

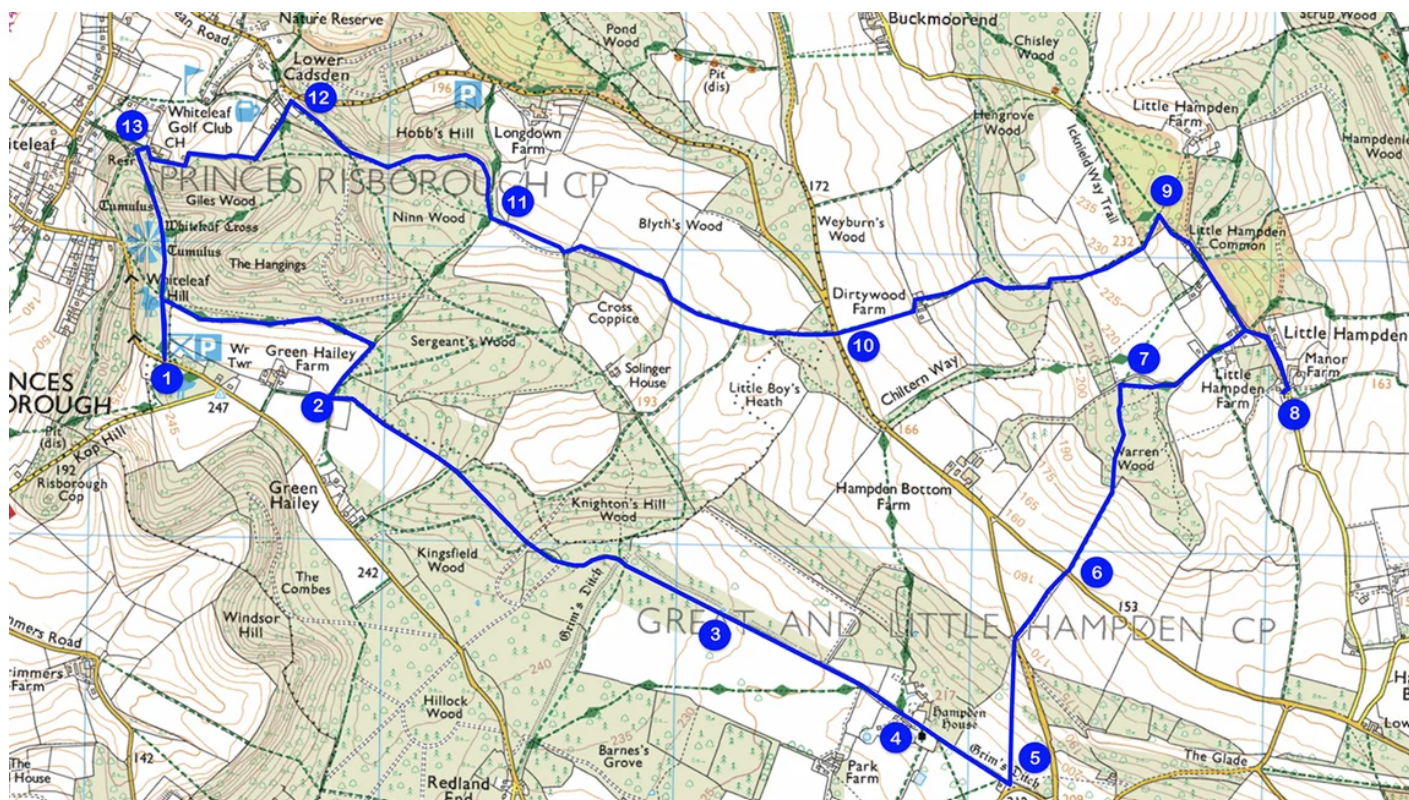
OXFORDSHIRE, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE & BERKSHIRE

Whiteleaf and the Hampdens walk

This walk will take you from beautiful Chiltern woodlands near Whiteleaf, past the famous Grim's Ditch, to the grounds of Hampden House. You'll then wind your way through wooded hillsides and the isolated village of Little Hampden, before returning to Whiteleaf Hill and a wonderful viewpoint over the Aylesbury Vale.

! Take care when crossing roads

You'll encounter a number of roads on this route. Please take care and look both ways before crossing.



Information

Address: Whiteleaf Hill car park, Peters Lane, near Princes Risborough, Buckinghamshire HP27 0LH

OS map: OS Explorer Map 181

Activity: Walking

Challenging: Paths and tracks, with some moderate climbs and one steep ascent. For further details, please see Terrain section.

Dog friendly: Dogs are welcome but must be kept under close control, as livestock may be grazing on some parts of the walk.

Full trail: Miles: 7.5 (km: 12)

Access: Challenging

Duration: 3 hours - 4 hours

Terrain

Nearly all of this walk is on footpaths and woodland/farm tracks. There's one section along a quiet road, and a few road crossings. There are no stiles but you'll encounter frequent gentle-to-moderate climbs and descents along the way, with one steep

Total steps: 13

Start point: Bucks County Council car park at Whiteleaf Hill. Grid ref: SP823036.

