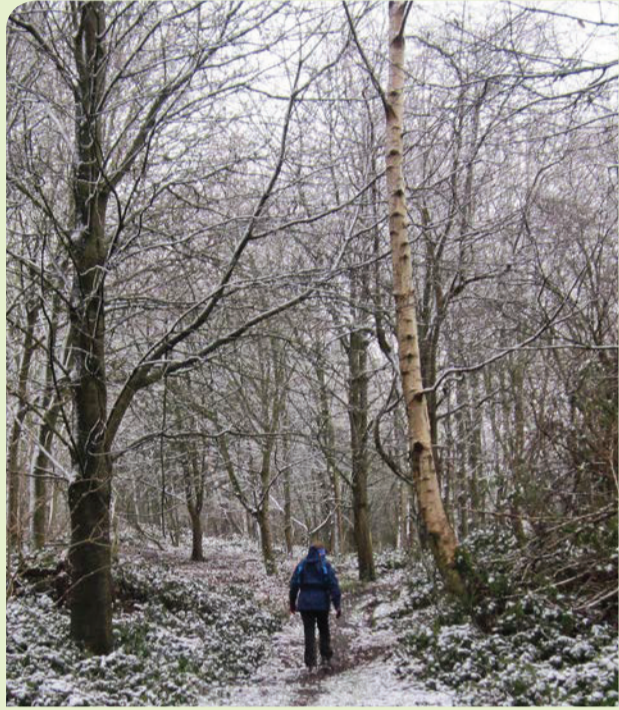


The Parish of Albury

Albury is located in the Ash Valley about four miles west of Bishop's Stortford in East Hertfordshire. The village has a long and fascinating history dating back to the Domesday Book of 1086 where it was recorded as belonging to the Bishop of London.

With an attractive rural landscape of farmland, woodland and heathland Albury is divided into six small hamlets linked by a network of ancient footpaths and bridleways: Albury End, Church End, Clapgate, Gravesend, Patmore Heath and Upwick Green.



The River Ash, a chalk river, bisects the Parish before joining the River Lea near Stanstead Abbots. Chalk rivers are rare and important habitats which support a rich diversity of wildlife.

Patmore Heath is the best remaining example of acid grass heathland in Hertfordshire. A Site of Special Scientific Interest managed as a nature reserve by Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust.

Scarce plants such as Heath Bedstraw, Harebells and Tormentil thrive here on the dry heathland. In the wetter areas Galingale, Water Avenis, Devils Bit Scabious, Ivy-leaved Crowfoot and Southern Marsh Orchid all occur.

Frogs and Toads spawn in the ponds in spring and the heath is home to all three native species of newt: Great Crested, Smooth and Palmate.

The reintroduction of sheep grazing has helped to maintain the heathland and prevent it turning into woodland.



Albury Church dates back to the 13th century. The church, dedicated to St. Mary, has a fine tower topped with a needle spire visible from almost every corner of the parish.



How to get there

Albury is situated four miles west of Bishop's Stortford. All walks start and finish at Albury Village Hall, Clapgate SG11 2JD, where there is free parking. Map reference: TL442248.

A limited bus service visits Clapgate from Bishop's Stortford. For public transport details visit www.intalink.org.uk or contact Traveline on 0300 123 4050 (open 8am-8pm).



Other Local Walks

This walk is one of a series of Walking in Hertfordshire circular walk routes. Download these and other walks from www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/cms



This walk was produced by Albury Parish Council (www.albury.org.uk) as part of the Parish Paths Partnership, a programme funded by Hertfordshire County Council.



The Countryside Management Service (CMS) works with communities in Hertfordshire to help them care for and enjoy the environment. For more information visit www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/cms

The Coronation Oak was planted by the side of Cow Pasture footpath by the people of Albury to commemorate the coronation of King George VI, 12th May 1937.



Albury Hall dominated the village from the late 18th century. A Manor House stood on the site for many centuries but the most recent Hall was built around 1780 by John Calvert the MP for Hertford.

