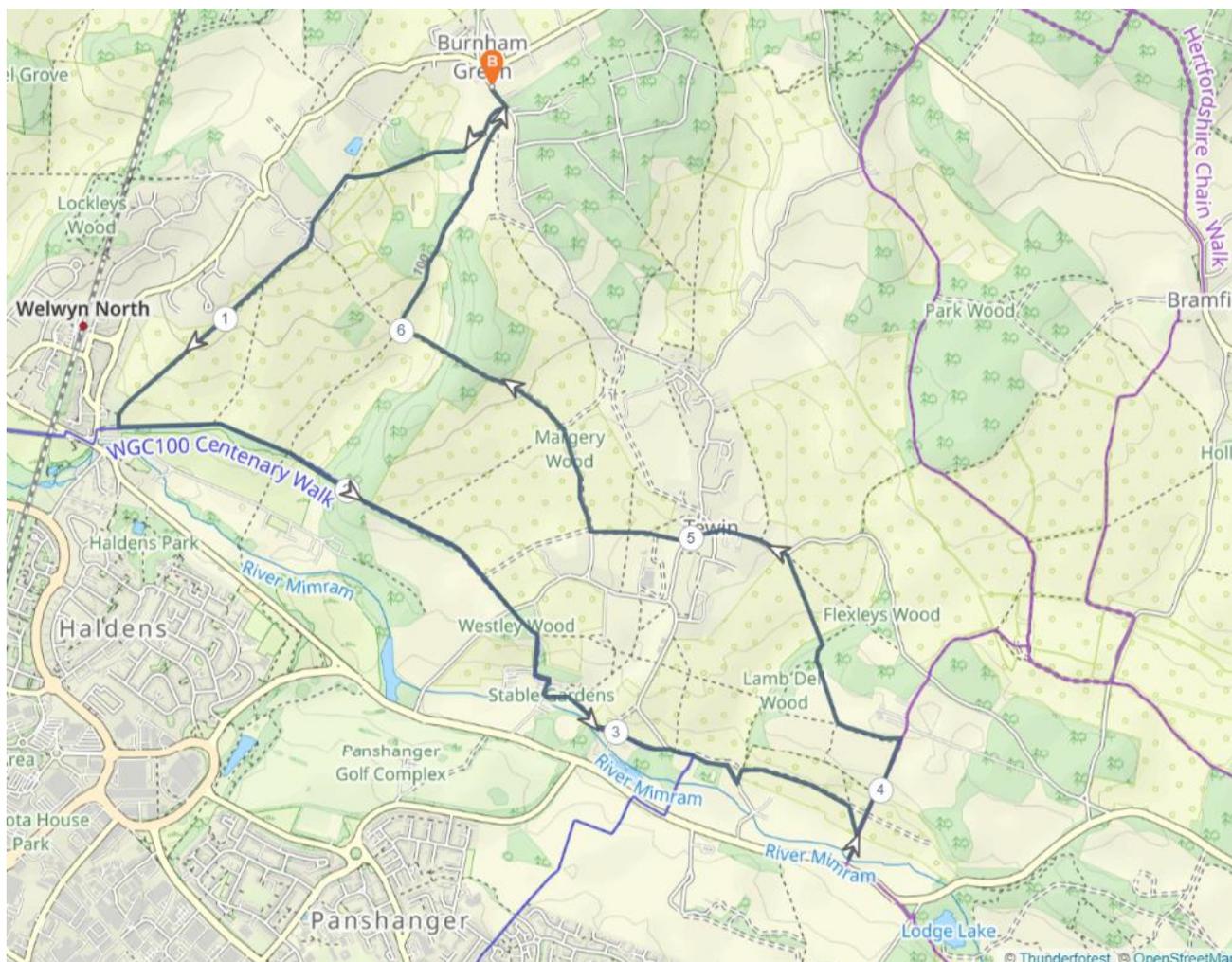




The countryside charity
Hertfordshire

Burnham Green and Tewin



An undulating circular walk through unspoilt Green Belt land, including fields, meadows and woodland. Spectacular views of Digswell Viaduct.

Distance: 6.7 miles / 10.8 km

Ascent: 580 feet / 177 metres

Duration: 2.5 hours

Difficulty: Moderate

Start / finish: Burnham Green Village Hall - free car park

Refreshments: Tewin Bury Farm, Tewin Stores & Cafe, The White Horse Pub at Burnham Green

This is a circular walk of almost 7 miles. Burnham Green is the highest point in Hertfordshire between here and the Ural Mountains in Russia, so expect a few steep climbs!

This walk starts and finishes at Burnham Green Village Hall on Orchard Road. There is a car park outside the Village Hall which is free to use, and is also next to a playground.

Come out of the Village Hall car park and turn right. Immediately to the right is a sign for Footpath 38. Walk in the direction that this is pointing, down the side of a house towards a wooden kissing gate. Go through the yellow way-marked gate and follow the Footpath 033 to the right of this field, following the hedgerow and walking between some trees.



