

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

Cumulative ascent/descent: 162/146m. For a shorter walk, see below **Walk Options**.

Toughness: 3 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 (hourly on Sundays), journey time 29 minutes (39 on Sundays); or from Stratford (hourly), journey time from 39 minutes Mon-Sat (30 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 with slightly more frequent service (journey time from 38 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 gently rolling Hertfordshire countryside, either along tracks and green lanes or quiet country roads, featuring cereal 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 in Perry Green, either in a charming pun next to The Henry Moore Foundation's sculpture park and studios (ticketed entry only) or in the café in the Visitor Centre of the Henry Moore Foundation.

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:

- A Morning Shortcut cuts 2.5 km (1.6 mi) before lunch,
- An Afternoon Shortcut cuts 1.4 km (0.9 mi) after lunch.

Taking both shortcuts reduces the length of the walk to 18.9 km (11.75 mi), with a rating of **2/10**.

Bus Line 35 (Bishop's Stortford – Hertford) calls at Widford, Bourne Lane, right on the walk route, and links to St. Margarets (Herts) or Bishop's Stortford Stations (hourly Mon-Fri, every two hours Sat). From/to both these stations you will need additional single tickets (to Broxbourne or Sawbridgeworth respectively).

An Alternative Route at Widfordbury avoids pastures which often have cattle herds present (map-led).

Lunch (details last updated 16/06/2024)

Rosey Lea Café Dane Tree House, Henry Moore Foundation, *Perry Green, Much Hadham, Herts, SG10 6BE* (01279 843 333, <https://henry-moore.org/studios-and-gardens/plan-your-visit-studios-gardens/rosey-lea-cafe/>). The Rosey Lea is located in the Visitor Centre and Ticket Office building at the Henry Moore Foundation, 14.0 km (8.7 mi) into the main walk. Open Wed-Sun and Bank Holidays 11.00-17.00, but only in those weeks that the Foundation is open! It serves salads, sandwiches, jackets, cakes, hot and cold drinks. No ticket to the Foundation needed: just ask for a 'Café'-badge at reception and do not stray from the café into the ticketed garden and sculpture park

The Hoops Inn *Perry Green, Herts, SG10 6EF* (01279 843 568). The Hoops Inn is located 14.0 km (8.7 mi) into the main walk. **Currently closed** and under new ownership (Windhill Investments). **Re-opening not expected before 2025.**

The Hoops 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 has a large outdoor area at the back.

Tea (details last updated 16/06/2024)

All these options are on or just off Shortcut II at the end of the walk. From the main walk route, from the Stort River at Station Road turn left up into town to reach them.

George IV 81 London Road/Knight Street, *Sawbridgeworth, Herts, CM21 9AT* (01279 723 527, <http://www.mcmullens.co.uk/george-iv/>). Open all day every day.

The Queens Head 26 Knight Street, *Sawbridgeworth, Herts, CM21 9AT* (01279 836 05, <https://www.queensheadsawbridgeworth.co.uk/>). Open all day every day.

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, <https://www.greeneking.co.uk/pubs/hertfordshire/white-lion/>). Open all day every day. Food served 12.00-21.00 every day.

King William IV (The Willy) Vantorts Road, *Sawbridgeworth, Herts CM21 9AJ* (01279 722 322). 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/>

Greenwich Meridian Trail

The Greenwich Meridian Trail is a 467 km (290 mi) waymarked long-distance walk that follows the line of the Prime Meridian. Inaugurated in 2009 to coincide with the 125th anniversary of the Meridian, it begins at Peacehaven in East Sussex and ends, on the Holderness peninsula at Sand le Mere in East Yorkshire.

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.

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

<https://henry-moore.org/>

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

Pishiobury Park

One of Capability Brown's last projects, Pishiobury Park is a Grade II*-listed 30-hectare 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 3 kilometres; 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 to the left of the station building and *turn right* through a car park 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 Public Footpath 13 signpost into a large field. Follow the right-hand field boundary (50°). You are now on the **Harcamlow Way** (HCLW) Long-Distance Path. In 85m *curve to the right* with the boundary, and continue along it for the next 365m, now with **Briggens House**'s driveway behind the trees. 20m after the path veers left, you *turn right* through the trees with a HCLW and footpath marker post. In 10m *turn left* with another marker post, to continue with large trees on your right and a wooden fence on the left. In 280m, upon reaching private gardens, follow a marker marker into the garden of **Stanstead Lodge**.

[!] 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-signpost. *Turn left* and in 40m pass the entrance to **Stanstead Lodge**. In a further 40m *turn up right* at a Public Bridleway 20-signpost. Go up a bank to reach a large field with a higher earthen bank on the right and the dual carriageway **A414** more audible than visible 200m away and follow a car wide track downhill to *turn left* at a line of mature trees just in front of the dual carriageway. In 215m turn to pass under the A-road and emerge into a large arable field. *Veer left* with a car wide 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 some large farm buildings visible in the distance (**Olives Farm**) and pass a **memorial for a crashed WWII Mosquito** airplane and its crew from nearby RAF Hunsdon.

