

The Walk

1 Start point View Point Car Park, Old Redding

Leave the car park by the right hand vehicle access and turn right past The Case Is Altered public house.

Cross the road and enter Harrow Weald Common by the five bar gate, continue along the track following way mark signs.



The name of this public house is a corruption of "Casa Alta" or High House"; from its garden you can look down over six counties



Cottage by the Saxon Grim's Ditch

2 The track ends at Grimsdyke Cottage, bear right and continue past the three houses on your left, continue up the hill following alongside a small stream on your left. The way markers lead past Len's Avenue which is on the right, this is named in memory of a Ranger who worked on the Common, up the hill and up steps leading into Common Road.

Grim's Ditch

Grim's Ditch is an ancient Saxon earthwork which runs for three miles between Harrow Weald Common and Pinner Green. It can best be seen along the northern edge of Old Redding. It is an ancient monument and its purpose is somewhat of a mystery. It possibly formed the boundary to the Catuvellauni tribe which came into conflict with the Romans, but it is also said to have been agricultural in origin.

Grim's Dyke Hotel and Lake

This Tudor-style house built in 1872 was the home of William S Gilbert from 1890-1911, who was famous for his partnership with Arthur Sullivan for producing Gilbert and Sullivan operettas. It is thought that William Gilbert died of a heart attack at the age of 72 while swimming in this lake, although the circumstances of his death are still shrouded in mystery. The house is now used as a hotel.

3 Cross the road watching out for traffic as this is a fast road, continue through a gate* remembering to close the gate after you. The path enters the



*5 Bar gate at the entrance to the Glenthorne Estate

Glenthorne Estate and continues to a kissing gate where you turn left into Bentley Priory.

Follow the concrete path which leads past RAF Bentley Priory, it was from here that Lord Dowding controlled RAF operations during the Battle of Britain in 1940. After walking past RAF Bentley Priory on your left you will come to a T-junction with the tarmac path which passes through Bentley Priory.

4

The route turns left following sign post towards Stanmore Common.

(Those wishing to take a shorter route to return to Old Redding can turn right at the T-junction to pick up the route again on the other side of the deer park.)

5 After approximately 100 yards you will come across a kissing gate, go through and continue on to second kissing gate where you turn right into Priory Drive. 100 yards down Priory Drive fork left to the main road at Stanmore. Cross this busy road, taking care and using the centre refuge, to the right hand side of Warren Lane. Continue up Warren Lane for approximately 100 yards and turn left into the car park. The route enters Stanmore Common at the bottom of the car park by the Bentley Priory Walk signpost. There are two tracks, take the right hand track which bears right after approximately 20 yards and shortly crosses a dirt track where there is another way sign continuing straight on to eventually meet Warren Lane again.



Gorse bush and blue bells in spring

Nearby is a further way sign, follow the direction of this - left (along a tarmac path behind some houses); continue walking along the back of the houses to a pedestrian safety barrier where you turn right. From the barrier bear left across the grass area towards the old tin Scout Hut. Follow the way mark signs to the path between Spring Ponds and Little Common cottages.

6

Little Common is a cluster of 18th and 19th Century Cottages which surround an open common, and overlook Caesar's Ponds, reputedly dug to serve Roman Legionnaires.



Turn right just before the junction with Wood Lane, to the left you can see Stanmore Hall. Follow the minor road downhill to the Vine Public House where you turn left down Stanmore Hill. Continue down for approximately 200 yards to the junction with Wood Lane and turn right into Aylmer Drive. Continue to the end of Aylmer Drive and pass through the kissing gate entering Bentley Priory where you turn right along the chicken wire covered walkway to a chain link fence.

7

(Those wishing to take a shorter route to return towards Stanmore can turn right at the T-junction to pick up the route again as it comes up to RAF Bentley Priory.)

Turn left on the tarmac path through the woodland, passing two five-bar gates. As you emerge from the edge of the woodland you can see views of the Boot Pond to the right, continue to the foot path sign and turn right across grass towards Clap Hill, through a small area of woodland to a bridge crossing a small stream.



Stream by Bentley Wood School

8 The walk passes between the stream and the backs of houses crossing the end of Masefield Avenue and continues alongside the stream to a gate at Lower Priory Farm, from here the farm track leads you to the main road at Clap Hill.

Turn right at the way sign walking up Clap Hill, pass Brookshill Avenue and ignore the first sign you see showing a public footpath. Continue until you come to the way sign which says 'Bentley Priory Circular Walk' and turn left up this footpath. At the top of footpath, turn right into Brookshill where there is also a sign indicating Circular Walk. Cross the road taking care and turn left up Brookshill Drive. On the left is Cope Farm a collection of 18th and 19th Century cottages and barns all carefully maintained to preserve the rural atmosphere. Turn where there is a public footpath sign "To Old Redding". Walk to the path where you come to The Case is Altered public house: turn left at The Case is Altered back into the Old Redding car park.

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The Viewpoint, Old Redding

