

Start your walk at the Centenary Pavilion PROW SR65 and follow along the hedge line to the kissing gate.

1. Halstead Centenary Pavilion was built in 1994 and is used by many clubs and sports teams.

Cross diagonally across Walnut Tree Meadow (ignore the path to the right of the kissing gate) and exit via the kissing gate onto Church Road. Cross the road to the pavement (there is no pavement on the east side) and turn right down Church Road.

On your right is The Old Rectory.

2. The Old Rectory – originally built in 1615 with additions made dependent on the size of the Rector's family! It has been privately owned since 1961.

Continue down Church Road past The Gatehouse at the entrance to Halstead Place on the left.

3. Notice the Blue Plaque on the wall of The Gatehouse, commemorating the pioneering photographic work of Anna Atkins 1799–1871.

Continue for another 50 yards following the flint wall. Cross over the road to PROW SR63 which parallels the fence line of the current Rectory into the field.

4. Flint walls – several can be seen on the walk. Flint use is characteristic in many building and walls in this area. It is widely available in the fields and has been used as a cheap source of building materials for many years.

Before you reach the woodland on this path turn sharp left into St. Margaret's Churchyard by a broken stile and the compost area - difficult to spot!

5. St. Margaret's Church. The present Church was built onto the Cemetery Chapel 1880–1881. Artefacts from the old Church were incorporated into the building and can be seen today. There is a guide to the Church both in the porch and in the Church.

Exit the churchyard through the Lych Gate.

6. The Lych Gate – erected in 2004 in memory of a Parishioner by his family.

Turn left out of the church car park, cross over the road onto the pavement and walk south east along Church Road passing Widmore Cottages on your left.

7. Halstead Place was built in the early or mid 18th Century. It replaced Halstead Court, which had over 40 rooms, and was visited three times by James I who enjoyed the local hunting. All that remains today is the Clock Tower, built in 1772.

After a short distance (after passing the entrance to Halstead Place and reaching the end of the flint wall) turn right along PROW SR67 for 175 yards to view the site of the original Old Church.

8. The Old Churchyard has a dedicated footpath from Church Road and there are still the remains of some headstones and walls in the area. A fantastic sight in the spring when filled with snowdrops. Records show there has been a church in Halstead since the 12th Century and probably from Saxon times.

Return along the same path and just before reaching the gate take the right hand PROW SR69 following the hedge line on your right across open land on the edge of the Halstead Place Estate.

Cross the stile and immediately turn left onto continuation of PROW SR69 that runs along the edge of the private golf course belonging to The Village House.

9. The Village House was built originally in the early 19th Century and occupied at one stage by the Rector who had a large family. The private 9 hole golf course was laid out by James Russel in 1902.

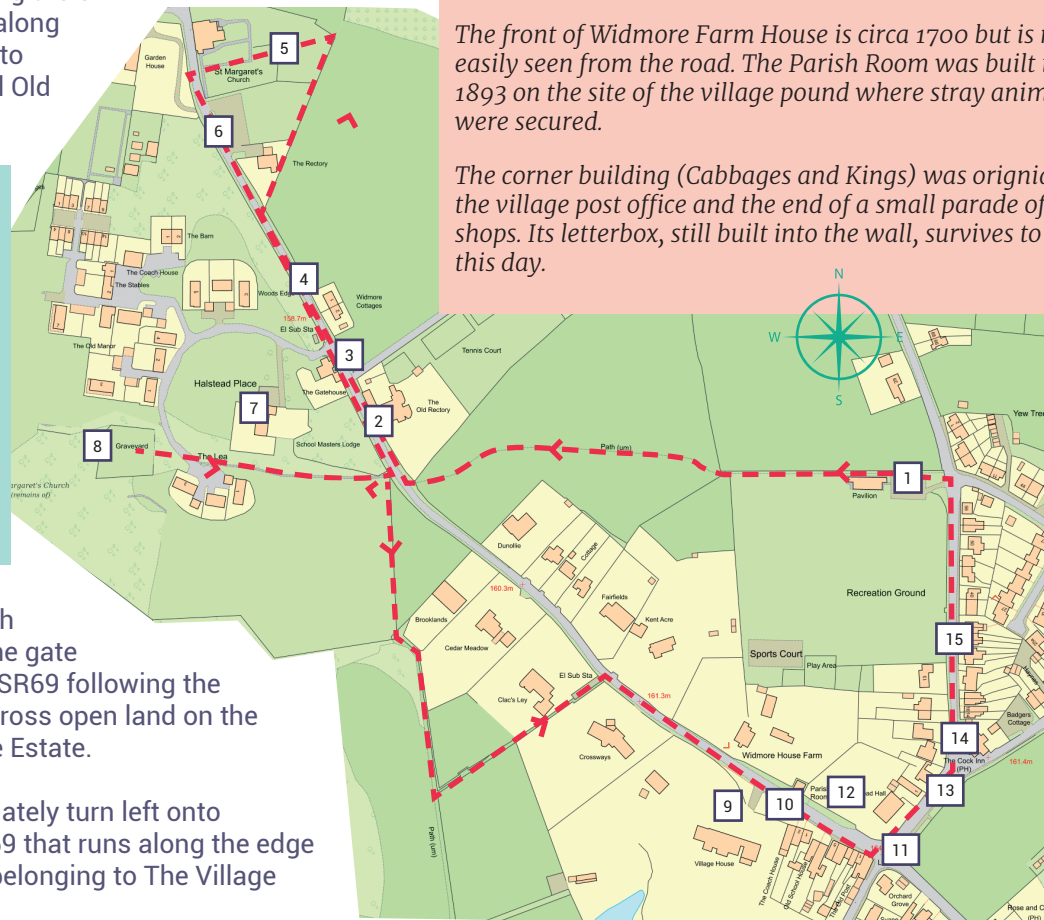
Continue for about 50 yards then turn left over a stile onto PROW SR68 which goes between two houses and exits onto Church Road. Turn right and walk towards the crossroads.

