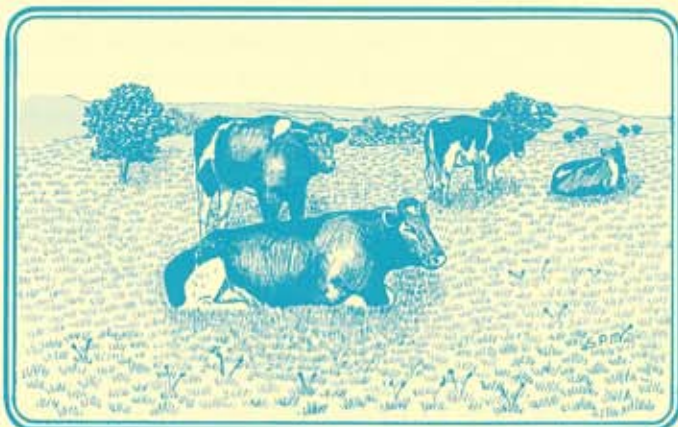


FURTHER INFORMATION

THE WALK

The walk is 3½ miles (5½ km.) in length and should take between 2 and 2½ hours. There are no very steep hills, while bridges and stiles have been constructed to help you cross streams and fences. The walking surface is generally good but after rain or during the winter the ground can be very muddy in places. Strong footwear or boots are essential at such times.



Elderly people and those with prams or young children may find the many stiles difficult to negotiate. As much of the path crosses fields where stock may be grazing, dogs should be kept under close control, preferably on a lead.

PARKING AND TRANSPORT

Parking space can usually be found in the village of Theydon Bois or at the Underground Station. Alternatively, there is a small parking area outside Theydon Garnon Church.

Theydon Bois is served by the Central Line and the service runs seven days a week.

A number of buses stop in the village; consult local timetables for details.

HOW TO FIND YOUR WAY

The whole route has been marked in both directions with distinctive yellow and green waymarkers. You will find these on gate and fence timbers, stiles, and special posts. Follow the arrows and you will not lose your way. At two points it will be necessary to walk a short distance on a metalled road—please take care. Plain yellow waymarker arrows indicate the direction of other footpaths heading away from this circuit. Perhaps you could explore these paths another time.

FOLLOW THE COUNTRY CODE

Though you will mostly be following public rights of way, you will cross private land, much of it in agricultural use. Please give farmers no cause to regret having footpaths across their land, respect the countryside and follow the country code.

OTHER WALKS IN EPPING FOREST DISTRICT

This is the first of a series of leaflets to be produced by Epping Forest Countrycare. Watch out for another near your home soon. Further copies of this leaflet can be found at District Council Offices and Information Points, Public Libraries, or telephone Epping 560000 Ext 3159.

The Epping Bookshop

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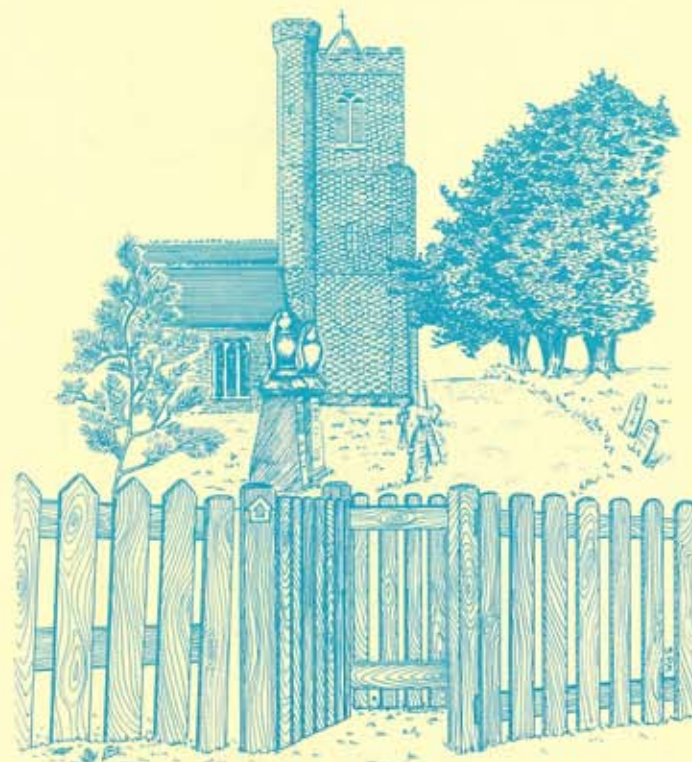
We can supply any book that
you may want on your walk,
even a novel if you wish to
sit awhile.