In another 70m, at the end of the hedgerow, [!] *turn left* with a byway marker post on the left along a car wide track towards **Square Spring Wood**. At the far corner of the wood, with views of **London's Skyline** on the left, *turn right* with a marker post along a car wide track (due N) towards a different set of farm buildings. In 360m a track joins from the right. In 190m, by a Public Bridleway 23-signpost, exit onto a road and cross it to continue along a gravel drive (**Halfway House farm**) with a Public Footpath 22-signpost. In 35m *turn right* along a gravel car wide track with a footpath marker post. The track curves left around some farm buildings, with a large arable field behind a fence on the right, passes a cottage and in another 60m turns right with a wood on the left. [!] In 40m you reach a new metal field gate with a metal kissing on its right and a marker post on the left. Go through the gate.

Here you have a choice:

For the Morning Shortcut, cutting out a lovely stretch along the river in the **Ash Valley**, *keep ahead on a grassy field margin* with bushes on your right (50°) and pick up the directions at the end of this text under **Shortcut I**.

For the Main Walk, *turn left* with the farm track and the marked Public Footpath 28 (not shown on the OS map, but on Hertfordshire's Definitive Map). In 180m, by a marker post on the left, *turn right* through a large arable along a usually well-cleared straight path. In 530m at the far field boundary, *turn left* at a marked multi-path junction along the boundary, immediately passing a small pond on the right behind trees (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 hedgerow on the right. The path levels out and starts to descend gently. Exit this field in its far-right

corner through a gap to the right of a metal field gate with a bridleway and HCLW marker post into the next field. Continue in the same direction along the boundary and then along **Young Wood** to a footpath three-way junction on a car wide earthen farm track. *Turn right* and continue with the wood on your right. You are now briefly joining the **Hertfordshire Way** (HW) and the **Greenwich Meridian Trail** (GMT).

The track swings left in 265m, and in another 85m you come to a three-way junction of paths. Leave the **Harcamlow Way** and the **Hertfordshire Way** and *turn right downhill* with a bridleway and GMT signpost, 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 marker post along 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* through a metal field gate into a narrow meadow. You will now broadly follow the course of the **Ash** for the next 5.4 km.

In more detail: 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 a metal field gate. Where the river and swings left and you approach a stile left of a metal field gate, **[!]** *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. You re-appear back on the HW and descend to leave this field through a wooden gate and cross a brook on a railed wooden plank bridge. *Turn left* for 5m onto a gravel-and-earth track to *turn right* along it, with tall trees on the left. In 420m, just after passing a solitary tree in the field on the right, *fork left* with a HW marker post into trees (the farm track carries on uphill). In 120m cross a road by a Bridleway 19-signpost 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-signpost 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 in 50m *turn right* through a metal kissing gate with a yellow marker into a riverside meadow (110°) with **St. John the Baptist Church, Widford** up on a hill on the right and with **The Ash** curving away to the left. **[Cattle Avoidance Route:** If there is a cattle herd in this field or in the subsequent one entered in 100m and you are uncomfortable with this, go back through the gate and *turn right* along the HW and follow a diversion around the very most of the two fields as shown on the route map.] *Veer left* towards a wooden gate this side of a two-railed bridge over a ditch and in 90m cross the bridge (with a squeeze gate on the far side) into a large pasture. Follow a clear grass path to the Ash River ahead and *bear right* along it to the far-right field corner. Leave the field through a metal kissing gate onto an earthen path and *turn left* along it, with the Ash on your left.

***)** In 220m, exit onto a road at a footpath/bridleway junction. Cross it to walk between fences along the concrete approach lane of some **water works** 200m ahead. At the gate to the works, *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 pasture. In 450m exit the field in its far-left hand corner through trees, *veering left* onto a road, by a **bus stop for services** to Bishop's Stortford or St. Margarets, opposite **Bourne Lane**. Cross the road into **Bourne Lane**, signed 'Perry Green' and 'Henry Moore Studios & Gardens' and in 20m ignore a bridleway turning up to the right. In 170m, and 10m after passing **Bourne Lodge** on the left, *turn left* off the road with a Public Bridleway 28-signpost, 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 (bluebells in season), still uphill. At the top of the rise follow a footpath marker post to the right, on a grassy strip between large fields (105°). In 350m, on the other side of the fields, *turn right* at a T-junction of footpaths. In 170m, at a T-junction with a farm track and footpath, *turn left* between fields towards some barns.

