



The Hundred Parishes

Circular Walks – number 172

Much Hadham – eastern side – 5.5 miles (9 kms)

This mainly countryside walk focuses on the eastern side of Much Hadham parish, touching the hamlets of Green Tye and Perry Green. It passes bluebell woods and the Henry Moore Studios (for opening times, see <https://www.henry-moore.org/visit>). The route is mainly along footpaths and bridleways that can be muddy in places. The route includes a stretch of Much Hadham's ancient High Street. If you would like a more thorough exploration of Much Hadham, please see the note on the final page of this route description. There are no stiles. The route passes potential places for refreshment in Much Hadham village, Perry Green and Green Tye (please check opening times before relying on one), so please be prepared, before entering, to either remove muddy boots or wear boot covers or plastic bags. There are several seats along the route.

Start and finish: There is usually ample space to park on the road beside the green at Green Tye. It is suggested that parking should be on the side next to the green, and definitely not on the green itself. The route starts from the Green Tye village sign.
Ordnance Survey Grid Reference: TL445185 - Postcode: SG10 6JP.
The route can be followed on Ordnance Survey Explorer Map 194.
A diagram of the route is provided at the end of the description.

The walk starts from the Green Tye village sign. Beside it is a beacon (usually planted with flowers) that commemorates the centenary of the First World War. From here, we head southwest along the green for just a short distance with the green on our left. Before reaching the end of the green, we come to a pump and here, with care, we cross the road and go through the hedge onto a footpath which is waymarked as part of the *Hertfordshire Way Long Distance Footpath*.

In about 10 yards we come into a field where we turn right, following the field edge. We pass 17th-century Green Tye Farm Cottage on the right and then follow the field edge round to the left.

Over to the left are large glasshouses of a tomato nursery and ahead are two large green domes that cover anaerobic digesters which turn plant and food waste into energy.

We ignore a gate on the right. When we reach the end of the hedgerow and fencing on our right, we keep straight ahead on a path between fields. The path curves towards the larger green dome and a ditch commences to our left.

We keep straight ahead, passing the green dome on our left. The field edge kinks to the left, still following the field edge and ditch. In another 20 yards, we follow the path round to the right, ignoring a footbridge on the left.

The path descends gently with a stream on the left.

At the bottom left corner of the field, we go straight ahead, following the footpath and still on the Hertfordshire Way. The narrow path may be muddy at times as it passes between residential properties. The path reaches a driveway and we turn right.

In about 100 yards we reach a lane, Danebridge Road. When safe, we cross the lane and go straight ahead on a footpath signposted to Much Hadham. The field-edge gravel path rises gently with hedgerow on the right.

Ignore a path that diverts to the other side of the hedge. Continue with hedgerow on the right.

At the top right corner of the field, we go through a wooden kissing gate and then straight ahead, now with robust metal fencing on the left. Occasionally, we catch a glimpse through the fencing of the 21st-century Gothic mansion with circular turrets at Hill Farm. Below is a photo taken before the hedge matured . . .



When the fence ends, we bear left and then turn left onto a driveway. After only 20 yards, we turn right through a wooden gateway onto a field.

We go straight ahead on a field-edge path with hedgerow on the right. The hedgerow can be rich in blackberries around September.

At the end of the field, we leave through a gate in the far right corner and continue ahead in another field with hedgerow on the right. The path descends, running parallel with a drive on our right.

At the bottom of this field, we exit to the right through a kissing gate and turn left, ignoring the two gateways on our right. After only 10 yards we turn right through a metal kissing gate. Beware the step down on the far side!

After the gate, continue ahead on the field-edge path with hedgerow on the right.

After a while, we cross the River Ash on a concrete footbridge with metal handrails. After another 50 yards, we turn right through a wooden gate to emerge onto the corner of a lane. When safe, we turn left.

Immediately to the right are the house and grounds of Much Hadham Hall, a Grade I-listed, red-brick mansion that was built in the 1720s. We are now in Much Hadham village. We keep straight ahead, passing the village hall car park on the left.

Just before we reach the road junction, the exposed beams on the left belong to Vine Cottage which dates from the 15th or 16th century. We will pause at the junction with the High Street, by the corner of Vine Cottage, taking time to read the next two paragraphs.

On the opposite side of the main road are Campden Cottage and Bull Cottage. These two small houses were once a single medieval house. Just to their right is the Bull Inn which dates from the 16th century and has been an inn for around 300 years. Should you choose to pause here for refreshment, beware the uneven ground in the garden – an elephant with a travelling circus is reputed to have been buried there many years ago after it died during an overnight stop.

In a moment, we will turn left from Oudle Lane onto the High Street, keeping to the pavement on the left. This is a long main street that is populated by a great variety of ancient buildings; today we will walk just a small part of it, about a quarter mile, taking our time to enjoy this rather special street. The High Street was once a section of a busy through route between London and Cambridge. Today, most buildings are residential but over the years lots of them have served as shops or provided other commercial services. A great many have been listed for their historic or architectural significance.

We will keep to the left, while mainly describing buildings on the right.

