

Roydon to Sawbridgeworth			Roydon to Sawbridgeworth (Short Walk)		
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Roydon to Sawbridgeworth (via Henry Moore Foundation)

Start: Roydon Station

Finish: Sawbridgeworth Station

Roydon Station, map reference TL 405104, is on the **East Hertfordshire/Essex** border, 4 km west of Harlow, and 32m above sea level. Sawbridgeworth Station, map reference TL 490150 is in **East Hertfordshire**, 6 km south of Bishop's Stortford, and 48m above sea level.

Length: 22.8 km (14.2 mi), of which 3.6 km (2.2 mi) on tarmac or concrete.

Cumulative ascent/descent: 249/233m. For a shorter walk, *see below* **Walk options**.

Toughness: 4 out of 10

Time: 5 hours walking time.

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

Transport: Trains go from Liverpool Street, half-hourly service (irregularly on Sundays), journey time from 29 minutes (30 minutes on Sundays); or from Stratford, approx. half-hourly service (hourly on Sundays), journey time from 39 minutes Mon-Sat (43 minutes on Sundays). Trains usually stop at Tottenham Hale (connect from the Victoria Line). Sawbridgeworth is further down the West Anglia Main Line from Liverpool Street to Cambridge (journey time from 41 minutes).

Saturday Walkers' Club: Take the train closest to 9.30 hours.

OS Landranger Map: 166 (Luton & Hertford) and 167 (Chelmsford)

OS Explorer Map: 194 (Hertford & Bishop's Stortford)

Walk Notes:

This walk leads mainly through rolling Hertfordshire countryside, either along tracks and green lanes or quiet country roads, featuring wheat fields, woods and waterways, the best of which are stretches of the River Ash in the morning and of the Stort Navigation near the end. Lunch is had at a charming pub in Perry Green, next to The Henry Moore Foundation's sculpture park and studios (ticketed entry only). The walk doesn't feature any stiles, industry or offensive field crossings, and it is very low on the conurbation count as well.

Note: The Henry Moore Foundation is closed from end October to Easter.

Walk options:

Shortcuts: It is possible to shorten the walk in two ways:

- Shortcut I cuts out 2.6 km (1.6 mi) before lunch,
- Shortcut II cuts out 1.4 km (0.9 mi) after lunch.

Taking Shortcut I & II reduces the length of the walk to 18.9 km (11.75 mi), still with a rating of **4/10**.

Lunch:

The Hoops Inn Perry Green, Herts, SG10 6EF (01279 843 568, <http://www.hoops-inn.co.uk/>).

Winter: Closed Mon-Tue. Open: Wed-Sat 12.00-21.30, Sun 12.00-18.00 & Bank Holidays 12.00-16.00. Food served Wed-Fri 12.00-15.00 and 17.00-21.00, Sat 12.00-21.00. Sun 12.00-18.00 & Bank Holidays 12.00-16.00. Tea served 15.00-17.00.

Summer: Closed Mon-Tue. Open: Wed-Sat 12.00-23.00, Sun & Bank Holidays 12.00-18.30. Food served to 21.00 Wed-Sat and 18.00 Sun and Bank Holidays. Tea served 15.00-17.00.

The Hoops Inn is located 14.0 km (8.7 mi) into the main walk. It was probably built in about 1834, a date found on several interior beams, with its ales initially being brewed on the premises. Ownership eventually passed to McMullens brewery of Hertford, but a long series of distinctive landlords, ensured The Hoops' popularity, especially during the War years when many troops were billeted in the vicinity.

Henry Moore had considered acquiring the property in the early 1970s, but it was not until 1990 that The Henry Moore Foundation, an arts charity set up by the artist, took on the lease. Moore, along with other local artists and occasionally his assistants, would often visit The Hoops on a Sunday, as did some of the important international figures who came to see the famous sculptor and his family.

Among those visiting his home at Hoglands were actresses Lauren Bacall and Julie Andrews, writers W. Somerset Maugham and W.H Auden, Politicians Helmut Kohl and Francois Mitterand and even Her Majesty, The Queen Mother. Until 2009, The Foundation entrusted the running of The Hoops to independent publicans. The Inn serves a full range of food from nibbles and sandwiches to ambitious meals, and has a large outdoor area at the back.