Pass through a metal field gate by 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 of **The Henry Moore Foundation** on the right, with the **Rosey Lea Café** in the same building. At the village green in **Perry Green**, *turn right* along a tarmac lane past **The Hoops Inn**. 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 **Old Park Farm** through a metal gate. *Turn left* with a marker post 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, 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-signpost. In 25m you reach a gravel lane junction, with a house on either side (Park Baylis and Corbies).

Turn left with a Restricted Byway 34-signpost ('**Beanfield Road**'). In 340m pass a thatched house and stay ahead, following a Restricted Byway marker post 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 continues as gravel-and-earth. In another 260m you come out on Beanfield Road, where you *turn right*. In 200m **[!]** 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 without a discernible path, 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. Directly after this, in a bend of the road, *turn right* onto a gravel-and-earth lane with a Public Footpath 42-signpost.

Follow marker posts 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 track to the right of some new builds, then continue between fields (110°). From the brow of this rise you can see large school buildings as well as several new housing estates ahead and the houses and church spire of **Sawbridgeworth**. Descend gently with the path towards a brook running from left to right. At the brook, 520m from **Tharbies Farm**, *turn right* along a car wide grassy field margin. You will now broadly follow the brook for 2.2 km. In 160m, right at the start of a wood on the left, ignore a footpath descending left into trees and continue ahead along what is a **deemed permissive path**, based on its frequent use by locals. In 440m though, in the field

corner, *turn left* along a grassy path between hedges and trees, a public bridleway. 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* with a Public Footpath 12-signpost (Coney Gree, 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-signpost 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 turning circle and continue in the same direction towards a T-junction with a road 60m away.

Here you have a choice:

For the Afternoon Shortcut *turn left* and pick up the directions at the end of this text 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-signpost (London Road ¼) *left down a tarmac path* (continuing as 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-signpost), 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 continues as an earth track and in another 140m Footpath 23 joins from the right. In 30m *turn left* with a Footpath 23-signpost through a metal kissing gate into a meadow by an info panel for **Pishiobury Park and its Causewayed Enclosure**. In 140m leave the meadow through a metal kissing gate with a HCLW marker and follow a footpath along wooden boardwalks into a wooded area. In 60m you *veer left*, where another footpath joins from the right and in a 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 140m reach **Sawbridgeworth Station's** level crossing.

London bound trains depart from the far platform.

Shortcut I (cut 2.5 km and 24m ascent/descent in the morning)

In about 300m (50m before a wooded area with a house a little to the right), *turn left* with a marker post along a hedge, then a wooden fence. In 200m *turn right* through a gap in the fence on your right with HW and footpath markers along a fenced path. In 75m *turn left* through a narrow gap between trees into a large arable field, which you cross over a small rise, towards the top of some trees visible on the far side of the field (30°). In 300m exit the field by a memorial bench and plaque away on the left and continue ahead on a wide grassy path ('**Paddy's Way**') with trees on the right and a hedge on the left. In 210m go through a gap to the left of a metal field gate and *turn left* at a T-junction with a gravel lane. Follow it around swinging right and in 170m *fork right* to soon pass **Filletts Farm** on your left. In 130m, at a T-junction of farm tracks, *turn left* with a Public Restricted Byway marker post on the left. The track curves to the left and in 400m you ignore a marked footpath forking off left and continue ahead on farm tracks through arable fields. In 620m follow a narrow path to the right of **Townlands** woodland for 80m, then follow another wide track between arable fields.

In 660m go through some bollards onto a road by a Public Restricted Byway 20-signpost pointing backwards. Cross the road and *turn right* along a pavement into **Widford**. In 80m, opposite the entrance to the cemetery, follow a Public Footpath 17-signpost ('Pegs Lane ½') left through the lychgate into the churchyard of **St. John the Baptist Church**, Widford. Follow the gravel path towards the church and *turn left* around it. Leave the churchyard in the far-left corner through a wooden kissing gate with HW and footpath markers. Head steeply down some steps with a wooden railing and at the bottom of the steps cross a bridleway by a marker post to continue into the lush **Ash** valley. Follow the river to the right towards a metal gate in the far corner, 500m away, where the field narrows. Go 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 by kissing gates on both sides. The Main Walk joins from the left. *Bear right* (but do not *turn right* through the wooden kissing gate), still with **The Ash** on your left. You are now on the **Hertfordshire Way** (HW), and will follow it to lunch. 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-signpost (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. In 40m *turn left* along **Vantorts Road** and pass the Masonic Centre to reach the **King William IV** pub. **Other tea options** are to the left along **Bell Street**, or just off Bell Street to the right.

Past the pub, at a T-junction with **Church Street**, *turn right* into the churchyard 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-signposts 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. Cross the navigation on the road bridge and in 140m reach **Sawbridgeworth Station's** level crossing. London bound trains depart from the far platform.