

Main walk last checked	Option a) last checked	Option b) last checked	Option c) last checked
6 May 2023	15 November 2023	6 May 2023	15 November 2023
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Tring Circular

Ivinghoe Beacon and Chiltern beech woods

Length	Main walk	16.3km (10.1 miles)
	a) Short circular walk	12.8km (8 miles)
	b) Tring to Berkhamsted	20.6km (12.8 miles)
	c) Short walk from Tring to Berkhamsted	9.4km (5.8 miles)

Toughness 4 out of 10

Maps Explorer 181, Landranger 165

Features

The first part of this route – which follows the Ridgeway along the **Chiltern escarpment to Ivinghoe Beacon** – is exhilarating, offering downland scenery as fine as anything on the South Downs. From the Beacon itself, it seems as if you can see half of England on a fine day.

Then, by way of contrast, you are plunged into the ancient **Chiltern beechwoods** of the Ashridge Estate. Lovingly preserved by the National Trust, they provide fine autumn colours in late October or early November. Tea is at the Monument Cafe, a popular kiosk with outside seating on the Ashridge Estate. All of the climbing is in the first half of the walk: the second half is all flat or downhill.

Towards the end of April and more particularly in early May, this is also a magnificent **bluebell** walk - arguably the best in the south east. The star attraction is **Dockey Wood**, just off the main walk in paragraph 33. But **Flat Isley** (to the right in paragraph 56: also reachable via a diversion in paragraph 78 in option a) is just as good and less well-known or frequented. Lastly, **Old Copse** to the south of the Monument Cafe (at the start of option b, but also reachable from the main walk as a short stroll) also has extensive displays. Being further north and higher up, all these woods are at their best a week to ten days later than others in the south east.

Walk options

a) Short cut from Ivinghoe Beacon to the Bridgewater Monument: This option avoids Little Gaddesden (and the lunch pub) by using a direct 4.7km (2.9 mile) route from Ivinghoe Beacon to the Bridgewater Monument, for the most part on an easy gravel track through beech woodland,

but with occasional escarpment views. There is an optional diversion into the woods midway, which also takes you through the wonderful bluebell wood of Flat Isley (see Features above). In all this option reduces the main walk to **12.8km (8 miles)**. To do it, follow the main walk directions to paragraph 21 on page 4 and then switch when directed to the directions in paragraph 69 on page 7.

b) Extension to Berkhamsted: This pleasant walk initially through woodland (with bluebells in season - see Features) and then over open hills offers an alternative ending to either the main walk or option a) above that is 4.3km (2.7 miles) longer than the standard version, making a total walk of **20.6km (12.8 miles)** if you add it to the main walk, or **17.1km (10.6 miles)** if combined with option **a)**. It has some bluebells in late April and early May. To do this option, either follow the main walk to the Bridgewater Monument (paragraph 59 on page 6) or follow option **a)** to its end. You then switch to paragraph 84 on page 8.

c) Short walk from Tring to Berkhamsted: This walk goes direct from Tring station to Aldbury and the Bridgewater Monument (both offering refreshment options) and then joins option **b)** above to make a short walk of **9.4km (5.8 miles)**, including a particularly fine section of the Ashridge beech woods. To do this option, start with paragraph 118 on page 10.

Transport

Four trains an hour run between **London Euston** and Tring from Monday to Saturday; there are two an hour on Sundays (journey time 35-46 minutes). Take **the train nearest to 9.30am** to get to lunch in time.

Berkhamsted is served by all trains that stop at Tring as well as some that do not. It is one stop nearer to London than Tring and so covered by a return ticket to Tring.

If you are driving, Tring station has a large (paying) car park.

Lunch & tea places

The **Bridgewater Arms**, Little Gaddesden (01442 842 408). Located 10.2km (6.3 miles) from the start of the walk, this traditional country inn, now owned by the Greene King chain, serves food all afternoon daily either in its restaurant or bar area. It also has a small garden. This is the only possible lunch stop for for the main walk.

The **Monument Cafe** by the Bridgewater Monument on the Ashridge estate is a popular place for tea. It is self-service, with outside seating (though there is a small amount of covered seating in the nearby visitor centre), and there is invariably a queue at its serving window. But your reward for waiting is a fine selection of homemade cakes and you can also get some hot lunch options. Open till 5pm or even 6pm in summer, 4pm in winter, it is the recommended tea option for the main walk, and a possible lunch stop on the shorter walk options.