Tea:

George IV 81 London Road/Knight Street, Sawbridgeworth, Herts, CM21 9AT (01279 723 527, <http://www.mcmullens.co.uk/george-iv>) Open Mon-Sat 11.00-23.30 and 12.00-23.00 Sun.

The Queens Head 26 Knight Street, Sawbridgeworth, Herts, CM21 9AT (01279 836 05)

La Provence 23 Bell Street, Sawbridgeworth, Herts, CM21 9AR (01279 726 495) Open Mon-Sat 09.30-16.30.

The Old Bell 38 Bell Street, Sawbridgeworth, Herts, CM21 9AN (01279 721 050)

The White Lion 28 London Road/Bell Street, Sawbridgeworth, Herts, CM21 9EN (01279 836 118, <http://www.whitelion-sawbridgeworth.co.uk/>). Open 11.00-23.00 Mon, 11.00-24.00 Tue-Sat and 12.00-23.00 Sun. Food served 11.00-21.00 Mon-Sat and 12.00-21.00 Sun.

King William IV (The Willy) Vantorts Road, Sawbridgeworth, Herts CM21 9AJ (01279 722 322) Open Mon-Sat 12.00-23.00, Sun 12.00-22.30. Named after Queen Victoria's uncle, and located on a quiet part of Vantorts Road, with a cosy outdoor area at the back. The pub building was originally used to store the equipment of the Sawbridgeworth fire brigade. Later it was turned into housing. Only in the mid-Victorian period did the owners establish a brewery in its cellar and a licensed tavern soon afterwards.

Notes:

Briggens House

17th century Briggens House is set in eighty acres of gentle parkland. It opened as a Hotel and Golf Club in 1988, with outdoor swimming pool and tennis courts within the grounds. The hotel is now shut, but the professional golf course is still open, if with only 9 holes (but there are eighteen tees to play off).

Harcamlow Way

A waymarked 227 km/141 mi figure-of-eight Long Distance Path through Herts, Cambs and Essex, starting in Harlow. Mainly on tracks and green lanes, passing many places of historic interest, crossing low hills, woods and arable land via Standon and Manuden to meet the cross-over point at Newport. It continues through Saffron Walden and over the low Bartlow Hills to Horseheath and the Fleam Dyke, to enter Cambridge, the return route passing through Melbourn and Chrishall to Newport, continuing via Debden, Thaxted, Takeley and Hatfield Forest.

Stanstead Lodge

Grade II listed farmhouse, now a private house. Said to have been Bugges Farm formed out of 2 timber framed cottages to which Robert Chester retired when the bursting of the South Sea Bubble in 1720 interrupted his building of Briggens House.

Hertfordshire Way

A waymarked 305 km circular Long Distance Path along public rights-of-way. The route passes through a variety of scenery, mostly in open countryside, but also through some of the more interesting and attractive villages in the county. It includes the fringes of the Chilterns and Ashridge Forest, a National Trust estate. Hertford and St Albans, as the County Town and the main historic centre, are the only large towns on the route. <http://www.fhw.org.uk/>

River Ash

The River Ash is a 26 km (16 mi) long tributary of the River Lea which it joins near Stanstead Abbots. It originates near Brent Pelham in North Herts and flows through The Hadhams (Little, Ford and Much), Widford and Wareside.

Ware, Hadham & Buntingford Railway

The Buntingford Branch Line was running from 1863 to 1964 for 22 km between the village of St Margarets and the town of Buntingford. It was originally intended to branch off in Ware from what is now known as the Hertford East Line.

St. John the Baptist Church, Widford

The Church of St John the Baptist in Widford dates to the 14th century but incorporates fabric and arch fragments from the early 12th century suggesting an earlier church stood on the site following the Norman Conquest (see the Norman zig-zag moulding in the wall above the south door). The church was constructed in flint rubble with clunch dressings and the tower walls (dating to the 15th century) contain stone from Barnack, Notts (Herts having no stone quarries). There are also some fine wall paintings dating from c 1300 along its north wall.

The Henry Moore Foundation

Outdoor sculpture grounds with many monumental works by Henry Moore in 70 acres of Hertfordshire countryside.

Indoor spaces include the Aisled Barn with tapestries, the Sheep Field Barn Gallery with a 'Henry Moore Plasters' exhibition, four studios with sculpture displays and the artist's house with Moore's personal art collections, including work by Renoir and Courbet. Henry Moore lived and worked here for 46 years.

Entry to the Artist's House is with timed ticket and in small groups only.

