

Drinkstone Footpaths (see the map above)



Drinkstone is reputed to have approx. 17km/10.5 miles of footpaths, mostly quite well maintained. Parishioners were asked to walk chosen paths and report back. Their views are personal and subjective; not scientific but faithfully echoing the experiences found during footpath walks. Lengths of walks are approximate and measured only within the parish boundary.

Included is a map of the footpaths with numbering taken from the definitive map. The numbering system is historical and charmingly eccentric.

Footpath 1 - starts at footpath 14. This footpath is rather short, running on the south side of a fenced, well maintained paddock. A quick study of the definitive map clearly shows that this footpath once ran across Garden House Farm land to the parish boundary. 0.34km/0.21m

Footpath 2 - runs up through the churchyard, becoming a field edge path. Features - iron kissing gate, seasonal pond surrounded by trees an uninterrupted view of

Drinkstone Mills and Woolpit Business Park. There are some mature hedges and trees on the south side after its junction with footpath 3. The footpath then runs east, joining footpath 18 for while, then running to the parish boundary with Woolpit. 1.2km/0.75m



Footpath 3 - this follows field edges, starting from behind Monks Hoot. There are mature hedges and trees on the west side. There are extensive views to the east and north. 0.53km/0.33m

Footpath 4 - one of the longest paths in the parish. It runs from Rattlesden Road, passing at first between two close-boarded fences between houses. The path then opens up, with pleasant views to paddocks on the right and left. It then crosses a footbridge over a ditch and runs through a copse, continuing along Gedding Road for a short distance before running along past Hall Farm Barns. Hedges have been removed, making this a rather bleak walk in the winter. However, the fine views both left and right make up for this. The path is wide and used by agricultural traffic. At Buck's Wood, the track turns to the left, continuing on to Gedding Road. The footpath turns right,

following well maintained hedges. It continues to the parish boundary just before Smallwood Farm on the unclassified Felsham to Hessett road. 3.62km/2.25m



Footpath 5- runs from Home Farm up to Park Road. Unusually for Drinkstone, it is accessed by a stile, as there are usually sheep in the field. The path runs uphill, with very attractive views of the Church, Old Rectory and Home Farm to the rear. The footpath crosses Park Road, then continues on to cross the parish boundary, finishing at Hessett Church. 1.31km/0.81m

Footpath 6 - runs from opposite Chapel Lane, following a stream. There are hedges and mature trees, with fine views of the rolling countryside in this part of the parish. Footpath 6 ends at its junction with Footpath 7. 0.56km/0.35m



Footpath 7 - this path runs uphill between two arable fields. There is a hedge with spaced trees on the north side.

There are fine views of the rolling countryside. The path runs to Hill Farm Lane, turning right and continuing on to meet Footpath 8 (Deadman's Lane) to the left of Burts Farm. 0.62km/0.38m



Footpath 8 - this is a continuation of a footpath from Rattlesden, reputed to follow an old Roman road which possibly connected with footpath 18. There is a fine mature oak but, sadly, most hedges and trees have been removed. Footpath 8 turns left at a small stream with a footbridge, joining up with footpath 7 near a large pond. On old maps, it is known as Wash Lane. 1.59km/0.99m

Footpath 9 - starts at the junction of footpaths 14 and 15, behind Lane End Cottage. It can only be described as bleak, since all the hedges and trees have been removed. There is a large pond surrounded by trees to the south side. Footpath 9 makes a left turn, joining up with footpath 8 near Hill Farm. 0.94km/0.58m

Footpath 10 - starts from Rattlesden Road, at the end of The Drift. The path is a narrow single path between Gregorys' field on the northern side and an overgrown hedge on the southern side, with a ditch just beyond the hedge. The undergrowth is encroaching on

to the grass verge, narrowing the path. This path does get very muddy when wet. A number of saplings are growing on the fence side of the path which will cause a problem as they get larger if not cut back. 0.43km/0.27m



Footpath 11 - runs from Cross Street to a footbridge over a small stream, where it joins with footpath 8. The initial section is closely fenced to the legal minimum of 1 metre between houses. This section is often very muddy; the footpath officer and team have recently put down wood chippings, improving the safety and pleasure of walking this section. On the eastern side of this path is possibly the only veteran oak tree in the parish. There is a panoramic view to NE and SE, to include Woolpit church spire, Hill Farm, open fields with trees and views to distant woods to the East. There is a fine view to the west across the valley of the little stream that runs from Chapel Lane. There is also a view towards the Village Hall and Rookery Farm, with a copse on the west side. Once at the bottom of the stream valley, the path becomes part of footpath 8, continuing through a small copse near Marsh Green Cottage. 0.64km/0.4m



Footpath 12 - runs north from Cross Street, along a (dry) stream bed with bridge. It crosses The Cricket, a playing field belonging to the parish. It then runs down Cherry Tree Rise. 0.23km/0.14m

Footpath 13 - again, a very short pathway linking Gedding Road to Chapel Lane. It runs between fenced gardens and can become very muddy in the winter. 0.13km/0.08m