The **Greyhound Inn** (01442 851228) in the heart of the village of Aldbury, describes itself as "a chocolate box village pub simply oozing charm and character". It serves food 12-2.30pm and 6-9pm Monday to Friday, 12-9pm on Saturdays and 12-6pm on Sundays. It is a possible lunch or dinner stop in Aldbury towards the end of the main walk or near the start of the short walk from Tring to Berkhamsted.

The former Valiant Trooper pub in Aldbury has also now reopened, fully modernised, as **The Trooper** (01442 949020), open from Wednesday to Saturday to 10pm and Sunday to 7pm, and serving food (seemingly quite upmarket) 12pm-3pm and 5.30pm to 8.30pm Wednesday to Saturday, and 12pm-5pm Sunday. It also has a **Barn** cafe, open 9-3pm Tuesday to Sunday.

Berkhamsted has various refreshment options if you are finishing the walk there. If you are rushing to get a train, the **Platform Wine** shop in the ticket hall of the station serves a full range of hot drinks to takeaway, as well as the alcoholic drinks its name suggests. Otherwise, turning left along the canal just beyond the station brings in a short distance to two pleasant waterside pubs - the **Crystal Palace** and the **Boat**. A bit further afield, a walk of 400 metres brings you to Berkhamsted's attractive high road, which has lots of tea options, including **Mario's Gelateria and Espresso Bar**, open till 5.30pm Monday to Friday, 6pm Saturday, and 5pm Sunday;

Simmons Bakers, which serves hot drinks, has tables and a good selection of cakes, and is open until 5 pm Monday to Saturday and 4pm Sundays; and **Bel Caffè**, open till 5pm daily. A later closing option is **Caffè Nero**, open to 7pm Saturday and 6.30pm other days. The high street also has several pubs, including the **Crown**, part of the Weatherspoons chain.

Picnic: Both Pitsdown Hill and Ivinghoe Beacon are excellent picnic spots. A good picnic spot for option c) is also identified in paragraph 99 on page 9.

WALK DIRECTIONS

For **c) Short walk from Tring to Berkhamsted** start with paragraph 118 on page 10.

Tring station to Ivinghoe Beacon (5.6km/3.5 miles)

- 1** From the platform at **Tring Station**, walk up the stairs and turn right. At the end of the footbridge turn left to come to the road in 50 metres.
- 2** Turn right on the road. In 30 metres you pass the entrance to the station car park. 5 metres beyond this **turn right** through a metal and wood kissing gate. Turn left along the hedge, parallel to the road, with an earth bank to the right initially.
This path along the field edge is a permissive path, ie not a right of way. If it is closed, you will need to follow the road, taking care of the traffic: ignore a road to the left in 100 metres and in 70 metres more turn left into a house driveway: pass through a footpath gate to the right of the two sets of fieldgates, signposted Ridgeway, and carry on up a broad grassy strip: continue the directions in paragraph 5 below.
- 3** In 50 metres there is a large field to your right. Keep up the left-hand edge of this.
- 4** In 60 metres more ignore gaps to the left by a road junction, but in 70 metres more, just after the hedge ends left, turn left through a gap to cross the road with care. On the far side go through a footpath gate to the right of two sets of fieldgates and on up a broad grassy strip following a Ridgeway sign.
- 5** You now follow the **Ridgeway** all the way to Ivinghoe Beacon. In more detail: 130 metres after the gate, at a crosspaths marked by a four-armed footpath sign, turn left onto a path.
- 6** In 500 metres, at a signposted crossroads, go right uphill following the Ridgeway sign. In 50 metres you pass a National Trust sign for Aldbury

Nowers. (*The field to the left here is an excellent place to see rare butterflies from April to August.*)

