

Outline proposal for a 'Three Villages' walk, between Broomfield, Little Waltham and Great Waltham

Background

The proposal is for a waymarked circular recreational walk between Broomfield, Little Waltham and Great Waltham villages.

- The full route is 11km, or just under 7 miles, and should take somewhere between 2 and 3 hours to walk.
- The route is divided into three sections, assuming section 1 starts and section 3 finishes at Church Green, Broomfield:
 - 1- Broomfield to Great Waltham (4km/2.5 miles)
 - 2 - Great Waltham to Little Waltham (2.5km/1.5 miles)
 - 3 - Little Waltham to Broomfield (4.5km/<3 miles)
- The route predominantly uses public rights of way, pavements or roads.
 - For Section 3, there two route options are shown south of Croxton's Mill.
 - Option 3a uses Public Rights of Way / footways only, but includes a section by the main road.
 - A nicer alternative would be Option 3b through Newlands Grove Nature Reserve (Essex Wildlife Trust) and across an (existing) permissive path onto Mill Lane. However these are not rights of way and as such would require explicit landowner permission for the walk to be routed this way. No approach to landowners has been made at this stage.
- There is one main road crossing required across a single carriageway section of the B1008 between Great Waltham and Little Waltham. This is at a designated point where the footpath(s) meet the road, but where there is no signalled pedestrian crossing.
- The paths are generally good, but the sections alongside or across fields can get muddy in poor weather. The section through the wooded area between Croxton's Mill and Newlands Grove Nature Reserve (Option 3b) can be particularly boggy during wet weather (avoided in Option 3a).
- Each of the sections passes through, or alongside, a number of points of interest in the village(s), which could be described in an accompanying leaflet.
- Each section of route passes through or close to a number of pubs or cafes, allowing people to break for refreshments.
- Subject to agreement with Essex Highways/landowners, the route could be waymarked on existing waymarker posts. This would mean the only costs would be for the waymarkers and for any leaflet production. Maintenance / replacement of the waymarkers would need to be undertaken locally.
- Essex Highways have confirmed the proposed route (via Option 3a) follows public rights of way.
- The map and directions below are designed to give an indication of the route only, and are not suggested text for any leaflet that might be produced.
- The walk would need a name, e.g. Three (Four?) Villages Walk, Broomfield & The Walthams Circular, etc.
- Broomfield Parish Council agreed to support the walk at their March 2022 Full Council meeting.

The aim at this stage is to understand whether the Parish Council would be interested in the concept of the walk and the proposed route. Comments and suggestions on the route or any amendments are very much welcomed.

David Thomas (10.5.22)

Section 1 – Broomfield to Great Waltham

Runs from Church Green to Great Waltham via Partridge Green Farm and Broad's Green

Refreshments along / near this section of the walk: The King's Arms (Broomfield), The Walnut Tree (Broad's Green), The Stores (Great Waltham), Great Waltham Village Stores (Great Waltham), The Beehive (Great Waltham)

- The route starts at Church Green at the War Memorial, and follows footpath 10 at the back of the green towards Broomfield Hall, round the back of the church on footpath 11 towards CVHS and takes a left up New Barn Lane along path footpath 9. It runs along the edge of the fields and cuts through a small wooded area along footpath 8, joins footpath 7 and emerges on Partridge Green Lane.
- There is a small on-road section (200m) to Partridge Green farm, but the road provides access to the farm only and is rarely busy.
- The path follows Footpath 1 / Great Waltham Path 84 into Broad's Green, emerging on Lark's Lane onto the village green.
- There is another on-road section here (150m)¹ down Hoe Lane towards Great Waltham, before joining Great Waltham path 79 on the right, running along the edge of the fields and over a footbridge across a stream, into the back of Great Waltham.
- The footpath emerges onto South Street. The walk continues to the right along South Street towards Great Waltham Primary School and the first section ends at the junction with South Street and Chelmsford Road, opposite the church.

¹ It would be possible to avoid this on-road section by diverting around the edge of Broad's Green along the river in a triangle, adding approximately 300m to the walk

Section 2 – Great Waltham to Little Waltham

Starts at the South St / Chelmsford Road Junction, loops through the Churchyard and the Langleys estate, before emerging further along Chelmsford Road, with a walk across fields before crossing the B1008 and through more fields into Little Waltham.

