

# Little Chalfont to Chesham

## *History and Points of Interest*

Up to the 1920s, Little Chalfont was a collection of farmhouses with most of the land split between families such as the Dukes of Bedford and the Cavendish's. The modern village owes much of its existence to the coming of the Metropolitan Railway when land was later released for development. In the 18th century a turnpike was built from Hatfield to Reading on what is now the main road through the village. This was reputedly financed by Lord Salisbury who wanted a quicker route to Bath for treatment for his gout.

### **A** Latimer Park Farm

Used to be known as Dell Farm until 1954. The site of a 1st Century Roman farm villa, the river was dammed in the middle of the 18th century to form the lake. Neptune Falls is on the site of a medieval mill.

### **B** River Chess

The Chess is a chalk stream fed by groundwater, which is stored in the aquifer – layers of chalk rock which work like a sponge, soaking up water until it emerges at ground level. Regular winter rainfall is needed to recharge the aquifer and keep the chalk streams of the Chilterns flowing throughout the year. Typical chalk streams like the Chess are shallow and narrow, with gravel beds and clear, warm water. We take our water from the aquifer too, so we need to use water wisely in order to reduce our impact on chalk streams and their wildlife.

### **C** Latimer

The village is made up of a number of 17th and 18th century houses around a village green. Latimer House (Place) was built in 1863 after the original Elizabethan house was destroyed by fire. Once the seat of the Cavendish

family, during World War Two the house became an interrogation centre for senior prisoners of war, including Rudolf Hess. It is now a conference centre and hotel.

### **D** Canons' Mill

This was the site of a Saxon corn mill, referred to in the Domesday Book. It was owned by the canons of Missenden Abbey from the early 12th century. Last working in 1937, it was demolished about 1960.

### **E** Chesham Moor

The Moor (an old English name for marsh) is actually a large island. It was created in the 10th century by Lady Elgiva who diverted the Chess and built Lord's Mill, the remains of which are located to the right of point 8 on the map.

### **F** Meades Water Gardens

Originally the location of the millstream for Amy Mill, of which now only the sluice gate remains. The site was then converted for use as watercress beds and later ornamental gardens. In 2008 the river was restored as part of a project to regenerate the gardens.



### About these leaflets:

This leaflet is one of a series of walks all of which are downloadable from the Walkers are Welcome pages at [www.chesham.gov.uk](http://www.chesham.gov.uk)

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# Little Chalfont to Chesham

'Station to Station'

