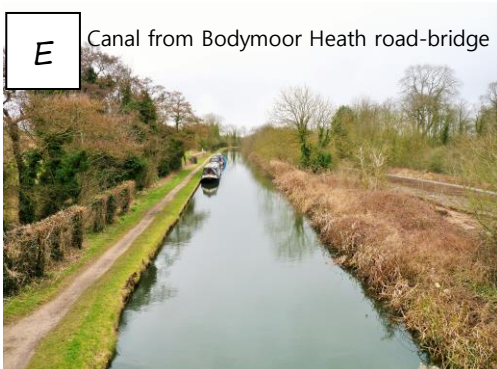
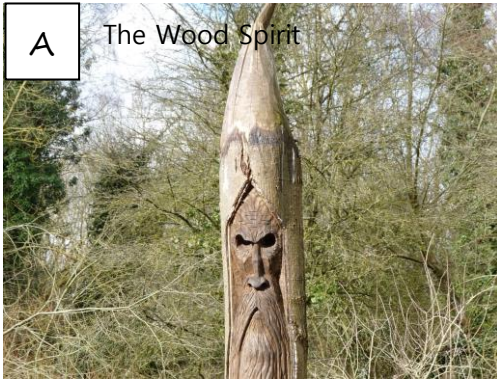


Middleton Lakes Circular Walk (11.8 km)



1. From the Visitor Centre follow the road round to the left, crossing over Echill's Wood Miniature Railway track. Just past the railway yard (about 40 m), turn left onto the Woodland Walk and follow the path (past the Wood Spirit & Bug Hotel) for about 0.5 km to Picnic Junction/Picnic Green.
2. Continue on the same path (it runs alongside the railway for about 30 m then crosses over the track just before Wrens railway tunnels) for about another 0.5 km until you reach a T-junction. Turn left and follow the wide path under the M42 motorway.
3. After about 100m, stay on the main path when it veers to the right, ignoring the smaller paths to the left and right. Rare breeds of sheep, goats and other farmyard animals from Broomey Croft Children's Farm can be seen to your left (Granary Tea Room by farm). Continue for about 600m where the path bends round to the left and opens out into the Broomey Croft picnic area. Go straight ahead, past the picnic tables and the entry barriers to your left then go diagonally left across the car park and follow the small path between the trees under the electric cables (camp site on your left). At the end of the path go through the kissing gate (by two other metal gates) and follow the wide track to your right.
4. Where the track bends round to the right, go straight ahead onto the Birmingham and Fazeley Canal towpath. Turn left and follow the canal path past the lock and on to Bodymoore Heath Bridge.
5. Come off the canal path at Bodymoore Heath Bridge, turning right to cross the bridge and continue along the road for about 0.5 km past the white houses on your right and past the sign for Lower Farm. PLEASE TAKE CARE ON THE ROAD.
6. At the metal gate (footpath marked with yellow sign & blue arrow) turn right and cross the field, keeping the hedge to your left. At the end of the field turn left (you can't go anywhere else!) and walk straight across the next field to the metal gate on the far side (Aston Villa training ground visible to right of gate).
7. Go through the gate, cross the road/track and through the gate opposite (slightly to the right) then continue along the narrow path through the trees. After 25m cross over the block paved section of a road and continue along the path, crossing another track after 40m. The Aston Villa building is to your right and, at the time of writing, gravel pits to your left are in the process of being filled in (to be returned to their pre-gravel extraction agricultural state). After approx 340m you will cross a footbridge and should see a bench to your left. Continue along this narrow path for a further 400m, crossing another footbridge along the way (wire fence to your right part way along) until you come to a wooden bridge.
8. Cross the bridge and the wide, muddy track beyond (watching out for landfill trucks) & take the narrow path through the trees opposite. After about 100m follow the path as it veers round to the left by a bench (bench is on your right) then turn immediately right (land is slightly more 'open' here) and follow the path into the wooded area. After about 50m you there will be a barbed wire fence to your left. Continue along the path for about 0.5km. Eventually it veers round to the right and downwards. You will see a lake/swamp to your left and the back of a sign for the Lakeside Wood Nature Reserve to your right. Here, the path becomes more overgrown and muddy. About 130m after the sign you will come to the main track into the Middleton RSPB site.
9. Turn left onto this main track and after about 150m you will see the buildings for Middleton Hall Craft Centre to your left and Middleton Hall itself just beyond them (go past the buildings and left through the car park to get to them). There are toilets, shops and a café here and, if you are interested in history, you might want to visit Middleton Hall (at a small cost), a Tudor Manor House which is run by volunteers. When you leave the Craft Centre, with the Hall behind you, turn

