

Epping to Chipping Ongar			Chipping Ongar to Ingatestone		
1 <sup>st</sup> walk check	2 <sup>nd</sup> walk check	3 <sup>rd</sup> walk check	1 <sup>st</sup> walk check	2 <sup>nd</sup> walk check	3 <sup>rd</sup> walk check
28 <sup>th</sup> Dec. 2022			29 <sup>th</sup> Dec. 2022		
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## Epping to Ingatestone (via Chipping Ongar)

**Start:** Epping Underground or Bus Stops in Ongar      **Finish:** Ingatestone Station or Bus Stops in Ongar

Epping Underground, map reference TL 462 01, is 27 km north east of Charing Cross and 80m above sea level. The Bus Stops in Chipping Ongar are 9 km east north east of Epping and 55m above sea level. Ingatestone Station, map reference TL 649 991, is 20 km east south east of Epping and 57m above sea level. All are in **Essex**.

**Length:** 26.9 km (16.7 mi).

**Cumulative ascent/descent:** 209/232m. For a shorter walk, see *below* **Walk Options**.

**Toughness:** 4 out of 10

**Time:** 5 ¾ hours walking time.

For the whole outing, including trains, sights and meals, allow at least 8 hours.

**Transport:** Epping Underground Station is the north eastern terminus of the Central Line and in Zone 6, with a journey time of 35 minutes from Liverpool Street. Ongar is served by several lines, with the 420 (Ongar – Epping – Harlow) linking back to Epping (at least hourly on weekdays, hourly on Saturdays, two-hourly on Sundays; journey time 23 minutes) and the 21 on to Brentwood (Crossrail, hourly Mon-Sat; journey time 25 minutes). Ingatestone is on the Great Eastern Main Line from Liverpool Street to Norwich (half-hourly service, hourly on Sundays); journey time 29 minutes.

**Saturday Walkers' Club:** Start the walk no later than 10.00 hours.

**OS Landranger Map:** 167 (Chelmsford)

**OS Explorer Map:** 174 (Epping Forest & Lee Valley), 175 (Southend-on-Sea & Basildon) and 183 (Chelmsford & The Rodings)

### Walk Notes:

This walk leads through the mildly undulating area to the east of the northerly end of Epping Forest, initially through the Roding River catchment area, later that of the River Wid. It is an area dotted with ancient woods, historic villages, old churches, plentiful pubs and inns and large manor houses, reflecting the wealth generated by the richness of the soil and the existence of important trading routes leading through it. The outstanding historic features and buildings are Chipping Ongar's Motte-and-Double-Bailey, Greensted's oldest wooden church in the world and Blackmore's former priory church with its rare wooden bell tower. The first half of the walk follows the Essex Way and shadows the now closed stretch of the Central Line from Epping to Ongar. This continues the route of two other SWC Walks along the line (SWC 241 and 197). The second half of the walk broadly follows the St. Peter's Way to near Ingatestone. The route passes through many woods and with the subsoil being London Clay, some mud can be expected after rain. There are also a handful of arable field crossings, all along usually well-cleared paths though.

Hourly buses to/from Chipping Ongar and Blackmore enable half-length walks or early finishes. Plenty of pubs and cafés en route enable flexible start times.

### Walk Options:

**Combine the first half of this walk with SWC 197 Loughton to Epping**, for a 26.9 km/16.7 mi walk. Lunch would be in Coopersale at the Theydon Oak or earlier in Epping via a diversion along the High Street. **Finish immediately upon reaching Chipping Ongar**, without a loop through the village and past the impressive Motte & Baileys site, and take the bus back to Epping or on to Brentwood (Crossrail), from the Banson's Lane or Rail Station stops respectively (12.3 km/7.6 mi with 109m ascent; **1/10** rating). **Finish in Chipping Ongar Village or at Ongar Rail Station** and take the bus back to Epping or on to Brentwood (Crossrail), from the Banson's Lane or Rail Station stops respectively. This cuts 13.5 km and 90m ascent (**1/10** rating). Both these short routes loop past all the lunch/tea stops in Chipping Ongar and past the impressive Motte & Baileys site, but in different directions. **Start the walk in Chipping Ongar**, using bus lines 420 from Epping or 21 from Brentwood to get there. **Bus Lines 61/61A/61C** connect Blackmore (19.6 km/12.33 mi into the walk) to Brentwood Station (Crossrail): hourly Mon-Sat.

**Eleveneses/Lunch** (details last updated 12/12/2022)

### En Route to Chipping Ongar

**Theydon Oak Village Pub & Dining** 9 Coopersale Street, Coopersale, Epping, Essex, CM16 7QJ (01992 572 618, <https://theydonoak.co.uk/>). The Oak is located 2.0 km into the walk. Open from 11.00 Mon-Sat and from 12.00 Sun.

**The Green Man & Courtyard Restaurant** School Road, Toot Hill, Essex, CM5 9SD (01992 522 255, <https://www.thegreenmanandcourtyard.com/>). The Greyhound is located 7.6 km/4.7 mi into the walk. Open all day every day. Food served.

**In Chipping Ongar** (from between 12.3 and 13.1 km into the walk)

**The Cock Pub & Kitchen** 218 High Street, Chipping Ongar, Essex, CM5 9AB (01277 365 261). Open all day every day. Food served.

**The King's Head** 177 High Street, Chipping Ongar, Essex, CM5 9JG (01277 508 905, <https://www.kingsheadongar.co.uk/>). Open all day every day. Food served all day every day.

