

## Walking & Cycling The Cole Green Way & the 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 a former railway and is suitable for walkers, cyclists and horse riders. This part of the route is also accessible for disabled visitors at various points. Motorised scooter wheelchairs are probably the best option due to the nature of the surfacing. There are links at both ends that take walkers and cyclists into Welwyn 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 traffic congestion particularly heavy between Hertford and Ware, make the journey to work an enjoyable experience by cycling along side the river.



### Sherrardspark Woods & Ayot Greenway

A stones throw from the town centre is Sherrardspark Woods. This 200 acre wood 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 being 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, connecting the local footpath network together via a pleasant walk between the trees. Within the woodland there is a circular path and several ponds. Look out for dragonflies darting along the paths in the Summer.

### Cole Green

When you arrive at the old Cole Green station you can take a break for refreshments at the Cowper Arms pub. Alternatively you can bring your own food and use the picnic area. There is also a short, easy woodland walk that includes carved statues and a pond. Car parking is available if you wish to start your walk or ride from this point.

### 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

Snaking its way through Hertfordshire's towns and countryside is the Great North Way cycle route. It is shown as Route 12 on the National Cycle Network and will eventually link London with Peterborough and beyond. Look out for Great North Way signs in and around Welwyn Garden City where this cycle track connects with the route to Hertford. Contact Pedal Point for a free leaflet on the Great North Way.

### The Old Railway

The branch line opened in 1858 connecting Hertford with the main line junction at Welwyn prior to the construction of the Garden City. It was closed in 1966 as part of the Beeching cuts. Today, the Victorian brick bridges and the platform at Cole Green remain as the only reminders of its past.

## Key

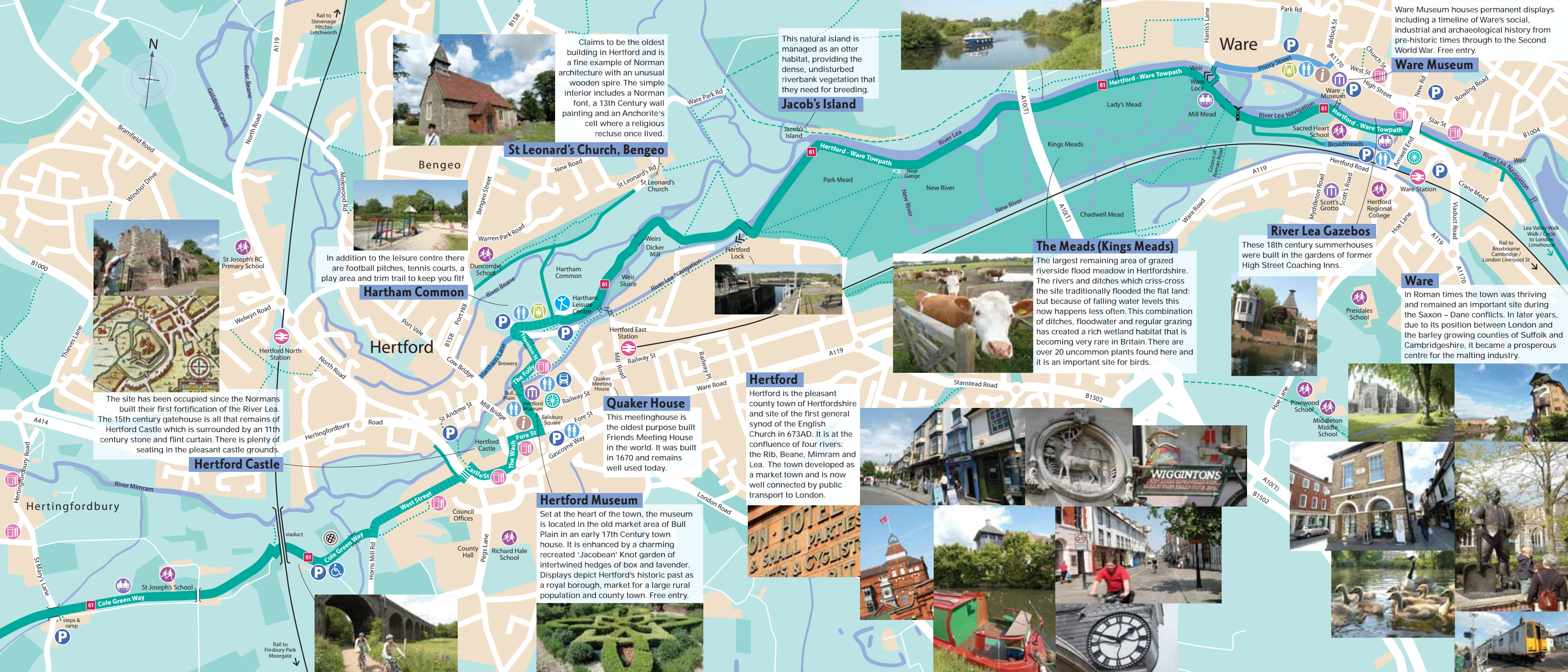
- |  |   |  |                                |  |   |  |                          |
|--|---|--|--------------------------------|--|---|--|--------------------------|
|  | National Cycle Network Route & Milepost |  | Toilet                         |  | Welwyn - Ware route (traffic free)        |  | Street / Minor Road      |
|  | Pub / Restaurant                        |  | Hospital A&E                   |  | Welwyn - Ware route (on road)             |  | Main Road                |
|  | Supermarket                             |  | Football Ground                |  | Cycle Routes (country lane or minor road) |  | Dual Carriageway         |
|  | Cycle Shop                              |  | Leisure Centre                 |  | Cycle Routes (traffic free)               |  | Railway                  |
|  | Tourist Information                     |  | Children's Play Area           |  | Cycle Routes (traffic free) proposed      |  | River                    |
|  | Rail Station                            |  | School / College               |  | Cycle Routes Crossing                     |  | Building                 |
|  | Bus Station                             |  | Seating                        |  | Footpath                                  |  | Lake                     |
|  | Car Park                                |  | Disabled Access                |  | Bridleway                                 |  | Open access land         |
|  | Museum                                  |  | Disabled Access with RADAR key |  | Track                                     |  | Park                     |
|  |   |  |                                |  |   |  | Residential / Commercial |

