

# Hampden Monument walk

Devised by **Helen Lodge**

**START:** The Great Hampden Arms, Great Hampden, nr Great Missenden HP16 9RQ. Grid ref SP 845 015; tel: 01494 488255; www.thehampdenarms.co.uk. The landlord has given permission to use the car park and would be delighted to offer you refreshments.

**DISTANCE:** 5.5 miles, with c150m of ascent over the length of the walk

**TERRAIN:** A moderate walk, mostly on paths and bridleways, and some lanes

**MAPS:** OS Explorer 181 and Chiltern Society 3 and 12

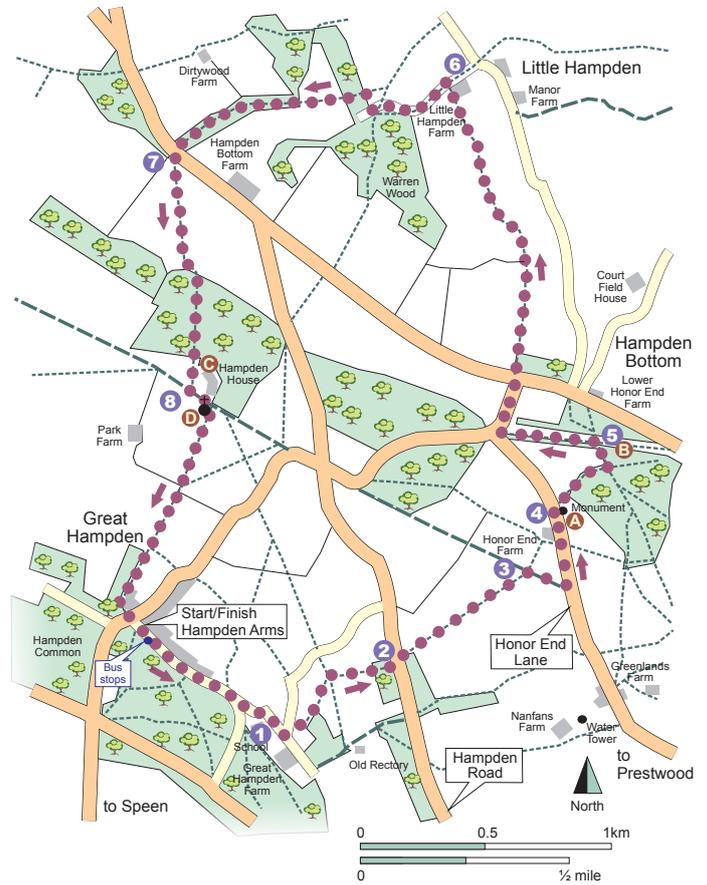
**REFRESHMENTS:** None on the walk

**PUBLIC TRANSPORT:** There are bus stops at the start of the walk in Memorial Road. Please check www.traveline.info for services.

## Route

**From The Hampden Arms, turn left into Memorial Road. At the next junction continue straight ahead into School Lane for 250m to where a road joins from the left.**

1. Bear left across the grass island, take the footpath behind into a field and continue along its edge. Where the hedgerow on the right ends, continue straight ahead across the field to a junction of paths at the end of the next hedgerow. Bear right along its left-hand side, follow the field edge into a wood and fork left down to a road.
2. Cross the road, go past the gate opposite and fork left uphill into a field. Turn right along the edge of two fields to a stile in the fence line ahead.
3. Do not cross the stile, instead, turn right to a busy lane. Turn left along the lane and, 100m after the entrance to Honor House, go through the first of two gates on the right into the site of Hampden Monument.
4. On leaving the Monument turn immediately right through the second of the two gates and follow the path across the field head to enter Pepperboxes Wood. Follow the path down the left edge to a crossing path. Turn left and go through a gate onto a wide strip of grass called 'The Glade'.
5. Turn left, head up towards the big house on the hill, Hampden House, and go over the stile to a road. Turn right and walk down it to a busy road at the bottom of the hill. Cross the road, turn left along the verge and right through a gap in the hedgerow. Follow the path along the edge of the wood to the corner of a field. Stay in the same direction up the hill, following the line of the overhead cables. After 600m the path bears left through the hedgerow and then continues to climb on the other side all the way up to Warren Cottage.
6. Turn left on a wide track to join the Chiltern Way which the route will



7. follow until reaching Hampden House. Stay on the track for 350m to a path junction close to the edge of the wood. Turn right to leave the wood into a field. Turn left along its edge and follow it round to the right for 80m. Turn left into the woodland strip and continue down to and through a gate into the next field. Bear half right downhill, through a gate at the bottom and up the slope to a path junction just after entering a wood. Turn left and follow the path down to a busy road.
7. Cross the road and go past the gate into a field. Bear left uphill into a wood and follow the path as it levels out through a gate into a field. Stay straight ahead past Hampden House on the left and through the next gate.
8. Turn left, go through a gate and walk along to the church of St Mary Magdalene. Take the footpath to the right of the church entrance and go straight ahead over the grass to a kissing gate at the back. Once through it, continue in the same direction to the left of the fence and pass through the next gate to a surfaced access road. Go straight over across the middle of the field and along the left-hand side of the wood to emerge between two cottages. Bear left along the access road to return to the Hampden Arms and the end of the walk.

## Points of Interest

Great Hampden was mentioned in the Domesday Book as Hamdenam. It is the ancestral home of the Hampden family, the most famous of whom was the English Civil War hero John Hampden. He was a wealthy landowner and MP, who opposed King Charles I's imposition of Ship Money, a tax to raise money for the Royal Navy. When the King tried but failed to arrest him and four other leading Parliamentarians in the House of Commons, it triggered a chain of events that led to the start of the Civil War. Hampden raised his own regiment and joined the war on the side of the Parliamentarians. He was mortally wounded at the battle of Chalgrove Field and later died at Thame. He was an important political and military leader, whose reputation has been eclipsed by that of his younger cousin Oliver Cromwell. For further information visit the website of the John Hampden Society, www.johnhampden.org.

**A Hampden Monument:** It was built by Lord Nugent in the early 19th century to commemorate the 200th anniversary of John Hampden's refusal to pay Ship Money. The inscription reads 'For these lands in Stoke Mandeville, John Hampden was assessed in twenty shillings Ship Money levied by command of the King without authority of law'.

**B Pepperboxes Wood:** Owned by the Woodland Trust and also known as Lodge Wood, it takes its name from the former lodges at the bottom of

The Glade, a long wide avenue leading to Hampden House. The Glade was reputedly cut in a single night to provide a view for Queen Elizabeth I on one of her two documented visits to the house.

**C Hampden House:** There was probably a significant house on this site before the Norman Conquest. The land was held by a man called Baldwin on behalf of Archbishop Stigland. After the Conquest, it passed to William Fitz-Ansculfe and was held by Otbert. Reputedly, both Baldwin and Otbert were ancestors of the Hampden family. The current house dates from the 14th century and has been rebuilt and remodelled many times. The most significant changes took place after 1743 when the Gothic style battlements were installed. In more recent times the House was a girls' boarding school, and was subsequently bought by Hammer Films, who made many pictures there over a four year period. It then lay empty, but was eventually restored and is now used as offices, and as a venue for weddings and occasional filming.

**D Great Hampden church:** The church of St. Mary Magdalene is situated c1 mile away from the main village and was built for the convenience of the Lord of the Manor. There has been a church on the site for many centuries. The current one dates back to at least the 13th century. John Hampden is buried somewhere under the flagstones of the church. One theory is that his remains were hidden so that the Royalists couldn't desecrate them.