**Porterhouse Wine Bar & Kitchen** 162 High Street, Chipping Ongar, Essex, CM5 9JJ (01277 366 770, <http://www.porterhousewbk.com/>). Open all day every day.

**Several cafés and small restaurants**, see the text below for details.

**En Route to Ingatestone** (both 19.6 km/12.3 mi into the walk)

**The Prince Albert** 1 The Green Blackmore, Essex, CM4 0RT (01277 821 705). Open all day every day.

**The Leather Bottle** Horsefayre Green Blackmore, Essex, CM4 0RL (01277 821 891, <https://www.leatherbottle.pub/>). Open daily from 12.00 hours. Food served all day every day.

**Tea** (details last updated 12/12/2022)

**In Blackmore** (19.6 km/12.3 mi into the walk)

**Megarry's Antiques and Tea Room** Jericho Cottage, The Duckpond Green Blackmore, Essex, CM4 0RR (01277 821 031, <http://antique-teashop.co.uk/>). Open Wed-Sun 10.00-17.00 (-16.00 Dec-Feb).

**The Prince Albert** As above.

**The Leather Bottle** As above.

**Blackmore Tea Rooms** The Green Blackmore, Essex, CM4 0RL (01277 821 946, <https://www.blackmoretearooms.co.uk/>). Open daily 09.30-16.30.

### Further en route to Ingatestone

**The Cricketers** Mill Green Road Mill Green, Ingatestone, Essex, CM4 0RH (01277 352 400, <https://www.thecricketersmillgreen.com/>). The Cricketers is located 3.0 km from the end of the route. Open all day Wed-Sun. Food served 12.00-15.00 and 18.00-21.00 Wed-Sat and 12.00-18.00 Sun.

**The Viper** Mill Green Road Mill Green, Ingatestone, Essex, CM4 0PT (01277 352 010, <https://www.thevipermillgreen.co.uk/>). The Viper is located 600m off route, 3.6 km from the end of the route, and newly opened in Nov 2022 after a lengthy refurbishment. Open all day every day. Food served 12.00-15.00 and 18.00-21.00 Wed-Fri, all day Sat and 12.00-18.00 Sun.

**In Ingatestone** (about 700m from the end of the walk)

**The Bell Inn** 55 High Street, Ingatestone, Essex, CM4 0AT (01277 353 314, <https://www.thebell-ingatestone.co.uk/>). Open all day Wed-Mon. Food served at lunch only. A Shepherd Neame pub.

**The Star Inn** 45 High Street Ingatestone, Essex, CM4 9DU (01277 356 441, <https://www.thestarinatingatestone.co.uk/>). Open 16.30-22.00 Tue, all day Wed-Sat and 12.00-21.00 Sun. Food served 17.00-21.00 Tue, all day Wed-Sat and 12.00-18.00 Sun.

## Notes:

### The Essex Way

The Essex Way is a 130 km (81 mi) waymarked Long-Distance Footpath. The trail starts in Epping in the southwest, crosses Dedham Vale and Constable Country to finish at the port of Harwich on the Stour estuary. It leads through ancient woodlands, open farmland, tree-lined river valleys and leafy green lanes, through historic towns and villages.

### Pargeting

Pargeting (or sometimes pargetting) is a decorative or waterproofing plastering applied to building walls. The term, if not the practice, is particularly associated with Suffolk and Essex (in Norfolk the term "pinking" is used instead), but it can also be seen in Kent and is documented as far away as York and the West Country. There was plenty of pargeting in London before the 1666 Fire.

English plasterwork became increasingly elaborate in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and the dramatic external decoration of Henry VIII's Nonsuch Palace (1538) was contemporary with early plaster friezes in the great houses.

Some of the most opulent pargeting was produced over the next 150 years with a high point around 1660, when the technique began to fall out of fashion.

In the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century architects like Norman Shaw became interested in the 'arts and crafts' skills of an earlier age and there was a revival of interest in pargeting.

Pargeting derives from the word 'parget', a Middle English term that is probably derived from the Old French *pargeter* or *parjeter*, to throw about, or *porgeter*, to roughcast a wall. Pargeting was applied to the wet plaster, generally by sticking a number of pins in a board in certain lines or curves, and then pressing on the plaster in various directions, so as to form geometrical figures. Sometimes these devices are in relief, and in the time of Elizabeth I represent figures, birds and foliage.

The original raw material is parge, a mixture of sand and lime with a binder like hair, traditionally used for parging flues and underlining roof tiles to reduce drafts. Many additional ingredients are recorded, including stable urine, loam, soot, tallow, road scrapings, cheese, dung, blood and salt, the aim being to produce a viscous material slowly curing to something leather hard. If it cured too quickly it would be difficult to work up a complex pattern.

### Gernon Bushes

Gernon Bushes is a 34-hectare nature reserve near Coopersale, north-east of Epping. It is managed by the Essex Wildlife Trust and part of the Epping Forest SSI. The site is ancient woodland and the last remnant of the old Coopersale Common that once linked Epping Lower Forest along the hill ridge to Ongar Park, the Royal Hunting Forest. It is mainly ancient Hornbeam pollards and has a network of woodland ponds, formerly created for gravel extraction, to the north of the reserve, now transformed into seasonal bogs. In the south of the reserve, there are two springs that rise out on the edge of the plateau, their streams descending through another series of bogs, home to the rare Marsh Fern.

Lady Fern, Bogbean, Marsh Valerian, Marsh Marigold and beautifully pink Ragged Robin can also be found.