1 kilometre

1 mile

scale 1:12,500 approx





**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.



**Hertford**

Hertford is the pleasant county town of Hertfordshire and site of the first general synod of the English Church in 673AD. It is at the confluence of four rivers: the Rib, Beane, Mimram and Lea. The town developed as a market town and is now well connected by public transport to London.



**Quaker House**

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

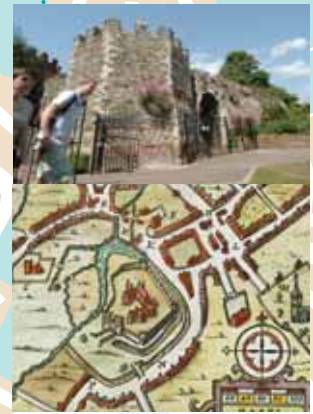
**Hertford Museum**

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.



The site has been occupied since the Normans built their first fortification of the River Lea. The 15th century gatehouse is all that remains of Hertford Castle which is surrounded by an 11th century stone and flint curtain. There is plenty of seating in the pleasant castle grounds.

**Hertford Castle**



**Attractions**  
Stanborough Lakes, [www.finesseleisure.com](http://www.finesseleisure.com)  
Tel. 01707 327655  
Hertford Castle, [www.hertford.gov.uk](http://www.hertford.gov.uk)  
Tel. 01992 552885 (Events)  
Hertford Museum, [www.hertfordmuseum.org](http://www.hertfordmuseum.org)  
Tel. 01992 582686  
Ware Museum, [www.waremuseum.org.uk](http://www.waremuseum.org.uk)  
Tel. 01920 487848  
Scotts Grotto (limited opening), [www.scotts-grotto.org](http://www.scotts-grotto.org)

**Walking & Cycling**  
Hertfordshire County Council, [www.hertsdirect.org/libtleisure](http://www.hertsdirect.org/libtleisure) & click on 'Enjoying the Countryside'  
Tel. 01992 555262  
Welwyn Hatfield Council, [www.welhat.gov.uk/pedalpoint](http://www.welhat.gov.uk/pedalpoint), (includes info on both walking & cycling)  
Tel. 01707 357551. Free leaflets available on Great North Way, Ayot Greenway and Alban Way  
East Herts Council, [www.eastherts.gov.uk](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk)  
Tel. 01279 655261



**Enjoy! Hertfordshire**

**pedalPOINT**  
01707 357551  
[pedalpoint@welhat.gov.uk](mailto:pedalpoint@welhat.gov.uk)  
[www.welhat.gov.uk/pedalpoint](http://www.welhat.gov.uk/pedalpoint)

- all cycling issues in the Welwyn Hatfield area
- route maps
- maintenance issues
- information

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



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