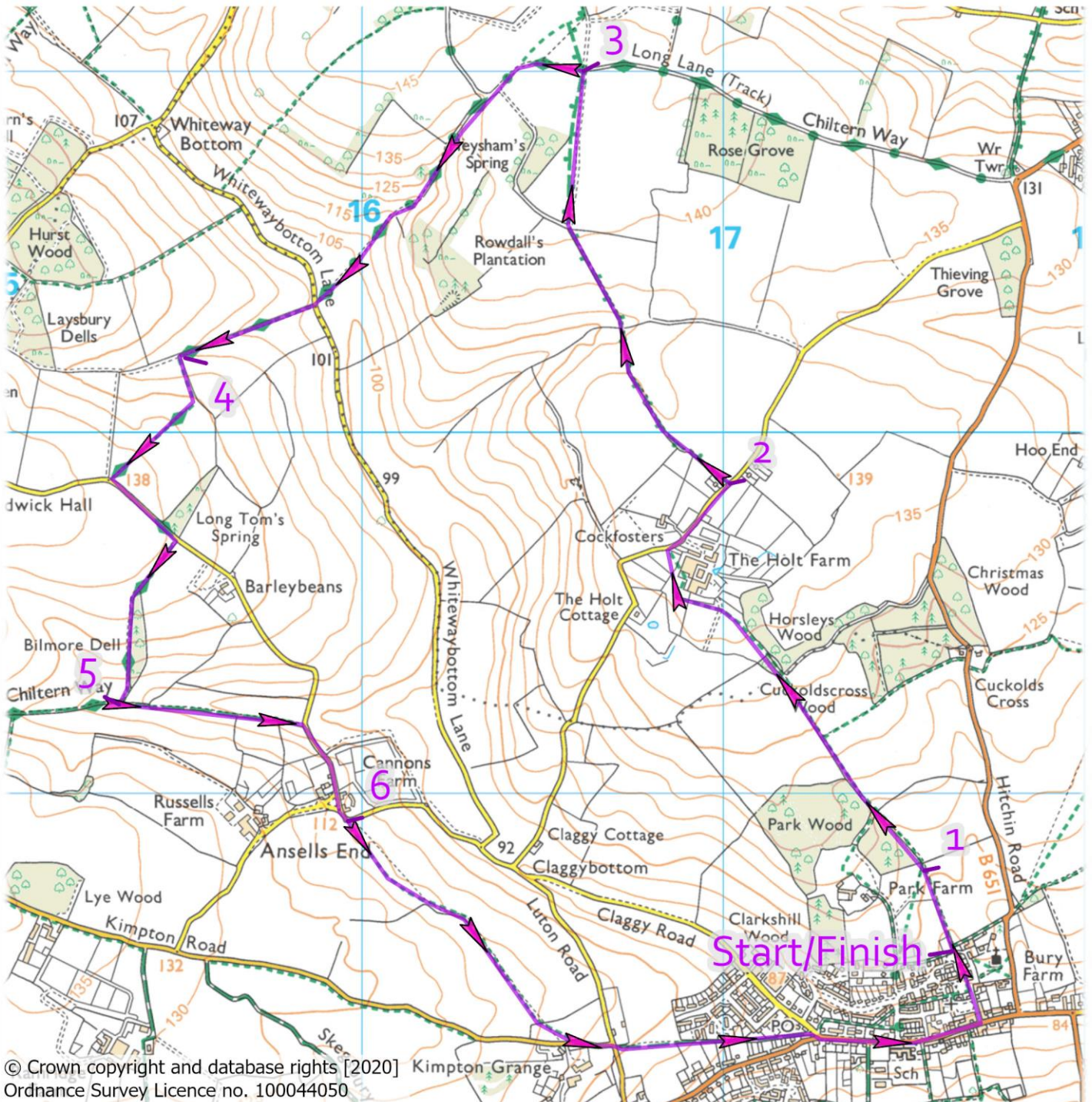


Kimpton Farmland and Nature Walk

By Bob Malcolm, Kimpton Parish Council and Andrew Clark, Chiltern Society

Summary

The parish of Kimpton is criss-crossed by an extensive of public rights of way, some of them dating from pre-Roman times. This walk explores the farmland north of the village which is rich in wildlife and there are outstanding views.