F Aston Villa training facility



G Middleton Hall craft centre



H RSPB Middleton Lakes



I View from SITA hide



J Lillies on Club Pool



right and cross back over the car park towards a gap in the trees. Cross the main track and go through the wooden gate opposite, following the short path through the trees, signposted 'Middleton Lakes'.

10. From here you emerge into an open area with a meadow to your right and car park to your left. (RSPB volunteers often on hand here for any info you might like to pick up). Continue along the path and through the wooden gate at the end of the field. Cross the wide track and go onto the boarded walk opposite. Here you'll have views and information boards about the RSPB's Heronry and see feeding stations set up for other smaller birds. At the end of the boarded walk turn left onto a wide track then right before the wooden gate along a path with several information boards (dogs must be kept on leads). At a junction with a signpost you can either go left (no dogs allowed) or straight on (dogs allowed).

11. These paths converge after about 100 m and eventually veer off to the right (sign posted Wetland Trail) down to the canal side at Fishers Mill Bridge. Cross the bridge and turn right, following the towpath with the canal on your right & the RSPB wetland area to your left.

12. Continue along canal path, past the metal bridge, ignoring the paths into the RSPB site. (**12a**) you could take a short detour to visit the secluded SITA hide overlooking one of the Water Park's quieter reserve areas. After about 1.5 km you will reach the recently built flood defences on the outer edge of the Water Park.

13. Go up the steps, cross over the wide path and go through the gate ahead. There are three bird hides along this stretch, the first having the unofficial name of 'Kingfisher Hide' because, from it, this beautiful, elusive little bird can sometimes be seen diving from the trees opposite.

14. Continue along the main path and turn left after the next gate along a small path. Follow the path, crossing over a small footbridge and ignoring the small path to your left then, after about 200m you will see a wooden bridge/platform with a mesh covering to your left. Cross over this bridge (there will be a signpost for Heron Pool and a life buoy to your left) then turn right and continue along path, past the sign for Kingfisher Pool.

15. Where the path divides, bear left towards the motorway. The path runs between Kingfisher and Gibson's Lakes where, in the summer months, you can see an array of colourful water lilies. After about 50m the path divides again (by a lifebuoy); turn right and continue for about another 100m until you come to a main track.