Perry Green, Hertfordshire, SG10 6EE,

<http://www.henry-moore.org/pg>

Open from Easter to the end of October, Wed-Sun & Bank Holidays 11.00-17.00 hours.

Red Cube Gallery

The phone box on Henry Moore's former village green is a K6 Jubilee model phone box (designed by Giles Gilbert Scott in 1935). It was decommissioned in 2009, but re-opened in 2012 as an art gallery. Of course, the Red Cube is not really a cube, instead the name is a reference to London's White Cube gallery (and also the title of a sculpture by Isamu Noguchi). The gallery is a collaboration between The Henry Moore Foundation and Much Hadham Parish Council, initially featuring work from clients of The Drawing Room, part of St Elizabeth's School & Home, also based in Perry Green. Other contributors have been visitors, Foundation staff, and former assistants to Moore himself. It is open daily and admission is free.

St. Elizabeth's School & Home

Established in 1903, it is one of only two national centres of excellence for people of all ages with severe epilepsy, associated neurological disorders, learning disabilities and other complex medical conditions. The Centre is set in 65 acres of safe, spacious parkland. It is one of the charitable works of the Congregation of the Daughters of the Cross of Liege, a Roman Catholic religious congregation, founded in 1833 in Liege, Belgium. <http://www.stelizabeths.org.uk/>

Sawbridgeworth

Prior to the Norman Conquest, most of the area of "Sabrixteworda" (one of many spellings previously associated with the town) was owned by the Saxon Angmar the Staller. At the time, Sawbridgeworth's rich farming land was as fully developed for cultivation as was possible with the means available at the time: it was the richest village community in the country. The Manor was recorded in the Domesday Book and granted to Geoffrey de Mandeville. Many important medieval families had estates here. The number of manors increased during The Middle Ages, by a process of subinfeudation, which is the granting out of a part of an existing manor to a new owner so that a new manor was created. Local notables have included Sir John Leventhorpe, who was an executor of King Henry V's will, and Anne Boleyn, who was given the Pishiobury/Pishobury estate, located to the south of the town. Much of the town centre is a conservation area; many of the buildings date from the Tudor, Stuart, and Georgian periods.

The modern town's prosperity came from the maltings (now a small business and residential area near the station).

Sawbo, as it is also casually known, is divided from the county of Essex on the south and east by the River Stort, except for a projecting tongue of land forming the Hyde Hall estate. The road from London to Newmarket passes through the parish in a north-easterly direction.

<http://sawbridgeworth.com/> <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=43625>

Pishiobury Park

One of Capability Brown's last projects, Pishiobury Park is a large area of natural land set aside close to the River Stort between Sawbridgeworth and Harlow. The park has areas of untouched heath land that are popular with walkers and ramblers. There are also many areas of woodland on the edge of the park that attract an interesting variety of plant life and animals to the area. Therefore the park is a popular spot for ornithologists and animal lovers.

The manor of Pishiobury originated in a grant of land within the Manor of Sawbridgeworth, which Geoffrey de Mandeville, 1st Earl of Essex, who died in 1144, made to Warin and Henry FitzGerold. The Lords of the manor had local hunting rights and their own park. In 1534, Lord Scrope sold the manor to Henry VIII of England who granted it to Queen Anne Boleyn. The perimeter of the park was nearly two miles; it was well wooded with game, deer and rabbits.

River Stort/Stort Navigation

The River Stort is a 38 km (24 mi) long tributary of the River Lea which it joins at Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire. Unusually, the river takes its name from Bishop's Stortford, a town through which it flows. The Stort Navigation is the canalised section of the River Stort, running 22 kilometres (14 mi) south from Bishop's Stortford.

Great St. Mary's Church, Sawbridgeworth

Great St Mary's was originally built from flint stone and mortar in the 13th century (although a church on the site existed in Saxon times) and includes a Tudor tower containing a clock bell (1664) and eight ringing bells, the oldest of which dates from 1749. In the base of the tower is a 'Pudding Stone' which indicates that this had previously been an ancient pagan site of worship which had been adopted/converted to Christianity.

Famous local families, including the Chauncey's, the Jocelyn's, the Wiseman's and the Leventhorpe's are remembered in this building through its memorials and monumental brasses. Today St. Mary's has one of the finest collections of church monuments in the country.

