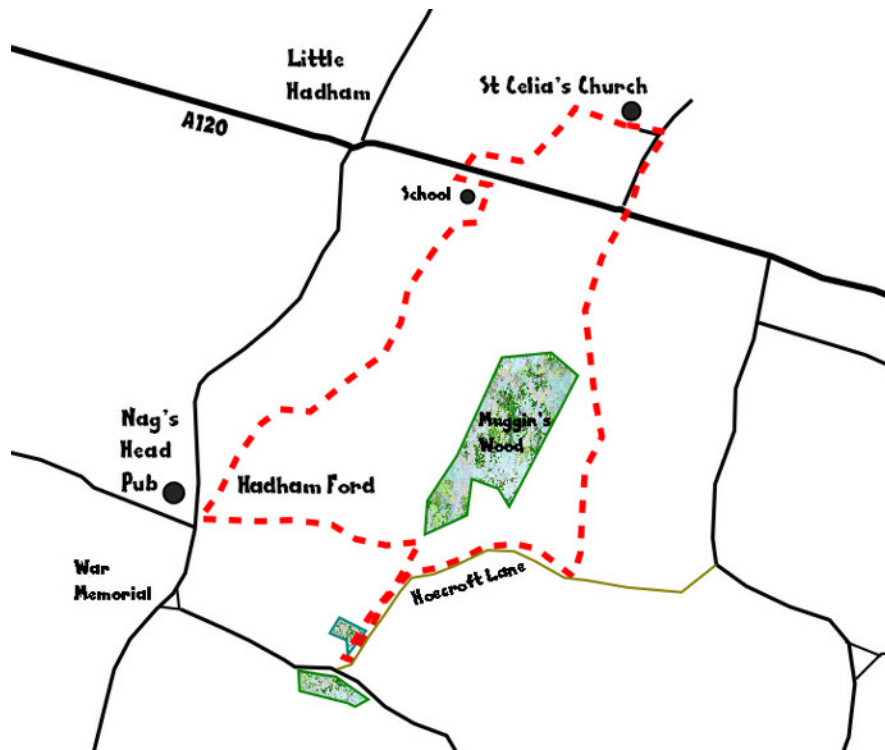


## Little Hadham (3 miles)



**Start:** St. Cecilia's Church, Little Hadham. The lane leading to the church turns off the A120 road about 600 yards up on the left from Little Hadham traffic lights heading towards Bishop's Stortford. Coming from Bishop's Stortford the turning is on the right about 300 yards down the hill heading towards the lights. There is ample parking behind the church.

**OS Map ref:** TL446227

Those wishing to take the 351 bus could alight at Hadham Ford and join the route at the point mentioned in the text.

**Distance:** 3 miles. The route is sign-posted and waymarked at junctions.

**Surface:** Mostly well-maintained grassy paths. The section along the byway can get muddy in winter. Footbridges over ditches have been installed by the East Herts Ramblers and the East Herts Footpath Society.

**Obstacles:** One damaged stile. One cross-field path that could be muddy after ploughing or obstructed by overhanging crops, but an alternative route is available.

*This is a short walk full of interest and surprises with changing scenery, wildlife, ancient buildings and a pub halfway round. Ideal for a leisurely summer afternoon or evening stroll. There is ample parking at Little Hadham church but if you prefer to get there by bus the 351 service from Bishop's Stortford will take you to Hadham Ford opposite the Nag's Head pub where you can join the route. There are also lots of other footpaths along the way which invite exploration.*

Starting from the church porch take the tarmac path up the slope and turn right along Church Lane. Cross over the A120 main road to the track opposite and follow this straight ahead towards a wood from where it winds up to the top of the rise. Go up a bank through the hedge and carry straight on along the edge of the polo field to the far end where you pass through another hedge onto a track which is a byway named Hoecroft Lane.

Turn right and follow this shady lane for about 600 yards. At the bottom of a slope a stile will be visible through a gap in the hedge on the right. Although that will be the route which you will be taking, you are encouraged to ignore the gap and proceed up the lane for about 100 yards to a waymark post where you go through the hedge on the right and turn back down the other side of the hedge. This point offers a fine view across the valley towards Albury church on the horizon. Go over the stile previously mentioned and bear right down across the field. On reaching the hedge turn left and follow the path all the way downhill until it reaches the ford and footbridge opposite the Nag's Head.

Those who have taken the bus can join the route here. If you are taking a break at the pub it is worth strolling along to the war memorial 100 yards to the south to admire houses and gardens.

From the field side of the ford and facing the pub, take the path to the right signposted to Little Hadham school. The path rises gently to a metal gate at the corner of the wood and then follows the wood round. At the top of the rise the path turns left and continues in a straight line to the back of the school where it turns right and then left to come out to the main road.

Turn left on the footpath down past the school until you see a footpath signpost on the bank on the other side of the road. Cross over to this and follow the grassy path along the bank back up the hill. The path will go round an old gravel pit and soon reach a waymark post which shows the direction of the path across the field towards the bottom of the churchyard. If the cross-field path is impassable turn right here and go through the hedge on to the top of the grass bank above the main road and follow it up to the entrance to Church Lane and back to the church. Take time to admire the setting of the church, see the ancient yew and cherry tree in the churchyard, and look for the piece of Hertfordshire pudding stone set in the north side of the tower.

*Those who joined the route at Hadham Ford now follow the instructions at the start of the walk.*