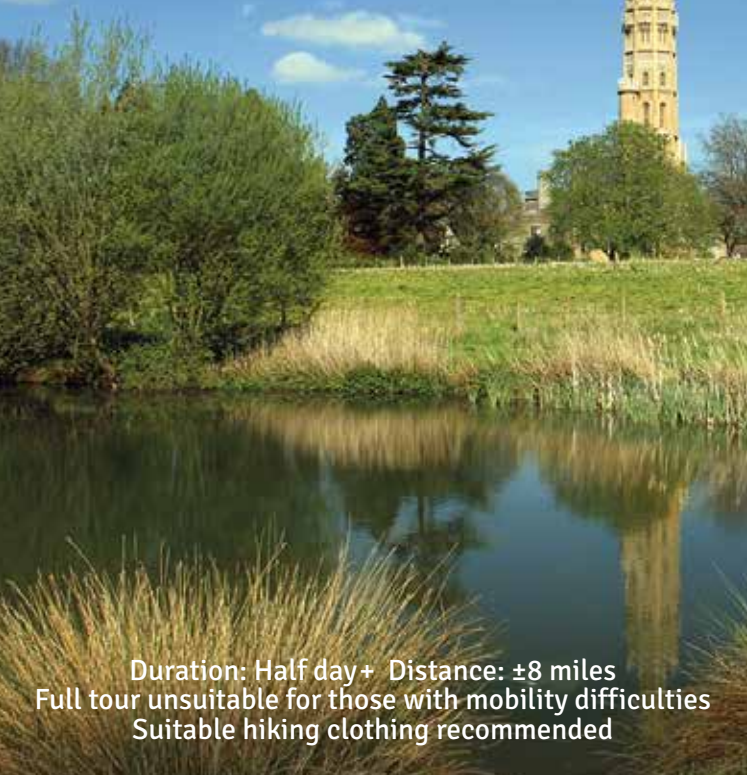


A guided tour through Hadlow and the surrounding countryside using predominantly rural footpaths

The Hadlow Parish Ramble



Duration: Half day+ Distance: ±8 miles
Full tour unsuitable for those with mobility difficulties
Suitable hiking clothing recommended



Introduction

This leaflet guides you on a ramble around Hadlow and its surrounding countryside. Although the going is fairly level throughout, it is largely on unsurfaced rural footpaths and involves the use of stiles and kissing gates. It is not therefore suitable for those with mobility difficulties, or without suitable walking shoes and clothing. The 'Hadlow Village Amble' and the Hadlow Access Trail would be more suitable alternatives in such circumstances. Wheelchair accessible individual points of the 'Ramble' could, however, be incorporated into the 'Amble' where indicated in the text, but you might find some distances demanding and you would have to share the rural lanes with vehicles. Car usage may be a safer alternative.

The tour is illustrated in map form on the reverse of the leaflet, with letters correlating to the written navigational directions and historical narrative (which continue overleaf). The letter A indicates a start and finish at St Mary's Church, but it is a circular route enabling you to join and leave at any point or pause for lunch or tea wherever places of refreshment are identified. While providing a self-contained guide, it does not repeat the detailed directions and narrative within the village centre, contained in the 'Hadlow Village Amble' leaflet. We recommend that you take that leaflet with you too, especially if you wish to incorporate all or part of the village centre within your tour, or foreshorten the Parish Ramble by taking any of the "breakout" points described (with other advice) in italics.

Expect the whole of Parish tour by itself to take about half a day (or more if you stop for lunch or linger at other points of interest). A longer full day tour might include the part of the 'Hadlow Hop' tour south of Golden Green (directions for those wishing to combine the 'Parish Ramble' with the 'Hadlow Hop' are included in the Hadlow Hop Leaflet - this would be about 12 miles in total).

As alternatives to arriving in Hadlow by car, the village can be reached easily by bus from Maidstone, Kings Hill or Tonbridge using the 7, 77 or 147 services along the main A26 road. Cycle stands (combined with planters) are also located in and around The Square, and provided by Hadlow Low Carbon Community.

To reach the starting point (Point A on the map), walk to the far end of Church Lane (off the south east corner of The Square between La Portuguesa Restaurant and the Bakery).

If starting from **Hadlow Manor Hotel**, walk to the left along the far side of the main road (where there is a continuous pavement) towards Hadlow. The tour can then be joined at Cemetery Lane (point G) just before the former **Harrow Public House**. If starting from **The Carpenters Arms**, turn left along Three Elms Lane and join the tour at point J, by **The Bell PH**. For those starting from **Hadlow College/Broadview Tearooms**, join at point B. Or from the **Rose and Crown PH** start at point D (The Freehold).