Countryside
COMMISSION
Epping Forest District Council

Country Walks

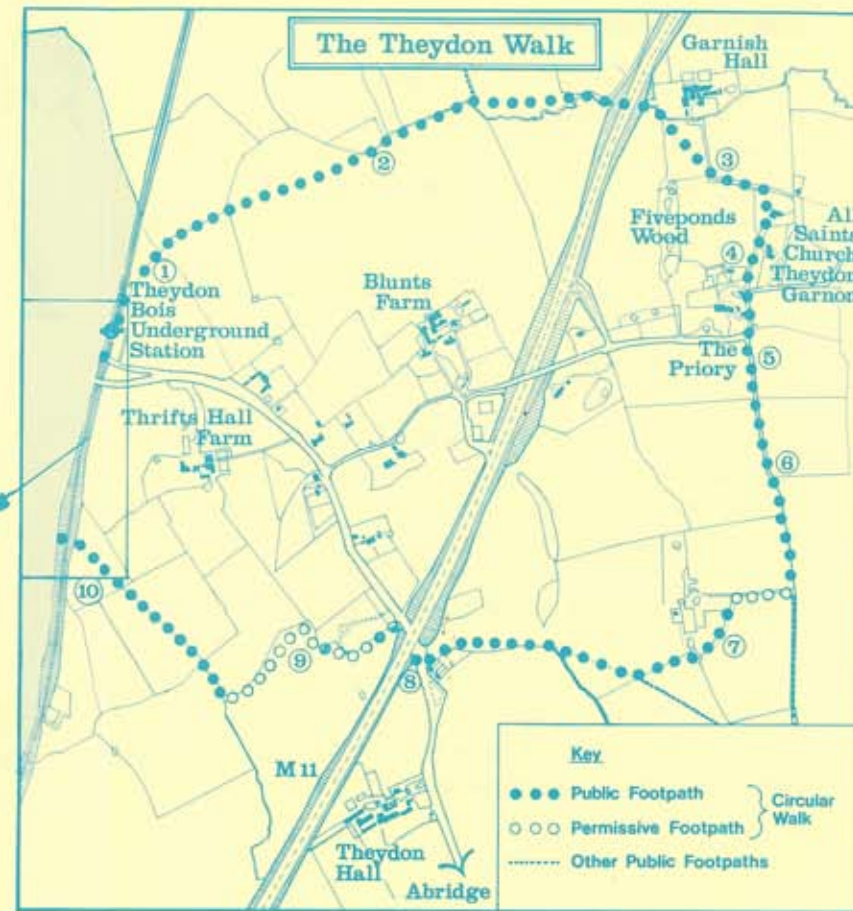
1 Theydon Bois and Theydon Garnon



Circular walk
Map and guide

Epping Forest
Countrycare

1. Today's Central line started life in 1865 as an extension, from Loughton to Ongar, of the Great Eastern Railway. It was mostly for passenger use from the outset and encouraged the development of towns such as Loughton, Theydon Bois and Epping. Suburban influences did not reach Theydon Bois and beyond until after the war; until then fields supplied farm produce, especially milk, which was delivered to the stations on farm carts for daily transport into London.



2. These pastures make easy walking, the black and white Freisian cattle cropping the grass closely in summer. In winter the wet clay ground easily becomes churned so for several months the cows are kept and fed indoors until the fresh grass growth of spring. In the 1920's and 30's dairy farming thrived in Essex but today is a less common sight.
3. The M11/M25 interchange to the north covers 25 ha. (60 acres), all of which used to be peaceful farmland. The embankments of the slip roads and flyovers have been planted with trees and shrubs, and are gradually developing an attractive mixture of wild flowers. Though noisy, they provide a home for numerous mice and voles which in turn are food for the local kestrels.

4. The church of All Saints, Theydon Garnon, was constructed and reconstructed in phases over the centuries. On the outside of the east wall of the north aisle the date of this part of the building's construction is picked out in brick. Notice the differences between the brick types used on different parts of the building. The avenue of trees (now sadly diseased and being replaced) which leads up to the Church is called Monk's Walk and follows the line of the old medieval road (see 5).

5. This green lane is a partial remnant of a medieval road which ran from Harlow to Abridge. The hedgerows have been damaged in the past but in places are now being laid in the traditional way, and gaps replanted. Since clearance this formerly overgrown lane has become filled with many more flowering plants.

6. This lane once had many elm trees along its length. Most of these have now died and been removed. At the south end a clump of coppiced hornbeam casts a deep shade even though it has been thinned. There are several woodland flowers found along this part of the lane, showing it has been wooded for many, many years.
7. The view to the south across the valley of the river Roding is an attractive mosaic of fields, hedges and woodlands. Some of these woods are very old with strange names like Apes Grove and Soapleys Wood. The old woods and irregularly shaped fields indicate an ancient landscape, the basic structure of which would have looked very much as it does today, several hundred years ago.
8. Take care crossing the busy Abridge to Theydon Bois road. Before the Epping to Loughton road was built through the forest in the 17th century this was part of the main London to Newmarket road. Transport networks continue to change over the years however, and the latest version of this route, the M11, now rumbles overhead.
9. On a clear day, looking southwards along the M11 you can see the Nat West Tower in Central London. Being so close to the city the countryside around you was once geared to supplying milk, firewood and even straw to the busy metropolis. Now such local markets are less important, but the countryside has taken on an increased value as a place for people who work in the city to live and relax.
10. In the recent past sheep have been mostly restricted to rough upland grazings but now they are increasingly found in the lowlands. Unusually the flocks in these paddocks produce milk to make yoghurt and cheese. Please ensure your dog is kept on its lead at this point.