

# Lacey Green walk

With **Helen Lodge**

A beautiful walk with stunning views and quiet valleys. You can also visit one of the Society's most important sites, Lacey Green Windmill.

**START:** Park on the verge in Pink Road or by the roadside in Loosley Hill. Grid ref: SP 818 007. Nearest postcode HP27 0PG

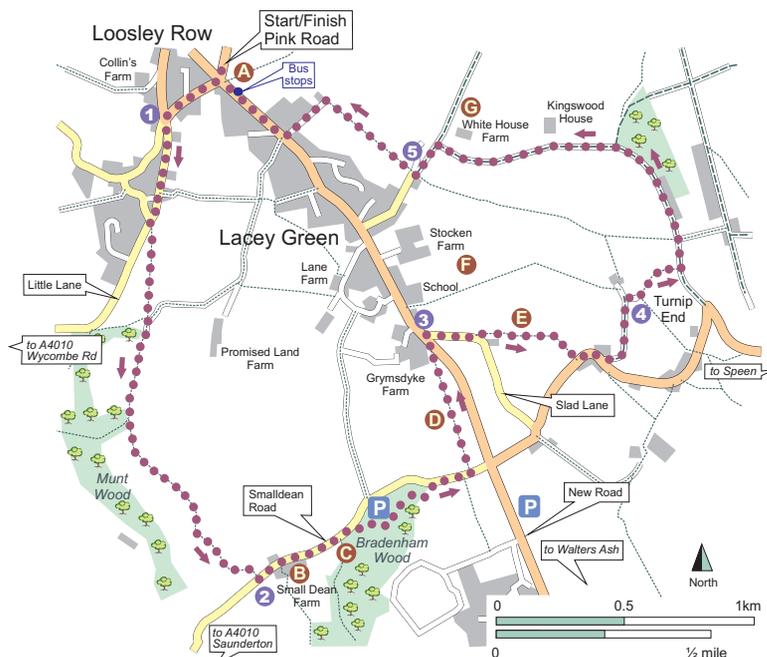
**DISTANCE:** 4.75 miles, with c150m of ascent

**TERRAIN:** An easy walk with three climbs

**MAPS:** OS Explorer 172 & 181 and Chiltern Society 7

**REFRESHMENTS:** The Whip Inn in Lacey Green and Small Dean Farm Tearooms

**PUBLIC TRANSPORT:** Bus 300, High Wycombe to Aylesbury.



Map: Glyn Kuhn

## Route

From the pub take the road opposite, Loosley Row, and head downhill.

- At the crossroads turn left into Lower Road. Walk along the road for c400m to a gate on the left with an unusual metal stile. Go over the stile and head uphill along the fence line. After the next stile bear right and walk along the top edge of the field. Continue on this path for c400m, keeping the fence line on the left, to go through two gates. After the second one, continue straight ahead and down to the right of the hedgerow. Where that ends, continue for a further c30m and then bear right past fencing to a lane.
- Turn left along the lane past Small Dean Farm and after c300m turn right into a small gravel car park. Go through the gate at the back into a field; bear left parallel to the fence, bear right uphill to the next gate. Go through it into the woods and turn left uphill on a sunken path. Near the top, fork right to continue climbing to a crossing path at the edge of the wood. Turn left and go out through a gate to a lane. Turn right along it for c150m, then take the first footpath on the left, over the stile into a field. Continue along the left edge of the field, over the next stile and through a gate to meet a road.
- Cross the road and head down Slad Lane. Where the road bends to

the right, bear left over a stile and into a field. Keep to the right-hand edge of the field and continue ahead to pass a stile, then on to the next stile. Go over it into a field and stay in the same direction along the field edge to a hedgerow. Cross a stile, then bear right across a field to go over a further stile to reach Flowers Bottom Lane. Turn left along the lane and at the first bend bear left on a wide restricted byway for c300m.

- Turn right just after Ducks Nest Cottage, walk past Turnip End Cottage and continue ahead onto a concrete track. Take the second stile on the right and follow the path downhill, keeping to the left edge of the field. Go through a gate at the bottom onto an unmade lane. Turn left and continue along it for c1500m.
- At the finger post at the top of the hill turn right, passing a house called Datcha. Go through a gate and stay in the same direction along the field edge. At the end of the field the Windmill can be seen straight ahead. Go through a gate and turn left onto a wide track that becomes a residential road. At the end turn right along the main road to return to the start.

## Points of Interest

Lacey Green parish comprises the main settlements of Speen, Lacey Green and Loosley Row, and is one of 28 parishes within Wycombe District Council. Lacey Green is derived from the Old English for pasture land, while Loosley Row comes from the Old English word 'hlose-leah' and means 'pigsty clearing'. The parish includes a number of Grade II listed buildings. For further information go to [www.laceygreen.com](http://www.laceygreen.com).

- A Lacey Green Windmill:** England's oldest remaining 'smock' mill, so called due to its resemblance to an old fashioned farmer's smock. The internal wooden machinery appears to date from c1650. During the 19th century it was rebuilt and modernised with fantail, patent sails, governor and machinery for grain cleaning and flour sifting, and continued working until 1915. In the 1920s it was used as a weekend cottage. Despite some obvious attempts at weatherproofing, by the mid-1930s it was in poor condition. By the late 1960s, the mill was in a desperate state, the whole body being twisted and tilted. In 1971 the Chiltern Society stepped in and volunteers, led by Christopher Wallis, began work to restore it. The project was completed in 1986 and in July 2013 it was given a prestigious Engineering Heritage Award by the Institution of Mechanical Engineers. For opening times see pp 26 & 40.
- B Small Dean Farm:** The farm has a small tearoom which is open when the owners are on site. They also sell eggs, as well as turkeys at Christmas.
- C Bradenham National Trust Estate:** The noticeboard tells the history of the Estate. There is a 17th century manor house which was once the home of Benjamin Disraeli's father, Isaac. There is no doubt, however, that Benjamin and his wife, Mary Ann, were frequent visitors.

- D Grim's Ditch:** The footpath runs alongside a section of Grim's Ditch. Named after a Nordic god, it's part of a series of linear earthworks that run from Bradenham to Ivinghoe, and remains one of the great mysteries of Buckinghamshire. Following investigations archaeologists now generally agree that the earthwork probably dates from the early to mid-Iron Age c 700BC.
- E Maize Maze:** During the summer months these fields are the location of the Lacey Green Maize Maze.
- F RAF Lacey Green:** The fields around Stoken Farm were requisitioned during WWII for the construction of a new airfield which was principally for the use of Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur 'Bomber' Harris, C-in-C at nearby Bomber Command. It was also used by light reconnaissance aircraft, such as the Auster. The land has now been returned to farming.
- G White House Farm:** Built in 1855, it was formerly known as Sunnysbank Farm, and has had a couple of notable owners - Margaret Haynes-Dixon and Major General Sir Colin Gubbins. Haynes-Dixon was better known as the author Rumer Godden, who wrote *Black Narcissus* while living at the farm. In the early days of WWII, Gubbins established the secret underground resistance movement in Britain, poised to act in the event of a German invasion. Later, as Director of Operations and Training at the Special Operations Executive, he was given full responsibility for secret missions to Western Europe. Finally, in 1943, he was appointed head of Special Operations Executive. White House Farm became his retirement home.