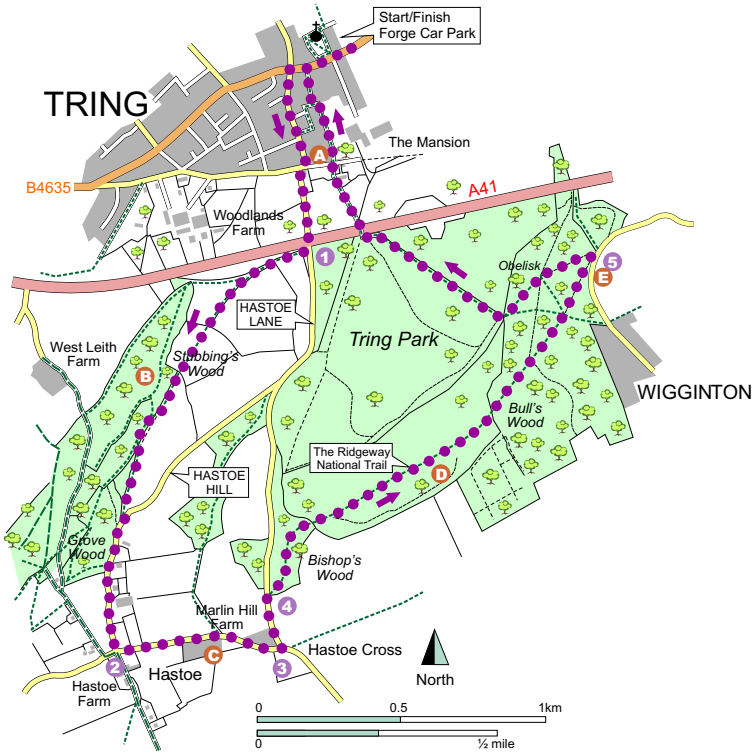
Tring winter walk



START: The Forge car park, High Street, Tring HP23 5AH
DISTANCE: 4.2 miles
TERRAIN: Easy walking on paths and lanes, with c130m of ascent over the length of the walk
MAPS: OS Explorer 181 and Chiltern Society 18. Note that on some older maps the Ridgeway Path is shown as a different route near Wigginton
REFRESHMENTS: None on the walk, plenty in Tring

Leave the car park via the main entrance and turn right along the High Street. Take the second left up Akeman Street to the T-junction at the top. Turn right and then immediately left into Hastoe Lane.

1. Go under the flyover and after a few paces turn right onto a concrete track signposted to Stubbings Wood. The track becomes a path that runs parallel to the main road. After c200 metres bear left uphill, keeping to the right of a hedgerow. At the brow of the hill look back to see the fine views over Tring and beyond. Keep climbing, cross the next field and then along the edge of a wood. Follow this path all the way to the top of the hill. For a short distance it enters and exits the wood, while maintaining the same direction. In the wood turn immediately left, follow the path uphill and at the fork, branch left. After a few paces, fork left again to exit. At the top of the hill, the path passes to the right of a couple of barns and continues, to meet a lane.
2. Turn right uphill to a road junction. Here, turn left along Church Lane and The Ridgeway National Trail.
3. At the junction, cross to the other side and turn left to use the grass verge up Marlin Hill.
4. At the top turn right through the barrier and into Tring Park. The next section is called King Charles Ride and in winter has extensive views over the Vale of Aylesbury. After nearly a mile the Ridgeway turns right. Do not follow it, but continue ahead and down to a white building – the Summer House.
5. Follow the main path as it bends left downhill to the obelisk. Continue in the same direction down to a kissing gate. Go through it and then across the open area of the Park towards a footbridge over the A41. Cross the footbridge and follow the fenced path to a lane. Go straight over on a path towards the town. Where the path opens out, follow the wall round to the right and walk down to the High Street. Turn right for the car park. Please note that there may still be building works at Point A on the map. If so, turn left along Park Street and then right down Akeman Street to return to the car park.

History and points of interest

Tring is a small market town lying at the edge of the Chiltern Hills, where the Roman Akeman Street meets the ancient Icknield Way. Probably the most famous resident of the town was Lionel Walter Rothschild, whose family bought the Wren-designed Tring Mansion in 1872.

A *Natural History Museum:* Rothschild was a keen naturalist and built a private zoological museum. It contained one of the largest natural history collections in the world. In 1937 the Rothschild family gave the museum and its contents to the nation and it became part of the Natural History Museum.

B *Stubbings Wood:* A Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and one of the best examples in Hertfordshire of ancient semi-natural beech woodland.

C *Hastoe Village:* Probably first recorded in the 13th century and most notably connected with the Rothschild family. On the right along Church Lane is the magnificent village hall built by the Rothschilds in 1898. It was featured in the September edition of *Chiltern News*. Nearby is the highest point in Hertfordshire, standing at just over 800ft.

D *The Ridgeway and Tring Park:* The Ridgeway has been described as Britain's oldest road and is thought to have connected the Dorset coast to the Wash. Opened in 1973, it is now an 87 mile National Trail. Tring Park dates back to 1066. For centuries it was linked to the manor of Tring and eventually became part of the Estate. In 1937 the Rothschild family sold the Estate but kept the Park. When it was threatened with development, it was bought by Dacorum Borough Council and leased to the Woodland Trust.

E *The Summer House and obelisk:* Both monuments are thought to have been designed by James Gibbs, who was also responsible for St Martins in the Fields. They are reputed to have been dedicated to Nell Gwynn who, local legend says, is supposed to have visited the Park with Charles II.

Chiltern Society
We care for the Chilterns

The Chiltern Society is a local charity with 6,800 members. It is one of the largest environmental groups in England directly associated with the conservation of some of the country's finest protected landscapes. The objective of the charity is to care for the Chilterns, to encourage people to explore this beautiful landscape and to conserve it for future generations. It has over 400 active volunteers who protect the Chilterns' heritage landscapes, buildings and rivers, maintain Chiltern footpaths and bridleways, publish footpath maps, lead walks, cycle rides and photographic trips, and do conservation work on ponds , commons and woodland. For details of the charity's work and its programme of walks, cycle rides and conservation groups open to all www.chilternsociety.org 01494 771250