to edge of wood. Cont on track, wood on R. Cont 80m past path junc at finger post (signed Sacomb Road). TL through gap and then R on path to next junc. Cont AH down steep gravel path. Cont AH in dip, then at Y junc at WP take L path uphill, to road. TL and in 25m 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 post.

X to path opp & go up between fences. TL up to KG, then in front of KG TR on encl path. Cont down. At Y junc take LH path, fence on L, then up to just before road. TR

thru gap into Great Mole Wood. Take R-hand path downhill to WP where TL thru gap. At track TR & cont round L bend to WP by wooden seat. TR down FP to X footbridge. AH thru small field, under railway bridge and thru metal gate. TR & follow grass path bearing R before river. Thru KG and AH to go thru second KG to road.

TR on road and at next junc TL along Barleycroft residential road (finger post signed Stapleford) to end, to FP which turns R to go thru gap. AH X field to KG, thru gap & under bridge. AH, River Beane on L, to road. TL. 60m, where road bends L, TR on road (Do not go under bridge). Where road bears R, cont AH on track (FP 3, signed Stapleford) past gate then barn to gate on L. Thru gap by gate & down encl FP alongside River Beane (900m) 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 - 13.5 miles

TOILETS AVAILABLE IN THE VILLAGE HALL

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

OPENING TIMES 10:00 TO 13:30

Section D - Stapleford to Tewin

Take gravel track to L of Village Hall (FP6, signed Bramfield). AH up track and under railway bridge. AH between wooden fences and up to field. TL at corner & uphill. At hedges TR, bank/hedge on L. TL at WP, wood on R. At end of wood BR passing (hidden) 'Wildlife Conservation Area' sign to X field. Thru gap to WP on R. X field diagonally, going downhill to trees at bottom corner. Keep AH/L, bending L thru gap then TR to T junc. TR. Follow track to road at corner. AH on road. On reaching wide track entrance on L ("The Old Dairy") TR along bridleway (signed Sally Rainbow's Dell) into edge of wood.

AH to reach WP at main track junc. TR uphill. AH on main track thru wood, 1100m to reach and thru wooden barrier at 4 track junc (white red-topped pole on L). **(18 mile route rejoins here)**. TL thru 2nd barrier.

Follow main track which later descends to road. X to road opp. AH (signed Tewin Hill/Queen Hoo). In 500m, at junc, BL to corner (Queen Hoo Hall). TL on track (bridleway 40, signed Tewin) & follow as it passes between fields & enters wood.

Cont AH on main track. In 250m, at WP, keep L on encl path (NOT INTO FIELD). In 450m, at (hidden) WP on L, BL. At WP, just before field, TR down encl path which descends to road. TR up hill into village. BR at village green to CP.

CHECKPOINT 4 - TEWIN - 17.8 miles

GR 272147 - W3W: [///barn.filer.dated](#)

OPENING TIMES: 10:30 TO 14:30

Section E - Tewin to Datchworth

Leave CP & X road to go along track to L of Rose & Crown Public House (Back Lane). ATWP, keep L along encl path for 700m to pond on R. AH at track junc for 50m. Opp 2nd gap to sports field, TL on winding path into woods. TR at WP. Cont AH following path along R field edge and on to KG. Thru & cont between fences. X track and AH thru KG & AH along FP thru another KG. Cross grass area, cream house on L, to reach road.

TL at road to X-roads. X to road opp (White Horse Lane). AH to pass pub (The White Horse!) on L. AH for 80m to FP sign on R (signed Coltsfoot Lane), before speed de-restriction sign. TR, follow FP to reach road. **(50k loop coming in opposite direction!)** TL on road downhill. TR at 'Restricted Byway' sign on R (signed Datchworth Green) on encl path. AH thru trees to emerge at green. TL and L again at Cricket nets (signposted "Robbery Bottom Lane"). AH 120m to WP where TR thru gap.

X sports field to gap in fence. AH X field to road and then road junc. TR and X road into Village Hall car park. TL at end of car park to CP.

CHECKPOINT 5 - DATCHWORTH SCOUT HQ - 20.8 miles

TOILETS AVAILABLE IN THE SCOUT HQ

GR 265184 - W3W: [///cycles.bond.giant](https://www.bond.giantcycles.com)

OPENING TIMES 11:00 to 16:30

Section F - Datchworth to Finish

Return to road, TL from car park and imm TL on encl path. Thru KG, 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 to house on RH bend where cont AH onto track (bridleway 24, to Stevenage). SLOT down and up track to just before road, where TR on grass verge. Before crematorium, X road to bridleway 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 1100m 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. **Beware cycles.** AH to X Monkswood Lane at football ground, and cont AH on path. At junc TL thru underpass, then imm TR thru further underpass, then imm TR up cycle track **(beware cycles)** bearing L at top past car park.

Cont on main path **(beware cycles)** passing cross paths to 'log' bench with bin, at corner of new plantation (Fairlane Wood). **KEEP OFF THE NEW WILDFLOWER AREA ALONGSIDE THE TOP PATH.** Bear slightly R over grass, aiming for gate in far corner passing to L of copse of trees. Thru gate and AH thru underpass. X cycle track & cont, bearing R, up narrow path into trees. Cont to lake. TR along lake edge path. 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 (**Beware cycles**) and at road TR to then go thru school gates to finish.

Finish - 26.2 miles / 42.2 km

GR 255244 - [///rings.cotton.park](http://rings.cotton.park)

WELL DONE!