

Walk No 12: Edwalton & Sharphill Wood

Walk/Photos taken 11th & 19th August 2020

This route goes through parts of Edwalton that were not on Walk No 8.1, plus a bit of Gamston, and then goes to Sharphill Wood (part of Walk No 1). The walk is about 10km. The map below provides the general directions of this walk but there will be local maps, at a better scale, at appropriate points along the way.



The walk starts on Musters Road. Go up and turn left into Sherborne Road, right at Selby Road and left onto Boundary Road, which after about 20 yards enters Edwalton. At Melton Road, cross over to Valley Road.

As with Walk No 11 – along Leahurst and Dovedale Roads – Valley Road provides the opportunity to note the wide range of housing size and age in West Bridgford & Edwalton. Rushcliffe Borough Council's 'Edwalton Conservation Appraisal and Management Plan 2009' describes the conservation area as consisting of 'two distinct character areas:

- *The old village of Edwalton[and]*
- *High quality, low density Victorian, Edwardian and inter-war residential development along Melton Road ... and Valley Road characterised by large houses, extensive gardens and mature trees'.*

Building of these large houses for the families of affluent businessmen started soon after Edwalton Station opened in 1880 (Walk No 4).

Examples along the first part of Valley Road include houses with typically Edwardian features such as Tudor style timber cladding, mullioned windows with small upper panes and ornate brickwork detailing.



Some are later, including this Old English style thatched 'cottage' from the inter-war period.



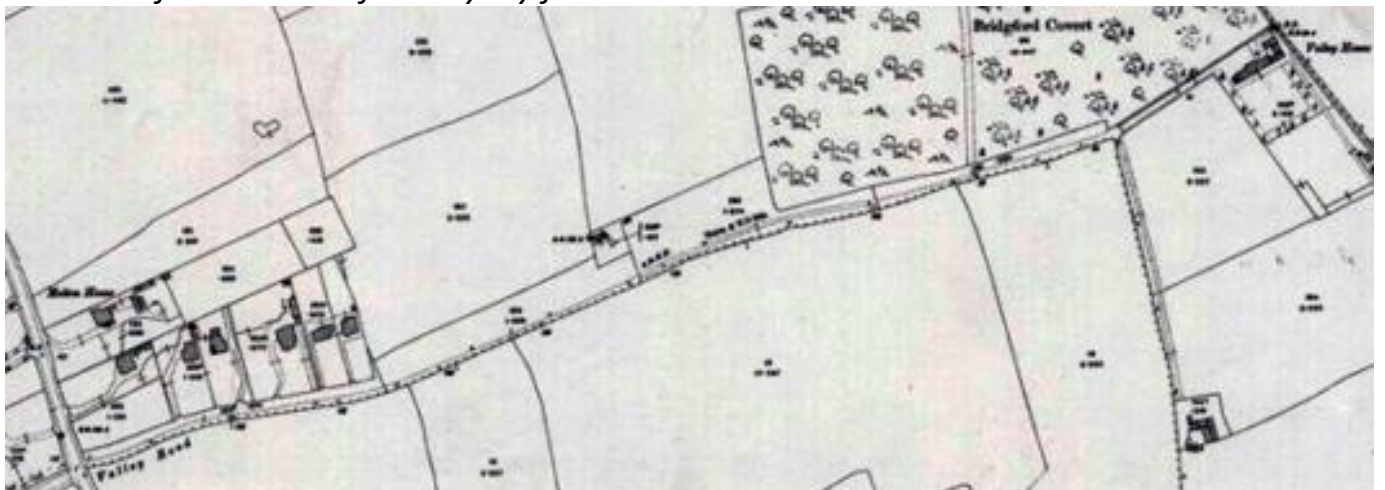
Some have been extended or rebuilt – the common element being size.



There were no houses here when the area was surveyed for a map in the 1880s – Valley Road did not exist.

By 1914, when the map below was published, Valley Road had 6 of these large properties. Also, at the far end, the lowest part of the area, next to Gamston Brook and a wooded area called Bridgford Covert, is a house named Valley House – perhaps the origin of the road name.

