

COLE GREEN WAY

Walking & Cycling The Cole Green Way & Hertford to Ware Towpath

An old railway line, canal towpaths, open spaces and quiet roads create a green route from Welwyn Garden City to Ware via Hertford. It also forms part of Route 61 of the National Cycle Network.

The Cole Green Way proper runs from the outskirts of Welwyn Garden City at the Black Fan Road / Cole Green Lane junction to West Street in Hertford. This rural section follows the former route of the Welwyn Garden City to Hertford branch line of the Great Northern Railway. Opened in 1858, the line was used for passenger services until 1951 and eventually closed in 1962. The track now has a smooth surface and several access points, most of which are ramped or level.

There are links at both ends that take walkers and cyclists into Welwyn Garden City and Hertford town centres. The link through Hertford joins the towpath along the River Lea, taking you to Ware and beyond. It is signposted through the town centre.

Enjoy this route for a leisurely walk or ride alongside waterways and rural tracks. It links three Hertfordshire towns with some great countryside. You could even take a circular diversion to explore local villages near the path.

Why not use the path for a journey to work? With a seven mile trip between Welwyn Garden City and Hertford, and three miles between Hertford and Ware, cycle to work and make commuting a more enjoyable and healthier experience.



Sherrardspark Wood & Ayot Greenway

A stone's throw from the town centre is Sherrardspark Wood. This 200 acre woodland has many footpaths and bridleways to be explored amongst the oak and hornbeam trees. You can follow the old railway line through the woodland as part of the Ayot Greenway to Wheathampstead some 3½ miles away. Access is off Digswell Road, the Campus West car park or Bridge Road.

Welwyn Garden City

Welwyn was the second of Ebenezer Howard's Garden Cities, after Letchworth. They were designed to include the best of both town and country living. The town's main shopping plaza The Howard Centre is named after the settlement's creator.

Rolls & Blackthorn Woods

A great link exists for walkers who wish to access the Cole Green Way from the residential area of Panshanger. Within the woodland there is a circular permissive path and several ponds. Look out for dragonflies darting along the paths in the summer.

Stanborough Park

A half mile diversion down the path alongside Stanborough Road will bring you to Stanborough Lakes. Here you can visit the two lakes, hire a boat, go fishing, learn to sail or enjoy roaming through 126 acres of parkland.

Great North Way & Alban Way

Snaking its way through Hertfordshire's towns and countryside is the Great North Way, Route 12 on the National Cycle Network, which will eventually link London with Peterborough and beyond. Look out for Great North Way signs where this cycle track connects with the route to Hertford. In Hatfield it connects to the Alban Way, another former railway line and traffic-free cycle route to St Albans.

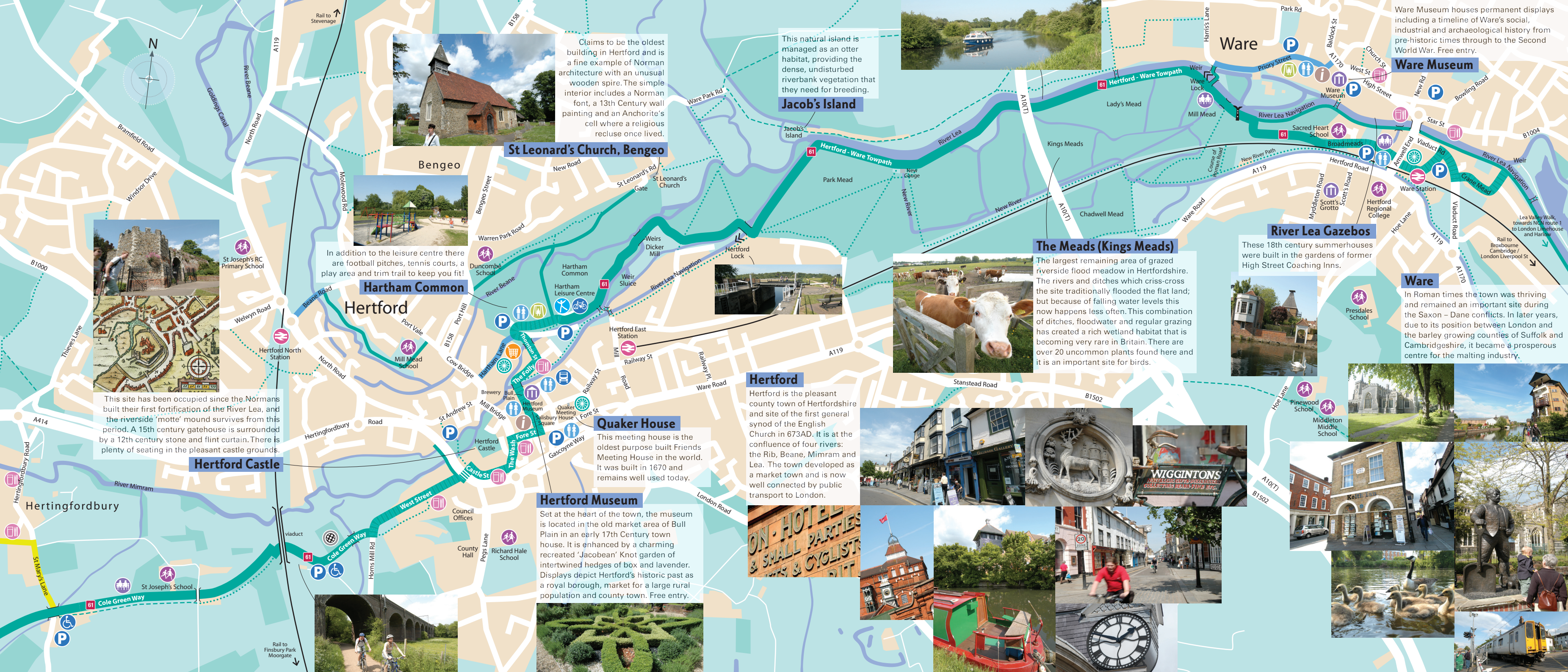
Cole Green Station

When you arrive at the former Cole Green Station, you can take a break for refreshments at the Cowper Arms, or bring your own food and have a picnic on the old platform. Explore the station area, looking out for panels which reveal its history, or take a short woodland walk. Car parking is available if you wish to start your walk or ride from this point.

