

## Historical notes:

### Markyate

Markyate grew up along the Old Roman Watling Street, in the valley of the River Ver, during medieval times. The Priory was established around 1145 but following the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII during the 1530s, it was converted into the mansion known as the Cell. The Chapel of Ease, built in 1734 in a corner of the Cell Park became the Parish Church in 1877. Interestingly until 1897, when the civil Parish of Markyate was formed, the village itself straddled several parishes in both Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire.

Markyate served the needs of travellers for many centuries. Until the late 1830s many stage coaches, en route from London to the Midlands and the north of England, stopped at the village inns. Later, and up to the early years of the 20th century, there were many hat and bonnet factories in the village.

Traffic through the narrow streets of the village increased greatly during the 20th century. In 1954 the villagers joined in protests seeking a by-pass and in 1957 one was built.

Today the High Street is still busy and frequently congested with parked cars, despite the by-pass taking the passing traffic. The hat factories are long gone, replaced with light industrial units and other businesses, however most residents now commute to the larger towns surrounding Markyate.

### Kensworth

In 1897 the Parish was transferred from Hertfordshire into Bedfordshire. In its early days this agricultural community also supported a straw plaiting industry supplying the Luton hat trade. At that time some of the water for the farms was drawn from deep wells by large donkey wheels big enough to allow the donkey to walk inside the wheel! Subsequently in the late 19th century brick-making flourished finally declining after the Second World War.

The village divides into three quite separate parts:

**Church End** to the north where the 12th century Norman church of St Mary stands together with a few farms and houses. St Mary's has an aisle-less nave twice as long as it is wide leading to a later, equally wide, chancel added at about the same time as the tower during the 14th and 15th centuries.

**The Lynch** (*an old name for a wooded place*) at the east end of the village, is now designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Lynch House is 17th century whilst Kensworth House at the top of the hill is 19th century.

**The Common** is now the main residential area of the village. Its Methodist Chapel, built in 1935, on the site of the 1847 Wesleyan Chapel. The school, a national School from 1852, had its school house added in 1872. Of the ten pubs of yesteryear only three now remain.

## How to get to the start:

**By Car:** Leave the M1 at Junction 9 and go north towards Dunstable on the A5. Markyate is approx 2 miles from the junction and the A5 is its bypass. Leave the A5 at the second Markyate turn on your left just after the footbridge (Hicks Road). Go to the end and turn right. Drive up the High Street past chip shop on your right, take next turning left (Cavendish Road). Go to the top and turn right to Village Hall and car park.

**Public Transport:** Trains run frequently to St Albans and the No 343 bus route serves St Albans and Dunstable. Nearby Luton and Hemel Hempstead also have frequent trains and the No 46 bus serves both these towns and Markyate.

## Enjoy your walking

**W**ear sensible clothing and footwear.

**A**lways respect the property you travel through.

**L**et someone know your whereabouts and have their Tel No handy.

**K**eep dogs under control.

**I**nclude a mobile phone and drink in your back pack.

**N**ever leave litter—take it home with you.

**G**ates must be left as you found them.

## Markyate Health Walks

Every Friday (All weathers) 10.30 am at the Fire Station. You are welcome to join them.

There are now eight maps in this series as follows:

- **Aley Green and Woodside**
- **Flamstead**
- **Studham**
- **Three short walks around the village**
- **Kensworth**
- **Bridens Camp**

Maps also available on the Parish Council Website: [www.markyateparishcouncil.com](http://www.markyateparishcouncil.com)

CAONB website: [www.chilternsaonb.org](http://www.chilternsaonb.org)

**Ordnance Survey Explorer Map 182** features Markyate and surrounding area.

# A short walk around about Markyate



## VER VALLEY and MARKYATE CELL

*The aim of these walks is to promote healthy living by providing residents and visitors with gentle walking exercise whilst enjoying the countryside around our village and visiting places of special interest in the Chilterns area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.*

Leaflets sponsored by:

**MARKYATE PARISH COUNCIL**

with the aid of funding from

**CHILTERN'S CONSERVATION BOARD  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND**



# A SHORT WALK TO KENSWORTH

A walk through the fields to the outskirts of Kensworth.—The Old Red Lion is situated at Kensworth Common. The hedgerows have attractive berries in the autumn and winter and the fields you walk through have a variety of crops and grasses which vary with the seasons.

