

## Industrial Walk

This walk passes sites of old and new industries in the area from the wartime aircraft industry at Salisbury Hall past sand and gravel extraction which will continue until around 2040 and ends with Willows Farm, originally an example of enterprising diversification on a working farm but now entirely part of the leisure industry.

Start this walk on the Village Green, at the southern end of the High Street. There is some parking in front of the Green Dragon Public House **1** and more on the other side of the High Street **2** next to the church. Begin in front of the Green Dragon Public House, follow the marked footpath over the concrete footbridge towards the fields and the M25. Continue straight along the path, cross the railway sleeper footbridge and go through the kissing gate. Follow the path straight on, keeping the hedge line on **3** your left and pass through the way-marked gap in the field fence. **4** With Colney Fields Shopping Centre on your left, continue along the grassy path at the edge of the field towards the concrete footbridge over the M25. Metal vents topped with a mesh screen show that this is an old landfill site; the vents allow residual methane to escape. **5** Climb the steps up the embankment and cross the motorway footbridge then follow the footpath down the embankment to Bell Lane. As you emerge onto Bell Lane you will see a tarmac driveway opposite leading to the Arsenal Practise Grounds. **6** Cross Bell Lane using the Pegasus crossing (note the high crossing controls for horse riders) and continue into the driveway. Walk along the driveway but leave the tarmac after 20 yards and follow the path straight on between two hedges until you reach the junction with a tree-lined bridleway. **7** Crossing the bridleway you will emerge through a way-marked gap in the hedge onto a field of football pitches. Cross this field and pass through a gap in the hedge on the far side into another field. Turn left along the edge of the field until you meet a farm track. **8** Turn left onto the track and follow it as it veers right towards the Aircraft Museum. Walk around the gate on the track and continue along a short stretch of track with paddocks on your left.



**9**

Straight ahead is a metal barrier with a way-marked post on its right marking a gap in the hedge at the entrance to the Aircraft Museum. Through this gap turn left and then immediately right following the road between the houses until you come to

**10**



before the junction with the road to South Mimms that runs beside the M25 at this point. Turn right onto Bridleway and follow it to the first junction.

Turn left here, cross the road and enter the tunnel under the motorway. Note the "step over" barrier for horses with rubber, non-slip matting in case they jump rather than step. When you emerge from the tunnel, look for a waymark post directing you to the left. The last time I took this path the way mark sign directing you to the left was missing and the path is not that clear since the ground is very rough at the exit from the tunnel.

However if you persevere and walk over the rough ground you will easily see the bridle path leading into the distance. Walk along this gravel path, keeping the motorway embankment on your left. The bridleway is interrupted by the access road to the "M25 Widening Compound" which lies behind fences to the right of the bridleway. Cross this road and continue along the bridleway until you reach Coursers Road which leads to Colney Heath. **13**



Salisbury Hall on your right behind its moat. Turn left at the entrance to the hall then right at the junction 20 yards on. Walk along the private access road for Salisbury Hall until just



**12**

The bridleway turns right at that point and continues on the left of Coursers Road, crossing a number of access roads to the gravel quarry and landfill site on the right. This is a changing landscape consisting of deep quarry workings, landfill and areas that have yet to be opened for the extraction of sand and gravel.

## Industrial Walk ... cont

The bridleway also crosses the conveyor belt that carries material excavated from this quarry to the sand and gravel processing plant to the north behind Tyttenhanger House. If you walk this route on a weekday you might see it working.



**14**

The bridleway turns left and crosses Coursers Road. Waymarks lead you along a concrete drive.



**15** After about 300M, a sign advises you that there is no public right of way beyond this point.



**16**

Turn left here along a waymarked footpath which crosses an estate road and the conveyor belt once more and winds downhill. There is a hide on a mound to the right of the path from which you can observe wildfowl on the lake. Continuing along the path beyond the hide you will come to the foot of a power pylon. **17** Keep the pylon on your left and follow the path round it to the left.



The path now carries on towards Willows Farm. As you continue, the River Colne on the right of the path is in a straight manmade channel and there are paddocks to the left. **18** Once you reach the farm, the path is clearly marked and strewn with stiles, gates and advisory notices. **19** You should cross the river using the concrete humpbacked bridge on the right of the path. On the other side, turn left and follow the narrow path which sticks to the right bank of the Colne as it passes under the London Colney Bypass.

The path now runs along the bank of the Colne as it widens into the lake. Continue along the side of the lake until, just before the seven arched bridge, you see an opening on your right into the car park by St Peter's Church where you might have left your car. If not, carry on until you reach the bridge. In dry weather you can walk through one of the two minor arches onto the green in front of the Green Dragon Public House. In wet weather you may have to cross the road to get to the green.

### Points of Interest

#### Mosquito Museum

Home to the de Havilland Aircraft Company, now a well supported museum displaying the Mosquito and other aircraft. Although the buildings slipped into derelict condition they have now been restored and staffed by volunteers who specialize in aircraft restoration.

#### The Agrivert Recycling Center

This is an In Vessel Composting facility. Green and other bio-degradable waste is delivered and allowed to compost in an accelerated process in specially designed aerobic vessels. The process takes up to about two weeks when the composted material is collected and used as fertilizer on local farms.

#### Lafarge Aggregates Quarry

Hertfordshire is rich in aggregates which are excavated for building roads. The resulting deep quarries are then filled with non degradable land fill. The quarried aggregate is transferred to the washing facility on other side of the lakes by means of a conveyor belt which can be seen in action during normal working hours. Care should be taken in this area.

#### Willows Farm

Once a working farm but now an amusement and leisure center. The walk bisects the facility so feel free to stop and admire the animals and other facilities but ensure that you keep to the footpath.