



Great Chesterford to Newport (Essex) Walk

Through rolling hills and river valleys to the historic market town of Saffron Walden and one of Britain's finest stately homes.



Length	Main Walk: 17½ km (10.9 miles). Four hours walking time. For the whole excursion including trains, sights and meals, allow at least 9½ hours.
	Extended Walk, to Audley End: 20½ km (12.7 miles). Four hours 45 minutes walking time.
	Short Walk, from Audley End: 15¼ km (9.5 miles). Three hours 25 minutes walking time.
	Circular Walk, from Audley End: 18¼ km (11.3 miles). Four hours 10 minutes walking time.

OS Maps	Explorers 195 & 209. Great Chesterford, map reference TL504424, is in Essex, 5 km NW of Saffron Walden.
----------------	--

Toughness	3 out of 10 (4 for the longer ending).
------------------	--

Features	All Essex walks seem to feature lines of pylons marching across enormous crop fields and this one is no exception. On the plus side, most of the farmland walking is along grassy field edges and there are pleasant interludes through small woods and river valleys to add variety.
	The walk's centrepiece is the historic market town of Saffron Walden . Originally called Chipping Walden, the town acquired its present name in the Middle Ages when it became the centre for the saffron crocus industry; the yellow pigment was used in cloth-making, food-colouring and medicine. The north-western corner of the town has retained many attractive medieval buildings with fine examples of pargeting, the East Anglian craft of decorating external plaster walls.

You enter the town through the elegant **Bridge End Garden**, which is well worth exploring. After lunch you could visit the **Fry Art Gallery** of works by local artists and the largest parish church in Essex, **St Mary the Virgin**. The suggested route through the town also passes the Norman ruins of **Walden Castle** and a notable **Museum** of local and natural history. A short extension would take you to the largest surviving historic **Turf Maze** in Europe.

Immediately after leaving the town the walk route cuts through a corner of the spacious parkland surrounding **Audley End House**. Now one of Britain's finest stately homes, the mansion was adapted from the buildings of a Benedictine monastery (Walden Abbey) and since the Dissolution there have been many alterations by a succession of owners. It mostly dates from the 18thC, with interior rooms designed by Robert Adam and the surrounding parkland landscaped by Lancelot "Capability" Brown. The property is managed by English Heritage and is open daily from April to October (and weekends in winter); admission for non-EH members is £25 (2024).

From Audley End the route follows a section of the **Harcamlow Way** to finish in the large village of **Newport**, which acquired its name at a time when "port" could mean a town with market privileges as well as a town with a harbour.

Walk Options

For a slightly **Extended Walk** you could loop back from Newport church via the small village of **Wendens Ambo** to finish at **Audley End** station, an extra 3 km.

Directions are also given for an alternative start from this station. This **Short Walk** goes past the entrance to Audley End House and includes a longer stretch through Audley Park, but of necessity much of its outward route is along roads. This option is mainly intended for those who want to combine a shortish walk with a visit to the house, but it would also be worth considering if you missed the outward train and wanted to catch up the main group at lunchtime. When combined with the extended finish it provides a **Circular Walk** option.

Additional Notes





The extension to Audley End was added to the original walk in 2020. At the same time the longer route around Audley Park was switched to the alternative start.

Transport

Great Chesterford, Audley End and Newport (Essex) are on the West Anglia line from Liverpool Street to Cambridge. All trains stop at Audley End, so this station usually has two trains an hour. At off-peak times the other two stations are only served by the hourly stopping trains, taking just over an hour from London. Buy a **return to Great Chesterford** (or Audley End if starting there).

