

## Notes

Please note that distances are approximate.

- 1 To join the Blue Walk you will need to walk back down the drive and cross London Road (take care, this is a busy road). Refer to the Blue Walk leaflet, from Point 4 on the main instructions.

The avenue of lime trees was more of a visual attraction for visitors to Westbrook Hay as it is not thought that it ever actually provided the access way to the house. These ancient trees were shown on the Tithe Map of 1840.

- 2 Enjoy the view towards Berkhamsted and the Bourne Gutter. On a clear day, you can see the elegant bridge over the A41 near Tring. This field was re-contoured with a chalk overburden taken from the route of the A41.

- 3 Westbrook Hay House, now a private school, was once the home of the Ryder family who were local benefactors and owned the land which you pass through on this walk.

- 4 The seat was placed here by the Box Moor Trustees in 1994 to commemorate 400 years of the Box Moor Trust.

- 5 Bovingdon Reach is a large field subject to minimal management to allow natural regeneration of a chalk downland slope with a rich diversity of plants. In the summer there is a profuse display of butterflies, insects and birds, including the marbled white butterfly and skylark.

- 6 The wood in front of you is Gorsefield Wood. The bridleway continues towards Box Lane and Bovingdon at this point, but the walk route stays within Ramacre Wood. The first few metres are uneven underfoot, so take care.

Bluebells, foxgloves (pink and white), willow herb and many other plants flourish in the glades of Ramacre Wood.

- 7 You are now in the middle of a very old yew wood, now rarely seen, particularly in this part of the country.
- 8 The meeting point with Red Walk is approx. 100 metres down at the bottom of the hill but you need to cross Box Lane on a difficult bend. **Please be very careful on this busy road.**
- 9 There is no difference in distance between the two routes. Hay Wood provides a shady walk on a hot day. Preston Hill, normally grazed by sheep (keep dogs on leads), contains a pond which was constructed by The Box Moor Trust in a large natural depression. There is an excellent view over Hemel Hempstead from this field.
- 10 Nesting boxes have been fixed to trees in Hay Wood and owls are commonly seen and heard here at night. To the left you will pass a small woodland pond that is dug into the boulder clay that covers the base chalk on top of the hill. This was deposited here at the end of the last ice age about 6000 years ago. The pond has recently been extended and is now a central part of the Trust's education programme, being used as a site for pond dipping. The wood is a haven for birds, and treecreepers are common on the periphery. The bird feeding station attracts many species and you can stand and observe them without disturbing them.



The Box Moor Trust Centre

London Road  
Hemel Hempstead  
Herts HP1 2RE  
Tel: 01442 253300  
Fax: 01442 253800

[www.boxmoortrust.org.uk](http://www.boxmoortrust.org.uk)  
Registered Charity No 206142

## Explore Westbrook Hay

The  
Box Moor  
Trust

A walk with steep climbs to a plateau at the top of the hill - a typical country walk

**Length** : approx 4 km (2½ miles)

**Time** : approx 2 hours

(follow the **GREEN** markers)

GREEN WALK

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# Box Moor Trust Estate

## Green Walk

From the A4251 (London Road), turn into the drive signed to Westbrook Hay School ①. There is a small parking area after 100m on your left. Follow the right hand fork up the drive. After approx. 200m there is a gate to your right into an open field (Overbourne). ②

Cross the field, heading in the Berkhamsted direction, with the woodland to your left. Pass over a stile in the hedgerow on to the brideway which passes to one side of the Golf Course. Turn sharp left and follow the brideway up the hill and through Green Croft Wood.

As you come out of the wood, follow the brideway to the left and follow the boundary hedgerow bordering Westbrook Hay School. ③

Cross the access road and head towards the Old Barn past the giant sequoia on your left ④. From the Old Barn car park, either go through the kissing gate ahead of you onto Bovingdon Reach ⑤, or alternatively enter the brideway to the right of the meadow. Both paths run parallel; it is a matter of preference whether you choose to walk in the open meadow or follow the brideway (which can offer some shade in hot weather). At the far end of Bovingdon Reach, enter Ramacre Wood from the brideway alongside the boundary with Little Hay Golf Course.

Follow the brideway through the wood until a footpath goes off sharp left ⑥. Follow this footpath through the wood, crossing over a track as you go ⑦ and eventually emerging from the wood into Three Crofts. When you leave the wood, take the mown walkway diagonally uphill to the kissing gate at the field boundary, and back onto Bovingdon Reach.

Once through the kissing gate, keep the hedgerow on your right and follow the path to the corner of Hay Wood ⑧. Continue along the mown walkway on Bovingdon Reach, or go through the kissing gate and walk along the brideway. As you approach Upper Hay Wood, you will see a kissing gate. Here you have two alternatives ⑨. Either take the track through Upper Hay Wood on your left, or enter Preston Hill via the kissing gate ahead of you and follow the mown walkway across the field, veering towards the left with the pond on your right, then through another gate to rejoin Hay Wood. Whichever route you choose you will eventually pick up the boardwalk through the wood.

Follow the boardwalk past the woodland pond ⑩ to the end of the wood. After the railings, turn off the boardwalk and take a sharp right onto the track. Go through the kissing gate on your left after approximately 50m. Turn right and walk down the hill through Dellfield and back to the parking area, keeping the lime avenue to your left.

*Please respect the moors, keep your dogs under control and dispose of your litter responsibly.*

This map should be used as a guide only. Please follow written instructions.