### H2S (Hadleigh to Stratford Legacy Walk)

The Legacy Walk is a 116.2 km/72.2 mi linear waymarked Long-Distance Path created by Ramblers Essex Area to celebrate the London Olympic Games in 2012 and it was launched on 20 May 2012. The route starts near the Hadleigh Mountain Biking Centre and makes a meandering route across some of the most beautiful parts of Essex to the Whitewater Centre near Waltham Abbey and ends at the Olympic Stadium.

### River Roding/Roding Valley

The Roding rises at Molehill Green near Dunmow in Essex. It then flows south through a group of villages known collectively as The Rodings and on to London and forms Barking Creek as it reaches the River Thames. Between Chigwell and Woodford Green, the Roding Valley Meadows make up the largest surviving area of traditionally managed river-valley habitat in Essex.

Redbridge takes its name from a crossing of the river; Ilford takes its name from Ilefort, "ford on the River Hyle", which was the mediaeval name for part of the Roding.

Within Greater London, The Roding is second only to the Lea amongst the Thames tributaries.

### St. Andrew's Church, Greensted-juxta-Ongar (aka Greensted Church)

Greensted's Anglo-Saxon church is a Grade I-listed building and has been claimed to be the oldest surviving wooden church in the world and probably the oldest wooden building in Europe still standing, although only a few sections of its original wooden structure remain, mainly the nave. Its walls are often classified as remnants of a palisade church or as a kind of early stave church. Built from 51 large split oak tree trunks, which was a traditional Saxon way of building, it is mostly original, with research dating it to 1063-1108.

Construction of the first permanent church on this site though is thought to have begun much earlier, shortly after St. Cedd began his conversion of the East Saxon people around AD654. The remnants of two simple wooden buildings were discovered under the present chancel floor, and these are thought to have been built in the late sixth or early 7th century.

The church's dedication to St. Andrew suggests a Celtic foundation for the original sanctuary.

The oldest grave, lying adjacent to the south wall is that of a 12<sup>th</sup> century Crusader, likely a bowman.

### **Chipping Ongar**

Chipping Ongar (/ˈtʃɪpɪŋ ˈɒŋər/) is a market town in the Epping Forest District of Essex. The name "Ongar" means "grass land" (akin to the (Southern) German word Anger), while "Chipping" is from Old English *cēping*, "a market, a market-place", akin to Danish "købing" and Swedish "köping".

It is located 10 km east of Epping, on slightly higher ground surrounded by former marshland and equidistant between Harlow to the northwest and Brentwood to the southeast. In the Medieval era, the village was at the centre of a hundred and it has the remains of a Norman castle located on a promontory between two rivers, the Roding and Cripsey Brook. It is a good example of a late 11<sup>th</sup> or early 12<sup>th</sup>-century motte and bailey, but only the earthworks survive. The motte is about 70m in diameter at the base and surrounded by a wet ditch up to 15m wide. A kidney-shaped inner bailey is to the west of the motte and a second bailey to the east. The remains of a town enclosure embankment extend to the west. Ongar High Street is lined with over 70 listed buildings.

### **St. Peter's Way**

The St. Peter's Way is a 66.1 km Long Distance Path from Chipping Ongar to the ancient chapel of St Peter-on-the-Wall at Bradwell-on-Sea. It runs across the open agricultural land of Essex, passing Hanningfield Reservoir and inlets of the Blackwater Estuary and reaching the coast to the east of Tillingham, then following the sea wall from where there are extensive views across the Essex marshes.

### **Three Forests Way**

The Three Forests Way is a 95 km/59 mi circular Long-Distance Path linking three forests in West Essex. It visits Hatfield Forest and continues via White Roding, the Roding valley and Abridge, to Hainault Forest and via Loughton to Epping Forest. The Stort Valley is followed back to Hatfield Forest.

### **Epping – Ongar Railway**

The EOR is a heritage railway is run by a small number of paid staff and a team of volunteers. It was opened in 1865 as the final section of the Great Eastern Railway branch line, later becoming part of the London Underground's Central Line from Loughton via Epping to Ongar, with intermediate stations at North Weald and Blake Hall. The line was closed in 1994 and sold in 1998. But to this day, distances on the Central Line are still measured from Ongar. It briefly reopened from 2004 to 2007 but finally re-opened on 25 May 2012. <https://www.eorailway.co.uk/>

### **River Wid**

An innocent looking stream in flat country, the Wid regularly breaks its banks after heavy rainfall to flood extended areas. It joins with the Can near Writtle, with the Can then flowing into the Chelmer in Chelmsford.

### **Ingatestone**

32 km north east of London, Ingatestone was established in Saxon times on the Essex Great Road that runs between the two Roman towns of London and Colchester. The name, derived from the Middle English Yenge-atte-Stone, means parcel of land at the stone. The stone in question – deposited by glacial action – is unusual for the area. It can still be seen, split into three stones, one by the west door of the church and one each side of the entrance to Fryerning Lane.

Ingatestone belonged to Barking Abbey from about AD950 until the dissolution of the monasteries, when it was purchased from the Crown by Sir William Petre. Originally a lawyer from Devon, Petre had risen to become the Secretary of State to Henry VIII. He built a large courtyard house, Ingatestone Hall, as his home in the village, along with almshouses which still exist today as private cottages in Stock Lane.