**Walk: 3 miles**

**Time: 1½ to 2 Hours**

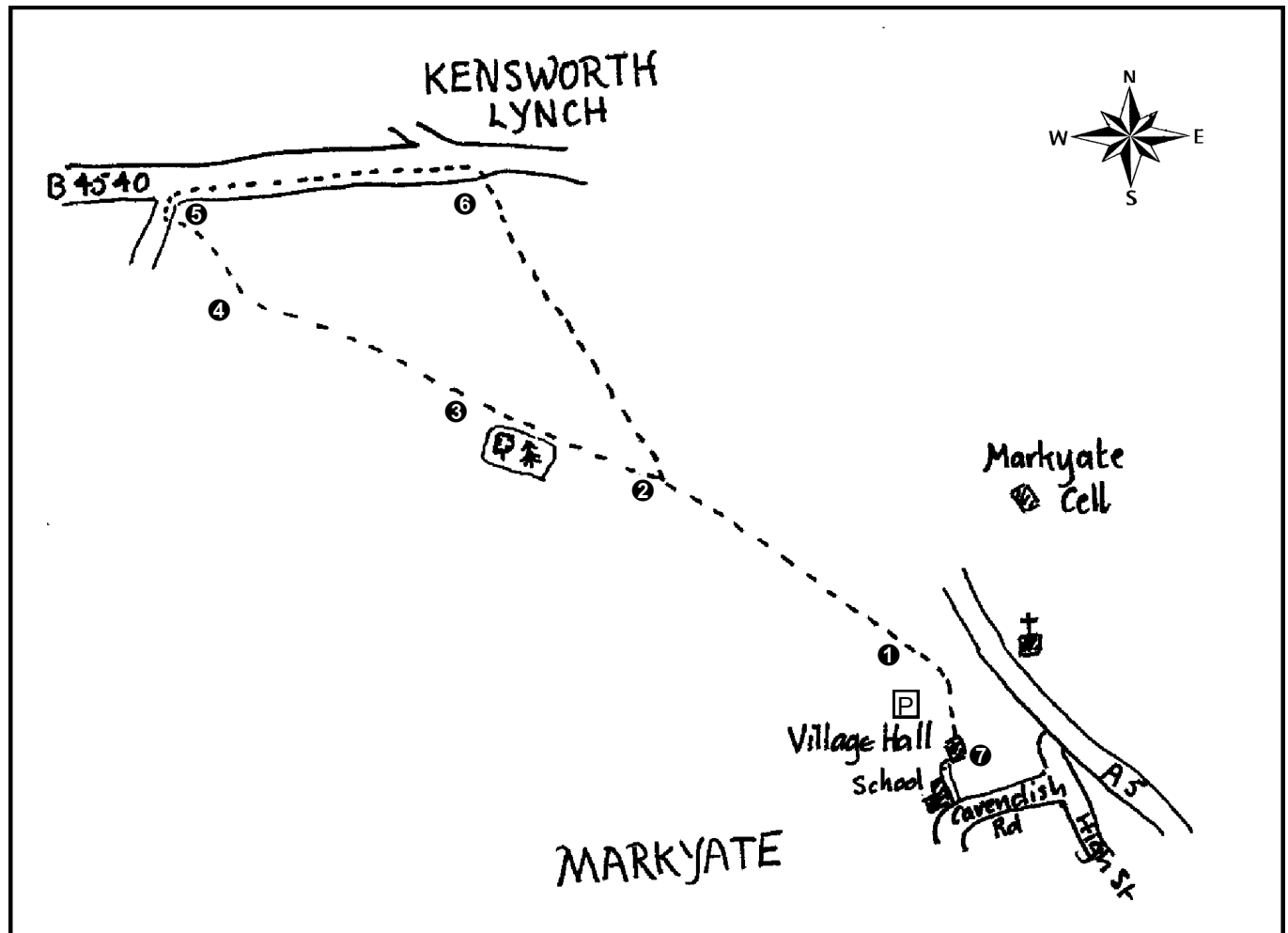
- Gradient: gentle rise to Kensworth with a rise as you leave the road and return through the fields.
- Not suitable for pushchairs or bikes etc.
- Refreshments: The Old Red Lion. You may wish to take some other footwear to change into in bad weather before entering.
- Number of stiles: none.
- Number of kissing gates: 3.
- Parking: Village Hall Car Park Recreation Ground off Cavendish Road.

## Making a start:

**1** Walk between the village hall and the cricket pavilion and with the playing fields to your left walk by the hedge towards the electricity poles. In the corner of the field go through the kissing gate and still with the hedge on your right follow the line of the telegraph poles. Keep going and you will see a large gap in the hedge through which if you look to your right you will see a lovely view of the Ver valley and Markyate Cell.

**2** Keep walking ahead until there is a gap in the hedge where you walk diagonally across the corner of the field towards a gap in the hedge with a yellow waymark post. Go through the gap and walk straight ahead through the field to the right of the copse with a seat.

**3** When you reach the end of the copse go across the field to the kissing gate in the hedge opposite.



**4** With the hedge on your left walk along the edge of the field. About 60 yards from the hedge in front at the yellow way mark sign go right towards the tall gate in the horse paddock. Go through the paddock (which may have horses in it) and head on the diagonal from the kissing gate by the large hut. Go through the kissing gate by the footpath in a garden and you will reach Clayhall Road. Go right.

**5** At the main road cross over (take care it is very busy) go right and continue for some way down Lynch

Hill towards the open speed limit signs. When you are past the turning on your left for Church End cross over to the other side of the road to a large gate with a smaller gate to its left.

**6** Go up the hill until you reach the yellow way mark post and you will reach (2) of this walk.

**7** Retrace to the car park. There are pubs in Markyate, a fish bar, bakery and an Indian restaurant.