

The Two Peaks Walk - a ramble around Chrishall

This circular walk of about 8 miles takes in both peaks (and also passes very close to Hertfordshire, the highest point of which is definitely not within walking distance, being the other side of Tring). By the end of the walk you will undoubtedly be ready for refreshments at The Red Cow in Chrishall (Tel: 01763 838792). The walk uses footpaths and quiet country roads, apart from a short stretch of the B1039. Parts of the walk can be muddy and the footpaths are uneven, so stout footwear is recommended. Allow $3\frac{1}{4}$ hours for the walk - extra if visiting the churches at Chrishall and Little Chishill. A useful map is OS Explorer 194 (Hertford & Bishop's Stortford). The walk starts and ends at the Red Cow (Grid ref: TL447394).

1. Proceed down Hogs Lane, which leads off the High Street at the Red Cow. At the end of this short lane, turn left on a footpath which follows the field edge and gives an excellent view towards Chrishall church. The path crosses a road then, after a short distance, turns left alongside the hedge. Go through a large gap in another hedge and continue down the hill to a tarmac road.

2. Go straight across the road, over a stile into a field and soon over another stile into Chrishall churchyard. The church of Holy Trinity is well worth a visit. Continue across Chrishall churchyard to the far corner by the yew tree and on to a drive. Cross the drive and bear slightly right on a footpath down the hill into the valley to a footbridge, and out onto the B1039. Take care when emerging onto the road.

3. Turn left, then right soon after, and then up a drive to Chiswick Hall. As you go up the drive, look behind you for a fine view of Chrishall Church and the surrounding countryside. Shortly before reaching Chiswick Hall follow the footpath to the right which goes over a small bridge and round the side of the Hall grounds, between a black barn and a tennis court. Turn left at the end onto a track which passes the rear of the Hall and then bears sharp right away from the Hall.

4. Continue along this track for about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile until it enters woodland. You are now at the highest point in Essex, at 482 ft (147 metres). Assuming you are not suffering from altitude sickness, continue on the path, which goes half left through the trees before emerging onto farmland. The path continues round the edge of a large field and bends to the right. After about another $\frac{1}{4}$ mile, turn right when the path bears sharp left.

5. Proceed along this path for about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile, (ignore the path on your right) until you arrive at bend on a tarmac road at Killlem's Green. Continue straight ahead along this quiet road for about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles, passing

Gypsy Corner Farm, until you arrive at Little Chishill. Have a rest at the ancient church of St Nicholas on your left. After leaving the church take a signposted track on the right by a letterbox.

6. Follow this track up the hill - there is a good view at the top - and proceed for about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile until you reach a tarmac road. Turn right and follow the road for a short distance towards Great Chishill, passing a public footpath sign on the left. Look for an unmarked footpath on the right, opposite the parking bay for 26 May Street.

7. Follow this path, which enters a spinney and then performs several bends. Turn left when you reach a concrete track to the B1039. Turn right, along the pavement out of Great Chishill, taking care near the village hall and playing field, where the pavement ends. Continue to the entrance to Hall Farm on your right - you are now at the highest point in Cambridgeshire at 480 ft (146 metres).

8. Once the excitement of scaling this second peak has subsided, follow the public bridleway on the right just beyond Hall Farm (signposted Building End) and after about 100 yards, take the left fork. The path runs along the north-east edge of Monkshole Wood and emerges on a quiet tarmac road near Building (or Bilden) End. Turn left and follow the road for about half a mile to the B1039 and then turn right. Keep a watchful eye for traffic, then, after two hundred yards or so, take the left turn up the hill to Chrishall.

9. Just before you enter Chrishall village, take the little road on your right. After a short distance there is a footpath on the left which leads back to Hogs Lane and the end of the walk with those well deserved refreshments at the Red Cow.