Refreshments along / near this section of the walk: The Stores (Great Waltham), Great Waltham Village Stores (Great Waltham), The Beehive (Great Waltham), The Rose & Crown (Great Waltham), the White Hart (Little Waltham)

- This section of the route starts at the junction between South Street and Chelmsford Road, facing the church.
- The route takes a right towards the War Memorial, follows Footpath 115 towards the churchyard then emerges on the far side of the churchyard onto Main Road. The route continues out of the churchyard, taking a right along the pavement, passing over Walthambury Brook, and enters the Langleys estate through a kissing gate.
- The path proceeds uphill along Footpath 68 until it reaches a metalled road and Footpath 71, then turns right towards Langleys, passing the main house and then exits the estate via the South Lodge, back onto Chelmsford Road.
- The walk continues south out of Great Waltham along Chelmsford Road, past the Rose & Crown pub and surrounding cottages.
- At the end of the village (opposite Windmill House) the path turns left and crosses diagonally through a field along Footpath 76 towards the B1008.
- The paths cross the (busy) B1008 at a single carriageway section and enters Little Waltham along Footpath 22. [It's not too difficult to cross here, but it is a fast road]
- The walk continues left into a Little Waltham, up The Street over Winckford Bridge. This section of the walk finishes at the War Memorial.

Section 3 (Option 3a) – Little Waltham to Broomfield (via Main Road)

Starts at Little Waltham War Memorial, runs alongside the river through Little Waltham Meadows (Essex Wildlife Trust) to Croxton's Mill, then across the river, and over the grassland towards Main Road. Then along Main Road to Mill Lane, down to Broomfield Mill, and back to Church Green via Broomfield FC, Angel Field & Sweeps Walk.

Refreshments along / near to this section of the walk: The White Hart (Little Waltham), The Angel (Broomfield), Cheerful Chai (Broomfield), The King's Arms (Broomfield)

- The route follows Little Waltham Path 23 to the left of the War Memorial, along the river and through a tree tunnel onto Glebe Field. The route bears right across Glebe Field on Little Waltham Path 24 and turns right onto Little Waltham path 28. It continues through a wooded area alongside the river before emerging at Little Waltham Meadows.
- Through Little Waltham meadows the route follows Little Waltham Paths 27 and 41 (cutting the corner via one of marked paths in the reserve that isn't a footpath) and emerges at Croxton's Mill.
- At Croxton's Mill, turn right across the footbridges, cross the river and take FP40/FP28 towards Main Road.
- Follow Main Road towards the centre of Broomfield, taking a left turn onto Mill Lane (a short section of on-road walking, but again with low-speed traffic as Mill Lane is a dead-end). Follow Mill Lane down to Broomfield Mill and across the bridge to see the river, before doubling back to the bottom of Mill Lane.
- The path turns left on leaving Broomfield Mill and continues through Footpath Field and Broomfield FC into Angel Meadow, leaving via Sweeps Walk (FP15) and emerging opposite Angel Green.
- The route returns to Church Green along Main Road.

Section 3 (Option 3b) – Little Waltham to Broomfield (via Newlands Grove)

N.B. Landowner approval would be required to route the walk this way

As per section 3 to Croxton's Mill, then through a wooded area (old gravel pits) and Newlands Grove (Essex Wildlife Trust), via a permissive path onto Mill Lane & Broomfield Mill, then back to Church Green via Broomfield FC, Angel Field & Sweeps Walk.

Refreshments along / near to this section of the walk: The White Hart (Little Waltham), The Angel (Broomfield), Cheerful Chai (Broomfield), The King's Arms (Broomfield)

