

Beyond Hartham Common

Circular Walks

Walks around Hertford greenspaces

Green route – 3.5 miles

A hilly circuit to the north of Hertford, going to the edge of the countryside around Bengoe, taking in the river Beane and introducing you to greenspaces around Waterford. The walk goes past two playgrounds and is great for kids!

Waterford Marsh – Stapleford Parish Council

The marshes are traditional wet meadows where cattle are grazed over the summer; meaning conditions are perfect for native wildflowers.

Waterford Heath – Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust (HMWT)

This site was formerly used for quarrying sand and gravel. The recovery process has given rise to species rich grass and scrub land supporting invertebrates such as the grizzled skipper butterfly. The 'Chalk Stream and Heath' walk on site allows further exploration of the Waterford sites.

River Beane

The Beane is a tributary of the River Lea, joining at Hartham Common. Chalk streams across Hertfordshire are fed by underground aquifers and are a special wildlife habitat due to their consistent temperature and high mineral content. Many, including the Beane, are threatened by increasing water abstraction caused by growing population levels.

Orange route – 7 miles

This route takes you west of Hertford to discover the storied Panshanger Park and Cole Green Way.

Panshanger Park – Tarmac

A former country estate and later a quarry, Panshanger Park is now a blossoming country park, teeming with wildlife. The Park is famously home to the largest maiden oak in the country. Former quarrying areas have been fully restored to vibrant wetlands and reed beds along the River Mimram valley. Even in the depths of winter it's easy to enjoy the wildlife at Panshanger Park as hundreds of ducks migrate in to overwinter on the lakes.

Cole Green Way – Hertfordshire County Council (HCC)

The former train line connecting Hertford to Welwyn Garden City now serves an important function as a green corridor, allowing wildlife to move across a great area in relative safety which is important for genetic diversity. Discover the history of the line as the former station at Cole Green, or look out for glow worms in the verges on a summer's evening.

Hertford Castle – Hertford Town Council

While only the gatehouse remains of the original Norman Castle the site is a wonderful place to spend a quiet moment. The impressive riverside garden is maintained by Hertford Town Council.

Purple route – 10 miles

This walk takes in the expansive water meadows of Kings Meads and a number of woodlands with some great views over quintessential Hertfordshire countryside.

Kings Meads – HMWT

An important wetland site cared for by HMWT on the south bank of the Lea between Hertford and Ware, the highlight being the superb range of birdlife supported which includes seven species of warbler breeding on site. At 95 hectares there's a lot to discover at Kings Meads.

Post Wood – East Herts District Council

An ancient woodland, Post Wood is owned and managed by East Herts District Council in partnership with CMS. You will find mature oak and hornbeam with springtime wood anemones carpeting the site.

Hertford Heath – HMWT

There are two distinct halves to this site, divided by the London Road. To the north, Goldingtons is a traditional Hertfordshire woodland of hornbeam coppice with oak standards. A rare example of Hertfordshire heathland can be found in The Roundings to the south, with ponds and heath acting as a haven for amphibians and reptiles.

Balls Wood – HMWT

Get to know Balls Wood using the two on-site trails and the extensive system of rides (wide woodland paths) which let sunlight into woods so that butterflies, birds and wildflowers can thrive.

Get walking

Walking has long been advocated as good for the soul by poets such as William Wordsworth. Today the physical and mental benefits are well documented.

The great thing about walking is that it's free! It's also low impact, requires nothing more than sensible clothing and shoes and has been proven to significantly decrease health risks such as heart disease.

If you feel these walks may be a bit challenging then Hertfordshire Health Walks offer a graded programme of guided walks to take you from a 20-30 minute gentle stroll to a five mile walk at moderate pace. Visit [Health Walks](#) for more information.

The benefits of walking are best realised when it becomes a habit. These routes are designed to be a starting point for further walking and exploration.

Get involved

Nearly all the wildlife conservation work going on in greenspaces around Hertford relies on volunteers.

There's a great range of opportunities provided separately by the Countryside Management Service and Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust.

How to get there

By road: Hartham Common Car Park, Port Hill, Hertford, SG14 1QS

By public transport: 14 minutes walk from Hertford North train station and 8 minutes walk from Hertford East train station. For more travel details contact Intalink Traveline 0871 200 2233 or [Intalink website](#)

Email: operations.admin@eastherts.gov.uk

Tel: 01279 655261

[East Herts Website](#)

To find out more about Hartham Common please visit the [East Herts website](#).

The Countryside Management Service (CMS) works with communities across Hertfordshire to help them care for and enjoy the environment.

Map page – shows the three walks on an Ordnance Survey mapping background.

Hartham Common is an ideal base from which to walk to surrounding nature reserves. Why not leave the car at home and enjoy the local countryside?

Hertford is well served by a great variety of local greenspaces, which you can visit by walking the waymarked routes: Waterford Heath and Marshes, Panshanger Park, Hertford Castle, Kings Mead, Post Wood and Presdales and Balls Wood to name a few. All routes are signposted and use well maintained paths.

Most greenspaces have interpretation panels with additional walks and in-depth information, allowing you to further explore each individual site.

For more information or to download an electronic leaflet and map visit the [East Herts Website](#).