This takes you past Widmore Farm House, The Village House, Village House Cottages, The Old School House, the Parish Room and the Old Post Office.

10. Village House Cottages and 1–5 Church Road were all built around 1830. All these properties demonstrate the wide use of Kentish flint in their construction.

The front of Widmore Farm House is circa 1700 but is not easily seen from the road. The Parish Room was built in 1893 on the site of the village pound where stray animals were secured.

The corner building (Cabbages and Kings) was originally the village post office and the end of a small parade of shops. Its letterbox, still built into the wall, survives to this day.



11. At the crossroads notice the old fingerpost (11) giving the distances to both local areas and London.



Turn left into Station Road having crossed onto the pavement and, opposite the bus shelter notice "Halstead Hall"

12. Halstead Hall – the home of Edith Nesbit who subsequently wrote *The Railway Children*, possibly basing her story on Knockholt Station!

13. The Millennium Sign – erected in 2000 and designed by a local team to show fruit picking, Railway Children, Fort Halstead and the Kent Horse.

Continue along Station Road past the junction with Shoreham Lane outside The Cock Inn.

14. The Cock Inn was built in 1747

Continue on down Station Road passing the Victorian houses on your right.

15. Ivy Cottages, built in 1886, with typical Victorian brickwork and cast iron fencing and Hope Cottage built in 1675.

Notice the last house on the left before the Recreation Ground. This was Halstead's very own Police House. Carefully cross the road to return to Halstead Pavilion.



Walking in HALSTEAD

ABOUT THIS ROUTE August 2020

Starting point:

Halstead Centenary Pavilion (Car Park and Toilet)
Station Road Halstead TN14 7DH

Distance: 1 ½ miles on level ground

Obstacles: Using footpaths and Public Rights of Way (PROW), 2 stiles and 2 kissing gates.

This walk falls almost entirely within a Conservation Area, one of only forty-one in the Sevenoaks District. Designated in 1973, the area is 3.5 Hectares and includes six listed buildings.

Refreshments at The Cock Pub (1747), The Rose and Crown Pub (1864) or The Village Store, Hancocks.

Explore further walks around Halstead, including Broke Hill and Fort Halstead:

www.halsteadparish.org.uk

Walking in HALSTEAD

Sevenoaks, Kent

Route 1: Celebrating the ordinary



The story of every village is written in its buildings and landscape for all to read.

Halstead was for centuries a tiny and impoverished community nestling in the woodlands on top of the North Downs, and only looked outward when the great expansion of fruit growing took place in NW Kent during the second half of the 19th Century. We may, therefore, expect to find not a picture postcard village of medieval timber framed dwellings, but a place whose very ordinariness has probably secured it from trippers and commuterdom.

Geoffrey Kitchener, Halstead in Kent, 1978

In 2020 we face new challenges of development and so the history of this Village becomes even more important.

Let us celebrate ordinariness and, in a walk around the village, discover the origins of its fields, hedges and houses.