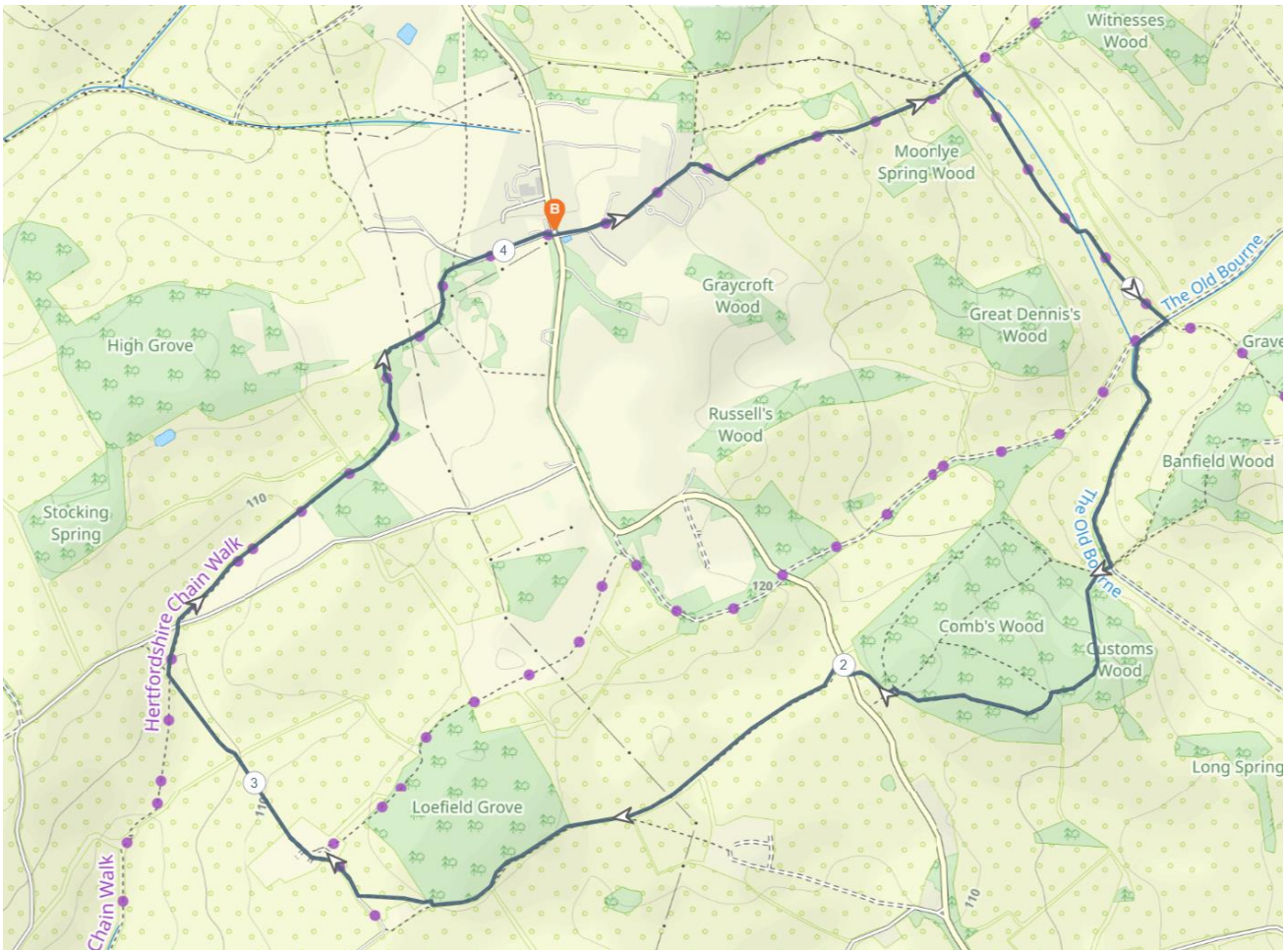




The countryside charity
Hertfordshire

Hebing End



This four mile circular walk traverses some of the loveliest landscape in Hertfordshire, including meadows, ancient woodland and the Old Bourne river.