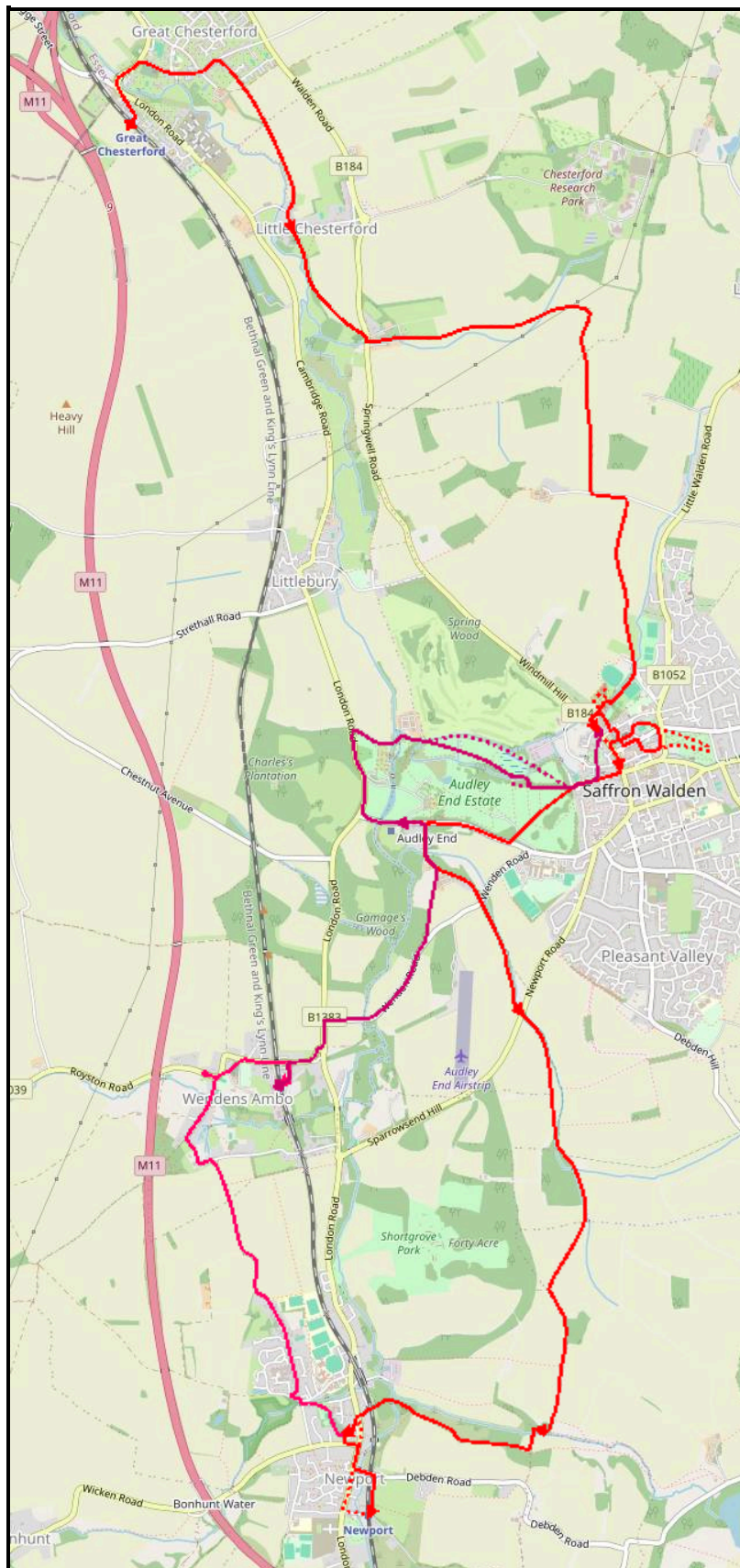
There are several useful bus services if you want to abandon the walk at Saffron Walden. Stephenson's 301 (Mon-Sat, hourly to 7pm) goes to Bishop's Stortford via Audley End and Newport stations. In the other direction Stagecoach Citi 7 (Mon-Sat, hourly to 8pm) and CG Myall 132 (Sun & BH, two-hourly to 5pm) go to Cambridge via Great Chesterford.

If driving, there is only limited roadside parking near Great Chesterford station. The small station car park at Newport costs £4.40 off-peak and weekends; the much larger one at Audley End costs around £7 off-peak, £5 weekends (2025).

