

## Teas, buns, pints and pies:

**St Michael's and Verulamium Park:** Six Bells, Rose and Crown, Blue Anchor and The Black Lion Public Houses. The Waffle House at Kingsbury Mill and Inn on the Park cafés.

**East Common, Harpenden:** Three Horseshoes Public House.

## How to get there:

**By road:** Verulamium Museum is situated in St Michael's Street, southwest of St Albans. Leave Junction 21a of the M25 or Junction 6 of the M1 and take the A405, followed by the A5183, direction St Albans. There is limited public car parking outside the Museum. Further car parking can be found at Westminster Lodge on the other side of the park.

**By public transport:** St Albans is served by transport links from London as well as surrounding villages and towns. Regular trains run from London to the city station, as well as the Abbey Flyer service from Watford, for further details visit [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk). For details of coach and bus services contact Intalink Traveline on 0871 200 2233 or visit [www.intalink.org.uk](http://www.intalink.org.uk)

 Parts of this walk can be muddy or wet underfoot.



This is one of a series of 8 circular walks on the River Ver and part of the 17 mile long linear, River Ver Trail. You can also use the OS Explorer Map 182 to find your way around the Valley. For lots more photos, memories, information and copies of the other walks go to [www.riverver.co.uk](http://www.riverver.co.uk)

The Countryside Management Service works with communities in Hertfordshire to help them care for and enjoy the environment. For information on further opportunities to enjoy Hertfordshire countryside, including Health Walks, visit [www.hertslink.org/cms](http://www.hertslink.org/cms)

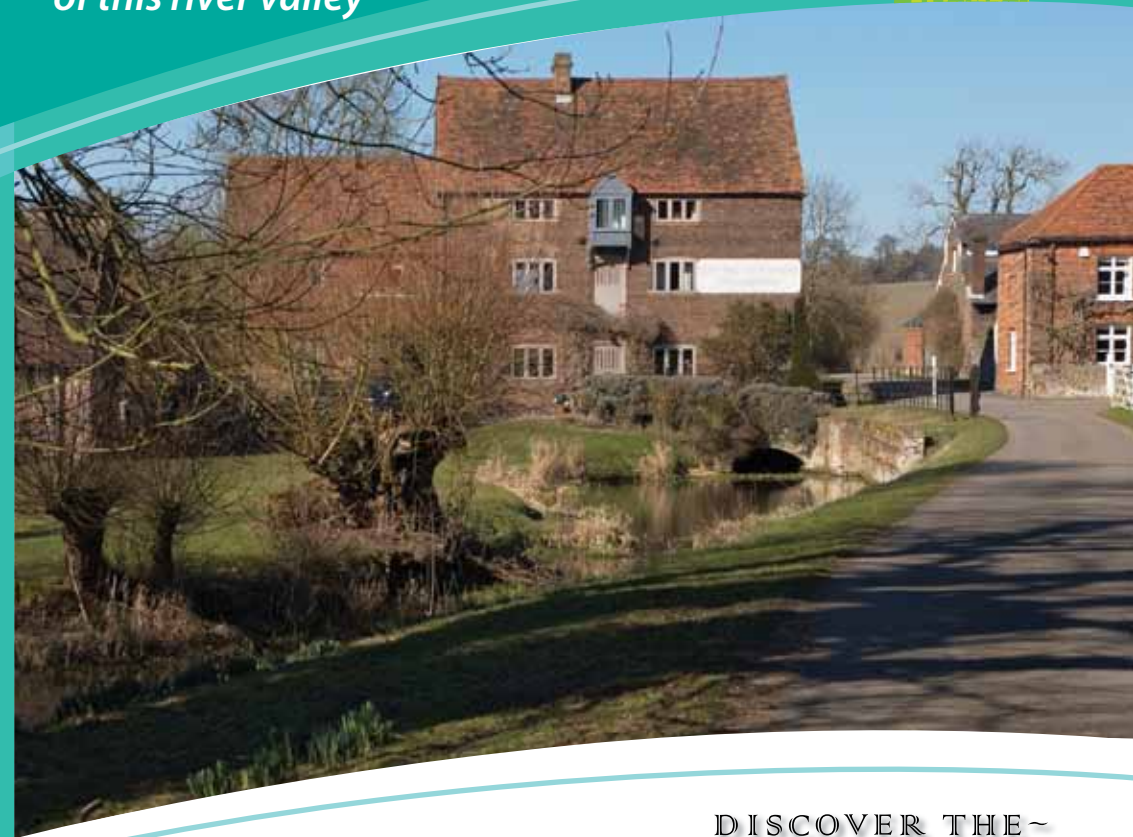
**If you would like this leaflet produced in large print, please contact the Countryside Management Service on southwest. [cms@hertscc.gov.uk](mailto:cms@hertscc.gov.uk) Tel: 01462 459395**

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# VER VALLEY WALK 5

## *The Three Burys Walk*

*Explore the beautiful rolling countryside of this river valley*



**Start and finish:**  
Verulamium Museum, St Albans  
**Full circular walk: 8 miles (12.8 km) -**  
**About 4 hours**



[www.riverver.co.uk](http://www.riverver.co.uk)