## WALK DIRECTIONS

Leave **Epping Station** from platform 2 through the station building (go over the bridge if arriving on platform 1) onto the station forecourt by a bus stop on the left. *Turn right* along the pavement, immediately passing a plaque on the wall marking the start of **The Essex Way** (EW). In 40m *turn right* with an EW marker up a bridge over the railway tracks and on the far side, continue along a residential road (**Hillcrest Way**). In 90m, at a T-junction with **Bower Hill**, *turn right* along the pavement and in 40m *turn left* across the road to continue along a grassy path between hedges with an EW signpost. The road noise wafting up from the right is from the **M25**, just before its junction with the **M11**. In 180m the hedges discontinue and you continue in the same direction along a wide grassy track between arable fields. In 160m go through a boundary growth gap into a neighbouring field and *bear left* with a marker post along its grassy boundary. In 360m leave the field through a gap onto a lane and *turn left* along it. In 30m *turn left* along a car wide gravel lane with an EW signpost, ignoring a signposted footpath turning right about 20m further along.

You now follow the tree-lined **Steward's Green Lane** between arable fields for one kilometre to a three-way road junction in **Coopersale Street** hamlet. **In more detail:** in 150m *fork right* gently uphill with a marker post, ignoring a left fork into a field; in 100m the track levels out for a while but starts to ascend further soon enough; the road noise now originates more from the right, from the **M11**; in 200m you cross a brow; in 240m cross a farm track connecting the fields on either side and ford a streamlet (may be seasonal); in 160m you have a fence on the left for a short while and a garden beyond it; in 130m you reach **Stonards Hill** (road) in **Coopersale Street** hamlet, opposite a triangular green and with another road joining from ahead. Cross the road onto the green and *turn right* along it, signed 'Fiddlershamlet & Toot Hill', and in 30m you cross the road from the left and pass the **Theydon Oak Village Pub & Dining**.

You cross over to the right-hand side of the road and in 25m, **The Lattice** (house) has a small example of **pargeting** on its facing sidewall. Briefly you have just a narrow pavement to walk along, but further along there is a wide grassy margin. In 120m, where the road turns right, you *turn left* across the road and follow a signposted public footpath and the EW. In 10m cross a stream and walk through a grassy open area. In 70m go through a boundary gap into a large pasture and curve to the left with the path along the left-hand boundary. The audible **M11** runs along a minor ridge across a couple of fields to the right. In 270m in the far-left corner, you *turn left* through a boundary gap and follow a path into the next field. *Veer left* (350°) with a marker post along a usually well-cleared path to cut the field's corner and in 110m at the opposite boundary, *turn right* with a marker post, gently uphill. In 110m go through a boundary gap into the next field and continue in the same direction along its left-hand boundary.

Views back down the valley reveal views to distant wooded ridges due South, they are **Hainault Forest and Havering Country Park**. In 300m, by a bench on the right, you enter **Gernon Bushes** SSI through a wooden barrier with an **Access Land** marker. Cross a short boardwalk over a ditch and in 10m *turn left* with the EW and a public footpath by a marker post a little ahead, along a clear forest path, initially along the boundary of the wood. In 40m *veer right* with the path and in 20m go over a boardwalk then up a stepped section through the trees, curving right with the stepped path. At the top, follow the path for 60m to a corner of the wood. There is a road visible 50m beyond a wooden kissing gate on the left in **Coopersale** village and a large map and info panel on the right. *Turn hard right* inside the wood, with house gardens beyond a hedge on the left. In 90m, now with a school on the left, the path splits by a marker post.

*Fork right* through the wood and in 75m you pass a pond on the left (may be seasonal). In 70m cross a plank bridge over a ditch and in 25m *bear left* along a clear forest path.

The ground is dropping away to the right and you have another pond on the left. In 70m a path joins from the left through a gap in the trees down some steps out of a cricket field by a marker post with an **H2S** marker and you *turn right* along a clear path. You pass through an area of mainly old, pollarded trees, with a marker post visible away on the left, and in 120m walk along a raised engineered gravel path which in another 100m leads to a T-junction with a broad gravel track, a public bridleway. *Turn right* along it. In 100m you pass a pond on the left and in 75m continue in the same direction up a raised and arched two-railed tarmac bridge across the **M11**, ignoring paths to the right and left and leaving the **Access Land**. On the far side, continue in the same direction along a wide gravel path with trees on the left and an arable field beyond, and with **Posternlane Spring** (wood) on the right behind a fence.

You now follow this gravel bridleway for 1.7 km along, then through several woods. **In more detail:** on the left across the fields, you have far views up to **North Weald Bassett** village, the **Epping – Ongar Railway** travels through it (as does the return bus from Chipping Ongar). In 250m you ignore a double wooden field gate on the right ('Private') and in 80m you *bear left* with the track. In 30m enter **Birching Coppice** and continue between lines of fence posts without any wire. In 30m you pass either side of a tree with an EW sign and a white arrow 3 metres up. In about 500m ignore another wooden field gate on the right into the wood ('Private') and go through a notable earth bank and ditch into the next wood, **Mount Wood**. This is initially a young plantation, then a more mature wood. In 90m cross a stream and then a private track and in 125m you go through an earth bank and ditch marking the far end of the wood.

In 10m cross a car wide gravel track (an unmarked byway) and enter **High Wood** through metal bollards, in 20m passing an EW marker post. In 100m a mud-prone stretch can be skirted on the left and in 130m you go through another earth bank into **Ongar Park Wood**. In 210m at the far end of the wood, a public bridleway along the fringe of the wood crosses and you continue in the same direction along an arable field boundary with a marker post inscribed 'Toot Hill'. You have fine far views to the south on the right into the wider **Roding Valley**, and a line of trees with an arable field beyond on the left, initially at a somewhat higher level. In 160m you start a very gentle descent into an infant valley, formed by a couple of streams out of the area to the left. A transmission mast on a wooded ridge visible on the half right 9 kilometres away on 130° stands near Bentley, this side of **Brentwood**.