Suggested Train	Take the train nearest to 10:15 from Liverpool Street to Great Chesterford for the Main Walk. Unless you want to allow extra time for visiting Audley End House, the semi-fast train after that would be fine for the alternative start from Audley End .	
Lunch	<p>The suggested lunch place (after 7¾ km, or 5½ km from Audley End) is the first pub you come to in Saffron Walden, the 15thC Eight Bells (01799-522790; closed Mon & Tue) in Bridge Street. Adjacent to Bridge End Garden (a nice picnic spot), this up-market old pub serves good food and has a quiet patio area away from the street.</p> <p>There are several other pubs in the town centre, plus cafés and coffee shops in and around the Market Place. The full walk route passes the Kings Arms (01799-522768) in Market Hill and the Cross Keys Hotel (01799-522207) on the High Street. On the way out of the town The Temeraire (01799-516975) is a JD Wetherspoons pub just past the junction with Abbey Lane.</p>	
Tea	<p>The suggested tea place in Newport is the 17thC White Horse (01799-540002) on Belmont Hill, a traditional village pub 10-15 minutes before the station. The only alternative is a convenience store on the High Street.</p> <p>On the extension the suggested tea place is The Bell (01799-540382) in Wendens Ambo, an attractive country pub about 10 minutes before Audley End station. Hot and cold drinks might also be available from the newsagent at the station.</p>	
Help Us!	<p>After the walk, please leave a comment, it really helps. Thanks!</p> <p>You can also upload photos to the   SWC Group on Flickr (upload your photos) and videos to  Youtube. This walk's tags are:</p>	
By Car	Start	Finish
Help	National Rail: 03457 48 49 50 • Traveline (bus times): 0871 200 22 33 (12p/min) • TFL (London) : 0343 222 1234	
Version	Apr-25 	
Copyright	© Saturday Walkers Club. All Rights Reserved. No commercial use. No copying. No derivatives. Free with attribution for one time non-commercial use only. www.walkingclub.org.uk/site/license.shtml	

Walk Directions

Walk Map



All maps © OpenStreetMap contributors

Walk Options

M. Main Walk (17½ km)

a. Extended Walk, to Audley End (20½ km)

b. Short Walk, from Audley End (15¼ km)

c. Circular Walk, from Audley End (18¼ km)

Walk Directions

If you are doing the Short or Circular Walk (from Audley End), start at §C.

A. Great Chesterford Station to Little Chesterford (2¼ km)

1. Arriving from London, cross the footbridge to leave the station by the other platform. Keep left through a small parking area and go along the station approach road to the B1383. Cross it carefully, turn left and follow the road round to the right and over the **River Cam** (or **Granta**¹). Ignore a lane on the right leading back towards the river but 75m later **turn right** into Church Street.
2. You soon come to **All Saints** church² on the right (and can detour through its churchyard if you wish). Continue past School Street and follow the road (now South Street) round to the left. Keep ahead at a crossroads, passing the **Crown & Thistle** pub on your right, then in a further 150m **turn right** into Rose Lane.
3. Where the lane veers left into a new private estate **keep ahead** on a tree-lined footpath, heading **SE**. At the end go straight across a farm track onto a broad path along the edge of a field, with trees on your right. In 250m, at the end of the field, veer right and left to continue in the same direction with a hedge on your left.
4. Follow this path for a further 500m (with the River Cam off to your right) to reach some houses on the edge of **Little Chesterford**. Go along a driveway and bear left onto a lane through the village. In 125m, where this turns left, go into a small parking area for the village hall and church of **St Mary the Virgin**³ (which is usually locked).

B. Little Chesterford to Saffron Walden (Bridge Street) (5½ km)

5. Go through a kissing gate near the back of the car park and continue alongside the low wall of the churchyard, then gently uphill towards the right-hand end of a line of trees. When you reach them, keep ahead on a narrow path which drops down to a short grassy strip near the river. At the end go through a new wooden gate onto a fenced path climbing gently through a copse, then alongside a large field to meet the B184.
6. Turn right briefly onto the road, crossing over at some point. Ignore the entrance to a nursery but then **turn left** onto a concrete track heading **E**, signposted as a footpath. The track becomes a broad grassy path which leads into the corner of a large field. Continue in much the same direction for 1¼ km, climbing gently with a hedge on your left and farmland on your right.
7. A line of pylons gradually approaches from the right and eventually you pass under the power lines. Shortly after this, at the top corner of the field, ignore a gap into the field ahead and instead **turn right** to go along the top of the field, with a hedge on your left. In 500m go through a wide gap in a hedge into the next field to get a view of Saffron Walden, 2 km ahead.
8. Continue gently downhill on the grassy track for a further 700m, heading **S** and eventually reaching a lane leading to Westley Farm. **Turn left** to head **E** for 250m; you can soon bear right onto a grassy strip running alongside and slightly above the farm lane where it passes a small chalk pit. After returning to the lane **turn right** at a footpath signpost onto a grassy track between fields.
9. In 500m go through a gap in a hedge and continue along the edge of more fields, with a tall hedge on your left. In a further 500m ignore a footpath off to the right and keep ahead on an unsurfaced track, crossing a stream. In 75m **veer right** into a small parking area in front of the town's football club and take a narrow path between its boundary fence and the tree-lined stream.

