

YATTENDON

*Footpaths, Bridleways
and Byways*



YATTENDON PARISH COUNCIL



FOLLOW THE COUNTRY CODE

**Enjoy the countryside and
respect its life and work**

Guard against all risk of fire

Fasten all gates

Keep your dogs under close control

Keep to public paths across farmland

**Use gates and stiles to cross fences,
hedges and walls**

Leave livestock and machinery alone

Take your litter home

Help keep all water clean

Protect wildlife, plants and trees

Take special care on country roads

Make no unnecessary noise

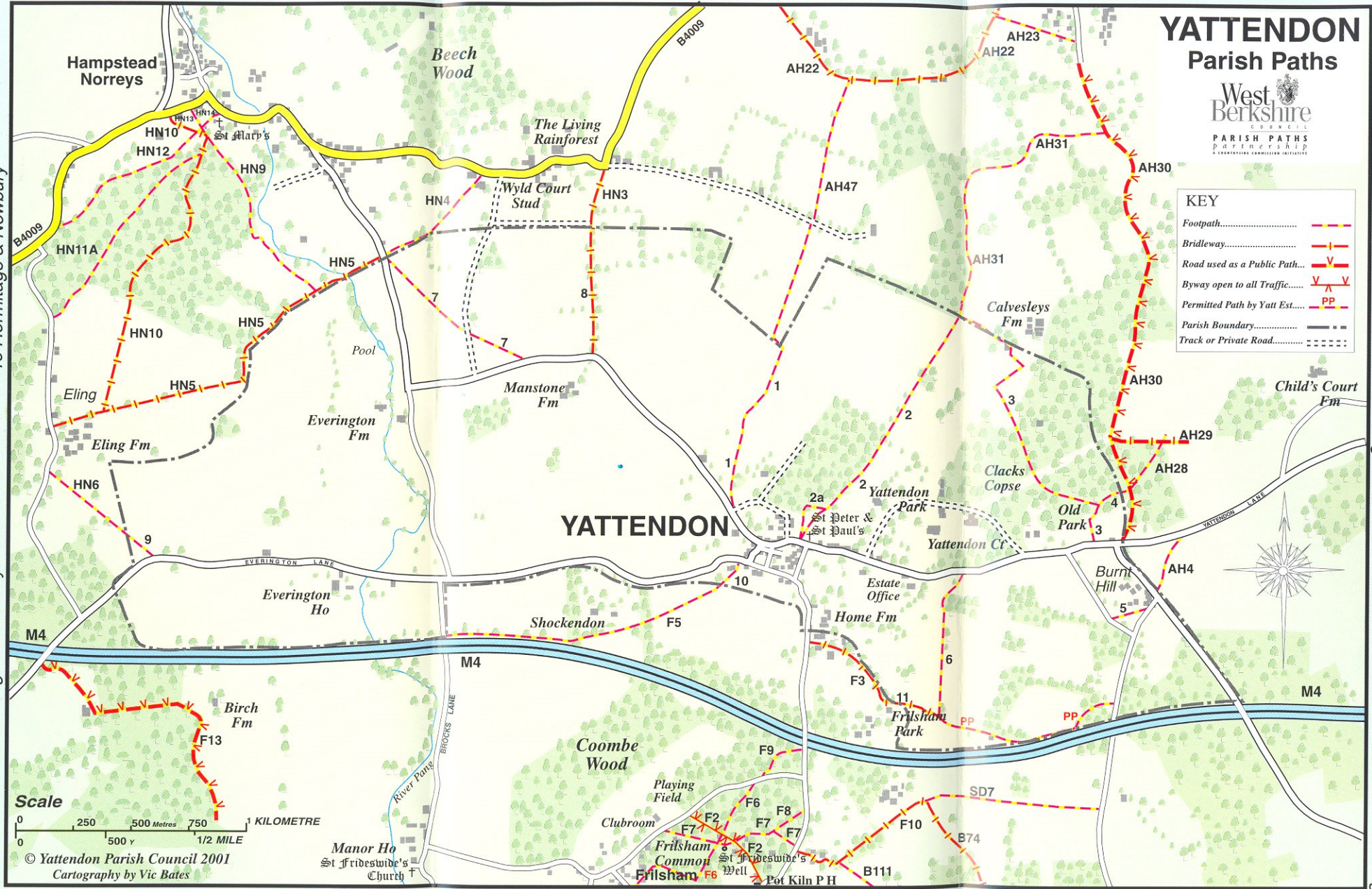
**Always wear appropriate footwear and take care
when walking in the town or countryside. No
responsibility is accepted by the authors of this leaflet
for the state or condition from time to time of the
paths comprised in these walks.**

YATTENDON Parish Paths



KEY

- Footpath.....
- Bridleway.....
- Road used as a Public Path.....
- Byway open to all Traffic.....
- Permitted Path by Yatt Est.....
- Parish Boundary.....
- Track or Private Road.....