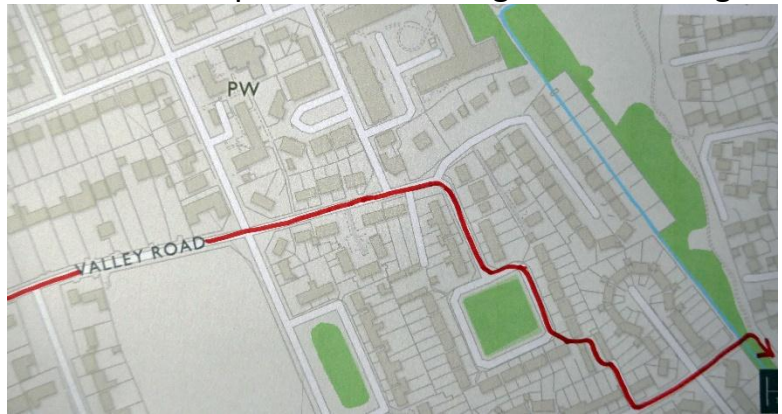
On the subject of origins, the word 'covert' originates from Old French *covert* (Modern French *couvert*) meaning hidden or covered and in English is mainly used similarly, as in secret, hidden, private, or stealthy. In the case of Bridgford Covert (and the nearby Meadow Covert) the meaning is probably '*a thicket in which game can hide*', and it may have been created for the purpose of hunting. A dictionary of hunting terms says covert is pronounced "cover" and is '*generally used to describe a wood but also a hedge, gorse, thicket or field where a fox may lay for shelter*'.



By 1950, most of the road had housing, with smaller properties as we move away from the Melton Road end and council properties towards the far end. Valley House is still shown but the wood (Bridgford Covert) has shrunk.



Today, Bridgford Covert is just a few trees at the end of Leahurst Road – the original wooded area is now mainly Hilton Crescent – housing, shops, a church and a residential care home. Valley House has been demolished and replaced with Grange Park housing. But Valley Road, and our walk, continues and, at its junction with Grange Park, turns right through an area of council housing (some still ‘social housing’) around a green square – Valley Gardens



At the far left hand corner go along the narrow alley which leads past boarded up garages through to Lutterell Way and turn left, cross Ridgeway and go along the path ahead, over the stream (Gamston Brook) and then turn right. About half way along, this path crosses from Edwalton into Gamston. Continue to Becksie, cross straight over and along the path ahead.





The path continues alongside the brook and then turns right and left, crossing a bridge over the brook.

The brook is now on the left and housing on the right.



Gaps in the trees to the left allow views of Edwalton Golf Course.



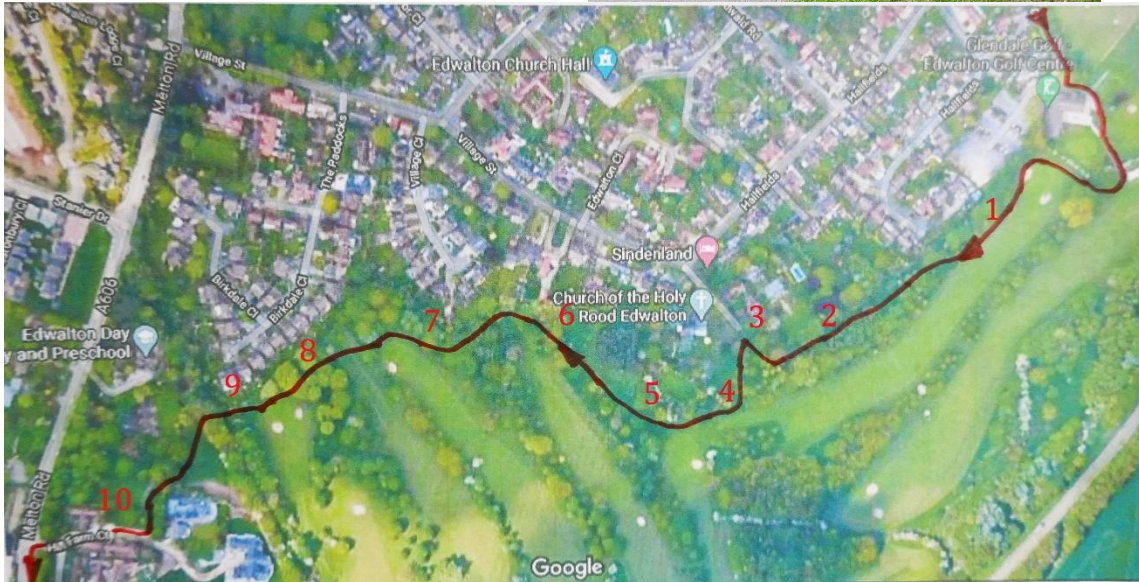
Continue to the end of the path (and back into Edwalton), go along Wellin Lane, pass Edwalton Primary School (on the right – with the Meadow Covert wood behind it) and then turn left along Lytham Drive and into the golf centre



Continue past the driving range, up to the club buildings and turn left to go towards the start of the course.



The 1st tee is on the left, but turn right, through the trees and then keep to the right hand edge of each tee or green passed and follow the path through the trees alongside the course. This route is a repeat of Walk 8.2, on the return from Tollerton.