10. The path soon drops down to run close to the streambed. After going over a small rise ignore a footbridge on the right leading to the cricket club's car park to continue on a grassy strip. At the end turn right onto the club's driveway to cross the stream, then immediately **turn left** through a back gate into **Bridge End Garden**⁴.
These elegant gardens are well worth exploring, either before or after the lunch stop (the afternoon route comes back past their main gate).
11. The most direct route is to go straight ahead through **The Wilderness** and then the **Dutch Garden** to the main gate on the far side. After leaving the gardens **turn left** onto a path which immediately splits: the left fork leads to Castle Street and the right fork to Bridge Street.
If you are not visiting the suggested lunch pub you could fork left here and resume the directions at [29] in §E.
12. To visit the pub **fork right** onto Bridge Street Path, soon with the **Eight Bells** visible across the stream on the left. At the far end go out through an opening and turn left to reach its entrance.
Continue the directions at §E.

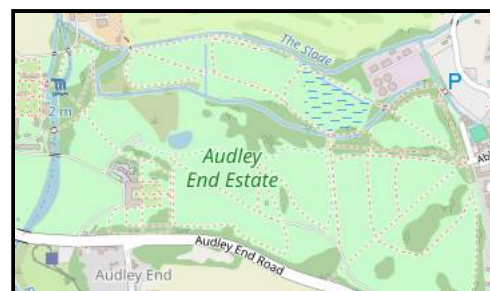
C. Audley End Station to Audley End House (2½ km)

13. Arriving from London, cross the footbridge to leave the station by the other platform. Bear left through the car park and go along the station approach road to a mini-roundabout. Turn right onto the B1039 and follow it round a couple of bends to a T-junction. Turn left and go along the B1383 (London Road) for 150m, then **turn right** into Wenden Road, joining the **Saffron Trail**⁵ (ST).
The signposted pedestrian route to Audley End House (1½ km away) is along the footway beside the main road, but there is no real problem with the much quieter route described below.
14. On Wenden Road there is a tarmac footway at first, but soon after crossing the **River Cam** (or **Granta**¹) you have to use the rather uneven grass verge for 600m. Towards the end of this stretch there is a low stone wall on your left and where it curves away from the road, **veer left** onto a signposted footpath to stay alongside it.
15. Follow the footpath through a wooded area and then along a grassy field margin, heading **N** towards the left-hand end of some outbuildings at Abbey Farm. At the end of the field keep ahead on a narrow enclosed path past the side of these buildings to come to the farm's driveway.
The afternoon route to Newport is along this farm drive to the right, so if you wanted to cut out the entire loop through Audley End and Saffron Walden you could skip to [41] in §F.
16. Bear left onto the farm drive, which is also a public footpath. It bends left and then in 100m turns half-right as it passes the old entrance to **St Mark's College**⁶. Carry on through Audley End village, heading **N** again. At the far end keep left at a small triangular green, leaving the ST. Turn left onto Audley End Road to reach the imposing entrance to **Audley End House**.

D. Audley End House to Saffron Walden (Bridge Street) (3 km)

17. Continue along the road, passing **Audley End Miniature Railway**⁷ on your left and crossing the River Cam on the ornate **Adam Bridge**. At the T-junction turn right onto a walkway beside the B1383, with an impressive view of the mansion beyond what appears to be a **lake**⁸; 500m away on the other side of the main road is one of the 18thC **monuments**⁹ dotted around the estate.
18. After passing the vehicle exit from the mansion you have a further 350m alongside the main road. Go past Nursery Lodge and **turn right** onto an estate road, signposted as a public footpath.

