



The Hundred Parishes

Circular Walks – number 112

Albury and Furneux Pelham – 6 miles (10 kms)

This clockwise walk is mainly rural in well-wooded countryside with a stroll through part of the village of Furneux Pelham. The walk is moderately hilly, mostly along clear tracks and country lanes. There is a pub in Furneux Pelham and another near the start and finish. There are no stiles.

Start and finish: The small parking area at Patmore Heath, about ¼ mile along the lane beside the Catherine Wheel pub in the hamlet of Gravesend. If there is no remaining space, please try the road that runs alongside the western side of the Heath (you passed it on the right just before the parking area). Ordnance Survey Grid Reference: TL443259 - Postcode: SG11 2LT. The route can be followed on Ordnance Survey Explorer Map 194. A diagram of the route is provided at the end of the description.

From the parking area, head towards the interpretation panel which gives information about Patmore Heath Nature Reserve. After inspecting the panel, go round it to the left and then right onto a main path, heading towards the apex of a bungalow.

Fairly soon, reach a lane and turn right, passing the bungalow and then a variety of houses on the left. Many of the buildings around the Heath are listed.

When the lane turns right go straight ahead onto a bridleway, passing Hitch Lane Cottage on the left. Soon, keep right, ignoring a path that goes left. The derelict wooden building at the junction of these two paths is a disused former chapel. Descend gently on a sandy path.

When the path reaches a lane (High Hall Road), turn left. In about 50 yards cross with care and turn right, opposite High Hall, onto a stony bridleway with farm buildings on the left. After a fairly steep descent, cross the River Ash on a concrete bridge. Keep straight ahead, ignoring the footpath to the left.

After about 100 yards follow the path round to the right, now heading in a northerly direction along the Ash Valley. At the end of the field, follow the path round to the left. Climb steadily with a wood on the right. Over to the left, the spire of Albury Church protrudes above the trees.

At the end of the field there is a staggered crossroads of paths. Follow our track to the right and almost immediately left, thereby maintaining the direction of travel. The wood on our left is called Ypres, named like other woods on the Albury Hall estate after a disastrous 20th-century event in British history. Further along, one of the copses to the right is called Munich.

At the end of Ypres, the path bears left to reach a lane. Turn right onto the lane and follow it for about 300 yards, now with Suez Wood on the right.

Just before the end of Suez, turn right on a footpath into the woodland.

Follow this narrow path, passing a fishing lake on the left before emerging onto a small green. Keep straight ahead and soon reach a lane. Keep straight ahead by turning right onto this lane. Walk beside the brick wall on the right that once formed the perimeter of Albury Hall, a three-storey 18th-century mansion that was demolished around 1950.

The lane climbs for a while before turning left, but at this point we go straight ahead along a gravel track. When the track turns right keep straight ahead, soon walking beside a hedgerow on the left.

After a rise, Pelham electricity transformer station is visible about two miles distant, ahead and to the right. From there, giant pylons head in all directions distributing electricity along seven power lines.

Keep straight ahead. As the path descends, we pass from Albury parish into Furneux (pronounced *Furnix*) Pelham parish.

After the descent, our path crosses a ditch on a concrete bridge and then climbs steadily for a quarter mile before reaching a lane. Turn right, soon passing Gables Cottage.

Descend and, just before the road goes over a ditch, turn left through a gate onto a footpath (No 008). Follow this straight field-edge path, with hedgerow on the right, for about half a mile, watching out for deep rabbit holes on the path. Pass through two more gateways. At the end of a field, turn right through a gateway on the right and meander through a small area of woodland.

The path emerges from the woodland immediately opposite a fence. Turn right, soon cross a footbridge and walk up a short drive to a road. We have now entered the village of Furneux Pelham.

Turn left onto the road, immediately passing The Star, a former pub. Keep to the left and soon turn left at the road junction. After about 30 yards, please check out the ancient metal county council notice on the left. It was erected in 1899 to discourage "locomotives and other ponderous carriages" from attempting to cross the bridge on which you are probably standing. There are some nice cottages a few paces further on but our route turns here.

Retrace to the junction and continue ahead to the church on the left. Pay heed to the advice around the clock. A visit inside this 13th-century church is recommended. Of particular note are the colourful angels that will look over you from the ceiling.

Exit from the church and turn left. Follow the winding road, passing the incorrectly-spelt village sign on a small green.

Pass Tinkers Hall Farm on the right; immediately afterwards a drive goes up to the unusual Roman Catholic church, painted black and with a corrugated iron roof.

Continue along the road. After passing Craighdu on the left, look left through the field gateway. Over to the right are the buildings that once constituted a substantial brewery. Soon reach a crossroads and turn right – noting the Hertfordshire pudding stone protecting the corner of the building, the Brewery Tap pub. Here is the only opportunity along this walk to purchase food or drink.

From the pub, keep ahead on the pavement, passing the village hall on the right. After the final house on the right, bear slightly right to enter the sports field. Keep straight ahead with the hedgerow on the left. At the end of the field, turn left onto the road and turn right.

Soon, before the road junction, cross the road with care and then turn left, heading in the signposted direction of Albury and Little Hadham.

You may like to cross to the right, although you will soon need to cross back to the left. Be on the left before the road turns to the right. At the bend, leave the road by turning left onto a track. Follow the track gently uphill with a hedgerow on the left and then downhill to reach a road. With care go straight across onto a very wide roadway.