- 7** In 80 metres, just after the path enters the wood, ignore a smaller path to the left that slants back downhill, but in 10 metres more take the next left, once again clearly signposted 'Ridgeway'. Climb up a long flight of wood supported steps, and at the top **turn half left**, your direction 310 degrees, **following a yellow arrow** and acorn sign on a post, and **ignoring** an apparent path that carries on straight upwards.
 - 8** You now stay on this path, ignoring ways off, as it curves up through the woods, then descends slightly and levels out. In 1km you reach a wooden kissing gate and exit the woods.
 - 9** Beyond the gate keep straight on along a well defined path which slants up the open hillside, ignoring another path that forks left downhill.
 - 10** In 300 metres, at the top of the hill, carry straight on along the grassy top of the ridge. This is **Pitstone Hill**, a good spot for a **picnic**.
- The 137km (85 mile) **Ridgeway** is supposed to be the oldest long distance footpath in England. Linking Ivinghoe Beacon with Avebury in Wiltshire, it is a route that has been in use for at least 5000 years. It is part of a track that originally stretched from the Wash in Norfolk to the Dorset Coast, and was used in more recent times by livestock drovers. Until the Enclosure Acts of the mid eighteenth century, the Ridgeway was a series of tracks on the crest of the downs, much as it still is today between Pitstone Hill and Ivinghoe Beacon. There is a map set in stone on the top of the Beacon that details the whole route.
- 11** In 350 metres the path curves slightly right towards a low rounded hill, 250 metres ahead. Follow the grassy path to the top of this.

- 12** From the summit of the hill follow the path downhill for 120 metres to a car park. Cross the minor road beyond.
- 13** Keep straight on through the gate on the other side of the road, ignoring a rather confusing Ridgeway sign pointing right (which indicates a horse rider's route). Keep straight ahead on a broad path along the right-hand edge of a field.
- 14** In 500 metres, when the fence ends at a four-armed footpath sign, carry on straight up the hill in front of you on a broad grass path.
- 15** In 300 metres keep on the path as it curves left on a broad shelf, ignoring a path steeply uphill to the right.
- 16** In 150 metres, at the top of the hill **do not go through the fieldgate** or the gate to its left, but **pass to the left of both of them** to follow a path along the very edge of the ridge, with a wire fence to your right.
- 17** In 60 metres, where the scrub ends to your right, ignore paths curving left around the bowl and one to the right to a kissing gate, to carry straight on, slightly uphill, towards a line of scrub.
- 18** In 100 metres go straight on into what is in fact a kind of hawthorn wood.
- 19** In 150 metres on the far side of the wood, keep straight on downhill with a fence to your right, ignoring a stile to the right.
- 20** In 90 metres go right through a kissing gate, on a path that goes uphill briefly, before descending in 250 metres to the road. Cross the road and take the left-hand of the two broad tracks ahead.
- 21** Keep straight on along this path for 500 metres all the way to **Ivinghoe Beacon**, passing over two lesser rises on the way. Once on the beacon, you have panoramic views.
- At this point to do **a) Short cut from Ivinghoe Beacon to the Bridgewater Monument** (4.7km/2.9 miles versus 8.2km/5.1 miles by the main walk route) go to paragraph 69 on page 7.
- Ivinghoe Beacon to Little Gaddesden (5.1km/3.2 miles)**
- 22** To continue with the main walk from the Beacon turn around, due south, and retrace your steps to the bottom of the first dip. Here, rather than carry on over the next hummock, take the track that skirts it on its left-hand side.
- 23** In 300 metres this descends to a crossroads with a track, 50 metres to the left of the road. Go straight over this track and on down a gravel path.
- 24** In 60 metres, at another (less obvious) path crossroads, turn left through a metal kissing gate. You are now on the **Icknield Way**, which you will follow to Wards Hurst Farm (paragraph 32 below).
- 25** In more detail: beyond the kissing gate continue downhill along a broad grassy path, with a wire fence on your right.
- 26** In 120 metres go through another gate and keep on, still with the fence to the right.
- 27** In 300 metres pass through a gate and keep straight on along a faint grassy path, ignoring paths forking left and right.
- 28** In 300 metres pass through a kissing gate to the left of a fieldgate under the trees in the far corner of the field, and follow a broad path through the wood.
- 29** In 450 metres this plunges into a dense plantation of pine trees. (Ignore paths left and right just before the pine trees).
- 30** After 120 metres the path veers half left across several rows of trees before resuming its former direction, and in 40 metres more it repeats the same trick. In another 30 metres it does so again, and in another 20 metres it veers half left again to emerge from the pines into a more open area, with a fence ahead of you.
- 31** Here turn half right to follow the edge of the wood. Keep the fence to your left, and in 200 metres go straight ahead up the steep slope ahead on zigzagging steps. (*Near the top of these there is a large patch of **wild garlic** (ramsons), which flower in May*).
- 32** In 350 metres, at the very top of the hill, pass through a kissing gate and keep on along a fence towards **Wards Hurst Farm**.
- 33** In 60 metres pass through a gate and carry straight on, passing between a metal barn on the right and a wood-sided structure to the left to come to another gate in 80 metres. Go through this and straight across the field beyond. In 90 metres go through

another gate.