Chesham Walks  
7

6 miles



# Little Chalfont to Chesham

Chesham Walks  
7

**Start:** Chalfont & Latimer Metropolitan Line Station

**Finish:** Chesham Metropolitan Line Station

**Terrain:** 6 miles of easy walking with two climbs. Sometimes muddy near the end.

**Maps:** OS Explorer 172 & 181; Chiltern Society 5, 6 & 17

**Refreshments:** Pubs and cafés in Little Chalfont and Chesham

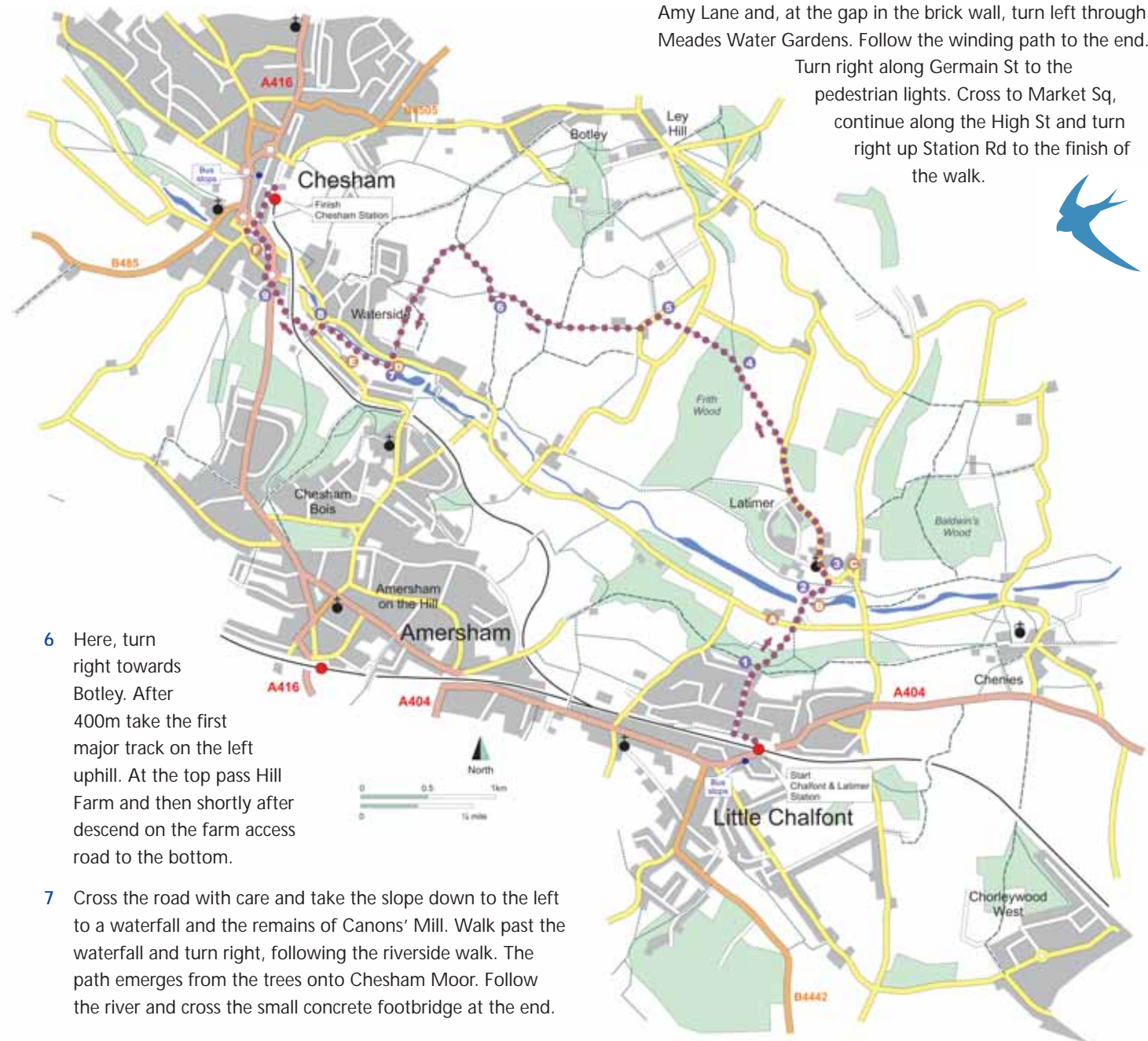
From the station ticket hall, cross the access road and go down the steps opposite to Bedford Ave. Turn left for 100m and first right up Chenies Ave. At Elizabeth Ave go straight across, walk to the very end and take the path into the woods.

- 1 Bear half right, cross a bridleway and through a barrier. There are two paths ahead. Take the left-hand one down to a wide track. Turn right and almost immediately left and follow it down to go through a gate. Turn left and follow the path to a gate at the bottom right-hand corner of the field. Cross the road with care and go through the gate on the other side. Cross the field, go through the gate and along the drive ahead. Go over the bridge and follow the drive uphill towards a lane.
- 2 Optional route – To walk to Chesham using the Chess Valley Walk, turn left through a gate near the top of the hill. For directions go to the leaflet on the Chesham Walkers are Welcome website.
- 3 At the lane, turn left and walk up and along it for 1km. Shortly after a white house on the left, turn left into a field and follow the path diagonally to the right across it towards a line of trees.
- 4 Soon after entering the wood, bear right, ignore the smaller path on the right and continue straight ahead. Cross a wide forestry track and a stile on the far side of the wood. Go straight across the field and over the stile on the other side to a lane. Cross the stile opposite into the next field and stay in the same direction keeping right of a hedge. Cross a stile to a lane.

- 5 Turn left and when the lane bends sharply left; fork right onto a concrete farm road. Where it descends towards some barns continue ahead through a single wooden gate onto a bridleway. Stay on it for over 1km ignoring paths to left and right until it drops down to a junction of bridleways at the valley bottom.

- 8 Cross Bois Moor Rd, turn left over the bridge and right into Millfields. Follow the path past the allotments, go under the railway bridge, bear round to the right and immediately fork left to exit at the main Chesham to Amersham road.

- 9 Cross with care and walk down to the roundabout. Cross Amy Lane and, at the gap in the brick wall, turn left through Meades Water Gardens. Follow the winding path to the end. Turn right along Germain St to the pedestrian lights. Cross to Market Sq, continue along the High St and turn right up Station Rd to the finish of the walk.



- 6 Here, turn right towards Botley. After 400m take the first major track on the left uphill. At the top pass Hill Farm and then shortly after descend on the farm access road to the bottom.
- 7 Cross the road with care and take the slope down to the left to a waterfall and the remains of Canons' Mill. Walk past the waterfall and turn right, following the riverside walk. The path emerges from the trees onto Chesham Moor. Follow the river and cross the small concrete footbridge at the end.

