

Islington U3A Longer Walks Group

Walk Title	Bayford & Hertford	Walk No.	299
Area	Hertfordshire	Type	Circular
Date	Thursday 03 December, 2020		
Distance	Link 4 of the Hertfordshire Chain Walk which is 6 miles but extended along the Hertfordshire Way. Total 8½ miles, 13 kms		
Timing	4 hours walking time + travel + lunch stop. Allow 7 hours in total. Therefore should be back in Islington by about 4.30 pm.		
Meeting up & travel	<p>Meet at Highbury & Islington by 9.20 to catch the 9.33 train to Bayford (Moorgate - Hertford North line). Or you can join the train at: 9.35 Drayton Park, 9.38 Finsbury Park. On the sign up form indicate where you are joining the train.</p> <p>You'll need to buy an off peak day return from Crews Hill (or Zone 6 Extension) to Bayford. £3.45 with Freedom Pass and Senior Railcard.</p> <p>Return from Bayford. Trains 20 or 30 minutes.</p>		
Route	<p>We previously walked this walk as a group in February 2018 but we did part of it more recently in September 2020. It's part of the Hertfordshire Chain Walk (IF1) a Long Distance Path, this time we'll do Link 4 – but extended toward Hertford.</p> <p>We start from Bayford station (0 mls, 10.15) and walk into Bayford village. From there we turn north along the Hertfordshire Way following the railway line. As we reach the outskirts of Hertford we loop round, crossing over for the first time the River Lee and pick up the Lea Valley Walk which runs along the route of the disused Cole Green railway line (11.30, 3mls, 5kms) (IF2). This was the route of the Welwyn-Hatfield Line which has now been converted into a path for walkers, cyclists and riders. Another long distance path, the Lea Valley Walk, also makes use of this path. We follow this path all the way along to Letty Green for our lunch stop (12.30, 5mls, 8km).</p> <p>After lunch (13.30) coming out of the pub we take the road into Letty Green and there join the Hertfordshire Chain Walk (Link 4). We head south initially on a quiet country road crossing the River Lee again. At the road junction we cross straight over onto a private road leading to a gravel quarry. But we leave this soon by taking the path left up the hill to Howe Green. From there it's on paths through rolling farmlands to Little Berkhamstead (IF3)</p> <p>We walk close by Stratton's Observatory (IF4). After Little Berkhamsted (14.15, 6mls, 10km) we pick up Link 3 again to take us back toward Bayford. From the village, next to the church, we take the Hertfordshire Way. We cross a road, zig zagging right then left. The path runs between gardens for a few yards then crosses some large grassy fields (on the right hand side). It dips down to a stile (you can dodge round this one) at the wood's edge. The path now climbs steadily uphill through the wood. Another stile at the edge of the wood gives access to another grassy field. Follow the path with the hedge on the left as it turns left, then crosses a stile to join a track, turn right pass a couple of houses then it reaches the main road in about a hundred yards. Turn left on to</p>		

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	the road. Follow the road for almost half a mile into Bayford (16.00, 8½ miles, 13 km). Trains at 05, 18 & 35 passed the hour.
Lunch	Food maybe available at the Cowper Arms at Letty Green (01707 330 202) or we will need to take a picnic. To be determined nearer the time.
Dropping out	Two possible opt out points. The first, before lunch, is when we join the Cole Green disused railway line. From there you can walk into Hertford North station. The second, after lunch, would be by taxi to Hertford North train station.
Suitability	We will observe our Covid Risk Assessment. Suitable for any reasonably fit regular walker. Terrain: some slight undulations. It will be quite muddy in places. Bring a pole. Some walking on minor quiet roads. Possible obstacles: 4 stiles. Comfortable waterproof walking boots. Check weather forecast for temperature and likelihood of rain.
Facilities	There are no toilets at Bayford station. Use the facilities on the train and at the pub at lunchtime.
Walk source	Leaders creation from links below.
Map & other references	OS Explorer 174 & 182 Links: https://www.ldwa.org.uk/ldp/members/show_path.php?menu_type=S&path_name=Hertfordshire+Chain+Walk http://www.petes-walks.co.uk/Hertfordshire%20Chain%20Walk/hcw_frame_page.htm https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1wpbftvE0alMAEE7hVKe1C4pnmc&ie=UTF8&hl=en&msa=0&z=11&om=1&ll=51.846516170074864%2C0.031209545492520974
Leader & contact details	<u>Walk Leader</u> : Derek Harwood <u>Phone</u> : 077 5931 4096 <u>e-mail</u> : derek.harwood@live.co.uk
Interesting Facts	<i>IF1: About the Hertfordshire Chain Walk</i> <i>The Hertfordshire Chain Walk is an 86-mile walk that crosses the county of Hertfordshire from south to north, starting on the northern edge of London and finishing in Cambridgeshire. This path consists of 15 circular walks of between 4 and 9 miles in length that are linked together to form a 'chain' – hence the name Chain Walk. In fact there is a quarter mile gap between Walk 7 and Walk 8, so the Hertfordshire Chain Walk is also unusual in that it is a long distance footpath with a hole in the middle!</i> <i>The Hertfordshire Chain Walk starts in the south of the county, the first walk actually passing through the London borough of Enfield. Sharing some early parts of its route with the Hertfordshire Way, it then heads north to Little Berkhamsted and passes just west of Hertford. Continuing northwards between Stevenage (to the west) and Buntingford, it again meets the Hertfordshire Way near Sandon and Therfield, just south of Royston. The Hertfordshire Chain Walk finishes at Ashwell and Morden railway station, just across the county boundary in Cambridgeshire.</i>