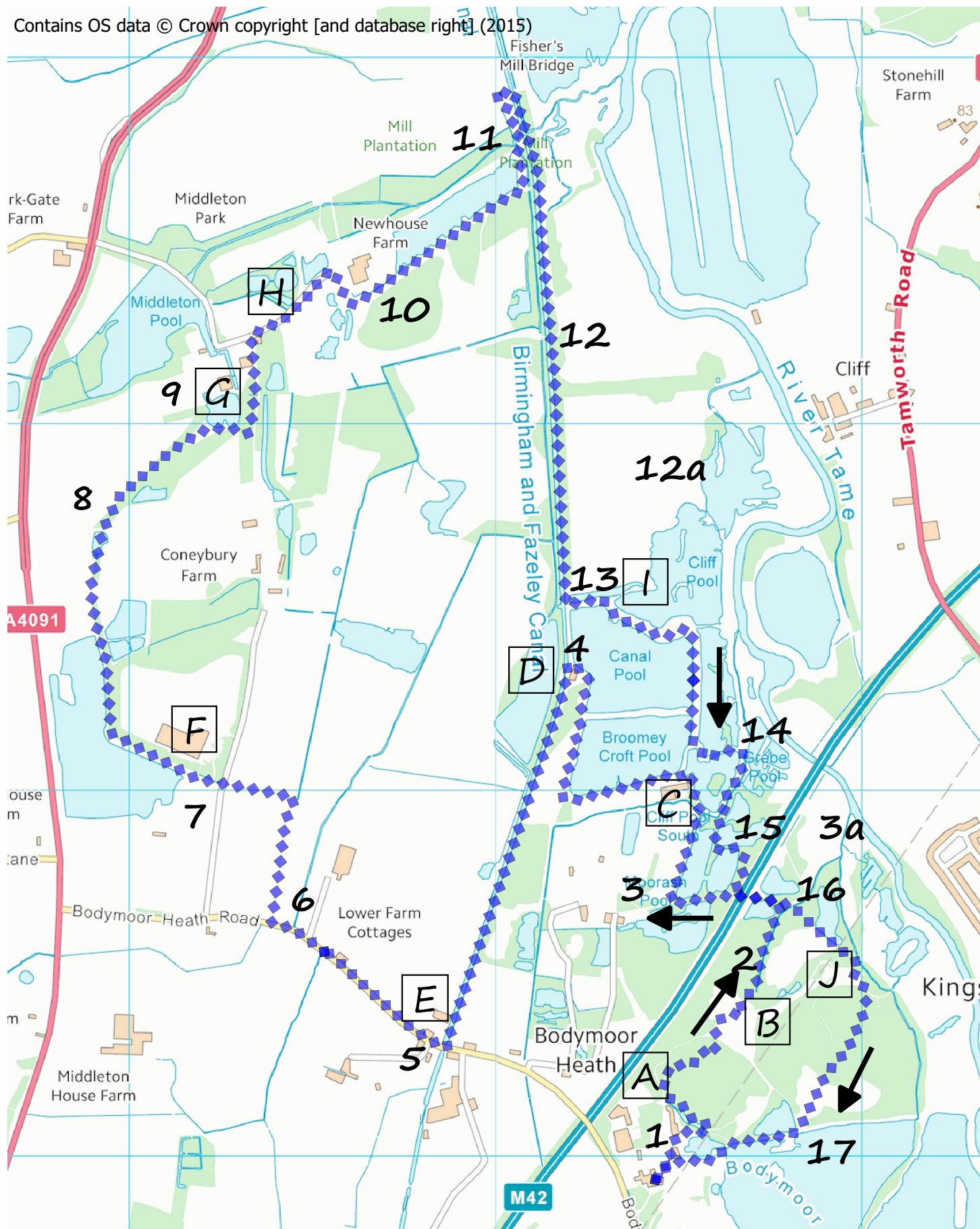
16. Turn left and go back under the M42 and continue straight ahead, keeping to the main track and ignoring the paths to the right and left (the main track goes over a drainage ditch). You will be walking alongside Club Pool (more water lilies!). At the end of the track turn right, then immediately left across the end of the Far Leys Car Park, past a toilet block and a map of the park on your left and onto the wide track by the wooden barrier to your left. About 20m after the barrier, where the path divides, veer right and follow the main path through a wooded area and out into a meadow.

17. Continue for about 0.4 km on this path until you reach a wide track alongside the large lake ahead (Bodmoor Heath Lake). Turn right onto this main track, veering left over a wooden bridge and then right, between the railway line and the Lakeview children's play area back to the Visitor Centre.

Enjoy! From the Friends of Kingsbury Water Park

To give feedback or for more information contact us:

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Ecological Consultants

Middleton Lakes Circular
(11.8 km)
March 2015