- In early to mid May, it is worth visting **Dockey Wood**, one of the best **bluebell woods** in the country, which can be seen ahead to the right. To do this turn right at this point and follow the footpath to the road, where the wood is to your immediate left. Return to this point to resume the walk.
- 34** Otherwise, to continue with the main walk carry straight on across the next two fields, each about 200 metres across, with Dockey Wood visible to your right.
- 35** Beyond the end of the second field, converge with the wood edge to your left.
- 36** In 250 metres pass through a gate, and carry on down a fenced path.
- 37** In 220 metres pass through another gate, and keep on down the wood edge.
- 38** In 150 metres, at the far end of the field, go through a gate and keep straight on down an enclosed path with cherry laurel to its left.
- 39** In 60 metres turn right with the green mesh fence.
- 40** In 60 metres more you emerge onto onto a track. In another 30 metres turn left through a gate into a field.
- 41** Turn half right across the field following a yellow footpath arrow towards a point 80 metres to the left of a white house with battlements in the distance.
- 42** In 200 metres, on the far side of the field, pass through a metal kissing gate and turn right along a road into the hamlet of **Ringshall**.
- 43** In 70 metres, ignore a road to the left to Little Gaddesden.
- 44** In 70 metres more you are passing some brick cottages on the right. Beyond them, ignore a road to the right signposted to Ivinghoe and Marsworth, but 30 metres beyond this, just beyond a driveway on the left side of the road leading to a pumping station), turn left up a gravel footpath signposted to Little Gaddesden.
- 45** Follow this path as it curves left around a garden fence. In 250 metres turn right with the path into a wooded area.
- 46** In 200 metres the path becomes a gravel track and then a tarmac drive.

47 In 250 metres more you pass through a wooden gate. 180 metres beyond this there is a slatted wooden fence on the left.

48 Where the fence ends in another 60 metres, turn left at a four-armed footpath sign up a path between fences, which leads in 150 metres into the car park of the **Bridgewater Arms**, Little Gaddesden, the recommended lunch stop.

- An optional detour after lunch is to **Little Gaddesden Church**, which is set in the fields behind the village and contains the tomb of the Duke of Bridgewater (*see panel*). To get to it, turn right out of the pub along the road. In 200 metres, turn right onto a footpath, and immediately fork right on a path that goes through the middle of three fields. In 400 metres this brings you to the church. Return to the Bridgewater Arms to continue the walk.

The most famous owner of the **Ashridge Estate**, across which much of the afternoon section of this walk passes, was Francis 3rd Duke of Bridgewater. Known as the "Canal Duke", his pioneering work is commemorated in the **Bridgewater Monument**, erected in 1832. You can climb the monument for a small fee at weekends from April to October, weather permitting, for fine views over the countryside

In 1759 Bridgewater employed engineer James Brindley to build a canal from Manchester to Worsley, Lancashire, one his other estates, to transport coal from his mines. Brindley's innovation - a technique called "puddling" - enabled the canal to travel in an aqueduct across the Irwell river valley. The aqueduct became the wonder of the age and sparked a canal building boom that lasted till the advent of the railways in the 1830s.

Bridgewater himself is buried in Little Gaddesden Church. **Ashridge House**, which is situated at the other end of the grand avenue leading up to the monument, is now a business school. The estate is now owned by the National Trust.

