



## J The Common and Bricky Pond

100 years ago the Common was still used for grazing animals. It was much more open, mainly covered with gorse and bracken. Part of the Common is now the home of Chesham Bois Cricket Club. Cricket has been played here for over 200 years. This open space was also used for Victorian open-air religious festivals. One 1857 rally attracted nearly 1500 people. Memorial oaks round the pitch commemorate Royal events and the centenary of the Parish Council. The Dips and Bricky Pond are the remains of clay excavations used by local brickmakers. The Common is regularly used for community events.

## K North Road Houses

The earliest house on the common was The Manor which was originally one of the four estate farms. There are some early labourers' cottages and barns, now converted to homes. The artist Louise Jopling lived in the Manor and used Manor Barn as a studio. The grand former Rectory was built in 1833 by the Duke of Bedford for his relation, the Hon. Lowther Barrington. The other houses mainly date from the Edwardian period and include some fine Kennard Arts and Crafts houses.



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# Chesham Bois VILLAGE WALK





# Chesham Bois History and Points of Interest

**The village was first mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086. It remained a small rural parish until the railway arrived. Much of the farmland was then sold as building plots, including, in 1896, the 60 acres at the centre of the village, previously owned by local landowner, Arthur Lasenby Liberty.**

## A The Old School House

The village school was built in 1846 on land donated by the Duke of Bedford. Lacemaking was taught here. In 1894, after a new school was built, it was converted to a private house by Sir Frederick Mott, the eminent psychiatrist, attributed with identifying shell shock. Dame Stephanie Shirley, philanthropist and IT entrepreneur also lived here. A V1 rocket exploded close by, killing two adults and a little girl in 1944. The bench by the bus-stop was provided by Amersham West District Guides to commemorate their 75th anniversary. The 1st Chesham Bois Scouts were also founded close by in 1908.

## B Anne's Corner and War Memorial

Although Tudor in style, Anne's Corner (Grade II listed), was built c.1910 by renowned Arts and Crafts architect, John Harold Kennard. He designed many fine buildings locally as well as the War Memorial opposite. An annual Remembrance Service is well-attended.

## C Bois Lane and Village Shops

The village shops date from 1910. Lindfield next to the shops was the weekend home of Margaret and James Ramsay MacDonald, suffragists and social campaigners. He was the first Labour Prime Minister. There are some fine Arts and Crafts houses, such as those built to a Voysey design near the junction with Holloway Lane, an ancient pathway leading down to the Chess and across to the Roman settlement at Latimer.

## D Chesham Bois House and The Warren

Time Team investigations in 2006 found that The Warren, next to the church, may be on the site of William de Bois' original manor house. A later large manor house, built by the Cheynes, fell in to disrepair when it passed to the Dukes of Bedford. Chesham Bois House, which includes an exquisite staircase, was built around a remaining fragment.

## E St Leonard's Church and Churchyard

William de Bois built a private chapel in 1215, which became St Leonard's Church. The original 13th century chapel is now the chancel. Largely rebuilt in the 1880s, the church was extended in 1911 to accommodate the growing congregation. It contains many memorials to the Cheyne family and a 1913 Burne-Jones stained glass window of The Sower and Ruth. The churchyard contains the Commonwealth War Graves of Lt Percy Walter Peach (Canadian Infantry) and 2nd Lt Sidney Lasenby Rose (RAF), both killed in World War 1. There is a poignant memorial to Christina Hanbury Sparrow, killed by the V1 rocket and to her German half-sister Gisela, killed in the Dresden bombing.



## F Railway Bridge and Waterside

A memorial plaque by the railway bridge marks the creation of Chesham Bois Parish Council in 1894. The parish boundary has been here since 1934; before, the parish extended further across Bois Moor Road to the Chess beyond. The Victorian terraced houses were built for the railway workers. There was also a pub, the Unicorn (now a nursery) where, before the boundary change, the front parlour was in Chesham Bois and the back in Chesham with different licensing hours in each! Before the townsfolk paid for the railway to continue to the town, the line ended here on the moor and the pub was extended and renamed the Railway Hotel.

## G Chesham Bois Burial Ground

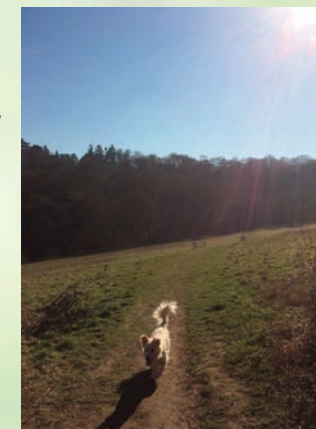
The Chesham Bois Burial Ground was established in 1924 with a Chapel and a Garden of Remembrance. It now includes a woodland area for natural burials. It has four Commonwealth War Graves: three RAF servicemen and WREN Aileen Kilburn from World War II. It is also the resting place of Louise Jopling, a professional artist, suffragist and society beauty, and of MP Charles Dukes, 1st Baron Dukeston of Warrington. A Labour peer, he was President of the TUC and helped draft the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. A leaflet is available at the entrance to the Burial Ground, which gives more details of notable graves and wildlife.