In 150m continue to the left of a belt of trees for 50m and then continue between arable fields. In 100m you cross the stream on the path and reascend to the left of a wood along a field boundary continuing as a car wide track. In 100m the terrain levels out and you follow the grassy farm track through a very large and mildly undulating arable field. In 400m in the corner of the field with a wooded belt on the right, you continue along the boundary towards a marker post in 60m. At the post, *turn right* with the EW along a public footpath through a gap in the growth, ignoring the farm track bearing up to the left with the boundary. At another, yellow-topped, marker post, *bear left* across the narrow corner of a large arable field along a usually well-cleared path, ignoring an unmarked public bridleway along the left-hand boundary.

In 100m you pass a marker post and enter another arable field to walk along its left-hand grassy boundary, gently uphill. Some houses are visible away on the right. In 70m you go through a dip and in 130m cross a public footpath by a marker post and in another 80m in the field corner, you continue in the same direction between hedges. In 30m go over a stile and in 20m pass a low marker post and continue along the left-hand boundary of an open grassy area. Ignore gates and a wooden fence on the left and in 100m go through an electric fence with handle bars and along a fenced path to the left of some paddocks to a road in 50m. Go over a stile onto **School Lane** in **Toot Hill**, and *turn left* along it. In 60m you reach **The Green Man & Courtyard Restaurant**.

Continue in the same direction past the pub and past the village green on the left. Ignore a road to the left (**Mill Lane**) and in another 210m, where the road turns sharply to the left, you continue in the same direction with a footpath signpost by **Weald Lodge** on the right and by **The Cottage** continue along a grass path. In 25m *turn right* at a marker post along a grassy field boundary, ignoring a footpath across a field ahead. **[!]** In 40m *turn right* with the unmarked public footpath, ignoring the continuation of the grassy boundary. You cross a (slippery) two-railed bridge over a ditch and *turn left* along a grassy path between hedges. In 160m cross a two-railed footbridge over a ditch and then a stile and continue in the same direction between a hedge and a fenced paddock. In 130m go over a stile and then a two-railed footbridge over a ditch and continue between hedge and fence.

In 90m you have an arable field on the right and in 300m cross a public footpath by a marker post. Continue in the same direction along a left-hand field boundary and in 70m by a marker post, ignore a right forking path towards a hedge corner 60m away and continue along the boundary and in 60m continue along an enclosed path to the left of a wood (not on the OS map, but very real indeed!). In 200m ignore a metal gate on the right (a public footpath joins through the gate) and in 30m *bear left* with the path along a wooden garden fence. In 50m you have an arable field on the right and **[!]** in 10m *turn hard left* along a narrow path through the boundary growth and a wooden kissing gate with an EW marker. Over the next 180m, you go along the left-hand boundaries of four successive small pastures separated by squeeze gates and then continue through a grassy strip to the left of a high hedge.

The path veers left then right and in 50m you go through a wooden kissing gate into an arable field and *turn right* along its boundary with a marker post. In 170m emerge at a road by an EW signpost and cross it some way to the left to cross a railed bridge over a stream and follow an enclosed public footpath. You continue with the stream on the left in a broadly easterly direction, with a field on the right behind a fence and eventually with **Greensted Wood** on the left behind a hedge. At the far end of the wood and after passing a large barn on the left, you cross a farm track and continue in the same direction through a boundary gap and over an earth bridge over a stream (with an overgrown footbridge to the left) into the next field and follow its left-hand boundary. In 330m in the far field corner continue in the same direction through a gap and along a fenced path, with some paddocks to the right.

In 230m go over a footbridge onto a concrete car wide track at a T-junction and *turn right* along it, gently uphill into **Greensted** village with a marker post. In 170m you have **St. Andrew's Church, Greensted-juxta-Ongar** on the left (usually open). In 20m *turn left* through a wooden gate into the churchyard for a close look at the exterior and interior of this remarkable building. Continue in the previous direction and in 20m *turn left* long a signposted public footpath along the tarmac drive to **Greensted Hall**. In 50m where the drive turns left, you continue in the same direction through a fence gap with some markers and in 20m along a barbed wire fence on the right. The Hall is shielded from view by a high hedge. In 200m ignore a wooden gate on the right (a public footpath joins through it) and in 180m cross another tarmac drive to the Hall.

In 40m go over a wooden bridge across a ditch out of a wood and cross a very large arable field, with **Chipping Ongar** village visible ahead. The route runs mostly along a raised grassy strip, or else along a mud-prone track, always close to the right-hand field boundary. In 300m you pass an intruding hedge corner and in 330m cross a public footpath at another hedge corner. In 110m cross the **Cripsey Brook** on a car wide bridge and ascend into the village along **Banson's Lane**. In 150m you meet the **A128** (High Street) at a T-junction, with **Budworth Hall** on the right and a **bus stop for services to Epping** 20m on the left. **KG Coffee** is a little away to the left, 100m beyond the bus stop, all other lunch or tea options are along the street to the right.

**Here you have several choices:**

**For an Immediate Ending**, *turn left* and walk to the bus stop.

**For an Ending at Ongar Rail Station**, cross the road and *turn right* along it. Pick up the direction at the end of this text under **Ongar Station Ending**.