Footpath 14 - runs from Cross Street for a short distance, bordered by well kept paddock hedges. It then turns right across a well-maintained bridge before running between paddocks. There is fine view to the north of fields, hedges and Woolpit church in the distance. The path is bordered by Julia's Wood to the right hand side, before it finishes at Cross Street. 0.56km/0.35m

Footpath 15 - The path which runs between a fence and a hedge is well maintained. The hedge has been cut, the undergrowth has been cut back and the path is wide enough for two people to walk side by side. This path is now known as Cora's Walk, after the late Cora Munford, Drinkstone's first footpath warden. This is a wide well maintained path with attractive open views on the right when walking north. 0.38km/0.24m



Footpath 16 - runs from Rattlesden Road near Hammond Hall. It is bordered by a dry stream bed. There are few hedges but some isolated trees. There are pleasant, open views to both sides. The path finishes on Gedding Road. 0.66km/0.41m

Footpath 17 - in general this footpath is one of the better footpaths to walk because it is not as well used as some of the others and rarely becomes a mud bath. The stretch from footpath 4 to the bridge/stile is very pleasant walking and for most of the way two can walk side by side. No obstacles to speak of. The ditch alongside, when cleared, is very deep. The part of the path which runs from the bridge into the horses' field is in reasonable condition; the stile presents some problems. It is a bit wobbly, and is positioned at the end of the bridge with a drop down to the Park Road field which might present a problem to the less nimble.

Once you have crossed an open stretch of field, you are then on a narrow path, bounded by a natural hedge/barbed wire/ditch on the right, and the boundary of the horses' field to the left. Mostly single file. Parts of the hedge could do with being cut back as they are growing across the footpath. Take care, it is very easy for

dogs to get through into the horses' side. The exit to Park Road is difficult to use, very stiff to open. 0.84km/0.52m

Footpath 18 - this path, also known as Deadman's Lane, runs a short distance from Burts Cottages to Woolpit Road. This is a true green lane, with hedges and trees on both sides. There is a rather fine isolated holly tree. Deadman's Lane is reported to follow an old Roman road. 0.56km/0.35m

Footpath 19 - not included on the numbered map as there is no access to it within the parish. It runs north from Beyton Road, just past Three Gables, with only a very short length in Drinkstone parish.

Footpath 20 - joins up with footpath 15, then runs a very short distance to the parish boundary near Garden House Farm. It is bounded by a mature hedge with trees. It then turns sharp left over a wooden footbridge, following the parish boundary, until it meets up with footpath 8. 0.49km/0.30m

Footpath 21 - runs from Rattlesden almost opposite The Chestnuts. It follows the parish boundary before joining footpath 22 at a left turn towards Gedding. There are few hedges or trees and the path is bordered by agricultural fields on both sides. 0.81km/0.50m

Footpath 22 - joins footpath 21 as described above. It is very short, soon crossing the parish boundary. 0.09km/0.05m

Footpath 23 - runs from Rattlesden Road through paddock land, crossing a track by means of a footbridge. It then skirts Garden House Farm before crossing the parish boundary. It then becomes Rattlesden footpath 17 near Pegg's Barn. 0.51km/0.32m

This footpath guide was compiled by Lindi Belfield and Lyn Hannant, with the help of Drinkstone parishioners. We are grateful for the kind sponsorship of Councillor Penny Otton, from her Locality Budget, and the Drinkstone Educational Charity, who both volunteered to cover the printing costs

**Suggested walk
Village Hall to Bucks
Wood and back.**

**Time: option A ca. 50 minutes, option B circa 75 minutes
Level: easy, and not too muddy in winter**

Turn right out of the village hall car park onto Gedding Road. Follow the road until you reach the junction with Park Road on your right. Continue along Park Road passing an attractively extended 19thC flint cottage on your left.

Take the footpath on your left, through a chain stile and carry on alongside a horse paddock. Stay on the path, cross the sleeper bridge, carry on along the field edge until you reach a farm track.

Turn right onto this track. As you walk, the landscape opens out into a wooded vista of old Suffolk rolling farmland. The track takes you alongside Bucks Wood on the left, one of the 3 county wildlife sites in the parish. Stay on the track until you reach Gedding Road. Here you have two options, marked A and B

For option A, turn left onto Gedding Road. After a while pick up the signed footpath on your right, follow it straight ahead along the field edges, cross a sleeper bridge, over a stile. Go diagonally across a small paddock until you reach a field gate and stile. Here the path emerges onto Rattlesden road

Turn left along the road and carry on until you reach Cross Street on the right. Go down Cross Street, cut diagonally across the playing field on the left. You will come out onto a modern housing estate, Cherry Tree rise, built on the site of the old village pub.

Turn left down the tarmac footpath, past attractive summer wild flower verges. You will emerge onto Gedding Road again. Turn right and continue back to the village hall.

For option B, turn right onto Gedding Road, continue along the road passing a pair of flint 19thC cottages on your right. After a short distance turn left onto a farm track. When you reach a concrete pad, continue straight on, picking up a field edge footpath.

At this point you will be at the highest point in the parish, and will have extensive views over the valley towards Rattlesden Mills, High Town Green and with the spire of Great Finborough church in the distance.

Continue on to Rattlesden road. Turn left, follow the road until you reach Cross Street and continue as for option A.

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