1. Leave the car park on the footpath by the information board. After 90m (98yds) or so, bear right to join the Ridgeway National Trail. After another 100m (110yds), you'll see some disturbed ground on your right – remains of First World War practice trenches. Once you pass it, turn right off the Ridgeway, onto a path that soon runs parallel to the edge of the open field on your right. Keep on this path for around 500m (550yds), at which point you'll come to a fork. Head to the right. When you come to a junction of paths at the corner of the field, take a sharp right uphill. After another 200m (220yds), you'll reach a crossing track with fields ahead and a satellite dish in the hedge on your right.
2. Turn left onto a downhill track that runs alongside a field on the right. When you enter Kingsfield Wood, continue ahead. Follow this undulating path for about 1km (0.6 miles), ignoring any crossing paths, until it eventually joins a track from the right. Continue round some gentle bends before coming to a junction of paths with an isolated stile. Instead of continuing ahead, veer left just past the stile to join a path that runs alongside the original track. After about 20m (22yds), look left and you'll see Grim's Ditch. Around 300m (330yds) past the point where you joined the path, it'll bend right to rejoin the original track.
3. Bear left along the track, which soon skirts around the edge of a big, open field to the right. As you continue, you'll see glimpses of Grim's Ditch amid the strip of trees to your left. After a bigger track joins from the left and then bends to the right, turn left on the corner, then go through a wooden gate into an avenue with Hampden House

climb at the end. Parts of the walk can get muddy and/or slippery after rain.

Please note that none of the route is on land in our care. As such, we do not check for hazards. Visitors therefore embark on this walk at their own risk.

visible ahead. Just to the left of the house is a magnificent cedar tree, thought to be the last of eight cedar trees planted around 400 years ago. As you near the house, you'll reach a gate.

4. Go through the gate and past the estate office buildings on your right. You'll soon see the Church of St Mary Magdalene on your right. Continue ahead on the drive, away from the house, passing the magnificent avenue of horse chestnut, lime and plane trees. At the end of the drive, you'll come to a push-button-operated gate.
5. Go through the gate, then immediately turn left over a stile to join a wide, grassy path running diagonally across a field. Continue downhill, past the Queen's Gap, and you'll reach a stile by a gate in the corner of the field. Go over the stile – take care crossing the road – then join the signposted path that runs down the field margin with a hedge on the right. You'll soon reach a road.
6. Cross the road with care, listening for traffic as it's on a bit of a blind corner. Continue ahead on the uphill path, which has a hedge on the left. After the path enters Warren Wood, you'll need to follow the white arrows on the trees. Eventually, you'll reach a junction with a footpath marker and an open field beyond.
7. Turn right onto a path that runs through woodland and then between fields, and you'll eventually reach the village of Little Hampden, passing a house on the left then coming to a crossing farm track. Continue ahead across the track until you reach a grassy triangle with a bench. Turn right here to join the road running downhill. After 250m (275yds), you'll see Little Hampden church on the right.
8. After exploring the church, retrace your steps up the road and past the bench. After 300m (330yds), you'll reach a parking area on the right. At the end of the houses opposite this area, bend left into woods, following the South Bucks Way marker. You'll come to a junction of paths with a fence and a 'no horseriding' sign behind.
9. Turn left, then fork left again at another footpath marker 20m (22yds) on. This narrow path through woods will soon bring you to open fields. Continue straight ahead with a hedge on your right. When you reach a gap in this hedge, cut through to the right so that the hedge is on your left. Continue down into a dip. Here, the path bears left into woods and is marked by occasional yellow arrows on trees. Shortly after passing a very big chalk pit on your left, bear left and downhill at a fork in the path (look out for the marker post). The path reaches fields and continues downhill with a hedge on the left. It then skirts around Dirtywood Farm before joining the drive to the farm. Follow this and you'll get to a road.
10. Take care crossing the road, and join the drive uphill to Solinger Farm. After 300m (330yds), when the drive takes a sharp left turn, turn right through the hedge onto a signposted footpath that continues uphill with a hedge on the left. Keep straight ahead on the edges of several fields until the path enters a hedge and drops down to a junction of paths at the edge of Whiteleaf Woods.
11. Go through the metal kissing gate opposite, then turn sharply right onto a descending sunken path. As it bends around, this path becomes very deeply indented. It's thought that this is part of an ancient (possibly Anglo-Saxon) bridleway route between High Wycombe and Askett, and the indentation is the result of several centuries' passage of livestock and people. The path levels out and becomes a track in a broader, wooded valley. Eventually, you'll reach a gate. Go through it to reach a pub.
12. Turn left uphill on the path between the pub and its car park, following the 'ridgeway and bridleway' sign. After 50m (55yds), you'll reach a fork. Bear right here, following the 'bridleway' sign. This path rises and skirts the edge of woodland, with paddocks, then Whiteleaf Golf Club, to the right. Eventually, you'll join a surfaced drive and pass behind the clubhouse.
13. Where the drive turns sharply right downhill, instead turn left uphill past the entrance to Whiteleaf Reservoir, then keep left at a fork with a signpost. The path rises steeply, passing through a wooden gate. After 20m (22yds), bear right onto the crest of Whiteleaf Hill. The top of Whiteleaf Cross can be seen below a low wooden fence. Pass to the left of the mound of earth and go through a gate onto a track. After 300m (330yds), fork left off this track to return to the car park.

End point: Bucks County Council car park at Whiteleaf Hill. Grid ref: SP823036.
