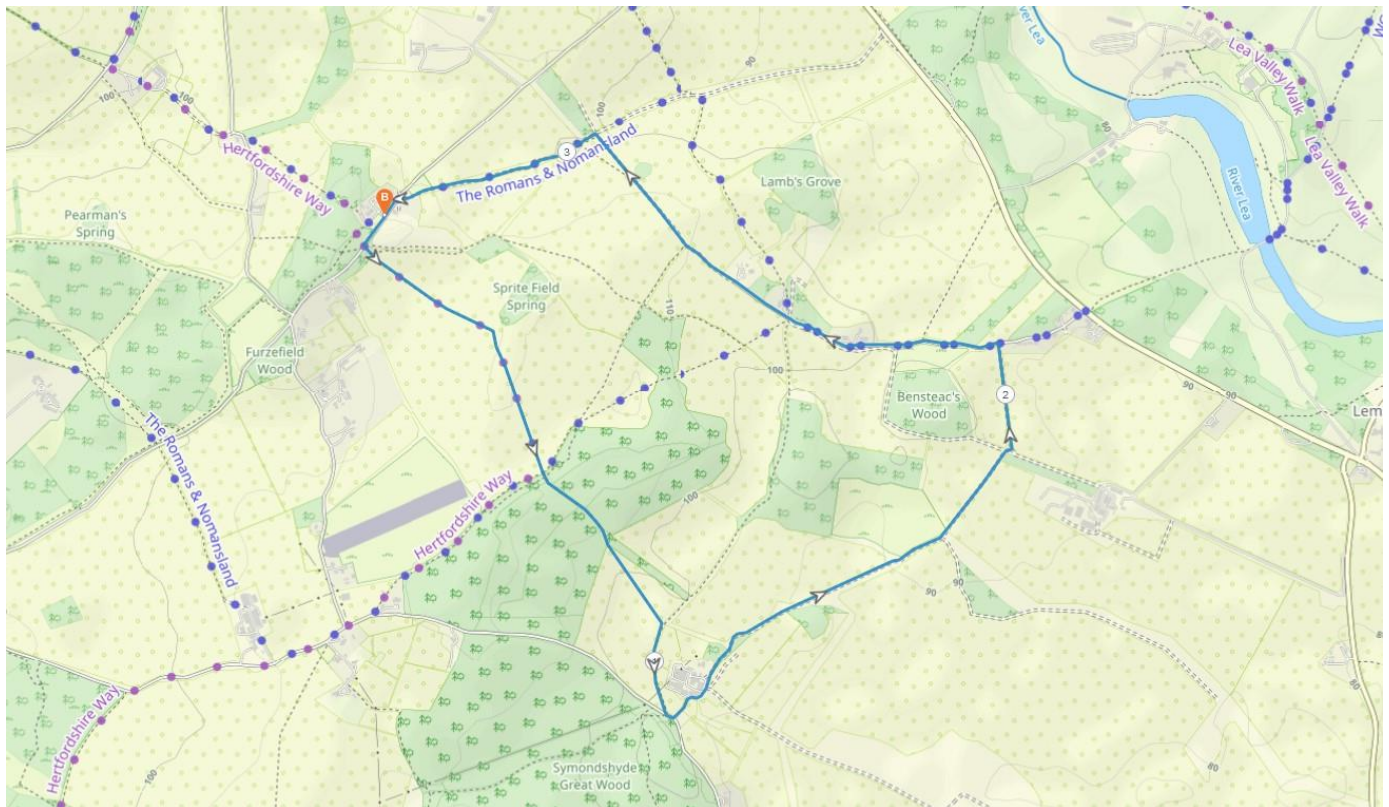




The countryside charity
Hertfordshire

Symondshyde and Cromer Hyde



This 3.4 mile circular walk takes in some of the rolling open countryside and woodland in the middle of the county. The walk is centred on rural Symondshyde for which there was a proposal for a massive new settlement of 1130 dwellings. The local campaign group Save Symondshyde and CPRE Hertfordshire campaigned successfully against this proposal, to protect this rural area with its ancient woodlands, bridleways and public footpaths for everyone to enjoy.

Distance: 3.4 miles / 5.4 km

Ascent: 187 feet / 57 metres

Duration: 2 hours

Difficulty: Easy

Start / Finish: The John Bunyan pub at Coleman Green, southeast of Wheathampstead

Refreshments: The John Bunyan pub; The pub welcomes walkers but anyone using the pub car park also needs to have a meal or drinks there.

With your back to the pub, walk out to the road (Coleman Green Lane). Turn right and walk 100 yards along the road to a point on the left marked with logs.

Turn left onto the footpath here. You are now on a part of Leg 4 of the Hertfordshire Way.

Follow the footpath around a green metal gate and along the right-hand edge of a large field.

At the end of this first field, pass two wooden posts (including footpaths marker post) and follow the path (Footpath 48) along the right-hand edge of the next field for 100 yards.

Then follow the path as it continues across the middle of the field towards a wood.

At the edge of the wood there is a signpost.

The Hertfordshire Way turns right but you continue straight ahead into, and through, the wood. (A short section in the middle may be overgrown in summer but is passable).

Soon you will emerge at the corner of the wood, looking into an arable field.

This is the western edge of the area for which the submitted Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan proposed over a thousand new dwellings in a new, standalone settlement.

Follow the path ahead as it crosses diagonally left through the field. Aim for a distinct tree on the far side of the field with farm buildings beyond.



At the far side of the field, there is a signpost. Turn right here, and follow the path (Footpath 49) between two hedgerows out to the road, Hammonds Lane.

Turn left and walk 15 yards along the road before turning left again into the driveway (also a Public Bridleway) for Symondshyde Farm.



The footpath proceeds northeasterly through the farm gateway, then slightly to the right and then to the left in front of some horse stables.

The path (Footpath 50) continues just to the right of, and alongside, a green metal sided barn.



Continue in the same northeasterly direction on the farm track. You will soon emerge into a field. The path runs along the right-hand edge of the field.

Continue on the path which runs straight ahead with a hedgerow now on your right.



At the end of this large field, the path bears right through a gap in the hedges and continues northeasterly, now with a hedgerow on your left.

Continue on the path alongside the hedge, through another gap between hedges and through another field.



You will eventually emerge at a junction of several gravel tracks.

Now head northerly (roughly straight ahead) on the track with a hedgerow on your right and horse paddocks on your left.



Follow the track to a metal field gate, and turn left onto Cromer Hyde Lane.

On the other side of the lane there is a view down the grassy avenue to Bocket Hall in the distance.

Proceed west along Cromer Hyde Lane. This lane is usually very quiet, but do watch out for any traffic.



After about half a mile the lane ends at a wooden gateway, but the footpath continues straight on.

Continue on the path as it crosses the field, with good views to the north and west, before descending into a dip.



At the bottom of the hill there is a metal gate across the track.

Turn left here, just before the metal gate, and walk about 60 yards with the trees on your right.

At a wooden signpost, turn right and descend a set of wooden steps into the holloway.



At the foot of the steps, turn left and proceed along the holloway as it gently climbs up the hill for about a third of a mile, passing numerous magnificent ancient gnarled and coppiced hornbeam trees.

The holloway emerges onto Coleman Green Lane adjacent to “John Bunyan’s Chimney” - the remains of the cottage where the author of “Pilgrims Progress” lodged.



This brings you back to the starting point at Coleman Green Lane and the John Bunyan pub.

This route last walked by CPRE in August 2024. 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.

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