

HATFIELD HEATH WALKS

WALK 3: Village Hall to Ardley End

Length: 2.5 km (1.5 miles)

Duration: approx. 1 h

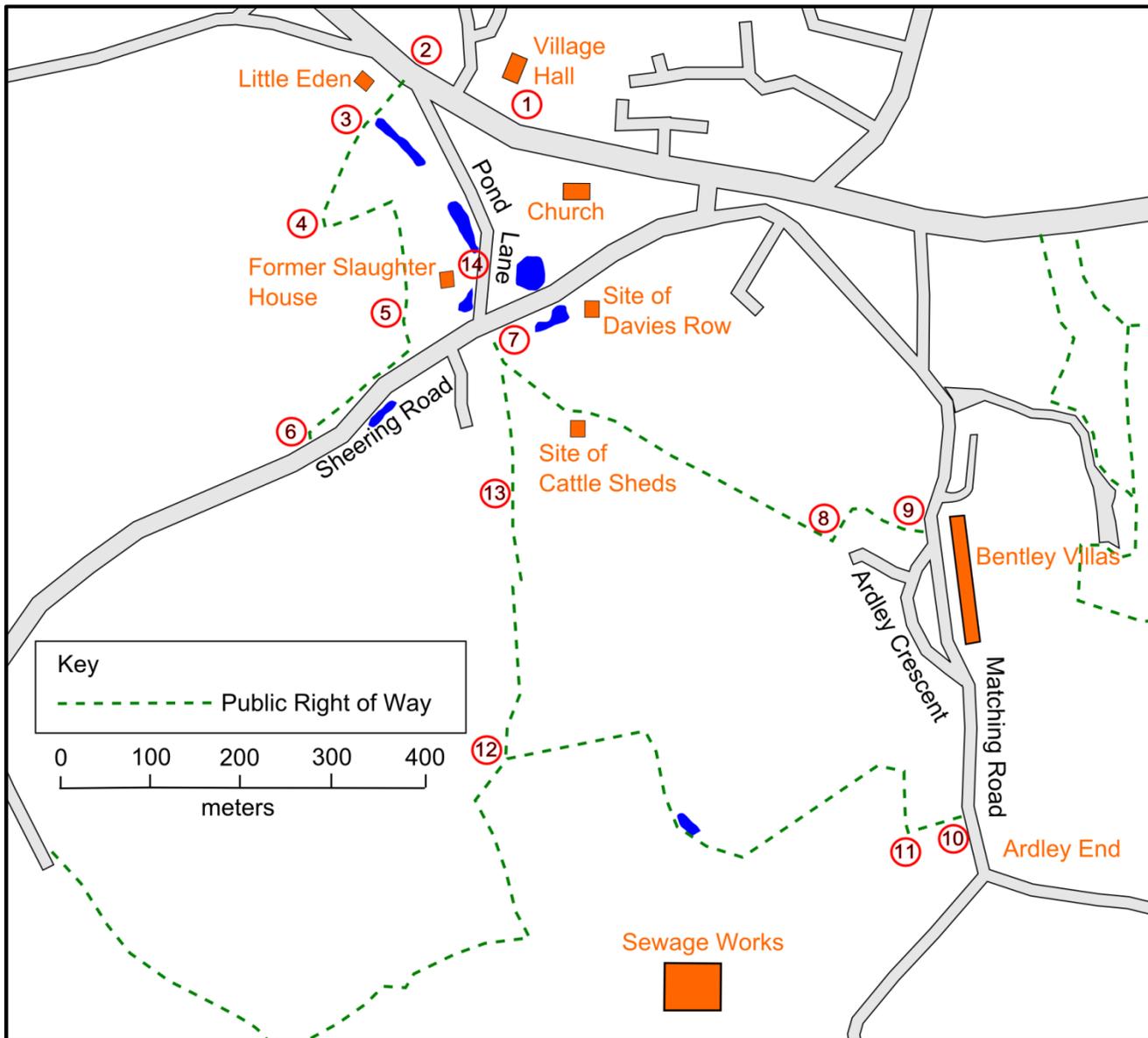
This walk uses definitive paths and stretches of roads with pavements. Suitable footwear should be worn. Two stiles are crossed (3) and (4), but these can be bypassed by walking directly from (2) to (7) along Pond Lane.