Explore Hadlow with the help of these leaflets



Welcome to Hadlow

An illustrated guide to local attractions, businesses and services in and around Hadlow.



The Hadlow Village Amble

A leisurely circular tour through the village of Hadlow and around the immediate environs.

Distance: 1 - 2 miles



The Hadlow Hop Tour

A guided walk through the hop farming and brewing industry in and around Hadlow, past and present.

Distance: ±8 miles



For all enquiries please contact:
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W: www.hadlowpc-kent.org.uk

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More information about the history of our village is contained in the other walking leaflets in this series, as well as from the village library.

www.hadlowpc-kent.org.uk

THE TOUR

Section A-B: St Mary's Church to Hadlow College

Taking in as much detail as you wish from the 'Hadlow Village Amble' leaflet, make your way to Hadlow College by walking along Church Lane to The Square. Turn left past La Portuguesa Restaurant and cross the A26 (High Street/Tonbridge Road) to the Post Office. Turn left, keeping to the right hand side of the A26. Cross Carpenters Lane, carry straight on past The Maltings and cross the road bridge over the River Bourne. After the bridge continue to Hadlow College's main access drive. Turn right along the drive (the public footpath is contiguous with the access drive here. Signs caution against wandering away from it). Upon reaching the college's equestrian unit, pass through the kissing gate on the left hand side of the entry gate and carry on straight ahead to a second gate with a stile to its left side. After crossing the stile, turn sharp right and continue along the path between the equestrian unit (to the right) and the open pastures (to the left).

Section B-C: Hadlow College to Bourne Mill

The path soon curves left around the edge of the pastures and then (after about a further 20 yards) divides. Take the right fork to cross the twin footbridges over the River Bourne and parallel mill race. Bourne Mill is to the left facing onto its car park. For those with mobility difficulties, Bourne Mill (and The Freehold, below) can be reached by using School Lane (from the Post Office to the Rose and Crown PH) and then taking the access drive down to the Mill just beyond Mill View. Then return to the Maltings (or Broadview Gardens and tea rooms) along Carpenters Lane.

Bourne Mill probably occupies the same location as that of a mill recorded in the Domesday Book. Old documents refer to "three mills under one roof" but the now existing mill was built in its present form in the mid C19. It was in active use for milling until the 1930s, and there is a Freda Barton photograph (see narrative for point 22 in the 'Hadlow Amble' leaflet) that shows the mill wheel. It has been occupied by Carr and Westley (a mail order dress firm) since WWII.

Section C-D: Bourne Mill to The Freehold

Pass in front of the mill and continue up the access drive onto Carpenters Lane. Turn right and you will come to the The Rose and Crown Public House, which marks the edge of The Freehold.

The Freehold, once known as Fairfield, is an enclave of houses surrounding garden land. It was developed in the mid C19 through the auspices of the Freehold Land Society, which promoted the lifelong education of artisans and craftsmen. Census records of the period indicate the range of crafts of those living here, including a carpenter, plumber and builders. A bakery and a shop were also present. Among other places in Hadlow, it became a popular location for fostering foundlings from the London Foundling Hospital, with families fostering children from one generation to the next. It is now a Conservation Area.

Section D-E: The Freehold to the moated site

Turn around and walk back along Carpenters Lane past the entrance to Bourne Mill. Carry on around the bend in Carpenters Lane (do not re-enter the access to Bourne Mill). Just beyond the curve and before the "end of speed limit" signs, turn left along the footpath/access drive (to The Byre) between fences (it is marked by a footpath sign on the opposite side of the road). After bending to the left, the path turns to the right away from the front of The Byre to a stile. Cross the stile. Do not take the metal gate immediately to the right. Instead, carry straight on for a few paces to a second gate, which can be walked around on its left side. Cross another stile a little further on and then carry straight on across the field in front of you (not left along the farm track towards a metal gate), keeping near the hedgerow on the left side, where there is a trodden path. Aim towards a group of tall trees in the near distance, which, together with a sharp right bend in the path, mark the moated site. The path continues for a short distance alongside the moat, and a further section of the moat (which still exists in complete circular form) can be seen from the footpath that crosses the footbridge across a nearby ditch.

