

# HADLEY WOOD CIRCULAR WALK



Text: Stuart Mills  
Photographs: Andrew Lack

A short but varied 3½ mile walk from Hadley Wood Station with attractive long distance views across Enfield Chase farmland. Half the walk is along country field paths. There are two shorter options using public transport but please note neither bus route will return you to Hadley Wood Station. As there is no station car park, park at least 200 yards away from the station and shops in either Crescent East or Crescent West (both off Beech Hill). Alternatively, begin your walk by alighting from the 313 bus at the New Cottage Farm bus stop on The Ridgeway.

Hadley Wood did not develop as a community until the late 1800's. The Great Northern Railway Company extended their line south through Duchy of Lancaster land in Enfield Chase with King's Cross opening in 1852. From 1880 Charles Jack, the owner of Beech Hill Park estate, negotiated with the Duchy for permission "to build an elegant upper middle-class estate" with a station. The station opened in April 1885 with 12 stopping trains per day in each direction, but the first two houses only arrived a year later. The number increased to 40 by 1896 and by 1914 there were 100 fine Victorian/Edwardian houses. The majority of those in the conservation area still retain the period character long since lost in most other parts of Enfield.



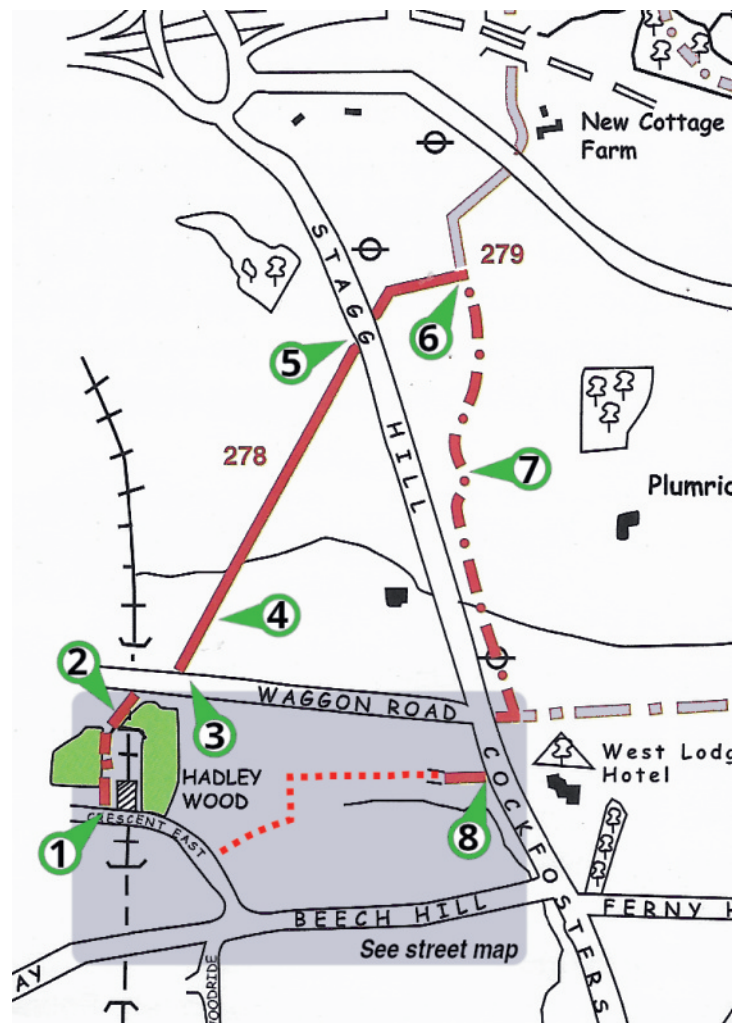
Victorian farm estate cottage. Curiously, the spelling of Waggon Road is with only one "g" in the Hertsmere section of the road.

For the next 1¾ miles the paths used were proposed and part built by The Enfield Society. From the start of path 278 there are long distance views eastwards towards the Epping Forest ridge ④. Crossing the land of Slopers Pond Farm, and near some Enfield Society tree planting, this path goes downhill and over Salmon's Brook, to then climb and reach Stag Hill. Although the hedgeline you have followed from Waggon Road forms the current Enfield/Hertsmere boundary, maps of 1658 and 1776 show it represented the boundary between South Mimms Common and Enfield Chase.



① Turn right down a cycle path parallel to the railway between the estate agents and the blue shed. In 100 yards either continue ahead uphill next to the railway or turn left into unmade Bartrams Lane and then right into the public open space. Climb the grass field and near the top look back for an attractive view over Monken Mead Brook valley towards the high ground of Monken Hadley Green north of Barnet. In the top right-hand corner of the field join the cycle path within the woodland above the railway tunnels and turn left beside the Enfield/Hertsmere boundary to reach Waggon Road. The tunnels were the unsuccessful target of enemy aircraft in the 1939/1945 war and a large bomb crater can be seen in the trees ②.

Turn right at Waggon Road (to the left is a view over the railway line) and continue past housing for about 300 yards to reach public footpath 278 ③ on your left next to a modern, highly glazed, house that replaced a





4

Take great care while crossing Stagg Hill ⑤ and enter path 279. From the seats there are lovely views over Salmon's Brook Valley and Enfield Chase farmland (page 1, picture top).

yards to reach a small gap in the hedge ahead. Go through and then turn right to exit near the Stagg Hill/Waggon Road/Cockfosters Road mini-roundabout with nearby 298 bus stop. (about 2¾ miles from start).



5



6



7



8

This is an appropriate location to reflect upon Enfield Council's recent Draft Local Plan which included 28 Green Belt sites including some Enfield Chase land. Much of this threatened land forms an integral part of Enfield Chase farmland, acquired at public expense in the 1930's by far-sighted Middlesex County Council, with the express purpose of protecting it from being developed due to its strategic importance as heritage land. This statement was reinforced in 1989 when the Countryside Commission's report stated "The finest landscapes in the Greater London area are generally acknowledged to be those areas such as the North Downs and Enfield Chase, which have strong visual characteristics."

Cross Cockfosters Road carefully at the traffic island and turn left for 150 yards to then enter a narrow public footpath between houses ⑧. Initially crossing Monken Mead Brook as it flows south to join the Pymmes Brook, this path leads to Kingwell Road. At the end turn left into Duchy Road to reach Lancaster Avenue. Turn right past impressive Victorian and Edwardian houses to reach Crescent East where the station is 200 yards on your right.

Continue downhill and, where path 279 turns sharply left to reach the 313 bus stop on The Ridgeway, turn right along the permissive path with the hedge on your left ⑥. As the field narrows near Stagg Hill, look for a gap in the left-hand hedge ⑦ and cross a plank bridge over the ditch. Turn right with the hedge now on your right, cross a farm road, go through a kissing gate and along the right-hand field edge for a short distance and turn right over a large footbridge. Continue ahead in next field parallel to Stagg Hill for 325



(C) Openstreetmap and contributors