Immediately on the right, we pass The White House, a long building that dates from the 16th century.

On the left, we go past the village hall, erected in 1887.

On the right stands a Hertfordshire Best Kept Village sign. Behind it is the Forge Museum which certainly merits a visit if open – it is quite a small museum. Its buildings date from the 15th and 16th centuries and include a forge which is still operated from time to time. The museum's most striking 'exhibit' is a series of Tudor wall paintings in their original location, lovingly restored in the 21st century.

Soon on the right we come to Plummers, a white painted building with an overhanging upper storey. This dates from the 16th or 17th century. In 1880 its purpose changed from butcher's to post office. Now it is residential.

A little further along, we pass the exposed timber framing of 15th-century Morris Cottage. In the 17th century it functioned as an inn called The King's Head. Its present name comes

from a more recent owner: it was purchased in 1894 by textile designer William Morris for his sister.

Also on the right, thatched Laylock Cottage, with steps up to the door, dates from the 17th century. In the early 20th century it operated as a laundry.

After a long red-brick wall on the right, we pass an entrance to Moor Place – not visible from the road but another of Much Hadham's rather grand residences - and with a Grade I listing. Immediately after it, rather hidden by hedges, is Much Hadham's war memorial.

Switching our attention to this side of the road, we come to Oudle House, built around 1800 AD, and then thatched 17th-century Brocketts.

We pass a group of buildings dating back to the 16th century which today constitute the Church of England Primary School. Then comes the Much Hadham village sign.

Immediately afterwards, the almshouses were built in 1866 to replace earlier almshouses.

Hill House on the left was a school until recent years.

In another 50 yards, flint-faced Old School House was built in 1869 as an infant school and is now a private residence.

Immediately after Old School House, we turn left onto a public footpath, signposted to Oudle Lane. This straight path descends, passing initially between houses.

The footpath reaches Oudle Lane, which comes from our left. We want to go straight ahead – but to avoid getting wet, we turn right into Malting Lane, but only for about 30 yards. To our left, a lane passes through a ford which can be quite deep at times. We pass the ford and then cross the road, with care, to turn sharp left onto the pavement and then the wooden footbridge which crosses the river – the River Ash.

Before descending onto the lane, we turn right through a kissing gate into a field. Now, we go straight ahead, climbing gently across the field on a footpath which gradually diverges from the lane on our left. Ahead and to our left, we can see the chimneys and roof of 16th-century Sidehill House.

At the far side of the field, we pass beside an ancient tree stump and through a kissing gate onto the corner of a lane. When safe, we turn right onto the lane which is called Stansted Hill.

After about 50 yards, our route goes right – but first, let's go straight ahead for a hundred yards or so, climbing steeply until we reach the entrance on the left to Daneswood, an early 20th-century house. Here we will turn and retrace.

Please rest assured that this is not just a manoeuvre to "*march them up to the top of the hill and march them down again*". Firstly, we are only part way up – but more importantly, it is hoped that you will enjoy a gentle, rather magical, descent in an unusual setting for this part of the world.

After coming back down the hill, we reach Public Bridleway 28 on the left, signposted to Bourne Lane. Now we turn left off the lane, joining the Hertfordshire Way. We are now in Sidehill Wood on a gravel path with a steep slope up to the left. To the right, there are

pastures in the valley of the River Ash. In springtime, large areas of the wooded slope are carpeted in bluebells.

Further along, we go left through a metal gate and then continue ahead on the footpath, now segregated by a fence from the horse route immediately on our right.

Soon, we leave Sidehill Wood, passing through another metal gate to go straight ahead at a crossroads of paths with a well-positioned seat on the left.

Our route becomes somewhat wider as it starts to go through another wood, this time Mill Wood. This wood is also popular for its bluebells. Sometimes, the well-used bridleway can become muddy in places.

The route continues to follow the River Ash which meanders to our right, occasionally coming into view. We also sometimes glimpse ponds to the right that are fed by the Ash. The river flows south (the way we are heading), eventually joining the River Lea at Stanstead Abbots and then the River Thames.

When the mature woodland comes to an end, we reach young woodland on the right. Soon afterwards, our gravel track bears right onto a concrete track but here we leave the bridleway, turning sharp left onto a public footpath. In just a few yards we pass through a wooden kissing gate and our route starts to climb. In about 40 yards, the path becomes wider. On our right we can look over a parapet, down to the driveway and garden area of a house called Woodlands. Here is the view of where we are standing, taken from the far side of the garden area below us.



We appear to be above what look like railway arches. They once supported the driveway to a rather grand residence. Hadham Towers resembled a German castle and was built in the late 19th century for its architect owner, Charles Fitzroy Doll (who also designed the dining

room of RMS Titanic). After Doll's death in 1929, the Hadham Towers estate was developed as a quarry for sand and gravel. The house suffered and was demolished in the 1960s.

We continue along the drive / path, climbing steadily and soon passing into woodland. We follow the main track as it bears to the left. About 150 yards after the arches, we reach a metal kissing gate. We are about to enter an area where sheep graze, so dogs should be put on leads.