Amongst the gravestones can be found that of Joseph Vick, who was one of the few survivors of the valiant six-hundred who "rode into the valley of death" in the famous Charge of the Light Brigade in the Crimean War in 1854.

WALK DIRECTIONS

Alighting from the train in **Roydon**, leave the station through a gap left of the station building and *turn right* into a car park. *Turn right* past a restaurant situated in the station building to reach a road in 25m, opposite the symmetrical pair of Grade II listed South Gate lodges, framing a view of **Briggens House** along the avenue. *Turn left* along the road. In 40m, having crossed a road bridge, *turn right* off the road at a metal footpath sign, and through a metal sheep pen gate 5m from the road. Stay on the right hand side of this grassy field (50°), with a fence and trees to your right. You are now on the **Harcamlow Way** Long Distance Path, and will follow its course for the next 6.5 km.

In 85m *swing right* with the field boundary, and continue along it for the next 365m, now with the approach track to **Briggens House** behind the trees. 20m after the path veers left, *turn right* at a yellow marker on a wooden pole between a couple of oak trees 2m apart, and through metal sheep pen gates. In 10m *turn left* in the direction of another yellow marker on a pole, to continue with large trees on your right and a wooden fence on the left. In 280m, upon reaching private gardens, follow a yellow marker into the garden of **Stanstead Lodge**, with signs warning to "Beware Guard Dogs" and to "Keep Close to Lake" **[!]** Stay on the *right hand side of the grassy area*, with the lake to your right and – later – a wooden fence on your left. Continue between wooden fences until in 220m you come out on a road by a Public Footpath 13-sign.

Turn left and in 40m pass the entrance to **Stanstead Lodge**. In a further 40m *turn up right* at a Public Bridleway 20-sign. Go up a bank to reach a grassy field with a higher earthen bank on the right and the dual carriageway **A414** more audible than visible 200m away. Follow a car wide track downhill and *turn left* at a line of mature trees just in front of the dual carriageway. In 215m *turn right* following a yellow marker on a low wooden pole to pass under the A-road and emerge into a field. *Veer left* with a car wide earth and grass farm track and with the field on the right, and a ditch and a hedge on the left. Stay on this track for 770m, gently rising all the time. In more detail: in 450m ignore a farm track joining from the left, and in 50m pass under a line of large pylons. In another 270m you get to the brow of the hill, with large farm buildings visible in the distance (**Olives Farm**). **[!]** At the end of the hedgerow, *turn left* along a car wide farm track towards a wood, with views of the London skyline on the left in the far distance.

At the far end of **Square Spring Wood** on your right hand side, *turn right* along another car wide grassy farm track (due N) towards a different set of farm buildings. In 360m ignore a farm track joining from the right. In 190m, by a Public Bridleway 23-sign, exit onto a road. Cross it to continue on the gravel approach lane to **Halfway House farm** (Public Footpath 22-sign). In 35m *turn right* along a gravel car wide track with a footpath marker post (the old right-of-way through Halfway House's garden has been rescinded). The track curves left around some farm buildings, with a large arable field on the right, passes a cottage and in another 60m turns right with a wood on the left. **[!]** In 40m, when the lane turns left, *keep ahead on a grassy field margin* with bushes on your right (50°). In about 300m (50m or so before a wooded area with a house a little to the right), you *turn left* with a marker post along a new wooden fence.

In 200m there is a gap in the fence on your right (at time of writing anyway, this may be filled by a gate in due course), here you have a choice:

For a Shortcut, cutting out a long and lovely stretch along the river in the **Ash Valley**, turn right through the small pasture on the right towards the field corner 50m away (for details see the end of the main walk directions under **Shortcut I**).

For the main walk, continue along the fence and in 75m *turn left* along the grassy field boundary, gently uphill, with trees on your right (325°). In 100m ignore another

footpath joining from the right, and then another grassy footpath turning left across fields, as your path swings right around a pond behind trees to then straighten and continue along the right hand field edge bordered by a hedgerow (300°). In 225m pass a wood on the right hand side. At the end of this wood in 500m continue in the same direction on a now car wide grassy track with a tall hedgerow on the right. The path levels out and starts to descend gently. Exit this field in its far right corner through a gap in the trees, with a bridleway arrow on a wooden post into another field. Continue in the same direction along the field boundary and then along another wood (**Young Wood**) to get to a footpath T-junction on a car wide earthen farm lane.

