

2.5-mile and 4-mile Mini Hikes, through Heartwood Forest

Route checked and route description revised September 2024

From 6 September, check out <http://www.oxfamstalbens.co.uk> for the latest version

Please note:

- The walk starts at the Scout Hut in Heartwood Forest, Sandridgebury Lane, Sandridge, St Albans, **AL3 6JB**, but use the adjacent Heartwood Forest overflow carpark (for Oxfam W4W), nearest postcode **AL4 9DQ**. The carpark opens at 8.00 and closes at 20.00. Follow the yellow 'Herts Hike' signs to the Scout Hut. There is also nearby parking in Sandridge, off the main road. Share a car or use public transport if you can, as weekends can be busy.
- **The Scout Hut will close at 17.00.** Allow plenty of time for parking and signing in, for the walk itself and allowing for some stops, and for signing out and tea & cake on your return.
- The **± 4-mile** route takes about 1.5 hours at a steady pace and without a break, so we advise you to you **start your walk between 10.00 and 14.00**.
- At **point 12** you can take a shortcut straight to the Scout Hut. This is the **± 2.5-mile** route, which takes about 1 hour at a steady pace, without a break, and we suggest you **start your walk between 10.00 and 14.30**.
- **Bring your own** copy(s) of this route description, water, packed lunch, snacks, sunscreen, hat, anorak, boots, a small first-aid kit, and a fully charged mobile phone. Also bring some cash for tea&cake and for purchases at the St Albans Oxfam shop stall, and your bank details to make your Walk4Water donation on JustGiving. We have no card-reader.
- We advise you to use this route description, and only use the map for reference.
- There is one **Check Point, C1**. The location is underlined in this route description. Every attempt will be made to have this in place within the times indicated, but not guaranteed.
- In the route description, the distances are approximate. The arrows **← ↶ ↑ ↷ →** indicate your direction, and also the approximate positions of the **yellow 'Herts Hike' route signs** that you will see on your way.
- ***Benches are highlighted in italic, orientation points in bold.*** There are no pubs, cafés, or shops on your way.
- Do check out <http://www.gov.uk/countrysidecode>, stay on the public footpaths and bridle ways, keep dogs on a lead, and step aside for horse-riders, cyclists and other walkers.
- **In case of emergency, or if you will *not* return to the Scout Hut to sign out, it is important to call Sue Cockell on 07535 695744, or Wilma Mendonca on 07305 807288.**
- **And last but not least, please remember that all walkers and volunteers take part at their own risk, and under 18's cannot register unless accompanied by an adult.**

Enjoy your walk!

Section 1: Scout Hut to Check Point C1.

- 1 At the **Scout Hut entrance gate** turn left ← onto the **Scout Hut drive**, then left ← onto a bridleway, and almost immediately right ↗ through a kissing gate into **Heartwood Forest**.
- 2 Go ahead gently uphill on the diagonal gravel path ↑.
- 3 Where the gravel path divides left and right at a **signpost**, go straight ahead on the grassy path ↑ towards a second **signpost on the skyline**.
- 4 Here turn left ← onto a track, soon passing on your left a **bench dedicated to Matt Risby**.
- 5 Continue straight ahead ↑ passing the **Woodland Arch** on your left as you go.
- 6 Where paths cross, (with the corner of **Pudler's Wood** in front of you), go straight on ↑. Continue ahead with wood on either side.
- 7 Take the first turning right →, onto the broad grassy path, passing between a **memorial stone on the left for Brian & Brenda** and a **bench** on the right. At the T-junction turn left onto the bridleway for a few yards, to the edge of a wood.
- 8 Turn right →, continuing on the grassy path ↑, between a wood on the left and a young wood on the right.
- 9 Going downhill, when the track forks, take the left grassy path. You can see **Check Point C1** {TL 162 122} in a shady spot, between **8.30 and 15.30**. **Please show your walker number to the Marshal.**

Section 2: Check Point C1 to Scout Hut, follow yellow Herts Hike signs

10 CAUTION – ROUTES DIVIDE HERE!

- 11 **The 5, 8, 15 & 20-milers turn right, whilst the 2.5 & 4-mile walkers continue in the same direction.** The yellow sign → shows which direction you go - don't just follow the people in front!
- 12 Proceed with the wood & fence on your left, and a thick hedge on the right. After about 10 yards, at the end of the wood, go straight on.
- 13 Continue downhill with a field on the left and the hedge on your right, to the boundary hedge at the bottom of the hill where the main path bends to the left. Once there, turn left ← onto the track, and walk between the hedges. Continue for about 0.7 miles, with the field on your left. You will eventually see & hear the train tracks ahead of you & finally arrive at a kissing gate. Go through ↑, onto a bridleway.
- 14 **!! Here, the 2.5-mile walkers turn left** uphill and follow the bridleway passing **Well Wood** on the left, through the **Magic Wood**, past **Langley Wood** on the right. Continue going straight ↑ on this path. **!! Now skip to number 24**, where the 4-milers join the 2.5-mile walkers from **steps** on the right.

!! The 4-mile walkers cross the main bridleway turning right → & immediately left ←, going through the gate ↑, where immediately the path forks three-ways.

- 15 Go straight on, taking the path in the middle, which leads across a field diagonally ↖, first with a wire fence on your left. Aim for the railway line.
- 16 Where the bridleway curves to the left continue for about 0.5 mile, first uphill ↑ with the fence on your left and the **railway** on your right.
- 17 At the end of the bridleway, the track forks at a “**Welcome to Heartwood Forest**” sign, take the path on the right briefly & go through the right-hand gate ↑, down a slope, and turn left ← along a narrow track with hedges on both sides (opening to a field on the right). Continue for about 0.5 mile.
- 18 Eventually you will come to a kissing gate on your left with another **Heartwood Forest board**, go through the gate ↑ on your left.
- 19 Go straight on with the hedge on your right, and up-hill keeping a young wood on your left.
- 20 Just after the path curves to the left, take the first path to the right, entering the gate ↑ to **Langley Wood**.
- 21 **Turn immediately left ←**, on a path with a **rope** on the left and an area for building wooden **dens and camps** on your right. Follow the path as it curves to the right.
- 22 At the T junction turn left ← onto a **roped path**.
- 23 Keep straight ↑ on this path, at a fork in the path, take the right-hand track →, leading you further into the wood, eventually passing a **sunken area** on the left.
- 24 When you see the **bench dedicated to Grace Parker**, turn right →. Go straight on where two paths cross, until you reach a **corner of the wood at an exit down some steps on the left**.
- 25 **!!** Go down the steps and turn right → onto the bridal way, **where 2.5-mile walkers join the 4-milers**.
- 26 Continue downhill and soon turn right → onto the drive of the **Scout Hut** and turn right through the gate of the Scout Hut.

CONGRATULATIONS ON FINISHING YOUR WALK

Please go inside to register your arrival, give us feed-back, and hand in your sponsorship money/donation(s) or make a transfer to

<https://www.justgiving.com/page/oxfam-st-albans-walk4water-2024>

And treat yourself to drinks and cakes whilst sending us your experiences & photos for our website on oxfamstalbans.w4w@gmail.com

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

We hope you enjoyed your walk, and we look forward to seeing you next year, the date will be announced shortly on <https://oxfamstalbans.co.uk/>.

Do save the date and check our website from time to time!