



The Hundred Parishes

Quiet Lane Walks – number 323

Chrishall – 2.8 miles (5 kms)

This walk is entirely on quiet lanes within the administrative parish of Chrishall which is especially attractive in springtime with a rich display of daffodils along much of the route. From the centre of the village, the route follows a figure of 8. A two-mile anti-clockwise route, back to the start, is followed by a mile clockwise back to the start.

The route passes a book exchange, so you might like to take a book to swap. There are several seats along the way.

The start and finish is close to The Red Cow pub and restaurant. If you plan to take refreshment there, it is probably wise to check opening times and perhaps make a table reservation - or perhaps arrange to park there - 01763 838792 - www.theredcow.com.

You may, of course, join this circular walk anywhere along the route.

Start and finish: The route description starts and finishes by the small green with the war memorial in the centre of Chrishall - Ordnance Survey Grid Reference: TL446394 - Postcode: SG8 8NP – what3words: zaps.oasis.spot. It should be possible to park nearby on one of the roads or, by arrangement, in the car park for the Red Cow.

To follow this route completely on Ordnance Survey Explorer Maps requires two maps, 194 and 209, as it strays north beyond map 194 onto map 209.

A diagram of the route is provided at the end of the description.

This route is entirely on quiet lanes, but please follow the usual safety precautions - when walking in the road, keep to the right so as to face oncoming traffic, crossing occasionally to the left if this offers a clearer view around a right-hand bend. Drivers and cyclists may be as surprised to see you as you are to see them!

From the green, we set off in the direction which has pavement on both sides of the road, the main route through this junction, heading North. It is suggested that we walk along the pavement on the right.

In just a few yards, we come to a road junction on the left with a fingerpost sign and village notice board. The sign was manufactured at Stanton Ironworks in Derbyshire. We should follow the direction of the finger that points towards Elmdon and Chrishall Grange.

For a short distance, we keep to the pavement on the right, passing the tiny former post office on our right and ignoring Palmers Lane on the left.

We immediately pass a small green on the left with Chrishall's village sign. We are now in Crawley End Road. Altogether, Chrishall has around 50 listed buildings - we will mention some of them.

We continue ahead along the lane, keeping to the right for just a few yards until a pavement begins on the left.

The pavement on the right runs out just as we pass the thatched Barleymans on our right – a 17th-century timber-framed and plastered cottage with thatched roof – the first of many listed buildings we will see on this walk. With care, we should cross to the left pavement.

Almost immediately, we pass red-brick Martinholm Farmhouse on the left. This also dates from the 17th century when it was built with timber framing and then plastered. The front was totally re-faced in red brick in the 19th century. The impressive chimney stack is original.

We pass a variety of relatively-new houses on the left and then Wire Farm on the right.

In another 200 yards, we pass Chrishall Village Hall on the left. It was erected as a Primitive Methodist Chapel in 1862 and has a cemetery at the rear of the building.

Just afterwards, thatched Chapel Cottage (17th century) has a matching thatched outbuilding that dates from the 18th century.

Soon afterwards, the pavement ends and, with care, we should cross to use the pavement on the right. We are now in the hamlet of Crawley End with some older properties but mostly 20th-century. All of the older properties are timber-framed and plastered, either fully or partly thatched; most date from the 17th century with a few from the 18th.

The last of this batch of thatched cottages is Rose Cottage on the left. About 40 yards further along, outside The Gables, there stands a well-preserved 19th-century cast iron water pump, painted green and black and the first of several that we will see around the village.

On the right, three apple trees were planted in 2023 to commemorate the coronation of King Charles III.

Just as the housing and pavement end, our lane turns left, passing yet another 17th-century thatched cottage, Dormers, on our right.

Just round the corner, we pass the entrance to an even older house, Tudor Thatch, which is believed to date from around 1500 AD. It is just visible through the iron gates on the left.

Opposite Tudor Thatch, we pass the Chrishall sign that welcomes people coming from the opposite direction.

In another 200 yards, we reach a junction where, when safe, we cross the road and turn left, signposted towards Heydon.

We pass a variety of dwellings including 21st-century red-brick Ridgewood on the right and somewhat older red-brick Mill House on the left.

To the right, the land falls away and we can see far into Cambridgeshire. On a clear day, the city of Cambridge is visible, including the 200-foot-tall iconic tower at Addenbrooke's Hospital, 10 miles away.

For a while, our lane is lined with trees on the left until we reach Hillside House on the left, a modern dwelling with exposed timber framing.

Our lane descends gently until we reach a road junction. Here we turn left into Abram's Lane, signposted towards Chrishall. If we had gone straight ahead, immediately after the junction we would have left Chrishall and Essex and stepped across the boundary into the parish of Heydon in Cambridgeshire (still within the Hundred Parishes).