Ver Valley  
Society



**CHILDWICKBURY, REDBOURNBURY  
AND GORHAMBURY**

# Discover the River Ver

The River Ver is special; it is a **chalk stream**, one of only about 200 on the planet and its pure alkaline water supports a very particular mix of **flora** and **fauna**. For 450,000 years, since the Anglian Ice Age, it has flowed (almost) uninterrupted along its valley, south from its source at Kensworth Lynch in the Chiltern Hills, through Markyate, Flamstead, Redbourn, St Albans and Park Street to where it joins with the River Colne near Bricket Wood – ultimately to empty into the River Thames near Windsor.

Man has used the river for navigation, for milling, for mineral extraction and for food production – these processes mean the river is much changed from its 'natural' state. Today we utilise the Ver in two other ways. Firstly, deep boreholes into the chalk strata (or aquifer) abstract over half of all the water that falls as rain

in the area. Secondly, we use the river and its attractive surroundings for simple leisure and pleasure, by walking through its valley or along its banks, as you might do today by following this route.

Like a good book, the River Ver has a beginning, middle and end, and associated with its twists and turns many characters come and go; through these walks you will follow the story in eight chapters, from source to confluence. We aim to set the Ver in its local landscape and cultural context. For further information about the Ver and the people who lived near it, past and present, visit our website: [www.riverver.co.uk](http://www.riverver.co.uk)

The River Ver links us to the past, present and future. it is...

## liquid history

*There were once eleven mills on the River Ver, but only nine remain (Redbourn 'Little' Mill and Cotton Mill disappeared long ago). One retains its original purpose, Redbourn-bury, now a working museum and bakery; Shafford Mill and Abbey Mill have been converted into dwellings, Pre Mill and Sopwell Mill are disused, Kingsbury Mill and Moor Mill are restaurants, New Barnes Mill and Park Mill are now offices. But all retain their importance in the landscape and in the river corridor in particular.*

*From Redbourn downstream, what we see today as our 'natural' river is, in fact, usually a man-made millstream constructed since*

*Roman times to divert water along the side of the valley to fall onto or over a water-wheel.*



### 1 Hertfordshire Puddingstone

This naturally occurring conglomerate and matrix rock is so named because of its resemblance to a plum-pudding mixture. It has been suggested that large blocks, like the one at Kingsbury Mill, were placed at important river crossings.



### 1 St Michael's Street and bridge

Arguably, St Michael's remains the most quaint part of old St Albans, it certainly retains a distinct character from the rest of the town on the hill. The bridge is the oldest surviving in Hertfordshire (1765).

### 5 Childwickbury Estate and drive

The attractive estate hamlet of Childwick ('Chillick') Green and house lie along the metalled estate drive, whilst Batchwood and its stunning display of springtime bluebells is nearby. The word bury means the 'estate of' or 'manor'.



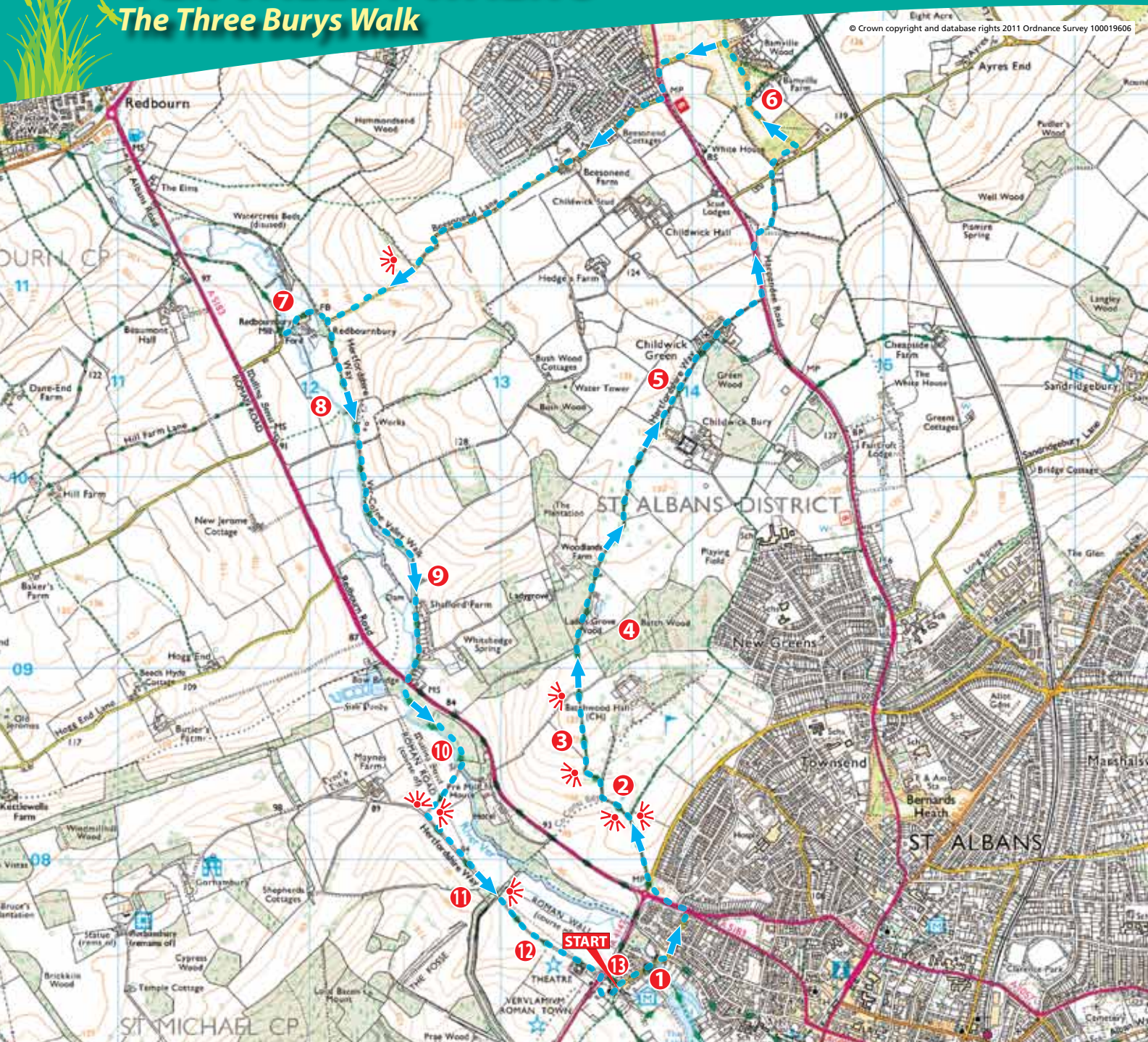
### 11 St Albans Abbey from Gorhambury Drive

