

Jubilee Walks in the Hilltop Villages

Hawridge Common and Heath End

1 Start from the Rose and Crown. Turn right out of the car park onto the road and walk along the grass verge for a short distance. Cross the road to take the track on the left signed "Unsuitable for Motors". This is Hawridge Lane, a green lane (see overleaf) which can sometimes be muddy as you walk beneath a canopy of trees.

left follow this path which runs alongside the parish boundary with Chartridge. A stile by a gate leads to another meadow and straight ahead a kissing gate provides access to an area of self-seeded ash trees. Follow the path as it meanders and passes by a metal gate and into mature woodland which in spring has a spectacular display of bluebells.

4 Eventually, in a small clearing before a wooden gate, a footpath crosses. Turn right here and climb uphill. The path soon becomes enclosed between hedge and fence. A little way on it passes a gate to Kingston Cottage, and ends on the gravelled drive to the house.

5 Cross the road and continue down the lane opposite. This is Horseblock Lane (see overleaf), which crosses Hawridge

Common at this point. After about 50 metres look across to the right to the original building of Hawridge and Cholesbury Church of England School with its distinctive turret (see overleaf).

6 As the road bends left go over the stile by the gate straight ahead. The path, which follows the Parish, County Parliamentary and EU constituency boundaries, climbs steeply up the left-hand side of the hedge until at the top it leads into a large field. This is a good place to hear skylarks on a warm sunny day. Looking back, the view is over fields to Drayton Wood in the distance (see Jubilee Walk No. 1).

7 Take the flinty footpath which traverses the field diagonally and hints at

some of the geology of the area (see overleaf). After 20 metres or so you are afforded a fine view of Hawridge Common to the right. Where the path meets a tall hedge bear left. At the end of this hedge go right onto a field access track alongside back gardens. After a short distance reach the road at Heath End (see overleaf).

8 Turn right and walk along Heath End Road, a quiet lane which used to be known as Lower Parsonage Lane. After about 150 metres turn left onto the stony track, signposted as a bridleway. Around 1600 this was known as Parsonage Lane. Follow the track a short distance. Turn left after an imposing brick wall curves round from the right, along the bridleway that

passes between sheds. Continue ahead through two gates.

9 Turn right after the second gate and follow the footpath that has joined from the left. Walk along the field edge keeping a stout hedge on the right. To your left is a view across the Rossway Estate beyond the Hertfordshire county boundary. The field you are in and those that follow formed part of the parsonage lands in the late 16th century. On reaching a small plantation of mixed conifers continue ahead as the path meanders between the edge of the trees and the hedge. Crossing the stile turn immediately left. Follow the hedge round the field, formerly known as Spring Close, to the far corner where there is a pond, often dry in summer. Beyond the next stile, in a field previously called Pond Close, continue along a fenced footpath to reach a track, via another stile,

known today as Hill Farm Road but previously called Berkhamsted Lane.

10 Turn right along this road, which still retains its character as a green lane (see overleaf). It is overhung with trees and in this section may be muddy in places. Passing by a bridleway to the right the track becomes stony as it descends steeply before levelling out. After curving round to the right, the track ends where several roads meet at Hawridge Vale.

11 Continue straight across at this junction, passing by the traditional black and white wooden signpost. Follow the road known as Stoney Lane towards Cholesbury. A little way uphill and beyond the flint-faced cottage take the footpath marked to the left. The cottage was built around 1800 on the site of a chalk pit. Notice the griffin in the end wall carved by a previous occupant. Climb steeply through a wooded part of Hawridge Common until steps bring you into the garden of the Rose and Crown.



Note: Numbered sections refer to numbers on the map. Parts of this walk may be muddy at certain times of the year. Apart from two short climbs the walk is across undulating countryside but there are a number of stiles to be negotiated. Please close all gates behind you.