The Old Railway

The railway opened in 1858, connecting Hertford with the main line at Welwyn prior to the construction of the Garden City. Passenger services ceased in 1951 and it eventually closed in 1962. Today, the Victorian brick bridges and the platforms at Cole Green and Hertingfordbury are the most obvious reminders of its past.

If you prefer to cycle on tarmac, there is an alternative route along The Old Coach Road linking in to tarmac surfaces at either end of the Cole Green Way.



St Leonard's Church, Bengoe
Claims to be the oldest building in Hertford and is a fine example of Norman architecture with an unusual wooden spire. The simple interior includes a Norman font, a 13th Century wall painting and an Anchorite's cell where a religious recluse once lived.

Jacob's Island
This natural island is managed as an otter habitat, providing the dense, undisturbed riverbank vegetation that they need for breeding.



Hartham Common
In addition to the leisure centre there are football pitches, tennis courts, a play area and trim trail to keep you fit!



The Meads (Kings Meads)

The largest remaining area of grazed riverside flood meadow in Hertfordshire. The rivers and ditches which criss-cross the site traditionally flooded the flat land; but because of falling water levels this now happens less often. This combination of ditches, floodwater and regular grazing has created a rich wetland habitat that is becoming very rare in Britain. There are over 20 uncommon plants found here and it is an important site for birds.



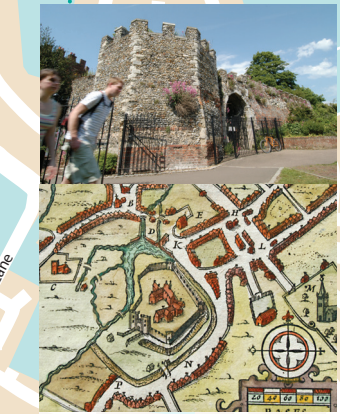
River Lea Gazebos

These 18th century summerhouses were built in the gardens of former High Street Coaching Inns.



Ware

In Roman times the town was thriving and remained an important site during the Saxon - Dane conflicts. In later years, due to its position between London and the barley growing counties of Suffolk and Cambridgeshire, it became a prosperous centre for the malting industry.



This site has been occupied since the Normans built their first fortification of the River Lea, and the riverside 'motte' mound survives from this period. A 15th century gatehouse is surrounded by a 12th century stone and flint curtain. There is plenty of seating in the pleasant castle grounds.

Hertford Castle

Quaker House

This meeting house is the oldest purpose built Friends Meeting House in the world. It was built in 1670 and remains well used today.

Hertford Museum

Set at the heart of the town, the museum is located in the old market area of Bull Plain in an early 17th Century town house. It is enhanced by a charming recreated 'Jacobean' Knot garden of intertwined hedges of box and lavender. Displays depict Hertford's historic past as a royal borough, market for a large rural population and county town. Free entry.



Shared Use Route

The Cole Green Way is a shared use route. Walkers, equestrians and cyclists have equal priority. Please respect other users and keep left. Please keep dogs under control and help us by disposing of their waste at home. No motor vehicles are permitted.

Misuse

To report criminal activity or misuse of the Cole Green Way, contact the Police. Tel: 101.

Useful contacts

If you have any comments concerning the Cole Green Way, contact Hertfordshire County Council Rural Estates. Tel: 01992 556238, e-mail: rural.estates@hertfordshire.gov.uk

The Countryside Management Service (CMS) works with communities across Hertfordshire to help them care for and enjoy the environment.

Visit the CMS website www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/cms for copies of other free maps in this series including: The Abbey Way, The Alban Way, The Ayots, The Great North Way and The Nickey Line. Tel: 01992 588433, e-mail: northeast.cms@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Other information

For information about the local area, visit Hertford Town and Tourist Information Centre, The Wash, Hertford, tel: 01992 584322, e-mail: tic@hertford.gov.uk or Welwyn Garden City Central Library and Information Service at Campus West. For bus and rail information visit www.intalink.org.uk



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey EUL 100019606. Use of this data is subject to terms and conditions: i. you are granted a non-exclusive, royalty free, revocable licence solely to view the Licensed Data for non-commercial purposes for the period during which Hertfordshire County Council makes it available; ii. you are not permitted to copy, sub-license, distribute, sell or otherwise make available the Licensed Data to third parties in any form; and iii. third party rights to enforce the terms of this license shall be reserved to Ordnance Survey.
Cartography, photography, layout design and cycling by Stephen Wragg - Wragg Art House - www.wah.co.uk
3rd edition January 2020 © WAH 2020 Printed on environmentally friendly paper

walking & cycling
The Cole Green Way
& Hertford to Ware Towpath



10 mile quiet route between Welwyn Garden City, Hertford & Ware