To Hermitage & Newbury

To Hermitage & Newbury

To Pangbourne

To Bradfield & Reading

To Compton & Oxford

To Aldworth

To Bucklebury

To Bucklebury

To Bucklebury

To Stanford Dingley

Scale
 0 250 500 Metres 750 1 KILOMETRE
 0 500 y 1/2 MILE
 © Yattendon Parish Council 2001
 Cartography by Vic Bates

YATTENDON - FOOTPATHS, BRIDLEWAYS AND BYWAYS

This leaflet gives descriptions of the footpaths, bridleways, byways and roads used as public paths in the parish of Yattendon, Berkshire. Yattendon lies some eleven miles north east of Newbury and, like so much of West Berkshire, is in the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The village lies on the eastern edge of the Pang Valley. The parish is a mixture of large open fields and woods and coppices.

The path network is modest. There are only seven footpaths and there is one bridleway (bridleways can be used by horseriders and cyclists, as well as walkers). Some of the paths are very short. However, they link to more extensive networks in neighbouring parishes and are well worth exploring. For more information on the wider network you should use the Ordnance Survey Explorer map for Newbury and Hungerford (No 158). This map shows all public rights of way. A similar leaflet to this has been produced by Frilsham Parish Council and illustrates the path network to the south of Yattendon.

Local people wrote the route descriptions and production of the leaflet was funded by the Parish Paths Initiative. This scheme aims to encourage local people to become involved in looking after and promoting their path network. It provides local councils and groups with the necessary funding, help and advice to complete projects like this.

THE HISTORY OF YATTENDON

Yattendon parish appears to have been settled at a very early date. Although no evidence has yet been found for Mesolithic and Neolithic occupation, flint implements of these periods have been found in neighbouring parishes. The first early evidence was the discovery of a Bronze Age smith's hoard of scrap bronze on the site of Yattendon Court.

There is also a Bronze Age round barrow in the south west corner of the parish.

Iron Age pottery has been found and there is plentiful evidence of Roman settlement. The name 'Yattendon' was originally the early Saxon 'Geat inga denu' which means 'the hollow of the people of Geat'. Their settlement was probably in the shallow hollow to the east of the present village. In the medieval period the manor was bought by the 'Norys' family of Bray near Maidenhead. They built a fortified manor on the ridge between the hollow and the fall into the Pang valley. The village then 'migrated' up to the ridge and established itself around the market place outside the manor moat. The same family also built the present church in the 15th Century - although there must have been a church here already since the list of rectors goes back to 1297. A notable memorial to one of the family - Sir John Norreys - is on a wall of the church.

In more modern times the Square was the site of the famous 'Revel' which later became Yattendon Fete - still an annual event! In the late 19th Century the manor was bought by the architect Alfred Waterhouse and many of the buildings in the village, including the well in the Square, are his work. In 1925 the manor was bought by Sir Edward Iliffe and his family still own it.

FARMING, FORESTRY, CHRISTMAS TREES.

The whole village and the surrounding parish are owned by Yattendon Estates. This is a very modern mixed agricultural and forestry enterprise producing cereals and other crops, milk from two dairy herds and timber from the surrounding woods and plantations. They are one of the largest producers of Christmas trees in the country. Shooting is an important part of their business as will be apparent on any Saturday during the winter.

GEOLOGY

The underlying rocks are chalk, but the soils are composed of very acid clay with flints. To make these more fertile and workable very large quantities of chalk were quarried and ploughed in after frosting on the surface. This process is called 'marling'. These marl pits can be seen in many of the woods and as hollows in many fields.

Alongside the Pang the soils are peaty alluvium, laid down as the larger Ice Age river channel silted up as the climate warmed. These soils provided rich hay meadows for early farmers and were a very important resource. The clays in the east of the parish were also used for brickmaking.

NATURAL HISTORY

The woodland - apart from the conifer plantations - is mainly hazel coppice with oak standards. The fields are intensively used for arable crops. The estate has recently signed an agreement for Countryside Stewardship and this has resulted in gapped up hedges and wide field margins. The bird life reflects this land use. Larks are increasingly common in the fields and rooks and jackdaws are always around searching for grubs. In the woods the tit family is well represented along with wood pigeons, woodpeckers and jays. At night little owls and tawny owls will be heard. More exotically, buzzards spread back to the parish some years ago and have recently been joined by red kites. If you are lucky you may hear a nightingale on a warm summer evening.

The woods harbour considerable numbers of muntjac and roe deer as well as a growing population of badgers. Polecats have recently been seen.

WALK DESCRIPTIONS

Footpath 1

Leaves the Hampstead Norreys Road close to the west of the manor house and crosses Park Field. It passes close to a partially refilled marl pit (see above). It passes through the hedge into Broad Field and runs alongside the hedge before crossing a stile into Slow Pightle. A 'Pightle' was a field recovered from woodland. The northern edge of this field forms the parish boundary with Hampstead Norreys. A section of the path can be difficult during high summer due to bramble and nettle growth. It joins paths leading to Haw Farm and Ashampstead village.