The moated site has never been investigated but it is thought to date possibly from Roman times. Some think it may have been the site of a small homestead but others postulate that its relatively small size and the boggy nature of the surrounding ground suggest use only as a secure enclosure for animals. It is now part of the locally extensive Fairlawne estate, so please do not trespass into the moated area itself.

Section E-F: The moated site to the cricket ground

If you have crossed the footbridge over the ditch, cross back again and turn sharp left along the edge of the field bordered by the ditch that feeds the moat. After a few yards turn sharp right onto the trodden path across the field and follow this uphill using Hadlow Tower (visible as a landmark above the horizon) as a navigation point, aiming to the left of it. Note the big white mansion on the hillside away to your left (referred to later). Pass through the kissing gate at the top of the field and cross Carpenters Lane into Steers Place (signposted to The Common). Pass the property called "Broom Waters", which is built on the site of The Broom Public House destroyed during World War II, having previously served workers from the nearby claypits for many years (see section F-G below). Follow Steers Place to its junction with Common Road and turn right. Continue along Common Road for about 150 yards and you will come to a footpath (marked by a fingerpost sign) by the entrance to a smallholding. Follow this path (passing a gated footpath across an orchard to the right) until you come to the back of the first building along it. This is the back of the cricket pavilion. Walk around the far end of the pavilion (requiring a right turn) and then turn left to follow the track around the inside of the ditch that separates the cricket pitch from surrounding farmland and woods.

Cricket was first recorded as having been played in Hadlow in 1747 when the Penny London Post gave notification of a game against Dartford. In August that year, Hadlow was described as a "famous parish for cricket". Cricket was already a popular team game at that time, with recognized rules. As early as 1744, Kent played All-England and beat them by 110 notches to 11 (the score being kept by cutting a notch on a stick for each run). Sir William Geary of Oxenhoath (the big white mansion on the hillside that you might have seen away to the left after passing the moated site) gave the cricket ground to the parish in 1907.

Section F-G: The cricket ground to the cemetery

Continue clockwise on the track around the inside edge of the cricket field and exit along the short drive back down to Common Road. There was once a brick clay field in the woodland to the left side of this drive, the excavations from which are still visible, although now much overgrown. On leaving the cricket ground by the kissing gate to the left of the vehicle entrance gate, cross Common Road and continue along the footpath directly opposite. This section of footpath was apparently created to facilitate access for workers from the village to the brick clay pits. The path emerges onto A26 Maidstone Road via Valley Drive. Turn right along the right hand side of the A26 (*If you wish to "breakout" from the walk at this point you can simply continue along A26 back to the village*). Cross the A26 just before reaching the former public house "The Harrow" to enter Cemetery Lane (This is a convenient place to join the walk if you are coming from Hadlow Manor Hotel, or from which to visit the cemetery if you have mobility difficulties - it being a short distance). The entrance to the cemetery is just along the lane, on its right hand side.

The cemetery came into use in 1881 (St Mary's churchyard by then being full). Among other things, it contains the village war memorial (a Grade II listed building) and five Commonwealth war graves, all dating from World War II. Two of these (towards the north east corner) are the burial place of soldiers of the Newfoundland Regiment. This regiment of volunteers was initially deployed on home defence (those here having been billeted at Greentrees in Cuckoo Lane) before participating in the D-Day landings. The other war graves are situated towards the south west corner of the cemetery.

Section G-H: The cemetery to Style Place

Leave the cemetery by the entrance drive and turn right to continue along Cemetery Lane, which curves round to the right and passes Goblands Farm before reaching a cross roads with Court Lane. *If you wish to "breakout" here by returning to the village, turn right along Court Lane back to The Square*. To continue, turn left along Court Lane (signposted for East Peckham) and after about ¼ mile (400 m) turn right into Caxton Place (don't take the signposted path diagonally across the field). Continue along Caxton Place, which curves to the left and then to the right, whereupon it reaches the group of buildings historically known as Style Place. Those with mobility difficulties can visit Style Place by walking along Court Lane from Hadlow Square (but it is a longish distance, much of it without a pavement).

Style Place includes a large maltings in the centre of the group (now housing since 1991). A brewery operated here between 1830 and 1905, this being the site of an artesian well. Style Place was once part of the Manor of Caustons, the family name of William Caxton, giving rise to the theory that he may have been born in Hadlow.



