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Inkpen Heritage Walk

Inkpen is first mentioned in an Anglo Saxon charter of 935 AD as 'Ingepenne' (enclosure on the hill) but has evidence of human activity stretching back to the Bronze Age. The village has developed in several places, with a church dating to the 13th century and a pottery industry developing in the 16th century. Many historic buildings remain, dating to the 17th, 18th and 19th century.



West Berkshire has a wealth of heritage ranging from early prehistoric finds to remnants of the Cold War – these can be seen as archaeological sites, historic buildings and even the landscapes around us.

These walks offer an opportunity to explore your local heritage as it exists in the landscape today.

Route

Walk length: 6 miles approx

This walk is of moderate difficulty, but includes some steep ascents and descents and some sections on narrow roads. The roads can be busy, so take care when crossing and please wear suitable clothing and footwear. **Please be aware that many of these heritage assets are private property or on private land, so please keep to public rights of way and respect owners privacy.**

- Start in the carpark next to Walbury Hill and walk west following the Wayfarer's Walk towards **Combe Gibbet (PO1)**. This replica of a 17th century gibbet is situated on a Neolithic long barrow and was originally used to display the bodies of George Broomham and his lover Dorothy Newman, who were convicted for the murder of Georges family in 1672. Continue past the Gibbet along the chalk ridgeway, past Wigmoreash Pond until you reach a stile on your right. Cross this and follow the path immediately to the right.
- Walk east, past Wigmoreash Pond on your right until you see an obvious cleft in the hillside on the left. This is part of an **earthwork enclosure (PO12)** of probably prehistoric date and part of a wider field system associated with Walbury Hill. Continue down the hill, taking care with the steep descent and veering right at the bottom of the hill to reach a stile entering a small clump of trees.



- Cross the stile and continue straight along the path crossing some fields, passing on your left the site of a possible **Roman building (POI3)** uncovered in 1983. Continue to the road and turn right, walking for about 200m before turning right into a lane. Continue up the lane until you reach **Church Farm (POI4)**, a historic farmstead of probable 17th century origin.
- Walk around the side of Church Farm to visit **St Michaels (POI5)**, a Grade II* Listed church originally built in the 13th century, but altered since. Return to the lane, passing **The Old Rectory (POI6)** on your right. This Grade II* Listed former rectory dates to the 17th century and is surrounded by a Registered designed garden in the style of Versailles. Continue back down the lane for a short distance, taking the footpath on the right.
- Continue across the fields until you reach the road. Turn right past **West Court House (POI7)** – a Grade II Listed 18th century house, possibly associated with a Medieval manor. Carry on up the road, crossing over the T-junction and following the footpath between the houses and through the woods, eventually turning right across some horse paddocks. Continue past Manor Farm, crossing the road and some more fields before entering Pottery Lane.
- Walk along Pottery Lane, where evidence of a **pottery industry (POI8)** has been found dating back to the 16th century. Turn right into Post Office Road after a short distance turn left and then immediately right onto the footpath. Cross the paddocks and carry on across the road into the opposite lane.
- Carry on until you reach **White Cottage (POI9)**, an unlisted cottage of possible 18th century date. Turn right immediately past the cottage into small park surrounding **Kirby House (POI10)**, a Grade II* Listed 18th century country house. Cross the park and turn left, following the path through a small woodland and turning left along the field edge. Continue on to the road and turn right.
- Follow the road, taking care as there are no footpaths. Continue until you reach a split in the road and follow the footpath into the woods at the bottom of the hill. Climb up through the woods until you reach a stile, leading onto a steep, open hillside. Continue past the distinctive **earthworks (POI11)**, probably representing a 'hollow way' or trackway. Follow these up the hillside, noting the earthwork banks on your right, until you reach the Wayfarers Walk.
- Turn right and follow the path through the eastern earthwork entrance of **Walbury Camp (POI12)** – an Iron Age 'hillfort' and Scheduled Monument. Walbury is the largest example of its kind in Berkshire, but excavations have revealed no evidence of occupation. Carry on through the hillfort and through the large earthwork ramparts at the western end. Before you end, make a slight detour to see the **Merville Battery Memorial Stone (POI13)**, which was set up to commemorate the 9th Battalion Parachute Regiment who trained at a replica of the Merville Battery in the fields to the north in 1944.





Points of interest

Use a QR Reader application on your smartphone or tablet to scan the code in the No. Column to link to more information.

No.	Name	Date	Description
1 	Combe Gibbet	Neolithic to Present	Renowned and highly visible monument of Neolithic barrow on which was erected 17th century gibbet
2 	Prehistoric enclosure	Prehistoric to Roman	Rectilinear earthwork probably associated with a wider prehistoric field system around Walbury Hill and its hillfort
3 	Site of Roman building	Roman	Roman building material brought to the surface by deep ploughing in 1983
4 	Church Farm, Inkpen (formerly Westcourt Farm)	17th century	Historic farmstead likely to be of at least 17th century origins and still partly present in 21st century
5 	St Michael's, Inkpen	Medieval to 19th century	Grade II* listed 13th century church, with 15th and 17th century alterations; extensively restored in 1896
6 	The Old Rectory, also called Inkpen House and gardens	17th century	Grade II* listed late 17th century former rectory set within landscaped gardens
7 	West Court House, Inkpen (formerly Westcourt House)	Medieval to 18th century	Grade II listed late 18th century brick house, perhaps associated with a medieval manor
8 	Inkpen Pottery, Pottery Lane	16th century to 20th century	Tradition of pottery from the 16th century to early 20th century in this area, with finds of pottery, wasters, and kiln bricks
9 	White Cottage, Trapps Hill, Inkpen	18th century	Unlisted thatched cottage, perhaps of 18th century date
10 	Kirby House	18th century	Grade II* listed 18th century country house within small park
11 	Linear features east of Walbury Camp	Prehistoric, Medieval, Unknown?	Possible trackways or banks seen as earthworks on the east side of Walbury Camp hillfort
12 	Walbury Camp	Iron Age	Scheduled Monument 17. The largest hillfort in (old) Berkshire, on the highest chalk down in southern England
13 	Memorial stone, Merville Battery	WWII	Stone commemorating the 9th Battalion The Parachute Regiment training for the assault on the Merville Battery in 1944