Footpath 2 and 2A

Path 2 cuts diagonally through the churchyard and joins 2A, which skirts the edge. Thereafter the path runs alongside the western side of the hedge bounding Bowling Alley Copse. It passes along the eastern side of Oaken Copse (hazel coppice with oak standards) before coming into the open between Oak Field Lawn and Lower Middle Lawn and crossing the parish boundary near Calvesleys Farm into Ashampstead parish and an extensive christmas tree plantation. The path links to the very extensive network of paths in Ashampstead parish.

Footpath 3

Leaves the Yattendon-Pangbourne road about 1¼ kilometres (¾ mile) east of the village down the drive to 'Old Park'. This apparently ancient house was actually built in the 1930s on the site of a small village isolation hospital built to contain outbreaks of scarlet fever. The right hand house is the headquarters of one of the Estate gamekeepers as can be seen from the pens and other equipment. The path leads to the right around the houses and then to the left for a short distance behind them before leaving the gravelled track

and entering a narrow woodland path to the right. A waymark post marks the entrance. The path leads through a wood for about 400 metres and crosses a wide grass ride before coming to a 'T' junction with a hard track. Turn left and then right onto a concrete road which passes through Calvesleys Farm and joins path 2 just beyond the parish boundary.

Footpath 4

Is a very short length of path running from path 3 behind Old Park to the right to the parish boundary with Ashampstead. Its main importance is as a link with the extensive networks to the east.

Footpath 5

Again this is a very short path between two roads at Burnt Hill. It passes between the area of houses and the underground reservoir built by doctor Watney before the First World War. Doctor Watney was a major local landowner who realised the importance of a safe water supply and provided piped water for many settlements on his estate. It is now owned and managed by Thames Water.

Footpath 6

Leaves the Yattendon to Pangbourne road about 800 metres east of the village and leads south around the edge of a major chalk quarry. In the 18th, 19th and early 20th Centuries a complex of large mine tunnels was dug out of this quarry to extract chalk for marling.

The tunnels were large enough to accommodate a horse and cart and contain an amazing range of graffiti on the exposed chalk! The entrances are now blocked. This whole area was extensively exploited for brickmaking with the kiln where the estate office now stands to the west of the path. The path continues south and crosses the parish boundary before joining a path leading west back to the village and east to the Stanford Dingley road.

Footpath 7

Leaves the Yattendon to Hampstead Norreys road north west of Manstone Farm and heads diagonally across the field to the gates either side of the private drive to Wyld Court. From the drive gates it continues north west across the field to a gate on the parish boundary, close to the Hampstead Norreys road. Fine views up and down the Pang valley and across the valley to Eling can be had from this path.

Bridleway 8

Runs from the sharp bend in the Yattendon to Hampstead Norreys road at Manstone Farm and crosses the parish boundary into Hampstead Norreys parish to the south of Wyld Court. It ends on the road near The Living Rainforest and does not link to any other footpath or bridleway.

Footpath 9

Leaves the Yattendon - Hermitage road at the top of Everington Lane and crosses arable land towards Eling. Very shortly afterwards it crosses the parish boundary and becomes Hampstead Norreys Footpath 6.

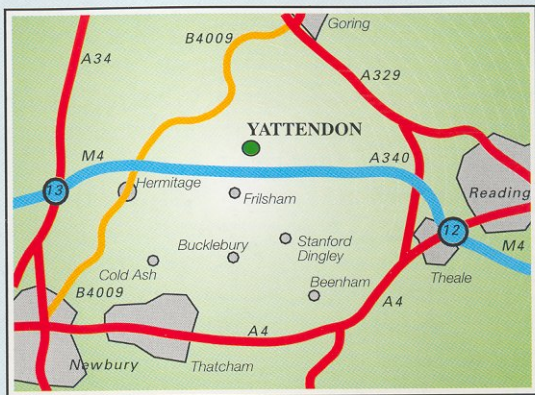
Footpath 10

Leaves Yattendon on the Hermitage road by the 30 mph sign and runs south west, crossing into the parish of Frilsham (Frilsham Footpath 5).

Bridleway 11

Leaves the southern end of Footpath 6 at its junction with the permitted path and runs westwards across the parish boundary to emerge near Home Farm on the Frilsham road.

A booklet more fully describing Yattendon church is on sale in the church, and another going into more detail on the history of Yattendon is available in the village shop and the craft shop.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Photographs courtesy of G W Dixon

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Thanks also to Vic Bates, the cartographer who was responsible for producing the map & designing this leaflet

PARISH PATHS
partnership
A COUNTRYSIDE COMMISSION INITIATIVE

West
Berkshire
COUNCIL

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