[!] *Turn right* and continue with the wood on your right. You are now briefly joining the **Hertfordshire Way** Long Distance Path. The track swings left in 265m, and in another 85m you come to a three-way junction of paths. Leave the **Harcamlow** and **Hertfordshire Way** and *turn right downhill*, following a bridleway sign on a wooden post, with the wood still on your right (40°). Just past a house on the right at the end of the wood, stay ahead with a bridleway sign onto a grassy path between trees. Cross the **River Ash** on a wooden bridge and continue on a grassy path between fields, gently uphill. In 130m *turn right* on an earth-and-gravel farm track (60°).

Just before being level with a red brick bridge (or from the bridge itself) you can peer down left into the track of the long dismantled **Ware, Hadham & Buntingford Railway**. *Turn right* at a T-junction with another earth-and-gravel farm track. In 100m ignore a bridleway turning down a tarmac lane on the left, but in another 75m, after crossing the river again, *turn left* with another bridleway sign through a metal field gate into an initially narrow grassy field.

You will now broadly follow the course of the **Ash** for the next 5.5 km: pass through a metal field gate at the end of this narrow grassy field (60°), with another field behind a fence on your right. The field narrows, now with wooded hills on the right and the meandering **Ash** on the left. Pass through another metal field gate. When river and path swing left and you approach a stile left of a metal field gate that leads onto an earthen farm track, [!] *turn right and initially uphill inside the field (60°), without crossing the stile*. Keep a hedge, and the sunken course of the dismantled railway behind it, on your left. Descend to exit this field in its far left corner through a wooden gate and cross a brook on a railed wooden plank bridge. *Turn left* for 5m onto the gravel-and-earth track that is the **dismantled railway's course**, to *turn right* along it, with tall trees on the left. In 420m *fork left* into trees to leave the farm track carrying on uphill.

In 120m cross a road by a Bridleway 19-sign and continue in the same direction along its left hand side on a narrow pavement. In 200m *turn left* off the road, which turns right uphill. Follow a Restricted Byway 18-sign to the right of an industrial yard onto a grassy path and in 30m through a wooden field gate. In 230m you pass through a rusty metal field gate and 25m further along – and with a footpath marker on a low wooden pole – *turn right* into a wide grassy area (110°) with **St. John the Baptist Church, Widford** up on a hill on the right and with **The Ash** curving away to the left. Shortcut I joins from the right down steps from the church. *Veer left* with the fence along the valley bottom towards the very far left corner of this field, where it narrows.

*) Follow a bridleway sign through a gate onto a gravel path with a fence on the left and a hedge on the right. In 65m a footpath crosses left to right. Head on, now with **The Ash** on your left. You are back on the **Hertfordshire Way**, and will follow it all the way to lunch. In 220m, exit onto a road at a footpath/bridleway junction. Cross it to walk between fences along the concrete approach lane of **water works** 200m ahead. At a gate *turn left* for 10m, then *right*, still with a fence on your left. At the end of the fence, continue in the same direction along the left hand boundary of a grassy field.

In 450m exit the field in its far left hand corner through trees, *veering left* onto a road, by a bus stop, opposite **Bourne Lane**. Cross the road into **Bourne Lane**. In 20m ignore a bridleway turning up right. In 170m, and 10m after passing Bourne Lodge on the left, *turn left* off the road by a Public Bridleway 28-sign, to the right of a wide metal gate onto a car wide gravel path through trees. In 90m **[!]** *fork left* to stay level through woods for 900m, with the river (behind trees) close by on the left, and trees on a slope on the right. Cross a brook to exit the wood. In 140m, at a footpath junction by a prominent oak tree with a bench in front, *turn right uphill* on a grassy field margin, with a barbed wire fence on the left. Follow the path left around a wood, still uphill.

At the top of the rise follow a yellow marker *right*, on a grassy strip across a large field (105°). In 350m, on the other side of the field, at a T-junction of footpaths, *turn right* with a yellow marker. In 170m, at a T-junction with a farm track and footpath, *turn left* between fields towards barns. Pass through a rusty metal field gate, as you reach the first barn, and then through a metal kissing gate next to a metal field gate into a grassy field to follow its left hand boundary. Exit this field through a metal kissing gate and follow a yellow marker, **[!]** *veering left* between trees. In 15m continue ahead on a car wide gravel track past a car park on the left, and the ticket office for **The Henry Moore Foundation** on the right. *Turn right* at the village green in Perry Green past the **Red Cube Gallery** (a phone box filled with art), across a plank bridge and on a gravel path to the recommended lunch pub **The Hoops Inn**.