**Little Gaddesden to the
Bridgewater Monument
(3km/1.8 miles)**

- 49** Coming out of the Bridgewater Arms, cross the road into the car park and retrace the path that you came up before lunch.
- 50** In 150 metres cross a tarmac drive and go straight ahead down a path between gradually narrowing hedges. In 60 metres there is a garden on your left and in a further 60 metres you emerge into woods.
- 51** In 5 metres, at a crosspaths, go right, following a footpath that in 100 metres comes up alongside a golf course.
- 52** Keep along its edge, just inside the trees, and in 600 metres the path brings you back to the main road. Cross straight over and carry on up a broad green pathway through the heart of the woods.
- 53** 100 metres ignore unmarked paths to the left and right, and in another 50 metres keep straight on at a post with lots of green arrows on it.
- 54** In another 250 metres, at a crossing of car-wide paths marked by another post with arrows on it, go half left along a broad ride between trees.
- 55** In 300 metres, at a crosspaths marked by green arrows, go straight ahead.
- 56** In 170 metres go straight ahead at a crosspaths marked by an arrow on a post.
*In early to mid May there is a **bluebell wood** to the right at this point: this is **Flat Isley**, one of the best bluebell woods in the country, which is well worth exploring. Return to this point afterwards to continue the walk.*
- 57** In another 200 metres, at crosspaths (with the escarpment steepening ahead), go left on a broad path.
- 58** In 250 metres you come to a junction with a part-gravel track, where you go left.
- 59** Stay on this track, ignoring all ways off. In 250 metres you cross a wooden bridge over a gully. 300 metres after this you come to the the **Bridgewater Monument** (see panel above). Cross the green space to the wooden building ahead, which is the **National Trust's Ashridge Estate Visitor's Centre**, which has some informative exhibitions about the surrounding area, and the

Monument Café tea kiosk, which is the recommended tea stop.

- At this point to take **option b) Extension to Berkhamsted**, 6.8km/4.2 miles from this point versus 2.5km/1.5 miles to the end of the main walk, switch to paragraph 84 on page 8.

**Bridgewater Monument to
Tring station (2.5km/1.5 mi)**

- 60** Coming away from the tea kiosk, with the serving hatch behind and the monument ahead, turn left along a tarmac driveway with parking spaces to the right.
- 61** In 60 metres, at the end of the parking area carry on downhill on a car-wide gravel bridleway. In 40 metres ignore a track forking left.
- 62** For the next 250 metres ignore minor side paths until you come to major fork in the bridleway. Here keep right downhill.
- 63** Again ignore all ways off until in 600 metres you come to a road, where you turn right.
- 64** In 60 metres you arrive at crossroads in the centre of **Aldbury**, with the village pond to your right, and beyond it the **Greyhound Inn**. The road to the left brings you to the **Trooper** pub/cafe in 250 metres.
- 65** **To continue the walk**, however, keep straight on at the crossroads, passing the pond to your right, and **Aldbury Village Store** on your left.
- Aldbury** seems such a typical English village that is hard to believe it is not a film set, and indeed has been used for this purpose on several occasions. With a pond, church, pub, post office, sundial and even a set of stocks, it seems to have everything a village should have. Its population, 675 people in 1831, was swelled by the influx of workmen to build the **Tring Cutting** (to the north of Tring station) a major engineering feat of the early Victorian era which allowed the London to Birmingham Railway, the first long distance railway line in the UK, to cross the ridge of the Chilterns.
- 66** In 200 metres, at the end of the churchyard, ignore a signposted footpath to the right. But 50 metres beyond this point, 10 metres before

the road starts to turn right, go left through a metal kissing gate, and turn right immediately to follow the hedge, parallel to the road.

- 67** The path now keeps to the right-hand edge of a series of fields, with the road just over the hedge to your right, all the way to Tring station.
- 68** In 500 metres the road and path turn sharp right, and after this point the path is a permissive one. If permission is ever withdrawn, the only alternative is the road, which is somewhat busy with traffic and needs care. At time of writing, however, you can keep on along the field edge for another 700 metres after the turn, curving gradually leftwards with the hedge, and eventually exiting the field via a kissing gate in its far corner. The entrance to **Tring station** car park is on the left immediately after this gate, with a pedestrian entrance in another 30 metres on the left, just before the bridge.