## H Martyr's Memorial

Thomas Harding, the last of the Lollards to die for his beliefs, was arrested in Chesham Bois woods and accused of heresy for demanding the right to read the Bible in English. He was burnt at the stake in 1532. There were many Lollard sympathisers locally. Sir Thomas Cheyne was imprisoned in the Tower of London in 1431 for supporting a Lollard rebellion.

## I The Meadow

This rare chalk grassland, boasting a rich diversity of flora and fauna, belongs to Chesham Bois Parish Council. Part of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, extensive surveys have identified 112 species of trees, shrubs and plants and up to 176 species of invertebrates, with notable finds such as the Wasp Spider, Lobe-spurred Furrow Bee, and rare Jersey Tiger Moth. The meadow is also home to the hives of the Chalfont Beekeepers' Society. Buzzards and kites nest nearby and there are regular sightings of bats, grass snakes and deer.



# Chesham Bois

## VILLAGE WALK

**Length:** 2.5 miles / 4km

**Terrain:** Mostly on pavements but there are some country paths which can be muddy at times. Two easy climbs and one steep set of steps to descend.

**Start and finish:** Chesham Bois Parish Centre, Glebe Way, Chesham Bois HP6 5ND

**Local transport:** Chesham Bois village is served by buses 71 and 73 that run between Amersham and Chesham Monday to Saturday. There are frequent bus services that run nearby and details can be found on [www.travelinesoutheast.org.uk](http://www.travelinesoutheast.org.uk). Amersham Metropolitan Line station is also nearby.

From the parish centre, turn right along Glebe Way to the junction with South Road. Cross over to the corner of Bois Lane and Chestnut Lane to the Old School House.

- 1 With the Old School House behind you, turn right along Bois Lane to the War Memorial and Anne's Corner. Stay in the same direction past the shops and cross at the zebra crossing. Continue over Green Lane to a fork in the path at the end of the railings. Take the left-hand path past Tenterden Spinney and continue on for a further 140m to the entrance to Chesham Bois House.

- 2 Go through the kissing gate to the right of the entrance, cross the field and through the next gate onto a rough track, High Bois Lane. Turn left along the track for a few metres. If you wish to visit St Leonard's Church, you can turn left towards its main entrance, then retrace your steps to the track. *See below for an optional route to avoid a set of steep steps.*
- 3 Continue along the track to a row of cottages and take the signed footpath past their right-hand end to path leading down to a steep set of earthen steps, Jacob's Ladder. Take these steps and follow the path to the bottom of the hill emerging onto a bridleway by the railway bridge.
- 4 Turn left and immediately right through the entrance to Chesham Bois Burial Ground. Walk past the chapel and climb the hill to a bench at the end of the concrete path. To visit the site of the Martyr's Memorial, go behind the bench and bear right to leave the burial ground by a gate in the corner. Continue straight along the edge of the wood for 160m to a gate on the right and the Martyr's Memorial. To rejoin the main walk, return to the bench in the burial ground.
- 5 Walk down the concrete path for 10m, turn right between the gravestones (taking care on the uneven ground) and through a gap in the hedgerow into the next section of the cemetery. Bear left down towards the next bench, passing behind it and continuing ahead through into the top of the next field,

The Woodland Burial Ground. Turn left down a sometimes overgrown path for a few metres, before continuing for some 30m across the top of a glade to reach a rustic bench which sits at the top of a gravel track. Ignoring the track, follow the path past the Burial Ground information board and standpipe and turn left into a field, The Meadow. Follow the path diagonally down The Meadow to go through a gate at the bottom corner onto a wide bridleway. Turn right and continue steadily uphill on the bridleway to emerge onto a lane by Great Bois Wood House. Follow the lane uphill to a bridleway signpost where the fencing on the left ends.

- 6 Turn left up the slope and follow the woodland edge all the way to a road, North Road. Cross it, go straight ahead to the cricket pitch and turn left along its edge. Stay in this direction and take any path that runs parallel to North Road. Continue past Brickly Pond and turn right into Glebe Way to finish the walk.

*Optional Route to avoid the steep steps – After visiting the church, retrace your steps along the track to Bois Lane. Cross to the pavement opposite, turn left and follow the road down past the school and over the bridge into Bois Moor Road. Continue downhill to the bend and junction with Woodley Hill. With great care, cross the road and go under the railway bridge to rejoin the walk at Point 4.*