At point 1 on the map, go along the path through the trees.

On the right, at point 2, is an interesting building, currently subject to a controversial planning application



The application is to extend and substantially modify the existing building, The Poplars, and a separate application is for a new dwelling alongside. There have been numerous objections, both from those living in neighbouring properties and from others, concerned about conservation issues, etc. The application and comments are worth a read – Rushcliffe Planning online: 20/01468/FUL and 20/01469/FUL

The architect of the project describes The Poplars as *'a large, two storey, flat roof dwelling built in an Art Deco style.... Constructed at some point between [1938 and 1952]'*. The description of the inside does not make it seem particularly practical or attractive. For example *'The current kitchen lacks any connection to the other three main reception rooms, all of which are scattered to the four corners of the building and have no relationship with each other'*.

Although the back (the view from the path) is rather attractive, the front is not so.

Proposal

Front

Rear



The decision target date was set at 19 August but no indication on-line of a decision at the time of writing.

Continue the walk along to Edwalton church (3) – perhaps go through the gate for a visit (see Walk 8.1 for info.) or turn sharp left and go around the outside of the church yard....



(4) keep to the edge, bear right

(5) straight ahead

(6) bear left



(7) bear right

(8) ahead

(9) over the old railway bridge

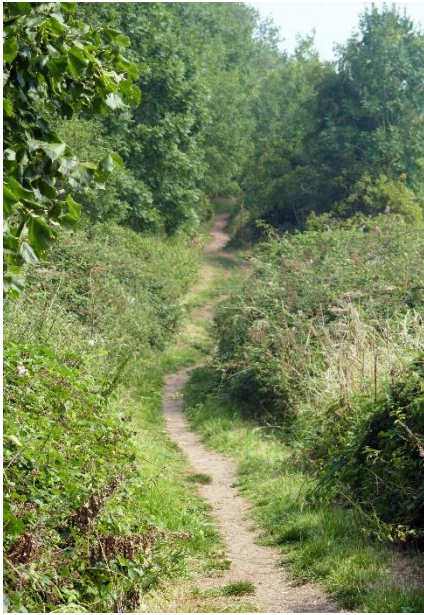


(10) go left and right up to Hill Farm Court

At Melton Road turn left and continue to the Edwalton Fields development on the right



At the far corner, go through the gap in the hedge and turn right up the footpath to Sharphill Wood.



As with Walk No 11, there may be rose hips to see and juicy blackberries to eat.

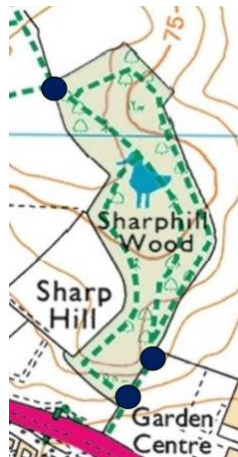


The Friends of Sharphill Wood website tells that the wood was not shown on early maps but the Sanderson map of 1835 shows a scattering of trees on 'Sharps Hill' with a couple of areas of woodland called 'New Covert' and 'Hill Covert' which suggests they were set aside for fox hunting.



Today, the wood is designated a Local Nature Reserve.

There are two entrances to the wood from the south and three routes, with many side paths, through it to get to the north exit.



The western route provides occasional views of the open fields.



The first part of the eastern route looks down over the new housing developments.





There is evidence of activity by people.....



...and by badgers.

Whichever route you choose ends at the exit



Go straight ahead, alongside the hedgerow on the right. At the end of the hedgerow, pause to take in the views....

Starting from the right (north)....



River Crescent and the new development alongside.



County Hall and Trent Bridge Cricket Ground – with Green’s Mill just visible to the right.



The City Centre



The Castle and Castle Meadow (HMRC) offices below



Queens Medical Centre



Nottingham University



Ratcliffe Power Station



Ruddington Church spire

Sharphill Wood and the fields around are, of course, a favorite area for dog walking, with the walkers meeting for a chat and the dogs (10 in this group) for a run-around.



However, the options are reducing. On my first visit planning this walk, I took the right hand diagonal path down the hill towards the top of Musters Road...



...but on my next visit (19th August) fences were being erected, and my path, admittedly not a Public Footpath, was closed!



So, straight down the hill and along Peveril Drive, right on Willow Road, right up Boundary Road and left into Musters Road – with another view of the city



Down Musters Road, stopping briefly to check up on the sheep at the junction with Sherborne Road – I understand she has been a little lame recently...but still able to move around keeping the lawn neat.

That's it folks – enjoy!

