



Title: Hatfield Broad Oak

Distance: 11 miles

Time taken: 4½ hours

Location: 5 miles south east of Bishop's Stortford

Parking: North of the junction between Feathers Hill and Cage End

OS Explorer Map: 183 & 195

Grid Ref.: TL 546 166

Transport: Bus: No.5 hourly to Bishops Stortford and Saffron Walden

Refreshment: Takeley: The Four Ashes and the Lion and Lamb

Hatfield Broad Oak: The Duke's Head and The Cock Inn

Walk Description

This lovely walk takes you through the water meadows alongside Pincey Brook, then through the majestic Hatfield Forest. The Forest is a Country Park and you can wander anywhere you like within its boundary: we have suggested a way through but feel free to find your own route. You need to head to the Flich Way which runs along the northern boundary of the Forest, there are several points of access between them. From there you head east along the Flich Way. The final section takes you through green lanes and open countryside back into the historic village of Hatfield Broad Oak.

Directions

- A.** Go through a gate in the top left corner of the car park (P) and walk diagonally down the hill to a footbridge in the northwest corner of the field (1).
- B.** Cross the footbridge (the barrier at the far end is quite tricky) and turn right to walk northwards through the water meadows, with a fence on your right (2).
- C.** Keep walking northwards. You will encounter several sets of gates and stiles: continue north along the fence or hedge line for over a mile, until you reach a small lane.
- D.** Turn immediately left at the lane, through a field entrance (3), and left again to hairpin back south along the field edge with a hedge on your left.
- E.** You will see a ditch 50 yards south of the field entrance, running east – west across the field. Cross this ditch, then turn right to walk between the fields with the ditch on your right (4).

F. Bear left along the field edge following the line of the ditch, then 200 yards later bear left again around a small copse. Keeping the hedge on your right, walk down a slope through an area of rough grass (5) and continue straight ahead to the roadside.

G. Turn left on the road and walk for 175 yards to the entrance to Hatfield Forest (6).

H. Once you are in Hatfield Forest you can wander as you please and make your own way to the northern edge of the park, where you join the Flitch Way. We have suggested an easy and attractive route through, and any distances quoted relate to that route. If you do take a different route through, please re-join our description at point N below.

I. Walk through the park, initially with the boundary fence on your right (7).

J. Continue ahead as the path goes between trees, until you come to a T-junction. Turn right here along a wide grassy track (8).

K. Walk northwards; after about 250 yards you will come to a gravel drive. Keep heading north for another 200 yards then turn left along an avenue heading north west (9). This is the Forest Way.

L. Keep going for about a third of a mile, to the junction with the Harcamlow Way (10) and go straight across. Continue north west on the Forest Way for another 200 yards then immediately after crossing over another smaller path, follow the avenue around to the right.

M. You are now heading roughly northeast. Keep going in the same direction for almost half a mile until you emerge from between the trees into a grassy area. Turn left for about 300 yards then right towards a gate onto the Flitch Way (11).

N. Turn right on the Flitch Way, and walk east for about a mile. You will pass several other exits from Hatfield Forest on your right along the way. If you decide to take another route through the Forest you can join the Flitch Way at one of these junctions: TL538212 (51.868666 0.233046) or TL546211 (51.86753 0.245323) (*i*). Keep going until you walk over the bridge above the road.

O. Continue along the Flitch Way for another half a mile after the railway bridge until you come to an exit bridleway on the left (12). You can turn off the Flitch Way here for a pub break in Takeley, or keep going straight ahead to continue the walk.

P. To go to The Four Ashes, turn left here and walk up the bridleway, along Chapel Fields and bear right along The Pastures. At the junction with the B1256 turn right and walk to the main road junction: the pub is on the left.

Q. To return to the Flitch Way, take Station Road heading south then turn left into Elm Close and immediately right into Sycamore Close. Follow the road round and you will see the old station building on your right. Turn left along the platform and re-join the Flitch Way.

R. Otherwise, continue along the Flitch Way going under Station Road bridge and passing the old station on your left.

S. About a third of a mile past the station, you will pass under another road bridge (13).

T. Two thirds of a mile later you will see a gate across the Flich Way ahead of you (14).

U. To go to the Lion and Lamb, take the footpath on the left 25 yards in front of the gate, to the B1256 and turn right to the pub.

V. To continue the walk turn right into the field, 25 yards in front of the gate.

W. Walk southwards for about 250 yards until you meet the corner of the woods on your right. There is a telegraph pole ahead of you. Go through the gap between the woods and the telegraph pole (15) and walk along the field edge in a south westerly direction with the woods at your right.

X. After about 110 yards the woods drop back. Continue ahead across the field passing to the left of another telegraph pole (16) then through the hedge and over a stile.

Y. Cross the next field diagonally still heading south west then carry on along the field edge heading for a cylindrical silo at Little Bullocks Farm (17).

Z. As you approach the silo you will see a metal gate in the corner of the field on your right. Go through this into the farmyard then turn immediately hard left to walk along a green lane (called Oak Lane) (18).

AA. Continue along Oak Lane as it meanders through the countryside.

AB. After about a mile the lane, now called Cuckoos Lane, becomes surfaced. Keep going past Cuckoo Cottage

AC. Continue along Cuckoos lane until you come to Hellman's Cross (19).

AD. Cross the road. You can see the old stocks and whipping post on your left. Carry straight on between Clovelly House on your right and The Old Forge on your left, to walk along another green lane (Boxley Lane).

AE. Keep walking along Boxley Lane turning left then right along the byway.

AF. After a little over half a mile you will come to a junction with a footpath to your left. Bear right to stay on the byway (20).

AG. Continue along the byway until you pass Aldburys Farm and arrive at the roadside by a small triangular traffic island. Turn left on the road and walk south for 80 yards.

AH. Turn right along a narrow bridleway, which looks more like a woodland path (21).

AI. Walk the length of the bridleway (about a third of a mile) until you come to a wide grassy area and then a lane (22).

AJ. Cross the lane and go over a small plank bridge under the trees, then continue ahead westwards along the edge of a field (23).

AK. Keep going around two sides of the field edge until you reach corner diagonally opposite the entrance.

AL. Go through the large gap in the hedge at this point and continue walking in the same direction, roughly south west, but with the hedge now on your left (24).

AM. Carry on along the edge of this field until you approach a thatched cottage with cartwheels against the wall, then turn right to the roadside (25).

AN. Turn left on the B183 Dunmow Road and walk into Hatfield Broad Oak village.

AO. Follow the road round to the right in front of The Duke's Head (26).

AP. Walk along the High Street with the magnificent St Mary the Virgin church on your right, until you pass The Cock Inn on the right.

AQ. Continue to the T-junction near the post office, then turn right up Cage End and continue straight ahead up the no-through-road to the car park.

[ROUTE DIRECTIONS at www.essexwalks.com](http://www.essexwalks.com)

The ROUTE MAP and ROUTE PHOTOS **also** need to be downloaded and saved on your computer for printing.



The Route Map PDF can be downloaded from this page: [Description & Map](#)



The Route Photos PDF can be downloaded from this page: [Photos](#)

This route description is not meant to be used in isolation, it is one piece of a three part guide to the walk. The other two pieces are the route map, and the numbered photographs. The walks work best when the description, map and the photos PDF are printed off and used in conjunction with each other.

The numbers in brackets in the description refer to specific points along the route, marked with numbered symbols and these in turn are matched to illustrative photographs which show you the lie of the land.



These symbols are shown at strategic points along the route, overlaid on a 1:50K Ordnance Survey map: [Online OS Map at www.essexwalks.com](#).