19. At the point where the driveway takes you back across the River Cam via a couple of bridges there are two massive concrete blocks, part of a **bridge barrier**¹⁰. Where the drive swings round to the left after the second bridge **veer right** as indicated by a footpath signpost.
20. Follow the path round to the right to run between a stone wall and a water channel, coming out into the north-western corner of **Audley Park**. The suggested route is to **bear right** onto a grassy path going diagonally across two meadows, passing through a wide gap in a hedge between them.
 - Alternatively, you could simply take the path ahead around the perimeter of the parkland. If you do this, resume the directions at [24] when you reach the main gate on its eastern boundary.
21. On the far side of the second meadow the path approaches a line of trees on the right and continues as a broad grassy strip alongside them. There is a stream in the trees and in 100m a gap reveals a place where you could cross it via a couple of stepping stones.
22. A straightforward route is to ignore this and carry on alongside the tree-lined stream for a further 100m (though the grassy strip can be muddy where it passes a pond at the head of the stream). On emerging into the corner of a field **veer right**, then in 50m **turn left** onto a tree-lined avenue heading **E**.
 - If you feel capable of scrambling up the bank on the far side of the stepping stones, you could avoid the potentially muddy stretch by crossing the stream there and **forking left** to go along the full length of the avenue.
23. At the far end of the avenue you come to the eastern boundary of the parkland, where five or six paths converge on the main gate.
The afternoon route to Newport is along the path turning sharply right (back through the parkland), so if you want to cut out the entire loop through Saffron Walden you could skip to [39] in §F.
24. Go out through the iron gate beside a lodge building and bear right onto Abbey Lane. In 75m you cross the medieval town boundary, described on "The Battle Ditches" information panel off to the right, then pass a large green on the left in front of the **King Edward VI Almshouses**¹¹.
25. At the end of the green **turn left** onto a tarmac path between the almshouses and the **United Reformed Church**¹². This leads into the back garden for "Primes Close", and although it looks private you can go through an archway and out through its front garden to a narrow street (Park Lane).
Please respect the privacy of the residents. This useful route is not a public right of way, but a plaque at the Abbey Lane end confirms that it is a permissive path.
26. Cross Park Lane and go through an opening in the brick wall opposite onto the continuation of the path. This leads into a small open space where you follow a tarmac path up to its top right-hand corner. Keep ahead through the parking area for Walden Place and go out through an opening onto a cul-de-sac (Myddylton Place).
27. Bear left and follow this short street out to a crossroads, with two particularly fine medieval buildings on its corners: the former **Youth Hostel**¹³ on the left and **The Close** diagonally opposite. At this junction **turn left** and go down Bridge Street for 75m to come to the suggested lunch pub on the right, the **Eight Bells**.



E. Bridge Street to Abbey Lane (1½ • 2 km)

This section is a rather convoluted route around the historic town centre (adapted from the local council's "Town Trail" leaflet), with an optional extension across The Common. There is a crossover point in front of the parish church, so you could omit the outer loop via the Market Place and Castle ruins. More simply you could just go directly along the High Street, picking up the directions opposite the church at [37].

28. For the suggested route **turn right** out of the pub, briefly retracing your steps on the Main Walk. Almost immediately **turn right** again onto a path between flower beds. Where the path splits near the main entrance gate for **Bridge End Garden** the walk continues round to the right, on Castle Street Path.

- If you have not already done so, these elegant gardens are well worth exploring. Return to this point to resume the walk.



29. Follow Castle Street Path away from the garden. After going through an opening in a bright red wall you pass the **Fry Art Gallery**¹⁴ (free entry). At the end turn left briefly onto Castle Street, then in 30m **turn right** up a tarmac path between houses into the churchyard of **St Mary the Virgin**¹⁵. Bear right to come to the west door of this large parish church (which is well worth visiting). *If you want to cut out the circuit around the Market Place, The Common and the Castle ruins, skip to [36].*

30. If you have been visiting the church, turn left out of the west door onto the tarmac path heading **SE**. On leaving the churchyard the route continues down a short street, but you might like to detour through the small Dorset House Garden on the left with its modern sculpture, **The Children of Calais**¹⁶.
31. At the bottom turn left onto Church Street, soon passing the **Old Sun Inn**¹⁷ (no longer an inn) on the right, with its impressive parterring. At a crossroads **turn right** and go down King Street, passing the **Kings Arms** on the left. This leads into the **Market Place**¹⁸, with an elaborate drinking fountain at its centre.

32. Go diagonally across the square and into a passageway (Rose & Crown Walk). This passes the **Tiptree Tea Room** and leads to the B1052 (Common Hill) in front of **The Common**. Unless you want to detour across it to see the Turf Maze, **turn left** and go alongside Common Hill to the crossroads at the north-western corner of The Common, with Church Street to the left.

33. Detour to the Turf Maze (+½ km)

- Go all the way across The Common to find the extensive **Turf Maze**¹⁹ on its eastern side. Come back across The Common on a diagonal route to its north-western corner.

34. The route continues through the Museum and Castle grounds, on the far side of The Common at the crossroads. If the small gate into the grounds at this corner is open, you can go diagonally across the grounds past the Norman ruins of **Walden Castle**²⁰ to the building housing **Saffron Walden Museum**²¹.