Early in the 20th century the property was purchased by Maurice Glyn, a partner in a banking firm. Pleasure gardens and a swimming pool were added. The family were generous local benefactors, providing piped water for the village.

When war broke out in 1939 Albury Hall was requisitioned by the Army and occupied by military staff. An arm of the Special Operations Executive (SOE) was based here planning espionage and sabotage missions behind enemy lines in France. Winston Churchill was closely involved and visited Albury Hall on a number of occasions.

Albury Hall was destroyed by fire in 1950. The site has remained untouched for over 60 years, its fascinating history now hidden under a cover of trees.



Things to look out for The aerial photograph taken in 1934 shows Albury Hall surrounded by its gardens, farm buildings and walled garden. The tree lined track running to the west indicates the original entrance route. Walk 3 follows a footpath along the western boundary of the walled garden, passing the farm buildings and the remains of the entrance to the Hall.



Albury Walks Discovering the Ash Valley

Walk 1: Patmore Heath – 3 miles
Walk 2: Hadham Hall – 4.5 miles
Walk 3: Albury Hall – 5.5 miles
Combined walks 8-9 miles



Ypres, Munich and Suez

The Glyn family had a penchant for naming their woodlands after current events. A field which had reverted to woodland was named Ypres following the battle in 1914.

When the threat of war again loomed in the late 1930's another woodland was planted to the east of the Hall. This time named Munich to commemorate a visit by the Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, following his fateful meeting with Adolf Hitler in Germany.

A third woodland was created close to the walled vegetable garden around 1956 and was named Suez, presumably in response to the crisis in Egypt when the canal was blockaded.



You may be lucky enough to catch sight of the white stag which frequents the area.

Birds

Over 60 species of birds have been recorded in the Parish in recent years – here are a few to look out for:

- **Red Kites** – with their distinctive forked tails gliding over the fields in search of carrion, they have become quite common in recent years and can be seen on most days.
- **Buzzards** – a common sight, often it is their distinctive 'mewing' call which first attracts your attention.
- **Cuckoo** – an annual visitor which can often be heard calling near Patmore Heath in the spring and summer.
- **Green and Great-spotted Woodpeckers** – both resident on Patmore Heath.
- **Yellowhammers**. Look on telephone wires for a bright splash of gold, they are common in the area.

To the Pelhams

**WALK 1: PATMORE HEATH – 3 MILES
APPROXIMATELY 1 HOUR**

An easy walk on good paths with panoramic views across the Ash Valley. The paths to the west of the Albury Road can be muddy in wet weather.
Points of interest: Clapgate, Patmore Heath, Albury Church, Coronation Oak.
Short detour from Patmore Heath to the Catherine Wheel PH which could also be used as a start & finish to the walk.
Follow these waymarks in an anticlockwise direction.

Key

- Footpath
- Bridleway
- Woodland

Waymarks

- Footpath (walkers only)
- Bridleway (walkers, horse riders and cyclists)

Walk routes

- Walk 1
- Walk 2
- Walk 3



**WALK 3: ALBURY HALL – 5.5 MILES
APPROXIMATELY 2.5 HOURS**

A longer walk taking in both Patmore Heath and the site of Albury Hall. Paths can be muddy in wet weather.
Points of interest: Clapgate, Upwick Wood, Patmore Heath, Gravesend, Albury Hall, Albury Church, Coronation Oak.
Short detour from Patmore Heath to Catherine Wheel PH which could also be used as a start & finish to the walk.
Follow these waymarks in a clockwise direction.

**WALK 2: HADHAM HALL – 4.5 MILES
APPROXIMATELY 2 HOURS**

A walk southwards on good paths down the Ash Valley to Little Hadham returning via Hadham Hall and Upwick to Clapgate. Extensive views across the Ash Valley. Paths can be muddy in wet weather.
Points of interest: Clapgate, Albury Church, Coronation Oak, Church End, Hadham Hall, Upwick.
Follow these waymarks in an anticlockwise direction.

The three walks shown here may be combined to create a longer walk – joining Loops 2 & 3 produces a walk of between 8 and 9 miles.
For further information about the Parish of Albury visit alburyvillage.co.uk