Short cut from Ivinghoe Beacon to Bridgewater Monument (4.7km/2.9 miles)

*This is the route for **a) Short circular walk.***

- 69** From Ivinghoe Beacon, turn right around, your direction due south, and retrace your steps to the bottom of the first major dip. Here, rather than carry on over the next hummock, take the track that skirts it on the left-hand side.
- 70** In 300 metres this descends to a crossroads with a track. Go straight across this on a gravel path. In 60 metres the path starts to climb.
- 71** In 500 metres more the path ends at a car park. Turn left to skirt around this on its grass edge, with the car park to your right.
- 72** In 150 metres, 10 metres before you come to the road, fork left on a path that in 10 metres goes under beech trees, parallel to the road.
- 73** In 200 metres this path emerges from the trees and in 10 metres more comes up to the road by the entrance to a track. Cross diagonally over the road and follow a path across the corner of the grass area ahead.
- 74** In 60 metres you come to a car park. Ignore a signposted footpath to the

right on the nearside of this, but instead walk 35 metres straight ahead to its far edge. Turn right here up a track to Clipperdown Cottage, passing around a fieldgate in 20 metres.

- 75** In 200 metres the track curves left and in 100 metres more goes over a cattle grid. In another 100 metres you start to get some views to the right.
- 76** In a further 700 metres, after passing some minor **bluebell** displays in season, the track ends at Clipperdown Cottage. Pass to the right of this, passing around the right-hand edge of a gate, and carry on up an earth and stone track with a field soon to the right.
- 77** In 250 metres there is woodland on both sides of the track. There are some good **bluebell** displays left and right here in season.
- 78** **You now have a choice:**
- You can simply **stay on this track all the way to the Bridgewater Monument** (2km/1.2 miles). You know you are getting close to the monument when you pass a wooden house to the right. In another 300 metres you cross a wooden bridge over a gully. 300 metres after this you come to the the Bridgewater Monument (see *panel on page 5*). Cross the green space to the wooden building ahead, which houses the **Ashridge Estate Visitor Centre**, and the **Monument Cafe**. You now **either** resume the main walk directions at *paragraph 60 on page 6* **or** take **option b) Extension to Berkhamsted** by continuing with *paragraph 84 on page 8*.
 - Alternatively, **to vary the walk on the track, or to see the spectacular bluebell wood of Flat Isley** in late April or the first half of May (adding only 200 metres to the walk length) continue with the directions below.
- 79** The track initially curves slowly right. But then in 350 metres it curves left by a bench, with a partial view to the right.
- 80** In another 150 metres it veers right again, passing a second bench in 70 metres.
- 81** 150 metres after this second bench **veer left uphill** up a footpath clearly marked by a footpath post with a

green National Trust bridleway arrow.

- 82** In 250 metres you come to a staggered path junction marked by a footpath post, in front of a tall stand of pine trees. Cross a path going along the edge of the pine trees and take the broad path straight ahead past the right-hand end of the pine trees. This takes you up the centre of **Flat Isley**, an extensive bluebell wood in season.
- 83** In 300 metres **at the end of the wood** you come to a major path crossroad, marked by a footpath post. Go right here and resume the main walk directions in paragraph 57 on page 6.

Bridgewater Monument to Berkhamsted (6.8km/4.2 mi)

- 84** Coming away from the **Monument Cafe** tea kiosk, with the serving hatch behind you and the monument ahead, turn left along a gravel path flanked on the right by parking spaces.
- 85** In 50 metres, at the end of the parking area, go downhill on a gravel track. In 40 metres more fork left on a level track, with the fence of a paddock on your left.
- 86** In 250 metres, at the end of the paddock, turn left, with the paddock fence still to your left, ignoring paths ahead (*This is **Old Copse**: there are **bluebells** here in late April and early May, and also either side of the path in paragraphs 88-90.*)
- 87** In 150 metres, 10 metres before the end of the paddock, veer right onto a track (rather faint after fresh leaf fall), your direction ultimately 160 degrees.
- 88** In 250 metres, at a five-way track junction marked by a footpath post, go half right, ignoring a track sharp right and two to the left, your direction 190 degrees. In 100 metres you can see an open paddock through the trees to the left.
- 89** Keep straight on. In 250 metres the fence of the paddock is immediately to your left briefly. In another 150 metres you come to a crosspaths, marked by a footpath post.

(In winter, when the forest floor is bare, this crosspath may be easy to miss. If you do miss it, you will find yourself passing a house on the left, just before a road: the crosspaths is 100 metres before this house.)

