

## The Chiltern Society - Chenies - Sarratt Bottom Walk

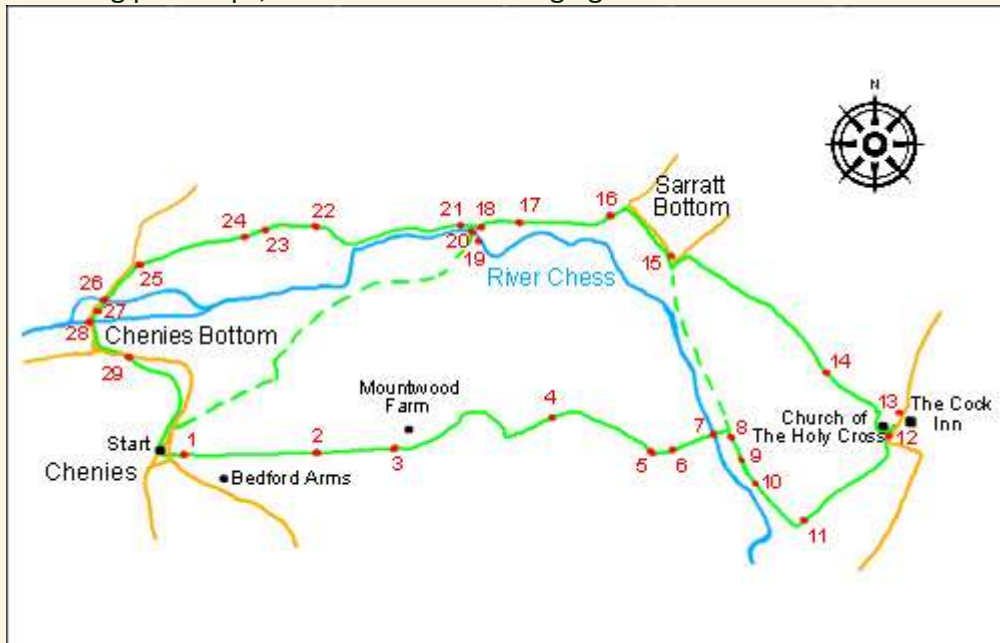
### Chenies - Sarratt Bottom

This walk is courtesy of The Chiltern Society - the author is John Harrison.

Their website is well worth a visit - the photographs are stunning -

[www.chilternphoto.org.uk](http://www.chilternphoto.org.uk)

This circular walk of about 8 km (5 miles), taking three hours at a leisurely pace and excluding pub stops, starts at Chenies village green where there is limited roadside



parking. Map

reference O.S. TQ 017 983.

**The red numbers** on the above map are referenced below as Locations to chart your progress. We have added photographs at a number of those spots.

A couple of short cuts are mentioned in the captions to help if you wish to reduce the distance or avoid uphill sections. These are between Locations 8 and 15, and between Location 20 and the start point.

The walk guide runs anti-clockwise around the route but it is interesting in both directions.

1) From Chenies village green (left photo) take the footpath along the lane leading to Mountwood Farm. The photo view is looking back from the lane across the green to the entrance of Chenies Manor House. A tower of a church in the Manor grounds can be seen amidst the trees. The House is open to the public on bank holidays also Weds & Thurs, Apr to end of Oct inclusive, 2.00pm - 5.00pm.

2) Continue along the paved lane through the gates towards Mountwood Farm. (centre photo)

3) At the end of the lane the pathway goes around the farm via a clearly marked track to the right. (right photo)



4) Shortly after passing the farm the path skirts round Nicholas Spring woods to the right. At an opening in a fence ahead the path bears left heading downhill towards the right hand corner of the field. The view is from this downhill path looking towards the buildings at Sarratt Church End across the valley.(left)

5) On entering the wooded area at the corner of the field you will see an old stile and signpost. (centre).

At this point go straight ahead across the marsh beds at the valley bottom. This part used to be very muddy but has been improved recently as a result of repairs to the river banks.

6) The first footbridge that you will meet crosses a small stream running parallel to the River Chess. Note the isolated row of cottages that stand alongside the river in the right photo.



