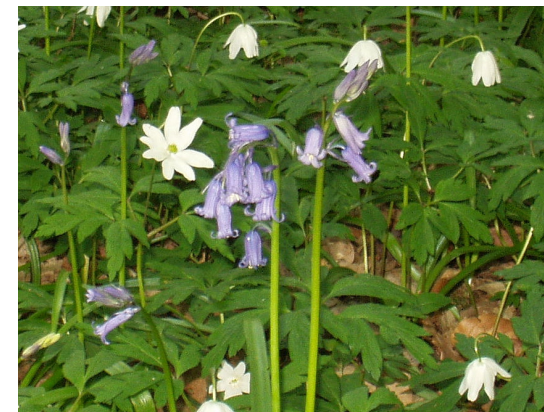


## THE WOODS AND THEIR PATHS



*Dense bluebells and wood anemones indicate that the wood has been here a very long time*



*A Bronze Age Barrow – a burial mound - as old as the pyramids. About 2500BC*

- Tracks and paths in wood
- Other tracks
- Footpath
- Bridleway
- Access footpath
- Access bridleway
- Dismantled railway

**Hampstead Norreys** is a very ancient place and it is surrounded by history. Stone Age tools have been found in the parish and you will see a magnificent burial mound in the woods built in the Bronze Age about 4,500 years ago – as old as some of Egypt's pyramids! Roman finds have been made all over the parish and the name of the village is Saxon and means 'farm headquarters'. Even the playing field's name is a thousand years old. 'Dean' comes from the Saxon *denu* meaning 'a shallow hollow or valley'. I think you will agree it is an appropriate name. William the Conqueror's inspectors reported on the manor in 1086 when they compiled the Domesday Book and during World War 2 the RAF had an airfield on the eastern side of the village.

There are several other detailed leaflets if you would like to read more. All free to download from the parish website or from the West Berkshire Countryside Society's website.

Since there are so many paths this leaflet has been produced to help you explore and bring to you home safely.

**The woods belong to Eling Estate.** Gerald Palmer, the last individual owner who set up the *Gerald Palmer and Eling Trust*, died in 1984. Gerald was very keen that this area of West Berkshire should be preserved and that the public should be allowed access to the woods where possible.

You will see a green notice board at the entrance to the wood and stakes with green badges at intervals along the paths.

**In return for their hospitality** Eling Estate expect the visitor to behave responsibly. Any activity other than walking, riding and cycling

should have permission from Eling Estate and no fires should be lit. The woods are commercial woodland and you should observe any restrictions in force during forestry operations.

**The woods are Ancient.** Technically this means they have been here since at least 1600, but these have been here since long before that.

You can tell that from the variety and density of the flowers that grow here and that are so beautiful in the Spring. Many are poor at spreading their seeds and if they are destroyed they do not easily return. Examples are the bluebells and wood anemones with which these woods are carpeted in the Spring.

Because so many people use the woods, from dog walkers to children from the school, many shy animals have moved to other woods and you are unlikely to see a fox or a badger unless you get up with the dawn and move very quietly. You may well see the little muntjak deer that can hide under a bracken frond and will not move until a dog spots them!

Woods are not the place to see many birds, but soaring red kites and buzzards are common around the edges.

#### Useful contacts and websites.

- Parish website  
[www.hampsteadnorreys.org.uk](http://www.hampsteadnorreys.org.uk)
- Eling Estate office 01635 200268
- West Berkshire Countryside Society  
[www.westberkscountryside.org.uk](http://www.westberkscountryside.org.uk)

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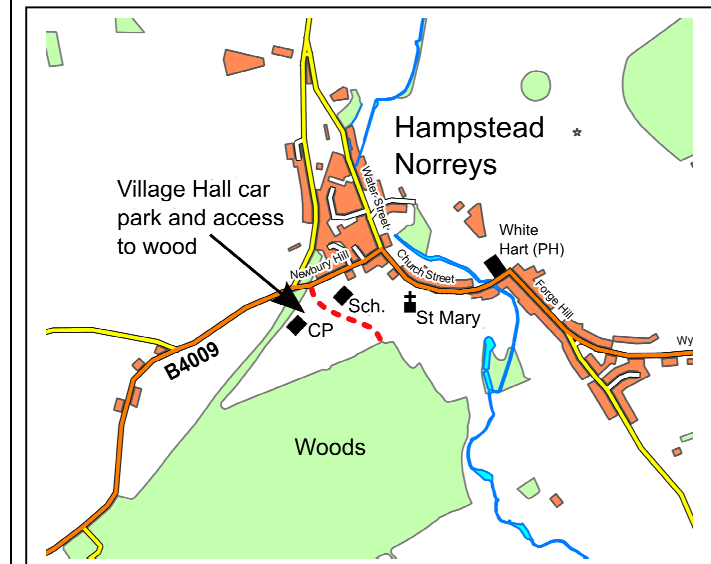
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West Berkshire  
Countryside Society

**Hampstead  
Norreys  
Parish  
Council**

## THE PATHS IN THE WOODS



Dick Greenaway and Nick Hopton 2013

Free download from

[www.hampsteadnorreys.org.uk](http://www.hampsteadnorreys.org.uk)  
[www.westberkscountryside.org.uk](http://www.westberkscountryside.org.uk)