The walk begins at the Village Hall car park (1). From here head north-west, crossing the entrance to Broomfields estate, then cross the Stortford Road opposite to Little Eden (2).

① **Village Hall:** Built in 1970 on the site of the former Parish Hall, known as Trinity Hall, which itself was opened in 1894.

② **Little Eden:** Dating from the mid-seventeenth century, Little Eden was originally a farm. On the 1838 Tithe Map it was known as Hockleys.

Follow the finger post across the green to the left of Little Eden, climb over the stile (3) continue straight ahead across the uneven pasture to an opening in the far corner (4). Cross the wooden bridge and second stile then turn sharp left through a kissing gate and around the edge of a paddock.



This is the third in a series of walks that explore the footpaths of the Parish of Hatfield Heath. Points of interest along the way are indicated in the text with an ① symbol. Each walk starts from a location around the circumference of the village green, and being circular in nature could be joined at any convenient point. For other walks and further information about the village visit: www.hatfieldheath.com

On your left amongst a collection of industrial units is a wooden barn bearing a notice “Licensed Slaughterhouse” – this was once one of two established butchers business on the Heath.

Pass through a second kissing gate (5) and follow the path until it exits onto Sheering Road (6), when you should turn left along the pavement towards the village and cross the Sheering Road before its junction with Pond Lane(7).

Here you will see two fingerposts – take the route to the left, through the metal gate and follow the path until it emerges to an open area. Beyond the gateway on your left you can see a few derelict brick structures which were once associated with Davies Row. The overgrown patch of land on your right is the site of a former farm building and cattle sheds.

① ***Davies Row:** A terrace of old cottages built at right angles to the road were demolished in the late 1930's.*

Keep straight ahead with the field boundary on your left.

Keep following the boundary until an opening on the left (8) reveals a wooden footbridge (just before the houses) which you cross and continue behind the houses of Ardley Crescent until the Matching Road is reached by crossing another wooden footbridge (9). Cross the road and turn right.

On your left are Bentley Villas (1931) and to the right is Ardley Crescent (1938), the construction of which allowed condemned buildings at Davis Row to be demolished.

These developments and the newer houses that flank the Matching Road conceal the fact that the cottages at Ardley End (junction with Friars Lane) were not long ago quite a separate community – indeed it did not receive electricity supplies until 1953.

Shortly after the EIR lamp box, cross the Matching Road opposite the finger post at (10) and follow the path where it turns to the right in front of some stables. Follow the path around the edges of the paddock. The metal fence running parallel on your left in the distance surrounds the sewage works. On the horizon you can see the water tower at Church Langley. After the paddock, turn right and follow the field edge. Almost immediately on your right, hidden amongst the trees is a pond, often dry in the summer months. This is one of many ponds around the village, some more evident than others (a few are marked on this map).

① ***Sewage Works:** Built to treat the material from the new main sewerage system laid on in the village in 1935.*

① ***Water Tower:** Built in 1994 for the new development of Church Langley, and with a capacity of almost half a million gallons, the water tower is often the scene of charitable abseiling events.*

Continue along the field edge and turn right at (12) heading due north. Continue straight on at (13) crossing a wooden bridge over a ditch and follow the narrow path (beware of the barbed wire) until an opening is reached. Cross to the northwest corner, along the side of Blaisdon Lodge and after closing the wooden gate behind you, follow the driveway back towards the road.

Cross the road and follow Pond Lane. Just before an oak tree, there is a path on the right leading to an information board beside one of the ponds. Return to Pond Lane, passing the small complex of shops and units at Reynolds (14), then turn right across the Heath towards a second information board. At the board turn left alongside the churchyard and over the road to reach the end of this walk (1).

① ***Holy Trinity Church:** The Parish Church was built in 1859. The current peal of six lightweight bells was recast from the metal of the three original bells in 1961.*

We gratefully acknowledge the input we received from Liz Wright whilst writing this walk, and for information sourced from “A History of Hatfield Heath”, 1999.

For further information about the village visit: www.hatfieldheath.com

Ian and Stella Hughes 2015