- If this gate is locked the main entrance to the grounds is 60m away along Church Street; the pedestrian gate there (and the one on Museum Street) should be open at all times.

35. Follow the Museum's driveway out to Museum Street, with the parish church ahead. Turn left briefly onto the road, then take the path on the right through the churchyard. Follow it past the south side of the church and back to its west door, completing this part of the town circuit.

36. Take the tarmac path going directly away from the west door, heading **SW** at the start of the **Saffron Trail**⁵ (ST). On leaving the churchyard you could simply carry on to the High Street, but the suggested route is to go down steps on the right and cut through a small garden, coming out onto the main road a little further along. Either way, turn left onto the road.
37. As you go down the High Street you pass a few more refreshment places, including the **Cross Keys Hotel** on the left. At the traffic lights the final pub (**The Temeraire**) is up ahead on the right-hand side of the High Street, but to continue the walk **turn right** into Abbey Lane, also joining the **Harcamlow Way**²² (HCW).

F. Abbey Lane to Newport Road (3 km)

38. Go all the way along Abbey Lane, passing the **United Reformed Church**¹² and the **King Edward VI Almshouses**¹¹ on your right. Towards the end you cross the medieval town boundary, described on "The Battle Ditches" information panel off to the left, then go through the iron gate beside a lodge building into **Audley Park**
39. Inside the park **turn half-left** onto a broad path heading **SW** for 500m, gently uphill at first and passing occasional tall trees. On the far side keep ahead down a track through some trees. Go out through the gate by another lodge building and turn right onto Audley End Road, with the park wall on your right. In 500m **fork left** at a small triangular green.
 - For a (side) view of **Audley End House** you would have to carry on past the green for 125m to its main entrance gate, then retrace your steps.
40. Head **S** on the private road through Audley End village, signposted as a public footpath. In 200m **fork left** in front of the old entrance to **St Mark's College**⁶ onto the driveway to Abbey Farm, still a right of way. In 100m the drive turns half-right and goes alongside an outbuilding. At the next bend you leave the ST, which takes the footpath on the right towards Wendens Ambo (the outward route from Audley End station).
41. Follow the drive out to Wenden Road. Go straight across onto a tree-lined track (Beechy Ride), signposted as a footpath and with farm fields on both sides. In 350m **swerve right and left** through a wide gap in the tree boundary to continue on the waymarked footpath through a belt of trees, with a stream on your left. In 350m the path briefly emerges from the trees and swings left up a slope to the B1052 (Newport Road).

G. Newport Road to Debden Water (3 km)

42. Cross the road carefully onto the continuation of the footpath, down a slope and through a belt of trees. In 300m the trees thin out and you emerge onto a thin crescent-shaped meadow. Follow a grassy path all the way along its right-hand edge. At the far end cross a ditch on a wooden footbridge and bear right onto a bridleway, heading **S** with **Brakey Ley Wood** on your right.
43. In 150m you reach the field corner. Follow the path round to the left and up a short slope, then **fork right** downhill at a footpath marker. Continue alongside the wood for 450m, crossing a couple of ditches along the way. At the end of the trees keep ahead up a gentle slope for 500m, with a hedge on your right. At the top **turn half-left** onto a fenced path, soon with glimpses of Newport in the valley down to the right, 1½ km away.
44. Follow the path through the edge of a wood and then gently downhill on a field edge, heading **S** with a tall hedge on your right. Later the path swerves left and right and descends through a patch of scrubland to a path T-junction. **Turn right** into a belt of trees, heading **W** alongside **Debden Water**. In 100m you come to another path junction (the crossover point of the HCW), with a footbridge over the tree-lined stream on your left.

H. Debden Water to Newport Church (1½ km)

45. At the path junction **turn left** to cross this tributary of the River Granta, coming out into a field. Unless it looks waterlogged (when it might be easier to go around its right-hand side) keep ahead across the field. On the far side **turn right** (leaving the HCW) along its top edge and continue along a broad grassy strip, climbing gently between two woods.
46. You come out into the corner of a huge farm field and keep ahead to go all the way along its bottom edge, about 700m. In the far corner **veer right** down a short slope to continue on a potentially muddy path through an area of partially-cleared wet woodland for 250m, crossing the **River Granta** on a footbridge in the middle.
47. On the far side bear right onto a track going under a low railway bridge to White Horse Lane. Bear left and follow this short street up to the B1383 at the top of Belmont Hill, with the **White Horse** pub on the left: this is the suggested refreshment place if you are finishing the walk at Newport.
 - For a direct route to Newport Station you could turn left out of the pub, go down the B1383 for 600m (passing a convenience store) and turn left into Station Road, but the full route is more interesting and not much longer.
48. For the suggested route cross the B1383 carefully by the pub and follow the lane opposite (Church Street) round to the left. Keep right at the quaintly-named Elephant Green, then turn right through a gate into the churchyard. Follow the path up to the south door of **St Mary the Virgin**²³, which is worth a quick visit if open.
If you are doing the extension via Wendens Ambo to Audley End Station, complete the directions at §J.