**For an Ending in Chipping Ongar Village and the Ingatestone Ending**, cross the road and *turn left* along it. [**Note: if walking on to Ingatestone but wanting to have lunch here**, you should turn right for the lunch options first and pick up the route again here.] At the far end of the library on the right, *turn right* and go past a car park. In another 25m you pass an info panel on **Chipping Ongar Castle**. Continue along a fenced path through a wood, with the former **Town Enclosure** away to the left and the former **Inner Bailey of Ongar Castle** to the right. In 50m go through a wooden kissing gate into a pasture and *turn right* along the fence around the Castle site. This is a Permissive Path and it passes along the **Inner Bailey, the Motte and then parts of the Outer Bailey**. In 200m leave the pasture through a wooden kissing gate onto a fenced path by a signpost pointing backwardsIn.

**Here you have a choice:**

**For the Ongar Village Ending**, *turn right* along the path and pick up the directions at the end of this text under **Ongar Village Ending**.

**For the Main Walk**, *turn left* along the path. In 25m by a marker post and some fence gaps on both sides, you *bear right* into a large arable field (leaving the Essex Way and now following the **St. Peter's Way** (SPW) and the **Three Forests Way**) and follow a usually well-cleared path gently downhill into the **Roding Valley** (65°), aiming to the right of an electricity pole in about 100m and then broadly towards the far-left corner of the field. You leave the field through the boundary growth by a marker post and cut the small corner of a large field in the same direction. In 60m *turn left* along the grassy field boundary and in 90m you have the **Roding River** on the right. In 50m by a raised two-railed footbridge on the right, you reach an unmarked four-way footpath junction and *turn right* across the bridge with the SPW.

Continue through a riverside meadow on a clear path, with a tributary stream to the Roding meandering away to the left. In 300m leave the field through a gap in the growth by a marker post and in 60m go up some railed concrete steps and follow a residential lane to the left, with some houses on the right. This is the **Clatterford End** part of **High Ongar** village. Ignore a right turn and in 150m continue along a tarmac path where the lane ends. In 90m you reach **Mill Lane** at a T-junction and *turn right* along its pavement. In 60m, by **number 76 Mill Lane** on the right, *turn left* across the road and walk through a gap in trees to the right of a small transformer into a large arable field (visible amongst the trees to the left of the fenced in transformer there are a two-way signpost and a stile). Ignore the footpath straight ahead towards some electricity poles nearby and *bear right* (160°) towards a solitary faraway electricity pole.

In 400m you reach a narrow linear copse and follow a clear path through it. In 40m, at a T-junction with a tarmac path (an unmarked public bridleway) and with a large arable field ahead, *turn left* along the tarmac path along the wood, temporarily leaving the SPW. In 300m you enter the next large arable field and continue in the same direction along the tarmac path, in 100m along a hedge where the wood ends. There are two wide breaks in the hedge, and an unmarked public footpath joins through the second of those after 350m. In another 130m you continue in the same direction along a car wide gravel track at a bend, ignoring the right turn downhill. You have the – initially wooded

– grounds of the **Paslow Hall Estate** on the left. Ignore a left turn past a first large barn and in another 110m *veer left* through a metal sheep gate with a bridlemark on a fence post into the farmyard.

You continue in the same direction through the yard, to the right of some stables. In 80m, now on tarmac, *bear right* along the drive from the manor house away on the left, passing a picturesque pond. You get fine views of **Paslow Hall** over the hedge on the left and in 60m at the far end of the pond, *turn right* off the tarmac drive past a bridlemark post. In 40m go through a gap in a wooden fence with a marker and continue in the same direction along a car wide farm track with a hedge on the left and briefly with a copse on the right. In 140m cross a marked public footpath and continue on the grassy track between arable fields, gently rising, and eventually with fine far views over the mildly undulating Roding Valley on the right, towards the wooded watershed in the distance.

In 300m stay to the right of a developing bramble hedge on the left, ignoring a footpath marker post on its left-hand side (a footpath joins from across the field but then turns left a little further along within that field). The SPW re-joins here across the field on the right. Continue downhill along the track and in 70m *veer left* with the track away from the field boundary. In 30m ignore a gap in the hedge on the left by a marker post and cross **a Roding tributary** on the track. You continue gently uphill along a grassy track to the left of a boundary hedge with another large field on the left, and in 50m a track joins from the right out of the neighbouring field. In 400m leave the field and continue between trees with the gravel bridlemark, ignoring a marked public footpath to the left.

In 50m a public footpath joins from the right over a footbridge. In 200m you have the first garden fence on the left in **Paslow Wood Common** hamlet and in 20m ignore a left forking path along the fence to continue in the same direction with a marker post. In 100m cross a road to continue down the drive to **Paslow Common Farm**. In 75m ignore a left turn to the farmhouse and in 25m take the furthest right of three tracks to the right of a somewhat unkempt farmyard/industrial estate. In 40m you pass an electricity pole with a SPW marker and in 130m you reach a marker post by a garden fence and house on the right. [The marked right of way here differs from the OS map.]

**[!]** *Turn left* back on yourself with the SPW along a field boundary, ignoring the bridlemark ahead (also marked as the H2S). You continue to the right of the fenced yard and then along a long shed and in 170m at the far end of that, *turn right* with a SPW marker post (broken and on the ground at time of writing) across an arable field. There is a usually well-cleared path heading towards the left end of a line of trees (100°). In 300m leave the field by those trees and cross a ditch on an earth bank and continue in the same direction along the grassy margin of an arable field, with a ditch on the left. In 300m *turn right* with a marker post along the boundary and in 50m *turn left* with another marker post across a two-railed footbridge and continue across an arable field along a usually well-cleared path, in the general direction of a church spire towering over some trees. In 300m you leave the field about 50m to the left of its far-right corner, by a marker post through a gap in the growth.