After lunch leave the pub through the back door and the garden into the car park and *turn right* onto a road, where you *turn left*. In 350m stay ahead along a minor road at a right turn, with a red brick post box perched on a traffic island, and a public byway joining from the left. In 300m ignore a footpath turning right towards **St. Elizabeth's School & Home**, as well as a footpath turning left towards **Allen's Green**. Stay to the left of **Old Park Barn** and enter the grounds of **Old Park Farm** through a metal gate. Follow a yellow marker and *turn left* before reaching the barns. Head for and continue down a car wide gravel-and-earth farm track away from the farm buildings (100°) through fields. 35m after passing under pylons, *stay ahead* onto a car wide grassy path, following a yellow marker, while the farm track turns right.

Stay in this direction –with a hedge on the left and a field on the right – for 350m, to then *turn left* over a railed wooden plank bridge across **Fiddler's Brook** into a field. Cross the small field (due E) and in 60m *turn right* into a gravel-and-earth lane between hedges (**Covey's Lane**), ignoring a footpath just before the hedge. *Bear left* with the lane in 380m by a house on the right and a field on the left. In another 280m a farm track joins from the left, by a Restricted Byway 34-sign. In 25m you reach a gravel lane junction, with a house on either side (Park Baylis and Corbies).

Turn left, following a Restricted Byway 34-sign to **Beanfield Road**. In 340m pass a thatched house on your left and stay ahead, following a Restricted Byway-sign on a low wooden pole onto a car wide grassy lane between trees (**Chandler's Lane**). In 290m ignore a footpath joining from a field on the left. In 80m pass the Grade II-listed **Chandler's Lane Cottage** on your right, after which the grassy lane turns into gravel-and-earth. In another 260m you come out on Beanfield Road, where you *turn right*.

In 200m you **[!]** stay ahead along a tarmac lane, where the main road turns right. Follow this lane for 680m, ignoring a public footpath pointing right into a field immediately, and another one forking left off the road in 170m. From this road you can catch glimpses of **Sawbridgeworth**, the final destination, half right. Pass the redbrick **Tharbies Farm House** and a large black wooden barn conversion. In a bend of the road, *turn right* onto a gravel-and-earth lane by a Public Footpath 42-sign. Follow yellow markers to and around the sheds and barns of **Tharbies Farm**, and – 220m from the road – walk through a metal gate to the right of a metal field gate onto a grassy farm

track between fields (110°). From the brow of this rise you can see large school buildings ahead and the houses and church spire of **Sawbridgeworth** to the right.

Descend gently with the path towards a brook running from left to right. At the brook, 520m from **Tharbies Farm**, *turn right* with a yellow marker on a low wooden pole, on a car wide grassy field margin, with the brook to your left. You will now broadly follow this brook's course for the next 2.2 km. In 160m, right at the start of a wood on the left, ignore a footpath descending left into trees. In 440m though, in the field corner, *turn left* into a grassy path between hedges and trees. In 115m pass through a gap to the left of a metal field gate and emerge onto a road.

[Turn left here up the road for **the shortest possible route to the station** (1.1 km, cutting out a further 680m vs. the recommended Shortcut II route). It's all on tarmac pavement, along this road, which gets busier towards the station. You pass the **George the Fourth** pub at the junction with **Knight Road**]

Cross the road and *turn right* with **West Road Recreation Ground** on your left. In 35m, at the end of the recreation ground, and before crossing the brook, *turn left* onto grass by a Public Footpath 12-sign for Coney Gree and Sayesbury Avenue. In 100m pass through a metal gate to the right of a metal field gate and *turn right* on a road with a Footpath 12-sign to Chalk's Farm. In 110m ignore a footpath turning left. In 230m at a T-junction with a footpath joining from the right over a bridge across the brook, *turn left and up*, on a narrow concrete path between wooden fences. In 50m reach a road in its turning circle and continue in the same direction towards a T-junction with a road.

In 60m you have a choice:

For a Shortcut *turn left* here (for details see the end of the main walk directions under **Shortcut II**).