Distance: 4 miles / 6.4 km

Ascent: 242 feet / 74 metres

Duration: 1.5 hours

Difficulty: Easy

Start / finish: The Lordship Arms pub in Hebing End, a small hamlet just south of Benington

Refreshments: The Lordship Arms pub

The Lordship Arms stands on a crossroads. With your back to the pub entrance, cross over and walk east along the road opposite, which is also called Hebing End.

You will pass Moles Farm on your left and then, a little further on, see a signpost on your right at Pond Cottage. Take Bridleway 025 to your right. After a short length of track, you reach a field. Immediately turn left to follow the hedgerow along the northern boundary of the field.



At the end of the field go through the gap in the hedge indicated by the white way-mark arrow. Continue down the hill.

At the bottom you will see a bridge in front of you and a gate to your right. Go through the gate into a meadow, following Footpath 007.



Follow the footpath across the meadow, to a bridge across a watercourse. Cross the bridge and then head for the gate on the far left corner of the field you are now in. This gate has a blue way-mark arrow.



Go through the gate and cross over the concrete culvert. On your right, you will see a broad path with a white way-mark. Take this path, following the path of the Old Bourne river.



The Old Bourne is a chalk stream, meaning its water comes from underground chalk reserves. This leads to the unusual phenomenon of the river disappearing and reappearing throughout the year. During dry periods, the riverbed can be completely dry, but after heavy rain, it can quickly transform into a rushing torrent. The Old Bourne's unpredictable nature has led to a wealth of local folklore. Some believe its flow predicts major events, with its reappearance signifying impending wars or disasters. Others see it as a harbinger of good luck, with its waters said to possess healing properties. Despite its intermittent flow, the Old Bourne is a vital habitat for numerous plant and animal species. Its clear waters support a diverse range of fish, invertebrates, and aquatic plants, while its banks provide refuge for birds and mammals.

Ahead of you is Comb's Wood. As you approach it you will see a bridge over the Old Bourne to your right. Cross it. In front of you is a way-mark post indicating two routes into the wood. Take the path to the left (Footpath 003) indicated by the white arrow. Comb's Wood is a semi-natural ancient woodland, dating back to at least 1600. Less than 20% of UK woodland is this old. This is a great place to see bluebells in spring, so please keep to the footpaths as you climb the hill through the woodland



Follow the yellow arrow on the next wooden post, taking the path to the right, to leave the forest and arrive at Whemstead Road.



At the road, turn right and follow the road until you see a signpost on the verge opposite. Cross over.

The post points to Footpath 043 to Loefield Grove. Take this path, which is defined by telephone poles along its length.

Keep on the path after it passes the end of Loefield Grove and veers to the right on to the drive to Gregory's Farm. Pass to the right of the barn and go along the drive, and through the farm, past the farm house.



The path goes downhill to the foot of the valley and then up the other side (Footpath 005 becoming Footpath 038). It is way-marked with a blue arrow.



Just before the end of the path, another path veers off to the right, heading diagonally across the field. Take this path. It leads to High Elms Lane. Opposite the point where it joins the lane is a signpost marked Byway 039. Take the path up the byway.



This eventually turns into a track and then a roadway. This is Burns Green. Burns Green leads back to the crossroads where the walk began, outside The Lordship Arms.



This route last walked by CPRE in January 2024.

All walkers do so at their own risk. Suitable footwear and clothing are recommended.

If you have enjoyed this walk, please consider supporting CPRE Hertfordshire in our efforts to protect and promote the Hertfordshire countryside for everyone. For more information on our work, or to sign up for our newsletter, make a donation, or volunteer with us, please visit www.cpreherts.org.uk

CPRE Hertfordshire is a registered charity no. 1162419, address: 31a Church Street, Welwyn, AL6 9LW, tel 01438 717587.