Walk up hill, and you will soon reach a track just after some bollards, with a riding stables on the left. Turn left here and follow Footpath 034 to Pennyfathers Lane. Cross the road and walk between two concrete gate posts to join Footpath 050, a paved path that brings you to a magnificent view point over Digswell Viaduct.



The Digswell Viaduct is a marvellous feat of engineering that has stood proudly over the River Mimram for over 170 years. Its history is intertwined with the development of the railway in the 19th century and is full of fascinating facts and tales. Built in 1850 by renowned engineer William Cubitt, the viaduct was a crucial part of the Great Northern Railway line between London and Peterborough. Queen Victoria was scheduled to open the viaduct on August 6, 1850. However, a popular legend claims she was so nervous about the height that she refused to cross it. In recognition of its architectural and historical significance, the viaduct was granted Grade II* listed status in 1950.



Follow the right branch to the path, Footpath 034b, to descend the field towards the large tree. Turn left at the bottom of the hill to walk in an easterly direction along the south side of the large field along Footpath 037. The route now follows part of the Welwyn Garden City Centenary Walk, a 20.20km circular walk launched in 2020 to celebrate 100 years since the founding of Welwyn Garden City, marked by bright orange way-markers. The next stretch follows the path of an old Roman road that used to link Welwyn and Watton-on-Stone.



At a four-way intersection ahead, keep walking straight, following signs for Footpath 007. The path descends for a short period before a steep climb through some woodland. The path then opens into a field again, following the southerly boundary all the way to Churchfield Road. Cross the road heading into the wooded area ahead, turning right at the point that you reach the access road for Tewin Bury Farm. Follow to the access road downhill, walking through the farm grounds and past the farm shop and tearoom. Consider stopping here for refreshments.



Just before crossing the bridge over the River Mimram, look for the signpost hidden in the hedgerow to the left, indicating Footpath 014. Turn left here and follow the gravel road along the north bank of the River Mimram, which quickly becomes Footpath 019. The Mimram is a chalk stream, a rare type of river fed by underground springs filtering through chalk rock. This results in crystal clear, oxygen-rich water, perfect for a variety of aquatic life. The Mimram provides a vital habitat for many species, including brown trout, otters, water voles, and rare water plants. The clear water allows sunlight to penetrate, encouraging the growth of aquatic vegetation that supports the food chain. There is a bird hide and information boards with further details.



Soon you will reach Archers Green Road. Follow this road for a few minutes, watching carefully for the signpost for Footpath 024, a left turn through a hedgerow before the end of the road. Follow this route before taking the next right turn, onto a track through the field. After about 5 minutes, this rejoins Footpath 024, heading downhill towards the river. Walk through the kissing gate and to the stone bridge, to admire picturesque views of the river and its banks.



Return through the kissing gate to the north, and climb the hill ahead, via Footpath 043. You will soon reach Marden Hill, after walking through some stables in the grounds. Marden Hill has seen several owners and architectural changes over the centuries. Edward North, Master of the Harriers to Edward VI, built a new house on the site in 1653. This was later demolished, and the current structure, a mix of Jacobean and 18th-century Georgian styles, was built in 1790-94. The house had various uses throughout the 20th century, including being a boarding school during World War II and briefly owned by a gravel extraction company. Currently, it's a Grade II* listed building divided into flats.



Turn left through the wooden farm gate, following yellow markers for Footpath 018. Walk along the southern boundary of the house, and turn right through the metal kissing gate to join Footpath 022. This traverses diagonally across a field, towards Home Wood. Descend through the woods and cross the wooden foot bridge to reach a large meadow. Continue following the footpath through this field, to reach Hertford Road and the village of Tewin. Turn left onto the road, and walk into the village. You will pass the Tewin Stores & Cafe on the left - a good option for refreshments, and recipient of the Chairman's Award in our 2020 CPRE Hertfordshire Awards programme.



Take a left when the road forks, walking past the village green. Ahead, you will see the Tewin Village Hall, an imposing brick building from the 1920's. It was built on land given by Lord Desborough and funded by Sir Otto Beit as a memorial to those who died in the First World War.



To the left of the Village Hall, there is a signpost for Footpath 017, which passes along the side of the Village Hall and nursery. Follow this path to reach a large field. Continue following the footpath, before turning right onto Footpath 001, which heads towards a small copse of trees in the middle of the large field. Follow this footpath to the west, continuing uphill through Dawley Wood and then steeply downhill as you exit the wooded area. At the crossroad ahead, turn right, onto Footpath 035. You will reach a wooden kissing gate, pass through this and beware that there can occasionally be a bull in the field ahead - keep dogs on leads.



Climb the hill ahead (turning back to admire the spectacular views of Welwyn Garden City) and then pass through another wooden kissing gate and subsequent hedgerow. Follow the path across the field, to the right of the white house, to emerge on Orchard Road. Turning left and walking for 50 meters will bring you back to the Village Hall car park in Burnham Green.



This route last walked by CPRE in December 2023.

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.