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IF2: Cole Green Railway See this link for more information:
http://www.disused-stations.org.uk/c/cole_green/

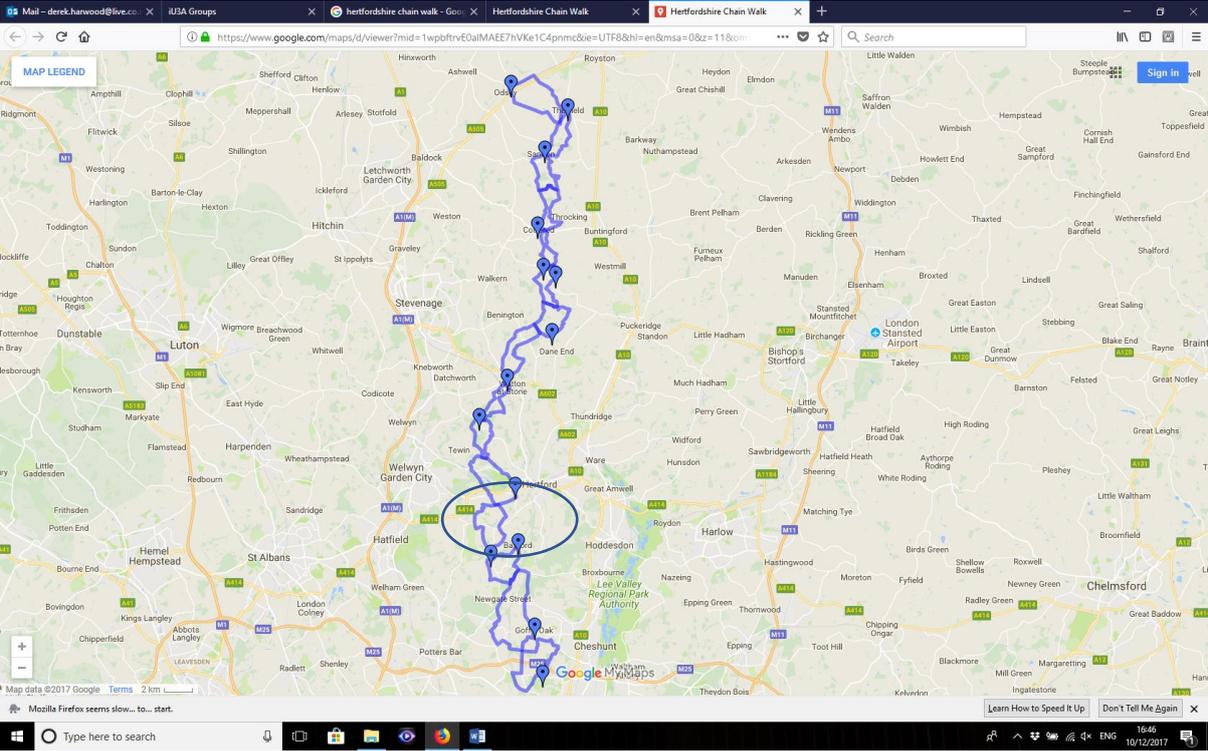
IF3: Little Berkhamsted's greatest claim to fame is that it was the place where William the Conqueror accepted the surrender of the City of London after the Battle of Hastings. The village dates back to at least Saxon times, and is mentioned in the Domesday book. It has previously been known as Berkhamsted Parva or East Berkhamsted to distinguish it from the town of Berkhamsted in the west of Hertfordshire. There are a number of impressive residences in the village, including two former manor houses and two former rectories. The cricket commentator Brian Johnson lived here (famous for that immortal line "As you join us, the bowlers Holding, the batsman's Willey"). The church has a rather unusual wooden tower, which somehow reminded me of churches I'd seen in Scandinavia.

IF4: This is a round brick Georgian prospect tower built in 1789 as a folly in 1789 by John Stratton on the site of a former brewhouse. Stories that Stratton was an admiral who wanted to be able to see his ships moored on the Thames are almost certainly fiction. Most likely he simply wanted to enjoy the views offered by this folly. Certainly the tower is quite a landmark and will be visible throughout most of the walk.



Full route of the Hertfordshire Chain Walk with Link 4 circled:

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The section this walk covers (link 4):