- 90** Turn left at the crosspaths, your direction due east. In 400 metres more, this brings you to a busy road. When you reach the road, there should be a large open field just to your left. If this is not the case, turn left on the road until you reach this point.
- 91** On the far side of the road, three paths diverge from a small parking area. Take the one **forking right**, which goes up the right-hand edge of a very wide grassy ride between a line of trees, ignoring more wooded paths straight ahead and half left (the latter not very visible when there is foliage on the trees anyway). Once you are on this path, your bearing is 130 degrees.
- 92** In 250 metres a path (more evident in summer than winter) merges from the right, and **50 metres beyond this, the ways divide**. The more obvious route is slightly left, due east, but your onward route is the **right fork**, heading into the trees, your direction 130 degrees.
- In winter, if in doubt at this point, veer half right through the trees and you will soon find the path along forest boundary, which you can follow to Little Coldharbour Farm (paragraph 95 below).*
- 93** In 250 metres cross unmarked paths to the left and right. You should now be able to see the forest boundary about 150 metres to your right. The path rapidly converges with this, and in 100 metres you merge with a broad path that is parallel to the boundary, about 70 metres inside the forest, your direction now 110 degrees.
- 94** In 100 metres the path forks around some brambles. It does not matter which fork you take as they later join up, but the right fork is probably easiest.
- 95** In 180 metres more you come to **Little Coldharbour Farm** on your right. Here the path merges with the farm's driveway, a gravel track, to continue in roughly the same direction as before.
- 96** In 200 metres a path marked by a post joins from the left, and the track curves right.
- 97** 70 metres after this, the track curves away sharply to the left to join another one coming from a house to the right, **Coldharbour Farm**. Leave the track and go straight on along a muddy bridleway, your direction 150 degrees,

- following an arrow on a post.
- 98** In 150 metres fork right at a footpath junction marked by a footpath post.
- 99** In 200 metres this well-defined path comes out alongside a large open space to your left (a good **picnic** spot). Keep on the path just inside the forest edge
- 100** In another 200 metres, at a post covered in arrows and a sign pointing to 'Alpine Meadow', turn right.
- 101** In another 200 metres, when the path comes to the forest edge, ignore a fork to the left and instead go right through a kissing gate 10 metres ahead. Keep to the right-hand edge of the field beyond.
- 102** In 120 metres pass through a metal gate and carry on down the edge of the next field, still with the hedge on your right.
- 103** Another 100 metres pass through another metal gate, still keeping to the field edge, and in 130 metres pass through a metal kissing gate into a wood, signposted **Alpine Meadow Nature Reserve**.
- 104** In 40 metres pass through another metal gate and in 20 metres more exit the wood and descend across a strip of grassland, before plunging back into the woods. In 30 metres more pass through a gate and carry on across a dip.
- 105** Climbing up the far side, in 80 metres you come to a metal gate. Pass through this onto a fenced path which climbs steeply uphill, initially just inside the wood and later between fields.
- 106** In 180 metres pass through a metal gate and keep to the right-hand edge of a field.
- 107** In 300 metres, at the top of the field, go left following a yellow arrow.
- 108** In 170 metres, in the far corner of the field, go straight on at a four-way path junction. You are now on a farm track, still on the right-hand edge of a field.
- 109** In 400 metres follow this track half right along the edge of the next field.
- 110** In 150 metres, at a four-way hedge junction, where the track curves left, leave it and carry **straight on** through a gap in the hedge into the next field. Keep on downhill on a grassy path, with a tall hedge to your right.
- 111** In 450 metres, at the bottom of the field, turn left with the field boundary.
- 112** In 150 metres, at the corner of the field, pass through a gap (a gate is missing here) and turn right onto a broad path, following a line of mini-pylons, with a sports field to your right.
- 113** In 70 metres pass through a redundant fieldgate and carry on along a gravel path. In 100 metres this comes out onto a tarmac driveway.
- 114** Keep straight on and in 200 metres you emerge onto a suburban road, where you go slightly left, downhill.
- 115** In 60 metres this road merges with a busier road that comes in from the left. Keep straight on downhill towards the bridge visible in the distance, which is the railway line. The ruins of **Berkhamsted Castle** are on the left.