Follow a path through trees. In 15m ignore a marked bridlemark to the left and pass the first houses of **Blackmore** village with a stream on the left. In 80m *turn left* along the pavement of the main road through the village. In 60m you pass a bus stop on the right and in another 40m one on the left. In 20m *turn right* across the road and follow a signposted footpath across a two-railed bridge over a stream. In a pasture with permissive access, nevertheless follow the right of way *veering left* in the direction of the church spire (125°). In 60m *fork left* along a grass path and in 60m *bear right* out of the field into some trees and cross a stream (an artificial arm of the **River Wid**, formerly the moat around an **Augustinian Priory**) and follow a clear path. Ignore a

right turning public footpath (this leads eventually along the high wall around the former priory grounds, but there is nothing to see unfortunately) and in 40m *turn right* through the lychgate towards the Grade I listed **St. Laurence, Blackmore**, the former priory church, noted for its wooden bell tower (usually open).

Leave the churchyard through the lychgate and go down a tarmac lane **into Blackmore village**. You pass cottages in the grounds of the **Manor House** (out of sight), some terrific timber-framed houses (a lane to the right leads to **Megarry's Antiques and Tea Room**), the former **Bull Inn** and – lastly – a targeted house, before reaching the main road through the village, opposite the village green. **The Prince Albert** is away to the left, **The Leather Bottle** on the half left, **The Blackmore Tea Rooms** to the right of it, the **village shop** on the right, and there are a toposcope and some benches in the middle of the green. *Turn right* from the previous direction along the road's pavement, passing a **bus stop for services to Brentwood** across the road.

In 40m, you have a large green on the right (and the War Memorial). And in 100m ponds on both sides of the road have the infant **River Wid** flowing through them from left-to-right. *Turn left* with the tarmac pavement at a road T-junction (Chelmsford Road to the left, Ingatestone Road to the right) and in 40m *turn right* across the road to continue with the signposted SPW across an arable field along a usually well-cleared path. In 290m leave the field through a narrow, wooded belt and on the far side go through a wooden barrier and *turn left*, following a grassy field boundary to the right immediately. In 290m you continue in the same direction with a marker post where the field boundary turns to the left.

You are cutting a corner of the field and have the large **Fryerning Wood** visible ahead and in 200m *turn left* through a boundary gap by a marker post into the neighbouring field. Follow a clear car wide track through another large field (this is somewhat to the right of the right of way on the OS map) and in 180m pass somewhat to the right of a pond. There is a footpath marker post by the pond but confusingly there is also a 'Private Property – Keep Out' sign closer by. In 220m at the far side of the field, at a four-way footpath junction and a bend in a farm track, *turn right* along the track, continuing to the left of the field just crossed. In 160m pass a metal field gate on the left ('Private – Keep Out – CCTV in operation'), leading into a field with dozens of wooden huts and sheds: they belong to **Howletts Hall**, a venison and game supplier.

In another 500m, at the far end of the field, you continue in the same direction with a SPW marker post and past a metal car barrier and along a car wide track past the former grounds of **Stoney Lodge**, recently replaced by a rather gargantuan modernist 'footballer's mansion', now called **Oakside**. In 40m pass another marker post and then the gate leading to the house. You continue on tarmac, passing a pond or two (disused gravel pits), and in 200m go through a squeeze gate to the left of a double wooden car gate. The drive continues ahead as a tarmac lane but it is crossed here by a wide linear wooded strip, **Mapletree Lane (Path)** on the OS map. This is **Access Land** and you *turn left* through it along a signposted bridleway through some wooden bollards and then along a clear path along the right-hand boundary of the strip (temporarily leaving the SPW). In 140m you pass a marker post and have **College Wood** to the left.

The path is not as straight as the map suggests and in 500m you *turn right* with Mapletree Lane, where another bridleway joins out of **Birch Spring Wood** by a marker post, now with pastures on either side of the wooded strip. In 120m you pass **Mapletree Farm** and in 50m the SPW and the H2S re-join along a public footpath from the right. In 40m a bridleway joins from the left along a car wide track and you continue in the same direction, with **Stonemore Wood** on the left. In 300m pass **Glasshouse Cottages** on the right and in 150m a signposted footpath joins from the right. At the subsequent left turn of the lane, you continue in the same direction with a signposted

bridleway into **Millgreen Common**. This is still **Access Land**, but there is a clear path to follow near the right-hand fringe of the common. Eventually you pass a car park to the right and in another 90m you meet **Millgreen Road** opposite **The Cricketers** pub. **The Viper** pub is 600m away to the left along the road.

Continue in the previous direction, with The Cricketers on the left, along the right-hand grassy margin of the road. In 50m, by the drive from **Mill Green Park** on the right, ignore a left turning signposted footpath and continue in the same direction, finally **leaving the St. Peter's Way** for good. You pass a **Gospel Hall and Water Tower** on the right and follow the road past some rather large houses and gardens for 300m to a three-way junction at a corner of **Fryerning** village. *Turn right* with the main road, still along the right-hand grassy margin, still with some rather large houses on either side. In 320m you cross **Beggarhill** (road) joining from the right and in 30m **Back Lane** joins from the left. Continue along the grassy margin of the road, now called **Fryerning Lane**, and pass a pond. In 100m, just before a three-way road junction, cross the road and *fork left* along a tarmac path that continues to the left of the left turning Fryerning Lane, shielded by trees, signposted 'Ingatestone'.