Follow the road gently uphill with a hedgerow on the right. After about 500 yards the road and hedgerow separate. Continue along the road for about 70 yards until a footpath crosses the road. Turn right, across the green and pass through the hedgerow. Keep ahead with woodland on the left and a field on the right.

The path leaves the field and enters woodland. Almost immediately turn left over a bridge across a ditch onto a tree-lined path. When the path reaches a lane, turn right, soon passing Kings on the left.

Stay on this narrow lane for about half a mile. The lane passes more woodland and is quite sunken at times.

When the lane reaches a junction with several houses, our route goes straight ahead, now with Patmore Heath on the left but, before proceeding, you might like to consider this image from around 1910 of the exceptionally tall tower windmill that stood close by. The house in the centre of the picture stands on the corner where you are hopefully standing and the mill was a few paces down the lane to the left. Apart from the names of properties, there is now no sign of the mill – and the pond is no longer so obvious.

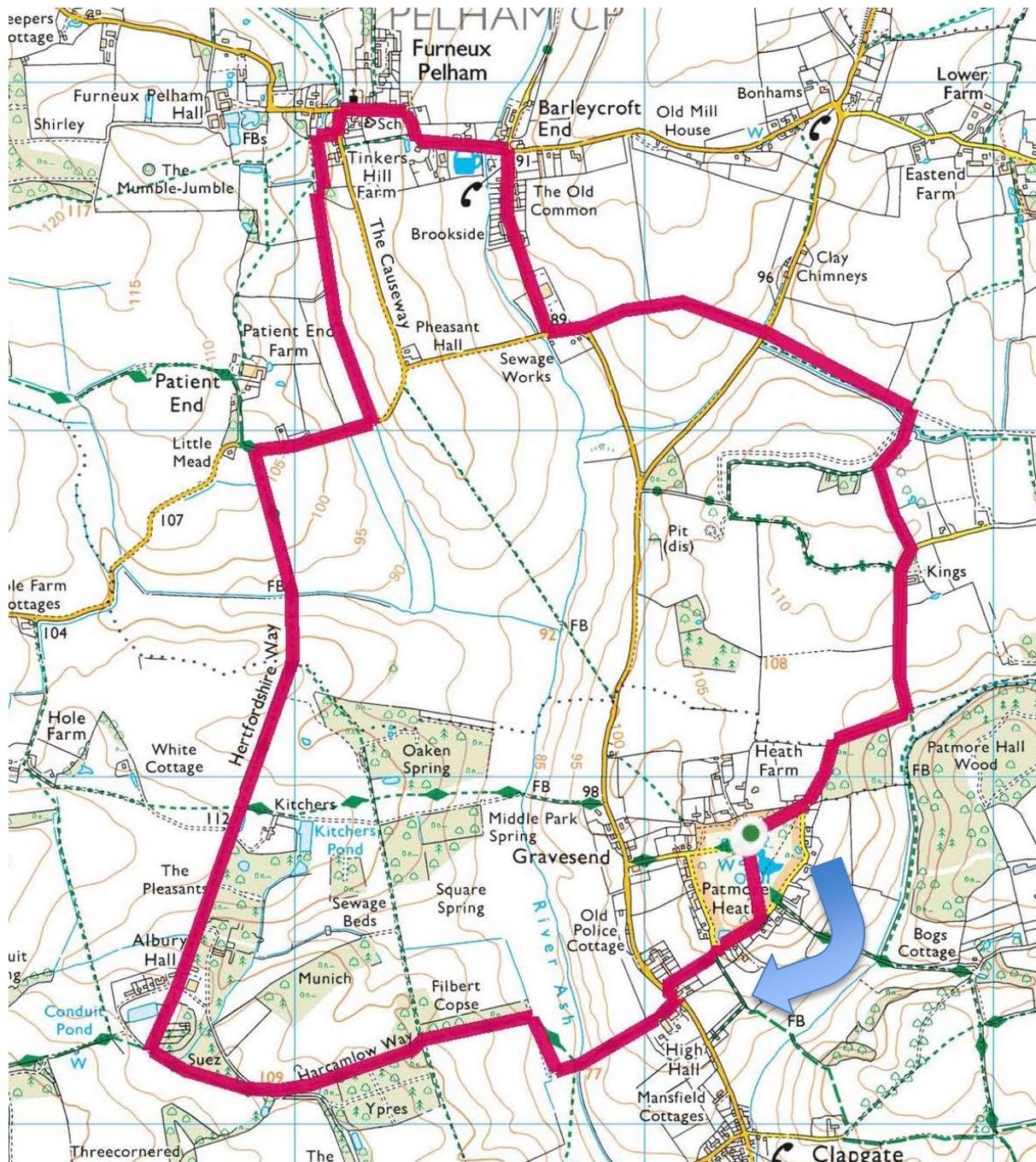
Continue with the Heath on the left. As you pass a gravel drive on the right, look down the drive towards a large round, pink building which appears to have been a large dovecote.



Almost immediately, reach the small car park on the left where we started this walk.

You can read more about Albury and Furneux Pelham on www.hundredparishes.org.uk.

A diagram covering this route, based on the Ordnance Survey map, is shown below. It is published under © Crown copyright 2020 OS 100062498.



This route description, last updated 06 July 2020, was downloaded from www.hundredparishes.org.uk. Please email any suggestions for improving the route or the route description to hundredparishes@btinternet.com.