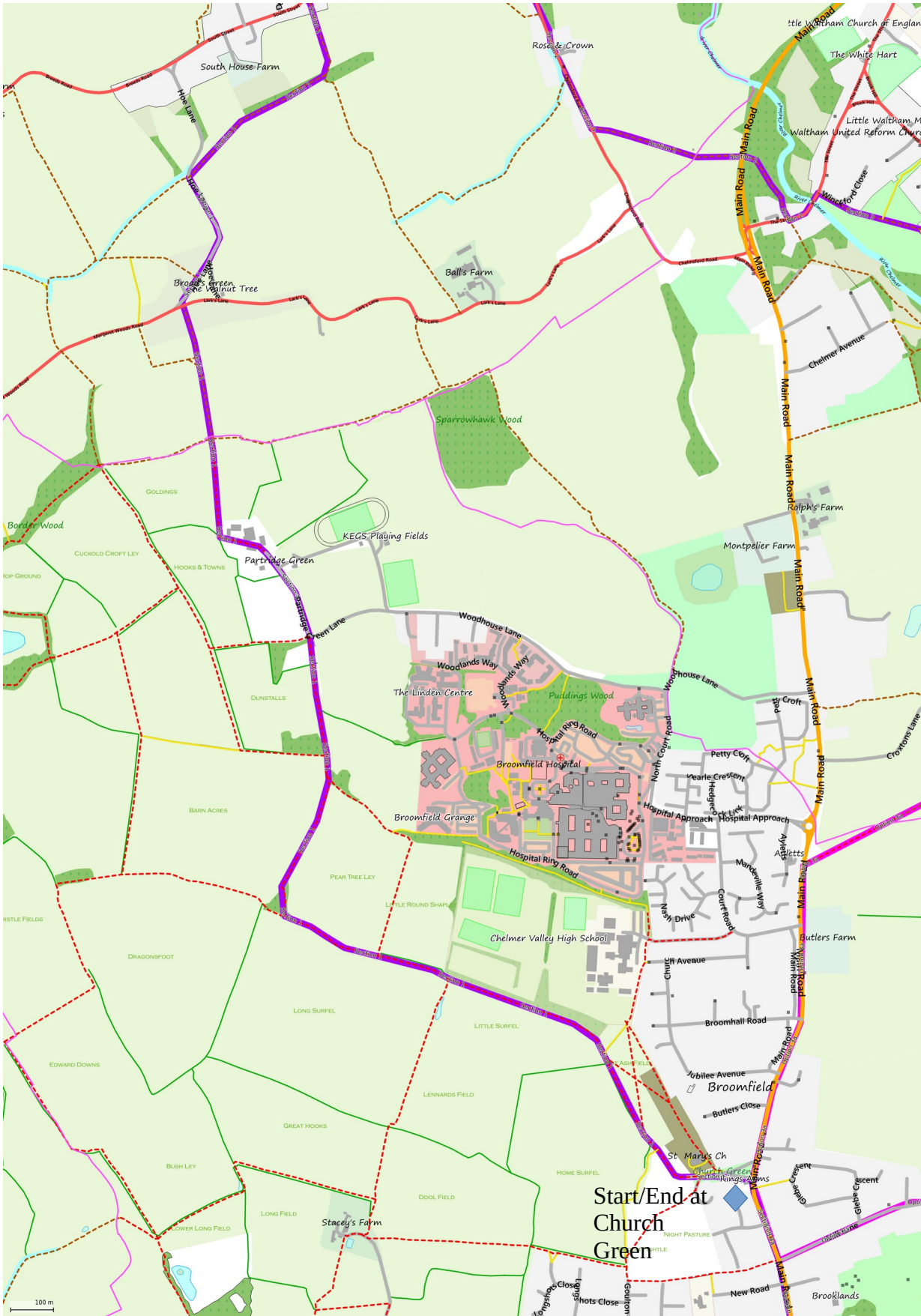
- As per section 3, but approaching the footbridges at Croxton's Mill the path takes a left along path 42, follows the fields next to the river, until it enters a boggy wooded area (old gravel pits) and through a metal gate onto Broomfield path 37.
- The path continues alongside the river until it reaches the boundary with Newlands Grove Nature Reserve.
- The walk continues through the nature reserve by the river path. At the far boundary of the nature reserve the path continues through grassland via a permissive path onto Mill Lane.
- At Mill Lane the route continues left, down the hill and over the bridges to Broomfield Mill.
- The path turns left on leaving Broomfield Mill and continues through Footpath Field and Broomfield FC into Angel Meadow, leaving via Sweeps Walk (FP15) and emerging opposite Angel Green.
- The route returns to Church Green along Main Road.²

² Once the new cycle path section opens between Goulton Road and Broomfield Hall, this last section could turn right down Main Road from Sweeps Walk, across the road at the pedestrian crossing opposite Mill Lane, up Footpath 15 behind Broomfield Primary School to Goulton Road, and back to Church Green via the new cycleway.