Having turned left, we immediately pass older terraces of houses with flint walls and slate roofs.

Abrams Lane heads south, climbing uphill. For the first quarter of a mile, the parish and county boundaries run beside the lane on our right, with Cambridgeshire and Heydon just beyond the tarmac.

Almost half a mile after turning into Abrams Lane, we are welcomed back into Chrishall with its 30mph speed limit.

We ignore a lane on the right, signposted to Broad Green, and continue ahead. Abrams Lane becomes Palmers Lane.

About 30 yards before we reach signs for a school and crossroads, the Icknield Way footpath is signposted off to the right. We continue ahead, passing Langford Drive on the right. Soon, we are able to join a new stretch of pavement and pass the school on our right.

Just afterwards, a bus shelter and The Old Telephone Exchange on our right are followed by a red telephone kiosk which has been repurposed as Barbara's Book Box – an opportunity to swap that book you have been carrying.

Soon, we return to the road junction with the Chrishall village sign. We keep right and soon reach the fingerpost sign. One of its fingers points towards "Great Chishall" which seems to be a mistaken spelling of Great Chishill.

Immediately after the fingerpost sign, when safe, we should cross the road to the pavement on the left and continue towards the war memorial.

[If you need a break now, The Red Cow is about a hundred yards down the lane to the right. Afterwards, return to the war memorial to complete the final mile.]

We fork left, keeping The Green and the war memorial on our right and immediately passing Loveday Close on our left.

We are now in Church Road, heading south-east. Immediately on the right is a hedge around a field with the Red Cow just beyond it.

We pass The Gate, set back on the left, another thatched property from the 18th century.

Our pavement ends, so we should cross the road with care to walk on the right, facing any oncoming traffic. We immediately pass a long, thatched 18th-century property on our right - Mullion Cottage. Opposite, on our left, two majestic lions stand guard at The Grange.

We soon leave Chrishall village, descending gently past Park House on the left, a substantial Victorian dwelling, and then two adjacent 17th or 18th-century thatched cottages on the right: Saffron Cottage and then The Thatched Cottage.

Between Saffron Cottage and The Thatched Cottage, on the opposite side of the road, there is another 19th-century cast iron water pump, distinctly painted in green and black. We can just about read that it was manufactured by G.Ingold in Bishop's Stortford.

We soon pass "Two Cottages" on the right and Park Farm on the left. Then a road sign suggests we really have left the village, welcoming those coming from the opposite direction.

In another 200 yards a public byway joins our lane from the left.

After another hundred yards, we reach a narrow lane on the right. Not far ahead we can see Chrishall's parish church. Our route does not go past it, but you may wish to add a few hundred yards to view it and retrace to this junction. The church is not always open.

Our route turns right up the narrow lane - there is no signpost to tell us this is called Chalky Lane.

Chalky Lane climbs until we reach another water pump on the right and, just afterwards, Chalky Lane Cottage on the left.

Further on, we pass a small barn on the left and the view opens up beyond it.

Soon afterwards we reach Hollow Road. Before pressing on, if we look back and to the right of the small barn, we should be able to see the square tower of Chrishall parish church, now about a quarter of a mile away.

At the road junction, we turn right into Hollow Road.

Almost immediately, we are welcomed back into Chrishall and asked to reduce our speed.

On the left, we pass a converted barn, now called Cart Shed, and just after it there is another seat. With care, we should cross to the seat. From here, if we look back, behind the Cart Shed, we can see Parsonage Farmhouse. This dates from the 15th century when it was built as a manor house, surrounded by a moat which still survives. The area around the house is protected as a Scheduled Monument – preventing any development or unauthorised digging. It is thought that this might be the site of an Iron Age settlement.

We should cross back to the right to continue the gentle climb.

Hollow Road becomes High Street as we enter the village.

We pass more of the village's 17th and 18th century houses on the right, mostly thatched.

After a while, we should cross to the left to use the pavement.

After about a quarter of a mile of pavement, we pass a small green and lane on our right, another green water pump on the left and then the Red Cow on the right. The pub dates from the 15th century but has been modernised. The adjacent barn is also thatched and its ridge features a large straw finial, naturally, of a cow. The barn was once the village post office and shop; nowadays it is used by the pub's bed and breakfast customers.

Just after the Red Cow, we pass The Old School House on the left, built in 1862 and now converted to private houses.

Soon afterwards, we return to the war memorial and green where this route description began.

If you started somewhere else along the route, please rejoin the route description from page 1.

This route description, last updated 14 March 2026, was downloaded from www.hundredparishes.org.uk There, you can read more about the parish of Chrishall and also find many additional walk routes.

Please email any suggestions for improving the route or the route description to hundredparishes@btinternet.com.

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