Length:	5.2 miles
Terrain:	A moderate walk along field edges and quiet lanes. Two modest climbs with a number of gates and 4 stiles.
Start & finish:	Parkfield Sports Ground, off Hitchin Road, Kimpton SG4 8SB Grid Ref. TL 176 185
Food & drink:	Cafés and pubs in Kimpton. None on route
Maps:	OS Explorer 182 & 193, Chiltern Society 29 &30
Parking:	Parkfield Sports Ground as above
Local transport:	Bus Service 44 runs between Peters Green and Stevenage on Monday to Friday and Bus Service 304 runs between Hitchin and St Albans on Monday to Saturday. Full details can be found on www.travelinesoutheast.org.uk

Route

Leave via the car park entrance, turn immediate left through a gate, walk straight ahead along the field edge and go through a gap into the next field.

Waypoint 1 – Bear left along the field edge, stay in the same direction for 650m and cross a stile into a field. The route will pass to the left of the farm buildings. Continue forward, cross 3 more stiles and, in the next field after the buildings, bear right to go over the last stile into a lane. Turn right along the lane for 230m and take a byway on the left (signed Byway 19 to Bendish Lane).

Waypoint 2 – After turning left, walk along the edge of two fields and go through a gap in the hedgerow onto a wide track. Turn left for a few metres, turn right and follow the track along the edge and then across the middle of the field to meet a major crossing track

Waypoint 3 – Turn left along the track, the route will now follow The Chiltern Way until Waypoint 5. Follow the track, ignore all turnings to the left and right and continue down to a lane (Whitewaybottom Lane). Cross, go past the barrier opposite and walk along the field edge to the entrance into the next field.

Waypoint 4 – Do not enter the field, instead turn left uphill to the top and turn right through a gap in the hedgerow. Follow the path up the middle of the field to a lane and turn left along it for 250m to take a footpath on the right. Go past the barrier into the field on the right and keep straight on to the right of the hedgerow down to and through a wide gap in the hedgerow ahead.

Waypoint 5 - Turn left to leave The Chiltern Way, walk forward a few metres and bear left down past a gate into a field. Continue in the same direction to leave the field through a gate onto a lane. Turn right along the lane to a road junction by Cannons Farm. Turn left towards Kimpton and, at the first bend, take the path on the right into a field.

Waypoint 6 - Bear left over the field towards the hedgerow ahead and turn left alongside it. Where the hedgerow ends, continue in the same direction across the field to a crossing path just before a road. This is a permissive path known as The Chris Baker Way. Turn left along the path and drop down to the road junction at Fox Hill. Cross straight over and take the track opposite (signed Bridleway 33 to Claggy Road). Follow the track across the field and along the backs of houses to a road (Claggy Road). Cross to the pavement opposite, turn right and then left along the High Street. Follow the pavement past The Boot pub as far as the Dacre Rooms and turn left up Church Lane. Walk past The Green and turn left through the barrier into Garden Fields. Turn right over the grass and leave at the top left-hand corner to return to the car park.

Points of Interest

Kimpton is derived from the Saxon "Cyma-tun," meaning "homestead of a person called Cyma". Over the centuries the name went through many changes including "Kamintone", "Kemytone" and "Kempton" before becoming Kimpton. Along the High Street there are houses dating back to the 16th century, but

most in the village are from 19th and 20th century. The oldest building is the Grade I listed Church of St. Peter & St. Paul which dates from the 12th century. It started with a simple nave and a small chancel, built around the previous wooden church. The oldest bell in the tower dates from the 1300s.

The Chiltern Way - The Chiltern Society, a local environmental charity, launched a new circular footpath in the north Chilterns, the 'North Chiltern Trail' to encourage people to explore this lovely area on foot. This built on the success of the Chiltern Way, the long distance walking route around the Chilterns, established by the Chiltern Society in 2000. The 'North Chiltern Trail' has been created by combining the original Chiltern Way route with an extension to this footpath to provide a 67km/42 mile circular walking route through some of the delightful Chiltern countryside of Bedfordshire and north Hertfordshire, including parts of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.