Pass through the kissing gate and bear left, slightly uphill, towards a wooden waymarker post. We have now entered the large open area that remained after the quarrying ceased and after the void was used for landfill until the 1990s. The round circular concrete structures are vents which allow gases to escape from the decomposition of waste down below.

When we reach the wooden waymarker, we ignore its suggestion to turn left, instead following the walked path, straight ahead and gently climbing. As the path reaches the top of the rise, we can see a large sculpture directly ahead. We walk directly towards it.

Just before we reach a fence and metal gate, we bear right to follow the path that runs beside the fence on our left. Soon we turn left through a metal gate and again head towards the sculpture.

This is the first of several works by Henry Moore (1898 – 1986) which we are about to pass. Moore, the internationally-renowned sculptor, lived at Perry Green in Much Hadham for most of his life. His studios and examples of his work are preserved by the Henry Moore Foundation which was established from the considerable wealth he accumulated in his own lifetime. He and his studio made hundreds of sculptures, generally in bronze, and his distinctive, large works can be seen in prominent positions in many cities around the world. Today, we will see several in their home setting.

The bronze is entitled *Large Reclining Figure* and is the artist's copy of one that is displayed in Singapore. Both are 30-foot (9 metre) enlargements of an original 1938 model that was only 13 inches long. Moore and his studio made further copies in different sizes for customers around the world. That process was repeated many times for other designs.

When we reach the fence in front of the sculpture, we turn left beside the fence, passing the reclining figure on our right. We continue beside the fence for some distance. Over to the left, the view opens up of the valley of the River Ash.

We pass a small patch of woodland on our left and continue ahead with fence and hedge on the right.

Some 400 yards after the reclining figure, we reach the corner of the field and turn right through a metal kissing gate onto quite a wide gravel track, heading towards farm buildings. We soon ignore a footpath that goes to the left.

We continue past the buildings on the left, passing through a metal kissing gate and continuing along a field edge with hedgerow on the left.

We pass through another metal kissing gate and soon reach a drive. Ahead, several sculptures are displayed in a meadow. We turn left along a gravel drive that passes through the Henry Moore Foundation site with sculptures on either side. The drive is a public right of way but the fields, etc on either side are private. The site is open regularly - for details,

please see www.henry-moore.org The two large bronze rings in the field to the right are entitled *Double Oval*.

The large bronze to the left is *Large Figure in a Shelter*, produced in 1985 and one of Moore's final works.

The drive passes the entrance to the studios and then reaches a road. At this point, looking back to the right we see Henry Moore's home, Hoglands. Originally a hall house, it was rebuilt in the 17th century. Just along the road to our left is a village sign for Perry Green, a hamlet within the parish of Much Hadham.

With care, we cross the road to the small green. To the right is an entrance to The Hoops, a pub/restaurant that is usually open from midday, Wednesdays to Sundays. [If you do stop, retrace to the small green and turn sharp right.]

Our route goes half right across the green, passing 17th-century Yew Tree Cottage and then Ash Tree Cottage. We leave the green at the far corner, beside Ash Tree Cottage, turning right on the footpath and then left after only about 10 yards. We ignore the wooden boardwalk ahead: this goes to the visitor car park for the studios.

Our field-edge path has a ditch and hedgerow on the left. Behind the hedge are more buildings associated with the studios.

We follow the field edge as it twists to right and left.

After a quarter mile, shortly before farm buildings at Bucklers Hall Farm, we bear right and pass a pond on the left. At the end of the pond, we turn sharp left onto a public restricted byway. We follow this round to the right, passing an area of concrete hardstanding on the left. Soon, we turn left, following the hedge, and now on a public footpath with hedgerow on the left.

We stay on this field-edge path as it meanders, at one point ignoring a gateway on the left and then ignoring a public restricted byway that comes in from the right.

50 yards after the byway, the path goes straight ahead into woodland. After about 20 yards, we fork to the left, waymarked as the Hertfordshire Way. We keep straight ahead on this gravel path with trees and shrubs on both sides.

The path reaches a gravel drive to Woodfields on the left. Here we keep straight ahead, soon passing thatched 16th or 17th-century Green Tye Cottage. We are now in the hamlet of Green Tye. We continue along the lane, passing relatively modern houses and then The Prince of Wales pub on the left. If open, this will be the final opportunity for refreshment as we will soon be back to where we parked.

At the road junction, we turn right along the lane, passing Hales Croft on the right. A little further along we reach the green with 17th-century thatched Croft Cottage on the right. On our left, a notice board shows all the footpaths in Much Hadham parish.

Just a little further along, we reach the Green Tye village sign where we started this walk.

You can read more about the parish of Much Hadham on www.hundredparishes.org.uk. A shorter Hundred Parishes walk, number 122, explores Much Hadham in more detail.

This route description, last updated 28 April 2022, was downloaded from www.hundredparishes.org.uk Please email any suggestions for improving the route or the route description to hundredparishes@btinternet.com.

A diagram covering this route, based on the Ordnance Survey map, is shown below. It is published under © Crown copyright 2020 OS 100062498.

