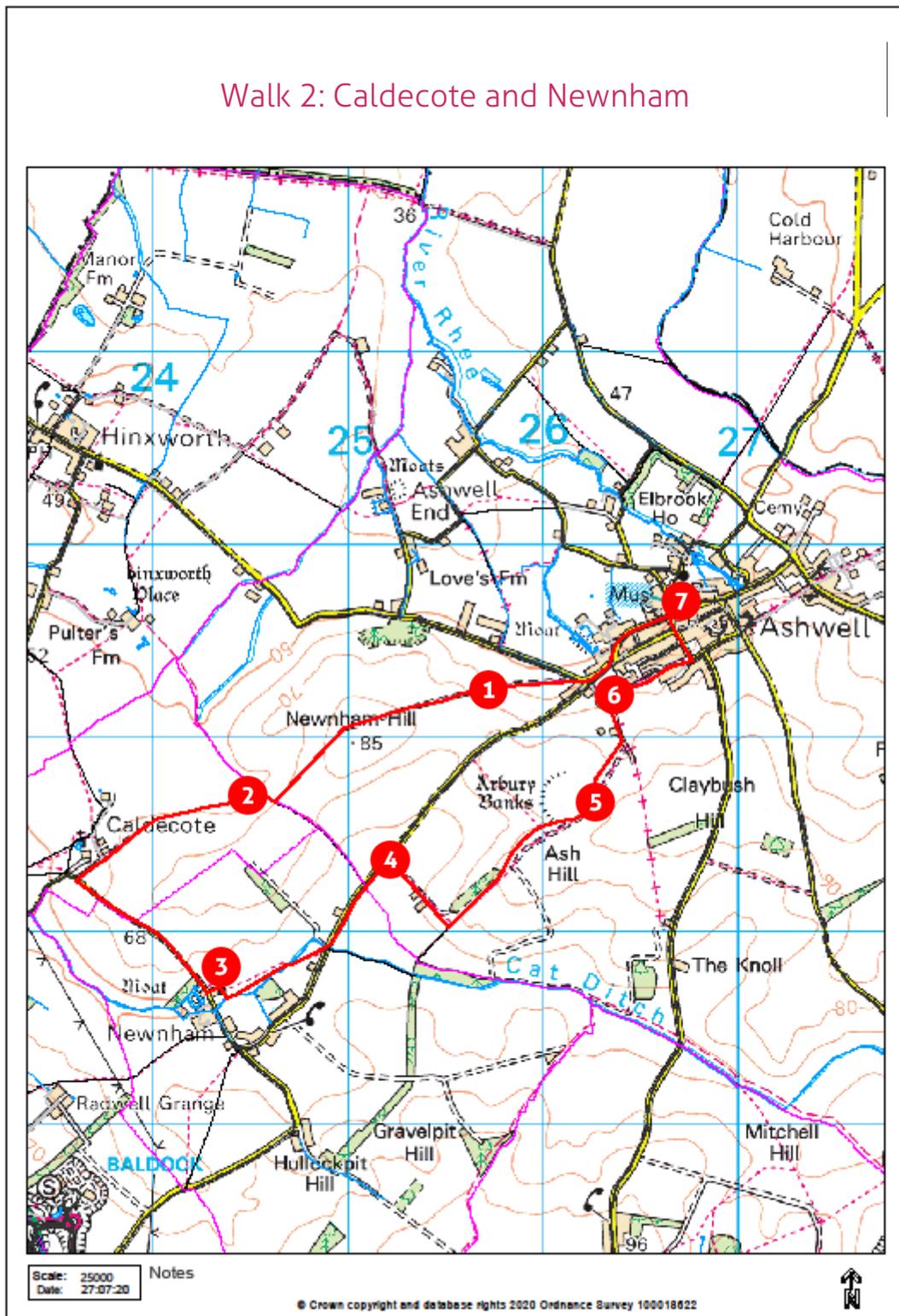


ASHWELL WALKS

Walk 2: Caldecote and Newnham



Length and timing

9 Kilometres (5½ miles), about 1hr 50 mins walking briskly, 2hr 40 mins at leisure.

One gentle climb and descent and one very short, steeper ascent.

Two picturesque churches, one at Caldecote and one at Newnham. This walk passes by a pig farm.

Directions

With your back to the Parish Church lych gate head left along Mill Street, cutting through to the High Street via Alms Lane between the Parish Rooms on the left and the Museum on the right.

Turn right along the High Street and carry straight on along West End for 600 metres to a junction just outside the village. Go down the right fork, the Hinxworth Road, and take the track going up the hill.



Right Fork, then take the track uphill

1 This is Newnham Hill. Don't forget to look back at the view of the church after climbing a bit. At the top it levels off and just before going down the other side there is an expansive view to the North (right hand side) of Biggleswade and the villages of Dunton, Wendy and Croydon.

Down the hill you come to a 'T' junction. Turn right here and keep on the lookout for a path to the left marked by a fingerpost after about 150 metres. Turn left there.

2 Follow the track with the field on the left until you come to a house with a concrete roadway outside then turn right, passing some farm buildings on your right. The Church of St Mary Magdalene is on the left behind the trees, just beyond the hard standing. Constructed largely of the relatively soft local stone, clunch, it has nevertheless survived for 900 years.



Church of St Mary Magdalene, Caldecote

Retrace your steps to the house (now on the left) and turn right down to the road.

Go left. After 900 metres you will see the rather functional Newnham village sign. The church is just beyond on the left and is worth a look inside for its faded murals, one depicting St Christopher.

3 If that doesn't appeal, turn left just after the village sign (note: if you're returning from the church you will be turning right here) and skirt around the vicarage, then head north-eastwards keeping to the edge of the field.

Keep a lookout for a wooden bridge on your right. It is about 500 metres from the turnoff into the field and not easily seen. Go over it and head off diagonally left through three grassy paddocks up to the road.



The footbridge is not easy to see

4 At the road turn left and continue until you reach the asphalted turnoff to the pig farm on your right.

Go straight past the farm - where the asphalt turns into a track - and up to the 'T' junction marked by a lonely-looking wooden signpost. Turn 90 degrees left up a short climb. Afterwards the track levels off as you pass a row of hawthorn trees on your left hand side.



Signpost with Bygrave in the background

To the south (right hand side) is the chalk escarpment with the small modern settlement of Bygrave and the A505 beyond that.

After passing the trees, to your left in the middle distance you will see Newnham Hill that you crossed earlier. The track then becomes a short avenue with conifers on the left and a bank on the right. Emerging from

the avenue the path veers slightly right up to Arbury Banks.

5 Curve round to the left to find the information board. This site of an Iron Age fort doesn't look much these days, unfortunately, but the 360 degree view from this point is rather lovely despite the chain link fencing..

Pick up the track that descends diagonally across the field towards the junction with another bounded by hedges and small trees. Then turn left down the hill.

6 After 250 metres take the turn-off to the right. This is Ashwell Street; a path and road that runs the length of the village and continues further east to Bassingbourn cum Kneesworth.



Junction, with Ashwell Street on the right

Continue along this tree lined path, past the allotments on the left until you reach an asphalted roadway. At the junction take the path downhill on your left past a terrace of houses and, down the steps. Go straight on at the crossroads into the lane flanked by a wall on each side. At the High Street turn right, then, just after the general store, left down Gardiner's Lane

7 The church will be in view now but the communal cottage garden on the right could be a good place to sit and take a short break.



Church of St Vincent, Newnham