Sited on elevated ground overlooking the Ver Valley the Cathedral remains a striking landmark in the local landscape, especially when viewed from Watling Street to the north and Shenley to the south.



# VER VALLEY WALK 5

## The Three Burys Walk



## CHILDWICKBURY, REDBOURNBURY AND GORHAMBURY

From the start walk down St Michael's Street to the river with its ancient ford, and bridge ① and Kingsbury Mill beyond. Note the large piece of Puddingstone on the Mill verge.

Bear left into Branch Road, at the end turn left, cross Verulam Road, and diagonally cross the recreation ground. ⚠️ Cross the main road to the drive opposite.

There are fine views back to the Abbey, and the Ver Valley to the west ②. Turn left onto a bridleway skirting the perimeter of the golf course. Here are views, west, towards Gorhambury House and Buncefield ③.

During springtime detour into Batchwood for a stunning display of bluebells ④.

Enter an enclosed footpath at the edge of Ladies Grove Wood, this emerges onto the estate drive that leads to Childwickbury House and Childwick Green ⑤.

🦉 Little Owls can be seen in daylight here, listen out for their 'screech' call.

Turn left then cross the Harpenden Road (A1081) ⚠️. Follow a footpath to Ayres End Lane. Take the track behind the cottages to East Common; turn left, pass Barnville Cricket Club and the Three Horseshoes Pub on The Common ⑥.

Skirt round the edge of Harpenden Common and ⚠️ re-cross the Harpenden Road to Beesonend Lane. Follow this towards Redbournbury Mill. (Detour over the two footbridges to visit Redbournbury Mill ⑦, working museum and bakery).

Otherwise turn south, along the River Ver Trail, towards St Albans. For the next 2kms the path passes beside Redbournbury and Punch Bowl watermeadows ⑧.

Passing the Works (former chalk-pit) the footpath leads to the Estate drive on the approach to Shafford Farm and Mill ⑨. 🦉 Watch out for Grey Wagtails that build their nests under bridges. ⚠️ Cross the Redbourn Road to the footpath opposite to enter the Gorhambury Estate. N.B. the footpath through the Estate is 'permissive' only. The path is normally open 8am-6pm but closed on certain days including Saturdays, September to end January. Should the estate footpath be closed, use the roadside path back to St Albans then follow Bluehouse Hill (A4147) to rejoin the route.

Follow the millstream until the site of Pre Mill is reached ⑩, then take the estate road over the river and, at a T-junction, turn left.

🦉 Look out for birds of prey, such as Red Kite and Buzzard – also listen out for deep 'cronk' call of Raven. There are fine views of the Abbey ⑪ along the drive, before the Roman Theatre ⑫.

Cross Bluehouse Hill via the crossing and walk through St Michael's churchyard to return to Verulamium Museum ⑬.

### KEY

Ver Valley Walk 5 uses rights of way to link to the River Ver Trail to enable you to explore the river valley in bite size sections.



#### Waymarking

Follow these waymarks on your way around the route.



#### Ver Valley View

Public Footpath

Public Bridleway



Take care when crossing main roads



Nature notes