I. Newport Church to Newport Station (¾ km)

49. Go directly away from the south door to leave the churchyard by its lychgate, returning to Church Street. Go down to a T-junction with the B1038 (Wicken Road) and turn left to return to the B1383 (now the High Street).
50. Turn right onto the main road and cross over at some point, passing the attractive brick and timber **Monk's Barn**²⁴. For a quieter alternative to the B1383, **turn left** into Debden Road.
51. Take care as you cross the railway on a narrow humpback bridge. On the other side **turn right** down a lane parallel to the tracks. In 250m **turn right** between low wooden fences to go directly onto Platform 1, for trains to London.



J. Newport Church to Audley End Station (3¾ km)

52. Take the tarmac path going around the church tower to the north-western corner of the churchyard. Leave it through a wooden gate and follow the path northwards. After passing some tennis courts **veer left** to cut diagonally across a recreation ground to its bottom corner.
53. Go out onto a path and continue along a cul-de-sac (Tenterfields) to School Lane. Cross over and **turn right** onto a short tarmac path which crosses **Wicken Water** on a footbridge, then turn left onto Bury Water Lane. In 75m **turn right** into Whiteditch Lane, signposted as a byway.
54. After veering right and left this long lane heads **N** past swathes of new housing, with a parallel walkway on the right for one stretch. Along the way you rejoin the **Saffron Trail** (ST) from a footpath on the right. At the far end the byway continues as a tree-lined path, curving round to the left with a large field on the right and climbing gently.

55. The path soon swings right to head **N** again on the broad grassy edge of this field, then bends left and comes to a concrete farm track. Turn right onto the track, still climbing. For 100m the tree boundary is on your right, then the track switches to go alongside a hedge on the left. As you go over the brow of **Mill Hill** you can make out the village of Wendens Ambo in the valley ahead.
56. At the bottom of the slope skirt around a new metal gate and turn left onto Rookery Lane. This turns sharply right in front of some large farm sheds, goes past a playing field and comes to a T-junction. Turn right and follow Duck Street through **Wendens Ambo**²⁵, passing a mix of modern houses and thatched cottages with pargeting.
57. In 300m a footbridge beside a ford gets you across another tributary of the River Granta. Follow the road up a short slope towards a T-junction with the B1039 (Royston Road).
 - If you are not visiting the village pub then just before the junction you can go through a wooden fieldgate on the right (with a ST waymarker) onto a tarmac path cutting through the corner of a recreation ground. If you take this minor short cut, resume the directions at [59].
58. For the suggested refreshment stop go up to the T-junction and turn left to come to **The Bell** on the left-hand side. After visiting the pub retrace your steps along Royston Road to the T-junction. Go through a small wooden gate on the other side of Duck Street and keep left to join the tarmac path through the recreation ground.
59. Follow the path out to a short cul-de-sac (Church Path) and turn right, passing a few more picturesque cottages. At the end keep ahead on a tarmac path going up to the church of **St Mary the Virgin**²⁶. Its entrance is round to the right, but to complete the walk follow the path as it turns half-left to go past the north side of the church.
60. Go past the car park for the village hall to return to the B1039 and turn right, leaving the ST. After crossing over the railway (where you can see Audley End Station on the right) turn right at a mini-roundabout onto its short approach road. Go past the right-hand side of the station building onto Platform 1 for trains to London.

