

Ashtead Village HERITAGE TRAIL

Total length of trail, **1.6 miles (2.5km)** Buildings mentioned in the text shown **1 – 15**

Ashtead is completely surrounded by Green Belt land and, even today, 60% of the its area is open space. Because of this, and also because the built-up area is still completely residential, with no light industry, it retains a village atmosphere that is surprising in a place that is only 18 miles from central London. Ashtead Village lies in a gentle bowl. Its main road, The Street, is fairly wide and, with its pleasant architecture and low-rise shops, it has an attractive and welcoming atmosphere. There are over 60 shops, agencies and outlets offering a variety of goods, several restaurants with different cuisines, and two pubs.

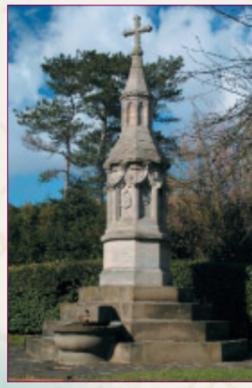
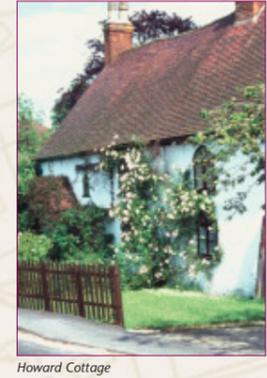
A Start in the pay-&-display car-park of the **Ashtead Peace Memorial Hall 1**, in Woodfield Lane, built in 1927 and the centre of village life.

Cross to the other side of the Lane and walk up towards the village centre to The **Brewery Inn 2**. This started in c.1800 as the beerhouse of an adjacent brewery. From here, you have a good view across to **The Leg of Mutton & Cauliflower 3**, public house. The earliest reference to this old pub dates from 1769. Its name commemorates the produce of the livestock and fields.

Cross the road at the pedestrian crossing just up the hill, and turn into Rectory Lane. This is the original axis of the village, and still contains many of the oldest, timber-framed, houses. The first of these, mid 17th century **Fowler's 4**, is named after a late 19th century builder who owned it. **Applebough 5**, was probably built early in the 17th century. The building behind it was once a school, but later became a hand laundry run by the Prosser family. Just beyond it lie **Wistaria Cottage** and **Forge Cottage 6**, in Blacksmith Close.

They are parts of a timber-framed house built in c.1580, the oldest house in the village. From early in the 18th century, the Close was the yard of an extensive wheelwrights' and blacksmiths' business. From 1847 this was run by the Wyatt family, who made millers' wagons that were sold throughout south-east England.

Now turn right along Parker's Hill to find **Ashtead Lodge 7**, on your right. It was earlier called Prospect Place because it had an extensive vista over the fields westwards towards Leatherhead. The present building dates from the 18th century, and in the early 19th century it was owned by a barrister named James Parker, who is commemorated in the names of the neighbouring roads. The grounds were surrounded by a high brick wall, the remains of which can still be seen.



Above: The Alms Houses
Right: The Howard Memorial



St Giles
CofE Infant School



St Giles
Parish Church

Now retrace your steps to Rectory Lane. On your right is the early 17th century timber-framed **Howard Cottage 8**, while its neighbour, no. 3 Parkers Lane, was built in the 18th century. In the 19th century they provided lodgings for men who worked at the forge in Rectory Lane. Opposite you, **The Old Rectory 9**, was the second rectory built in Ashtead; there had been an earlier one further west, in Ottways Lane. This one was built in the 18th century and, like Ashtead Lodge, was surrounded by high brick walls.

B The **Old Bakery 10**, can just be seen behind the hedge at the corner of Crampshaw Lane and Dene Road. It originally consisted of two cottages dating from the 17th and early 18th centuries, which were used as a baker's shop from 1720. Turn left into Dene Road. On your right is **The Old Parsonage 11**, the third of the Ashtead rectories and built in about 1930. Continuing along Dene Road, **St Giles' Church of England Infant School 12**, dates from 1852 when Mary Howard (see no. 15) had it built. She later gave the school and the land to the Rector for the education of the poor boys and girls of the parish, from the age of two. It became a state-aided primary school after the Second World War.

Now continue along Dene Road, cross Park Lane and walk up to St Giles Church.

TAKE CARE IN THE NEXT STRETCH OF THE VILLAGE TRAIL, AS THERE ARE NO PAVEMENTS

Now turn right, continuing along Rectory Lane to Crampshaw Lane, which leads to the South Walk (see overleaf).

C The **Norman Parish Church of St Giles, 13**, was built in about 1120 adjacent to the manor-house of the Lord of the Manor, as his private chapel. The pretty building therefore lies in a quiet spot, amid the trees, far from the bustle of the village. It did not have its own priest until 1282, when the original simple chancel was rebuilt. The priest only started to live in the parish as Vicar in the 14th century, supported by the product of his 30 acres of "glebe" (church) land and tithes of his parishioners. Built of flint, the church itself remained little changed until the 19th century, when the Howard family (see overleaf) paid for many improvements – a north transept, south porch, 15th-16th century east window (from Liège Abbey in France, which was demolished after the French Revolution), the roof of the nave embellished with carvings and cedar panelling, and a new organ and bells.

The welcoming church interior contains a memorial to Lady Diana Feilding, née Howard, Lady of the Manor 1701-1731. At the eastern end of the churchyard lies the chest-tomb of Peter Hamelot, a French Huguenot refugee who was Rector of St Giles for 43 years!

Return to Park Lane and continue up it to The Street.

At the corner on your left lie the attractive **Almshouses, 14**, founded by Lady Diana Feilding in 1730, and added to by her descendant Mary Howard, to whose memory the **Howard Memorial, 15**, across the road, was erected in 1879.

Continue westwards along the south side of The Street, cross at the traffic lights and return to the Car Park, 1.

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