In 60m ignore steps down to the right and continue along the elevated path. Over the next 250m the path drops to the road level and you cross the road to continue along its right-hand pavement. In 270m pass **Ingatestone Infant School** on the left and cross the **A12** dual-carriageway on a road bridge to enter **Ingatestone**. In another 170m, where Fryerning Lane curves to the left, you *bear right* along **The Meads** (road). Ignore right turns and in 115m continue in the same direction along a tarmac path. In 40m *bear left* along the left-hand pavement of **Norton Road** to in 120m reach **High Street** at a T-junction. Cross the road and *turn left* along its pavement, ignoring **Crown Mews** ahead. In 60m cross **Bell Mead** (road), a shortcut to the train station, just before passing a bus stop and **The Bell Inn**. In 40m cross **The Limes**, another shortcut to the train station, and in 30m cross **Star Lane**, just before **The Star Inn**.

In 40m, with an **Italian restaurant** ahead on the left, you *turn right* along a signposted public footpath along a tarmac path. In 40m *bear right* in front of the red brick-fronted **St. Edmund & St. Mary's Church, Ingatestone** (11<sup>th</sup> century, modified in the 17<sup>th</sup> century). In 30m go through a metal kissing gate out of the churchyard and continue in the same direction to the right of a fenced playground. In 30m pass a two-way footpath marker post and continue in the same direction, ignoring a left fork. You follow the path along the right-hand side of a cricket green (**Ingatestone & Fryerning CC**) and in 160m *turn right* to cross a lane and continue in the previous direction along a tarmac path between trees. In 40m ignore a right fork (it links to one off the roads off the High Street) and in 125m you go through bike barriers and in 50m cross a tarmac lane to reach **Ingatestone Station**.

London bound trains depart from the far platform, reached via an overbridge.

## Ongar Station Ending

You pass **The Cock Pub & Kitchen** and have **Nerissa & Claire's Coffee Bar and Restaurant** opposite in Budworth Hall and in 100m **The King's Head**, also opposite. In 30m pass the **Porterhouse Wine Bar & Kitchen** as well as **The Bar** and **Brick Lane Bagel Company** opposite. In 30m *turn left* along a signposted footpath with the EW, signed **St. Martin's Church**. In 20m you pass the entrance to the churchyard and continue along a gravel drive. In 50m continue along an enclosed tarmac path to the right of the entrance gate to **The White House**. In 70m at a T-junction with a road, *turn half left* along the middle of three options, along a signposted public footpath with a **St. Peter's Way** marker, ignoring private drives on either side. Go through a wooden kissing gate and along a gravel path, soon with an arable field on the right and a hedge on the left, with a house and a pond visible at times. The pond is actually in the moat around the former **Outer Bailey of Ongar Castle**, whose perimeter the path follows.

In 180m by a marker post at a T-junction with a car wide gravel drive, *turn left* and in 20m *turn right* with it, ignoring a private drive to the left. In 25m *turn left* into a large pasture through a wooden kissing gate on the left, where the path continues ahead between fences. *Turn left* along the boundary fence along a Permissive Path (signed, at time of writing by a broken signpost on the ground: '**Permissive Route – Ongar Castle**'). You have a thick hedge on the left, initially still with the former **Outer Bailey of Ongar Castle** behind it, but in 80m you get first glimpses of the impressive moat around the now wooded **Motte of Ongar Castle**. In 75m *fork left* with the fence, now with the former **Inner Bailey of Ongar Castle** behind the hedge and in 30m go through a wooden kissing gate. Follow a path between the Inner Bailey and the **Town Enclosure** through a wood and in 50m you reach an info panel on **Ongar Castle** by a car park, with **High Street** beyond.

Return the way you came, back into the large pasture through the wooden kissing gate and *turn left* immediately along a clear path continuing between trees and bushes. In 70m by a footpath marker post, you continue between garden fences on the left and a high wire fence on the right. In 60m you have some sports fields on the right and continue along a car wide track. In 120m you *turn left* at a T-junction with **Love Lane**. In 90m cross **High Street** to the **Ongar Station bus stop for services to Epping**. For the train station, *turn right* along the pavement and in 30m *turn left* along **Station Approach** to in 70m reach **Ongar Station** on the **Epping – Ongar Railway** with a '**Buffet Stop**' selling hot and cold drinks. Return to the **bus stop for services to Epping** for the journey back.

## Ongar Village Ending

In 25m *turn left* along a car wide gravel drive and in 20m *turn right* along a grassy path by a marker post on the right with a **St. Peter's Way** marker on the reverse, further along the perimeter of the **Outer Bailey of Ongar Castle**, soon with an arable field on the left and a hedge on the right. In 180m go through a wooden kissing gate by a signpost onto a junction of private drives on the left and right and a road ahead. In 10m *turn right* along an enclosed tarmac path. In 70m this continues as a gravel drive by the entrance gate to **The White House** on the right and **St. Martin's Church** on the left. Pass the church and continue to the **High Street**. The **bus stop for services to Brentwood** is away to the left. *Turn right* along the High Street. You pass the **Porterhouse Wine Bar & Kitchen** as well as **The Bar** and **Brick Lane Bagel Company** opposite and in another 30m **The King's Head** opposite. In 100m pass **The Cock Pub & Kitchen**, with **Nerissa & Claire's Coffee Bar and Restaurant** opposite.

Cross the road to the **bus stop for services to Epping**.