Section H-I: Style Place to Barnes Place

Leave Style Place by continuing along the driveway in a zig-zag down to the pond, where there is a wide gate with a stile on its right hand side. Cross the stile onto the footpath beyond and proceed between hedgerows. You will shortly approach a high mound surmounted by fencing. This is the bund forming the side of a farm reservoir. The path divides at this point. *If you wish to "breakout" here, take the right hand fork until you come to a farm track. Turn right along the track and continue until you reach Victoria Road. Turn right along the road and then almost immediately left onto a footpath into the woods. Follow this path round to the right (not the left turn through the kissing gate) and keep straight on back to Court Lane near The Square via The Forstal.* To continue to Barnes Place, take the left fork at the reservoir and when you meet the farm track, turn left along it to pass through a hedgerow and then immediately turn right (*do not go straight on*) to follow the left hand side of this hedgerow down the side of the field. At the end of this side of the field, the path divides. Follow the curve to the left along the bottom of the field and beside the River Bourne (*not right along the side of the river unless you want to take a short cut to Golden Green*). After about 25 yards (20m) you will come to a right hand limb of the path, which crosses a footbridge over the river. Having crossed the footbridge here, continue straight ahead on the trodden path across the field in front of you, aiming to the left of the twin oasts beyond. On reaching the hedgerow on the far side of the field, turn left on the path alongside the hedgerow (*do not cross the bridge through the hedgerow towards the twin oasts*). The path shortly curves to the right alongside a brook. The half timbered house directly in front of you is Barnes Place.

Barnes Place dates from C15 and is the oldest house in the parish. It is best seen from the approach along the footpath as closer views are obscured by a dense roadside hedgerow.

At this point, if you wish to extend your walk, you can join the 'Hadlow Hop' by taking in the area south of Three Elm Lane (see text following point 6 in that leaflet).

Section I-K: Barnes Place to Golden Green

Having reached Barnes Place, turn right along Three Elms Lane. A short distance along the Lane you will come to Sherenden Park on the left side. Still in Three Elm Lane, look out here for the semi-detached Crystalate Cottage and a larger house called The Pines.

These are all that now remain of the former Crystalate works. Note the musical references in the motif of the cottage's name sign.

The Crystalate Works opened here in 1902, making billiard balls out of the composite material that gave the firm its name. Manufacture of gramophone records probably began a few years later, when Crystalate took over from a short-lived venture called 'Neophone' which attempted to produce 'indestructible' gramophone records from papier maché. Millions of 78 rpm gramophone records were produced by the Crystalate Gramophone Record Manufacturing Company at its works here and in Cannon Lane, Tonbridge, between 1917 and 1937. Most were ten inch discs pressed on shellac and giving about three minutes of music on each side. Crystalate became a major provider of popular music on disc, selling its records under the Imperial, Eclipse, and Rex labels.

Continue along Three Elm Lane to Golden Green, stopping by the green corrugated iron chapel on the left side, opposite The Bell Inn. Those with mobility difficulties could visit Golden Green (Barnes Place, The Crystalate site and the chapel) from Hadlow village by car, along Three Elm Lane, perhaps parking near The Bell Inn.

The corrugated chapel is an early example of prefabricated buildings and "tin tabernacles" like this found their way to nearly every corner of the Empire. This one was erected in 1913 on land donated by a local grandee (Sir Osmond D'Avigdor Goldsmid) and cost £285 collected by local fund-raising. It is a listed building. **The Bell Inn** played an important part in a local hop-pickers' tragedy, details of which are included in the separate 'Hadlow Hop' leaflet. Its oldest part is the remnant of a Hall House.



Section J-A: Return to St Mary's Church from Golden Green

Turn into Victoria Road alongside the Bell Inn. Continue along Victoria Road for about 100 yards (100m) towards the bridge over the River Bourne. Just before the bridge, take the footpath on the left, which follows the left bank of the river. You will shortly come to Gold Hill Mill, now converted to residential use. Here the path crosses the river and on the far side of the footbridge there is a good view of Hadlow Tower in the wider landscape.

Turn left to follow the path along the right side of the river (left side of the field) to a paddock enclosed by a fence. Turn right alongside this fence and then follow the path round to the left alongside a field hedgerow. The path soon curves sharply to the right around the edge of the field, immediately beyond the curve take the left fork into woodland and follow the path (bordered by woodland to the left and hedgerow with field beyond to the right) uphill. As the ground levels out there is a path across a field to your left. Take this path along the right hand side of the field.

After passing through the next kissing gate turn left onto the well-defined path that is part of the Hadlow Access Trail and leads back into The Forstal. When you come to the end of this limb of the cul-de-sac, go straight ahead along a clearly defined path (that may once have served as part of a "coffin route" from Golden Green) back to St Mary's church. The tour finishes.



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