1. Leave the Hurdlemakers’ Arms and turn right onto Post Office Road. After 75 yards, at the T-junction with the B1010 (Burnham Road); cross over Burnham Road and take the signed footpath in the field opposite. For the first 70 yards, the path runs along the left-hand edge of a hedgerow and then heads across the middle of the field in the same direction; then through Mill House Lane. The path skirts round the right-hand side of the farm and reaches a track. Turn left here, past the farmhouse and pond and continue ahead on the track. In just over 1/4 mile, turn right onto the crossing path, and after 100 yards turn right onto Goat Lane House, and after 60 yards, turn left into Chimney Pot Lane.

2. After nearly 1/2 mile, Chimney Pot Lane comes to a T-Junction with Birchwood Road. If you turn right here, in 120 yards you will reach the Fox and Hounds pub in the village of Hazeleigh Hall. After 180 yards, (after the entrance to Scotts Farm on the left and shortly after the lane bends right) turn right onto Pot Lane and Birchwood Road. Continue along Birchwood Road for just over 3/4 mile, then turn left into Lodge Lane.

3. After 180 yards, (after the entrance to Scotts Farm on the left) then continue ahead through a small wooded area to soon reach a field, going through a hedge gap in the left-hand corner, and after 70 yards, turn right into Howe Green Lane.

4. After 250 yards, turn right into Howe Green Lane.

5. After visiting the Bell, retract your route round the front of the pub, turning right onto the path which goes into the churchyard (via the gate). Go through the churchyard, ignore the path to the left we used previously and exit through the gate ahead onto Church Hill. Turn left on reaching the lane (Post Office Road) for over 1/4 mile, then turn left onto the road, by the Bell pub.

6. The path reaches a gap in the hedge alongside the B1010 (Baron’s Lane); go through this and cross the road. Take the surfaced track ahead, ignoring the footpath which goes off to the left, and head towards the New Hall vineyard buildings. The track goes to the right of most of the buildings and soon crosses a footbridge; keep ahead, following the right-hand edge of the field. 150 yards after the footbridge, you enter a larger field; follow the path around the right-hand edge. After 300 yards, look out for a large gap in the hedge and turn right through this into another field. Go ahead on 35 yards and cross a footbridge and through a kissing gate into a larger field. Follow the path on the field’s right-hand edge for 150 yards, then go through another kissing gate and cross a footbridge. Turn right on the umbrage track for 15 yards, then turn left for another 15 yards, taking the signed footpath off to the left across a footbridge into another field. Walk along the right-hand edge of this large field for 250 yards and cross over the stile into the next field. Continue along the right-hand edge of the next two fields and ignore all footpath signs.

7. After 60 yards (passing a wood-store and dovecote on your left), you reach the driveway to Hazeleigh Hall which dates back to 1750 on your right. Ahead, you can see the remains of the medieval moat. Turn left and follow the driveway, which soon becomes a tarmac lane (Hazeleigh Hall Lane). Follow this lane for over 1/2 mile, ignoring all footpath signs.

8. After 250 yards, cross a five-barred gate. To the right, you can see the remains of the Purleigh church in the grounds of a large house on the right; go through the hedge gap. The path bends right, then left along the hedge to cross a crossing track with greenhouses to your right. After 200 yards, enter the next field and follow the path along the field’s left-hand edge. To your right, across the field, you can see Woodham Mortimer church, Woodham Mortimer Hall and a commemorative obelisk.

Follow the way-marked path ahead through the next two fields for 1/4 mile, which follows the left-hand edge of both fields. Then turn right after going through the hedge gap to take the path on the right-hand edge of a long, narrow field. After 300 yards, bear left and continue along the hedge into a five-barred gate. Cross the lane (Rectory Lane) and take the footpath opposite. Head across the field in the same direction as the overhead cables, then go across a footbridge into a small copse, soon emerging onto a path on the right-hand edge of this field. This soon becomes a fenced path as it crosses the grounds of a large house on the left, then narrows as it continues ahead between the gardens of houses either side, then opens out into a track as it nears the lane. Turn left and leave the lane at the Post Office Road for 150 yards until you arrive at the Hurdlemakers’ Arms, which is where we started the walk.
This is an extremely pleasant walk which takes you through attractive Essex farmland and down quiet country lanes. There are many beautiful country houses to look at along the way, and some lovely scenery to admire too. One of the key features of this walk is that it provides the opportunity to visit two historic country pubs which are locally renowned for serving fine ales and excellent food: the Hurdlemakers’ Arms in Woodham Mortimer and the Bell in Purleigh. There’s also another characterful village pub on the route, namely the Fox & Hounds in Cock Clarks. Pub opening times vary - please check beforehand.

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