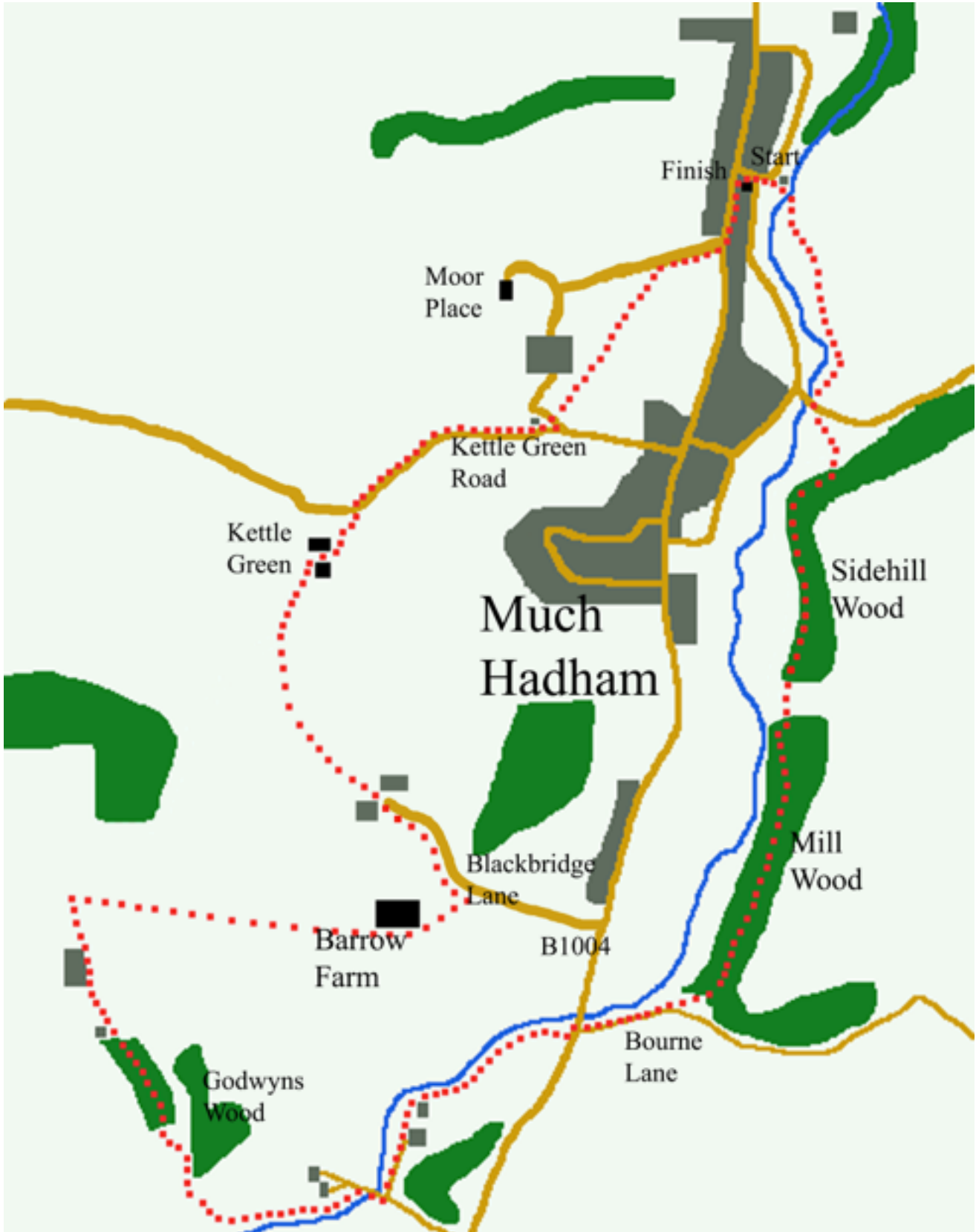


(Old English: Mycel Haedham - Great Heath Homestead)



This is a circular walk of approximately five miles. It is mostly flat. One short section is currently overgrown and requires effort to negotiate. Much Hadham has too many listed buildings to mention, including four listed as Grade 1. Take your time to admire them as you go round.