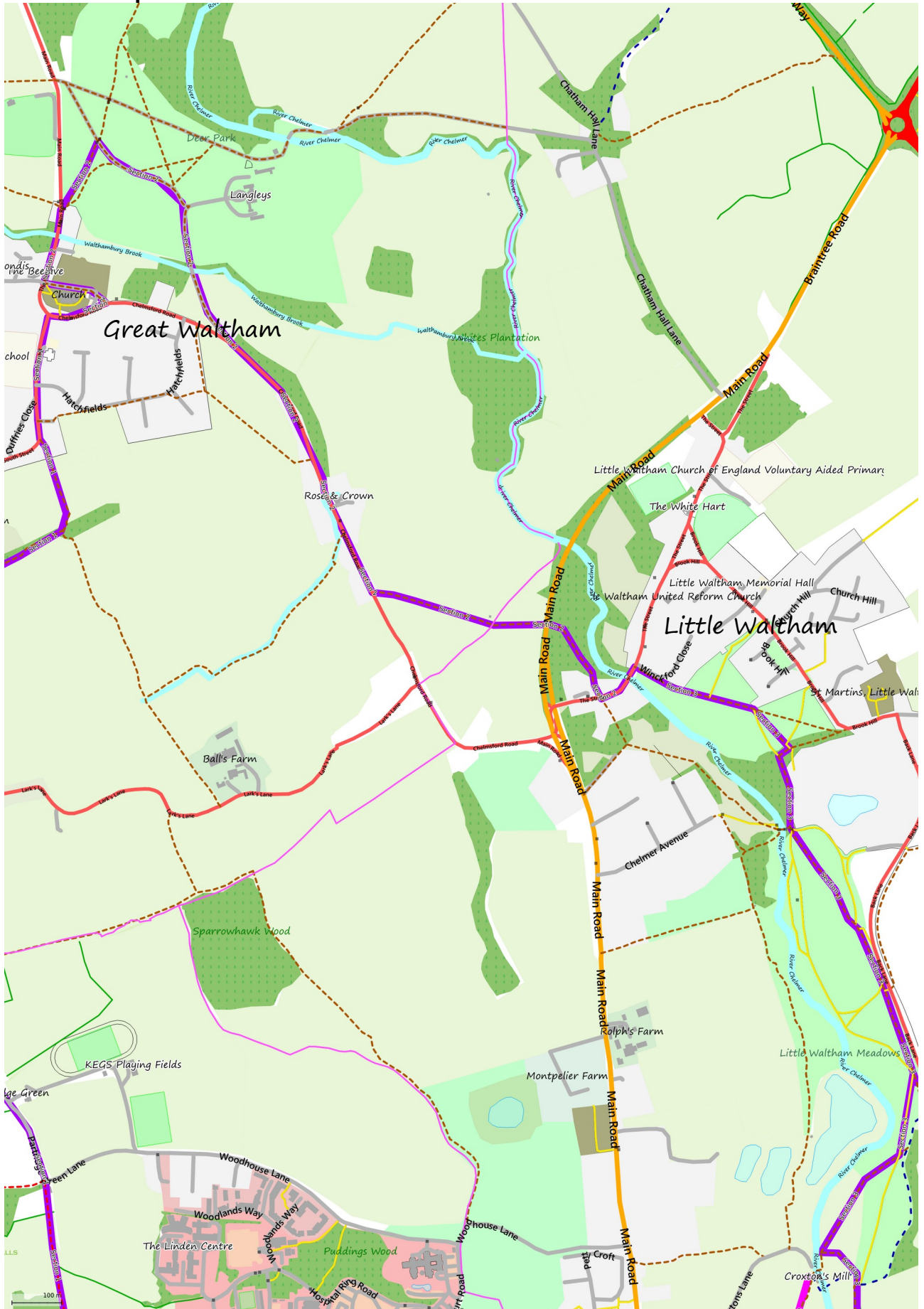
Maps

- The proposed route is shown in purple highlight
- Section 3 (option 3a) is shown in pink, with Section 3 (option 3b) shown in purple, with comments in orange to clarify where the routes diverge.
- Public rights of way are shown as red/dark brown dashed lines
- Yellow lines show paths or tracks which are not public rights of way.

Section 1 – Broomfield to Great Waltham



Section 2 & part section 3– Great Waltham to Little Waltham to Croxton's Mill



Section 3 (part) – Croxton's Mill to Broomfield