Berkhamsted was the childhood home of writer Graham Greene, whose father was the headmaster of Berkhamsted School. **Berkhamsted Castle** next to the railway station, is a classic Norman motte and bailey castle, built by Robert, Count of Mortain, the half brother of William the Conqueror. Thomas a Becket, Henry II's chancellor and later martyred when archbishop of Canterbury, lived here from 1155 to 1165. There is not much to see, just a few ruined walls, but entrance is free, and if you have just missed a train at Berkhamsted, it is worth a quick look. The castle is open until 4pm in winter and 6pm in summer.

- 116** In 120 metres you come to a mini-roundabout. The back entrance to **Berkhamsted station** is just ahead to the right. (London trains go from platform four, the first one this side.)
- 117** For **tea** in Berkhamsted go through the station (or under the bridge to the left of the station entrance) to emerge onto Lower Kings Road. For the canalside **Crystal Palace** and **Boat** pubs turn left along the canal path on the far side of the road. For other tea options turn right on Lower Kings Road. This curves left to cross over the canal in 130 metres and in 250 metres more brings you to Berkhamsted High Road. On the corner to your right here is **Mario's Gelateria and Espresso Bar**, and turning right on the high road you come in 60 metres to **Caffe Nero**

on the right, and just beyond it **Simmons Bakers**. Alternatively if you go left on the high road you come in 150 metres to **Bel Caffè**. Opposite it is the **Crown**, a Weatherspoons pub.

Tring station to the Bridgewater Monument (2.6km/1.6 miles)

*This is the start of c) Short walk
from Tring to Berkhamsted.*

- 118** From the platform at **Tring Station**, walk up the stairs and turn right. At the end of the footbridge turn left to come to the road in 50 metres.
- 119** Turn right on the road. In 30 metres you pass the entrance to the station car park. 5 metres beyond this **turn right** through a metal and wood kissing gate. Turn left along the hedge, parallel to the road, with an earth bank to the right initially.
- This path along the field edge is a permissive path, ie not a right of way. If it is closed, you will need to follow the road, taking care of the traffic: ignore a road to the left in 100 metres and in 70 metres more turn left onto a house driveway: pass through a footpath gate to the right of the two sets of fieldgates, signposted Ridgeway, and carry on up a broad grassy strip. Continue the directions in paragraph 122 below.*
- 120** In 60 metres there is a large field to your right. Keep up the left-hand edge of this.
- 121** In 50 metres ignore gaps to the left by a road junction, but in 70 metres more, just after the hedge ends left, turn left through a gap to cross the road with care and go through a footpath gate to the right of two sets of fieldgates, signposted Ridgeway. Keep on up the broad grassy strip beyond.
- 122** In 130 metres, at the top of the strip, go straight ahead at a crosspath marked by a four-armed footpath sign, climbing a small slope and carrying on down a path between fields.
- 123** In another 150 metres, just beyond the end of the field, ignore a signposted bridleway to the left and keep straight on.
- 124** In another 300 metres, at a four-armed footpath sign, turn right downhill on a path between two fields, signposted Aldbury.
- 125** In 300 metres pass through two metal kissing gates and to the left of a green corrugated barn.
- 126** At the end of the barn, a kissing gate takes you into the field to your left, where you continue in the same direction as before, with farm buildings to your right.
- 127** In 70 metres, at the end of the farm buildings, pass through a kissing gate and keep straight on.
- 128** In a further 50 metres pass through another kissing gate and turn left on the road into the village of **Aldbury** (see panel on page 6).
- 129** In 180 metres this brings you to the centre of the village with the **Aldbury Village Store** on your right and a pond on your left with the **Greyhound Inn**, beyond it.
- 130** To continue the walk, carry straight on across the crossroads by the pond and on up Toms Hill Road. (The road to the right at the crossroads brings you to the **Trooper** cafe/pub in 250 metres.)
- 131** 60 metres up the road, veer half left up a gravel path between hedges, signposted to the Bridgewater Monument.
- 132** Keep on uphill on this bridleway. In 350 metres ignore signposted bridleways left and right. In 230 metres more merge with a track from the right and continue uphill more gently. In 120 metres more ignore a path forking left at a footpath post.
- 133** In another 130 metres, at the very top of the hill, ignore a track sharp right and carry on for 100 metres to come to the **Monument Cafe** on your right, with the **Bridgewater Monument** visible to the left (see panel page 5) and the **Ashridge Estate Visitor Centre** behind the cafe.

*You now follow the **Bridgewater Monument to Berkhamsted** directions in paragraph 84 on page 8.*