The walk starts and finishes in the Village Hall car park in Church Lane. Much Hadham is a long narrow village which extends almost due north and south along the B1004. Church Lane is off the High Street towards the northern end of the village. (The Car Park is reserved for users of the Village Hall, but I have always found that if you ask nicely and explain what you are doing they will allow you to park there.)

From the car park walk down Church Lane, away from the High Street. There is a kissing gate on the right. Go through the gate and take signed Footpath 23, which goes across the left edge of the field to the bridge over the River Ash. Follow it across the meadow to the point where two drives merge.



Cross the drive and take the path through the meadow on the other side. At the kissing gate take the path which goes diagonally across the next field until it meets a road. Turn right towards the point where the road becomes a ford across the river. Just before the ford take Footpath 25 on your left and head across the field to the wood on the far side.



You will come to a lane. Go a short distance up the lane, where you will see signed Bridleway 28 entering the wood to your right. This is Sidehill Wood, which has good displays of bluebells in spring. Follow the bridleway which goes along the inside edge of the wood with the river to your right. You will eventually come to a gap between Sidehill and Mill woods. Carry on through Mill Wood. The path changes to a concrete track. Soon after leaving the wood the track meets Bourne Lane at an acute angle through a gate next to a cottage. Turn right into Bourne Lane and follow it until it meets the B1004.



Cross the B1004 and turn sharp left onto a narrow footpath, behind the bus stop, which soon opens out onto a field. Go along the field margin with the hedge to your right.



You will eventually come to some industrial buildings belonging to Thames Water. Go round the side of them and join their access drive. At the end of the drive turn right on to a second drive and cross the River Ash.

Immediately turn left on to the path which runs between a hedge on your left and the metal fence to more Thames Water buildings. This opens out into a wide meadow. Follow the line of the River Ash to your left until you reach a way-marked stile at the end of the meadow. Do not cross the stile, but carry on to your right until you see a way-marked gap in the hedge (yellow way-mark arrows). Go through the gap and up the hill with Godwyns Wood to your right. (Note that the land to your left is signposted as Private.)



At the top of the hill you will see what looks like a small copse ahead of you. There is a path entering the copse. Take it. There are yellow way-mark arrows along the path, though most of them are currently obscured by foliage. (The next two hundred yards or so are difficult as the path is currently heavily overgrown. Though the line of the path is clear, in sections brambles and nettles have grown over it and need trampling down to make progress. Hopefully at some point this path will be properly re-instated.) The path emerges on to Upper Crackney Lane, with a house and then a farm on your left. Carry on past the farm until you meet a wide track to your right, leading across the fields to farm buildings in the distance.



Take this track until you come to Barrow Farm with its impressive topiary garden and broad avenue of lime trees. Follow the lime avenue until it meets Blackbridge Lane. Turn left and follow the lane until it terminates in a farm yard. Cross the farm yard and take the footpath into the copse in front of you.



This path eventually veers to the right and takes you to Kettle Green with its beautiful, moated farmhouse.



Follow the drive from the farm until you reach a triangular junction onto Kettle Green Road. Turn right and carefully follow the road until you go down hill to a sharp left hand bend with a house to your left. A little further on there is a drive to your left. Go up this drive. On your right there is a gate leading to a path across the field to a further gate on the far side.



From that gate the path is indistinct but aim for the stile which is visible on the other side of this field. From there you are entering the Moor Place estate. Moor Place is an imposing Georgian mansion dating from 1779. The path crosses the park to the drive to Moor Place.



Turn right on the drive and down, out the lodge gates, with the war memorial to your left, on to Much Hadham High Street. Turn left and walk back up the High Street to Church Lane where the walk ends.

This route last walked by CPRE in August 2016

Note: all walkers do so at their own risk. Suitable footwear and clothing are recommended.

CPRE Hertfordshire is a registered charity no. 1162419, address: 31a Church Street, Welwyn, AL6 9LW, tel 01438 717587. For more information on our work visit www.cpreherts.org.uk. We are the county branch of the Campaign to Protect Rural England.