7) This view (left photo below) is taken from the footbridge looking upstream of the River Chess in the direction of Chesham. The water meadows in this area used to be managed many years ago but the reeds and grasses now die back during the winter.

8) After crossing the river, a few yards further on you will see a signpost. If you wish to avoid an uphill climb, turn left and follow the Chess Valley Walk to rejoin our route at Location 15 - but going this way you will miss the church (Location 12) and The Cock Inn (Location 13). To follow the recommended route turn right along the valley floor following the signpost direction towards Chorleywood.

9) You are now walking along a broad pathway that forms part of the Chess Valley Walk. The river and marshes are to the right.

10) Look to the left and notice the lynchets: ancient terraces created long ago to enable cultivation on the side of the valley. (centre photo)

11) After a couple of hundred yards you will pass a small row of cottages on the left. Just beyond them take the pathway over the stile leading out of the valley, see photo. At the top of the field cross a stile (right photo) and then go straight across a private drive to rejoin the path as it wends its way around some houses, ending at the roadway by the church.



12) The church of The Holy Cross is well worth looking around at this point: it was originally built about 1190 with extensions added through the 12th, 13th and 14th centuries. The tower was constructed in the 15th century, the porch and vestry being more recent 19th century additions.

13) Just across the road from the churchyard is The Cock Inn, an excellent place to take a rest and to sample their fine pub food and real ale. I can personally recommend a cheese ploughman's lunch washed down with Badger ale. The inn is open all day.

14) Leave the inn refreshed and walk through the churchyard to a gate and stile at the rear where you will join a footpath; keep the hedge close on the left. After a couple of hundred yards you will arrive at a signpost. Continue straight on down the avenue of trees towards Dawes Lane (right photo).



15) At the end of the avenue of trees seen at Location 14, the footpath bears left across a field. The pathway is not always well trodden here but look for a stile midway along the hedge ahead. Over this stile and then after about a hundred yards cross another stile which brings you to a small road. Turn left along the road and you will soon come to the view in the photo at Sarratt Bottom. Continue along the road with the marshes on the left.

16) After about a hundred yards along the road, alongside the small community of Sarratt Bottom, you come to a gate on the left as the road turns sharp right. The left photo is a view looking back as I went through the gate along the paved lane.



17) You are now back on the Chess Valley Walk; continue along it until you reach a road near Chenies Bottom. There are various farm animals in the fields along this path such as goats.

18) Soon you will see some watercress beds on the left. The local supermarkets may source their watercress from other countries but you can buy it fresher directly from here.

19) This old building backing (centre photo) on to the River Chess is part of the watercress bed farm. I'm not sure how many more years it will be standing here.

20) Right next to the watercress beds is a ford and a footbridge across the River Chess but from the look of the large concrete block that has been dropped into the ford someone is not keen to see road traffic using it. From here you can take a short cut back to the walk start: cross this footbridge and follow Holloway Lane to Chenies.



21) Continue along the Chess Valley Walk, going straight ahead when the road bends sharply to the right. This takes you along a path with fencing along both sides; (left photo) it covers boggy ground but the worst places have wooden slat walkways in place to make life easier.

22) At the end of the fenced-in footpath enter a small wooded area where you are surrounded by dead silver birch trees. (centre photo)

23) After leaving the wooded area and crossing a small field you come to another stile. If the pathway is obstructed by animals don't be intimidated as they mean no harm.

24) You are now walking through open fields with the river over to the left.

25) At this point leave the fields and join a road bearing left. The view here is looking back down the valley along the last section through the fields.

26) The view in the right photo is from the road bridge at Chenies Bottom, looking at the River Chess flowing downstream into the valley.



27) At Chenies Bottom leave the Chess Valley Walk as it continues upstream towards Chesham and continue along the road past an old mill (right photo) which has been converted to a private house.

28) A final look along the valley: an upstream view of the River Chess that was dammed to provide water to power the mill.

29) Just beyond the mill house turn left at a road T-junction. From here, on the other side of the road, you will see some steps leading from the roadway up to a footpath. Take care crossing this fairly busy minor road near a bend. Once on the footpath you are within a few minutes of arriving back at the starting place in Chenies.