Walk Notes

1. The **Granta** is the longer of the two main tributaries of the **River Cam**, joining the Rhee near Grantchester, just south of Cambridge. The Granta's source is in the low hills around Newport, near the end of the walk.
2. **All Saints, Great Chesterford** dates from the 13thC but has had many additions over the years.
3. **St Mary the Virgin, Little Chesterford** dates from the 13thC and retains much of its original form. It was restored in the 19thC.
4. **Bridge End Garden** contains a number of contrasting areas ingeniously linked by paths and views. It was originally laid out in the mid-19thC by Francis Wilson, a prominent Quaker whose family were great benefactors of the town.
5. The **Saffron Trail** runs for 115 km between Saffron Walden and Southend-on-Sea. Devised by Essex Ramblers, it was given this fanciful name to evoke images of an exotic (but non-existent) spice trail between the two towns.
6. The 17thC buildings of **St Mark's College** were originally almshouses, built on the site of the old Benedictine Abbey's hospital. They became a Residential Youth and Conference Centre run by the Diocese of Chelmsford.
7. The **Audley End Miniature Railway** is a 10¼" gauge railway which runs for 1½ miles through the estate woodland, operating on summer weekends and school holidays.
8. The serpentine '**lake**' in front of **Audley End House** was created by widening the River Cam on its course through the landscaped grounds.
9. The **monuments** visible from the walk route are the **Temple of Victory** in the farmland to the west of the mansion (celebrating British successes in the Seven Years War) and an obelisk in the hillside to the north of Audley Park known as **Lady Portsmouth's Column**.

10. The **bridge barrier** was designed to stop enemy tanks in World War II. Heavy steel cables would be drawn across the road between the two concrete blocks.
11. The **King Edward VI Almshouses** in Abbey Lane were built in 1834, but there have been others in the area since 1400. They are now sheltered housing.
12. The **United Reformed Church** was built in 1811, replacing an earlier building. There are two other Nonconformist places of worship (a Baptist Chapel and a Friend's Meeting House) in the High Street.
13. The **Youth Hostel** was closed by the YHA in 2011. The building dates from the 1490s and was originally a combined shop, home and warehouse; it had also been used as a malting.
14. The **Fry Art Gallery** contains works by the Great Bardfield group of artists, who settled in the countryside of north-west Essex in the 1930s. They specialised mainly in figurative (as opposed to abstract) art.
15. **St Mary the Virgin, Saffron Walden** dates from 1250 but was mostly rebuilt in the Perpendicular style in the late 15thC, with the spire being added to the tower in 1832. The church's size reflects the wealth created by the saffron industry. It has a fine organ with a spectacular set of *Trompeta Real* pipes.
16. **The Children of Calais** sculpture by Ian Wolter was installed in 2018. It portrays six refugee children caught in the migration crisis, their poses echoing Rodin's famous work *The Burghers of Calais* (1895).
17. The **Old Sun Inn** is a range of 14thC homes and shops with many different types of pargeting. The intriguing end gable shows two giant figures.
18. The buildings around the **Market Place** are mostly Victorian (eg. the Italianate-style **Library**, originally the Corn Exchange), or older buildings with Victorian additions (eg. the Georgian **Town Hall**, housing the Tourist Information Centre). The local market was moved from Newport in the 13thC and there are still twice-weekly markets on Tuesdays and Saturdays.
19. The **Turf Maze** on The Common is the largest surviving medieval turf labyrinth in Europe, but its age and purpose is unknown. It is 100 feet in diameter with a mile-long pathway through its convoluted pattern.
20. **Walden Castle** was built around 1140 by the Norman Lord of the Manor, Geoffrey de Mandeville. Only the ruins of the keep tower remain from that period; the round tower is an 18thC addition.
21. **Saffron Walden Museum** has galleries of local and natural history and an important ethnographic collection. Beside the driveway there is a display of medieval stone coffins and some unusual rocks from the area, including a glacial erratic boulder.
22. The **Harcamlow Way** runs for 227 km from Harlow to Cambridge and back again in a Figure-of-8, with the crossover point outside Newport.
23. **St Mary the Virgin, Newport** dates from the 14thC, with the tower being restored in the 19thC.
24. **Monk's Barn** is a Wealden house dating from the late 15thC. It has a fine carved oriel window depicting the crowned Virgin and Child, flanked by angels.
25. **Wendens Ambo** means 'both Wendens'; two separate parishes (Wendens Magna & Wendens Parva) were joined together in 1662.
26. **St Mary the Virgin, Wendens Ambo** dates from the 11thC, with later additions in the Middle Ages and the 19thC.

» [Last updated: April 5, 2025](#)

© [Saturday Walkers Club](#). All Rights Reserved. No commercial use. No copying. No derivatives. Free with attribution for one time non-commercial use only.
www.walkingclub.org.uk/site/license.shtml

saturdaywalkers@walkingclub.org.uk

No warranty, use at your own risk!

[Saturday Walkers Club © 2025](#)