For the main walk, *turn right* down the road (**Gilders**). Just after crossing a road bridge over the brook, follow a Public Footpath 13-sign (London Road ¼) *left down a tarmac lane* with metal fencing and the brook to your left. In 330m rise with the path onto the busy **London Road**, where you *turn left* for 10m and cross at a set of lights to continue in the same direction. Follow a footpath sign down a narrow earthen path, now with the brook on your right. In 100m cross a road and continue along the brook. In 120m *turn right* over a concrete bridge to *immediately turn left again* to stay with the brook, now on your left. In 140m come out onto **East Drive** (Public Footpath 22-sign), and continue in the same direction. In 30m *stay ahead* where this road turns left to *immediately fork right* onto a minor road (**Springhall Lane**), with the brook now again on your left. In 80m *turn right* with this tarmac lane, away from the brook.

In 60m the lane turns to earth and in another 140m a footpath joins from the right. In 30m *turn left* with a Footpath 23-sign by an information board for **Pishiobury Park**, through a metal kissing gate into a grassy meadow. Leave the meadow through another metal kissing gate in 140m, and follow a footpath sign on wooden boardwalks into a wooded area. In 60m a footpath joins from the right and in another 75m you reach the **Stort Navigation** at a footpath T-junction, *where you turn left*. Stay on this path for 1.1 km: in 530m pass **Sheering Mill Road** by **Lock Keepers Cottage**, and in another 570m rise onto **Station Road**, where you *turn right*.

***) Cross the **Stort Navigation** on the road bridge, and in another 140m reach the railway level crossing by **Sawbridgeworth Station**. London bound trains depart from the far platform.

Shortcut I **(cut 2.6 km and 24m ascent/descent in the morning)**

Walk through a narrow gap between trees into the next field, which you cross uphill towards the top of a clump of trees visible on the other side of the field (30°). In 300m exit the field and continue ahead on a wide grassy path with trees on the right and a hedge with a field behind on the left. In 210m, at a T-junction with a gravel lane, turn left. Follow it around swinging right and in 170m fork right to soon pass **Filletts Farm** on your left. In 100m, at a T-junction of farm tracks, turn left by a Public Restricted Byway-sign on a low wooden pole, and with a hedge on the left and a field on the right.

Ignore a footpath forking off left in 400m, just before a bench on the left, and continue ahead on farm tracks through wheat fields, for 1.35 km, until you reach a road. Exit through a wide gap onto the road by a Public Restricted Byway 20-sign. Cross the road, ignore a bridleway ahead and turn right into **Widford**. In 80m, opposite the entrance to the cemetery, follow a Public Footpath 17-sign (Peggs Lane) left through the lychgate into the churchyard of **St. John the Baptist Church, Widford**.

Follow the gravel path towards the church entrance and turn left around it. Leave the churchyard in the far left corner through a wooden kissing gate by a footpath arrow on a wooden post. Head steeply down some steps with a wooden railing, into the grassy **Ash** valley. The main walk joins from the left. Veer ever so slightly right (40°) across the field towards a metal gate in the very far left corner, 500m away, where the field narrows.

Join the main walk directions at the asterisk *).

Shortcut II **(cut 1.4 km in the afternoon, but add 535m to the tarmac count)**

Follow the road (Gilders) uphill, and in 80m turn second right into Hoestock Road. In 200m turn left along the busy London Road. In 30m cross the road carefully to head through bike barriers onto a tarmac track by a Public Footpath 32-sign (The Square), with a wooden fence on the right and bushes and trees on the left. Follow this path for 300m, with a Bowling Green, Tennis Courts and a Cricket Green with its Club House on the right, and a couple of car parks and the back of **The Old Bell** pub visible on the left through the trees and hedges. Exit onto **The Square** (once the town's market-place) to cross a road and a small grassy area with houses on the left. In 40m turn left into **Vantorts Road** and pass the **Masonic Centre** to reach the recommended tea stop, the **King William IV** pub.

Past the pub, at a T-junction with **Church Street**, *turn right* into the church yard of **Great St. Mary's Church**. Veer left along the furthest left of three tarmac footpaths (number 28). Exit the church yard through a gap in the wall and continue in the same direction, gently downhill, with a hedge on your right. Pass through bike barriers onto a road (**The Forebury**), where you turn right, following Footpath 29-signs to the railway station. In 20m you stay ahead on a tarmac lane to the left of a large grassy area. In 250m join **Station Road** and *turn right* towards the bridge over the **Stort Navigation**.

In 25m a footpath joins from the right, this is the Main Walk.

Join the main walk directions at the double asterisk **)