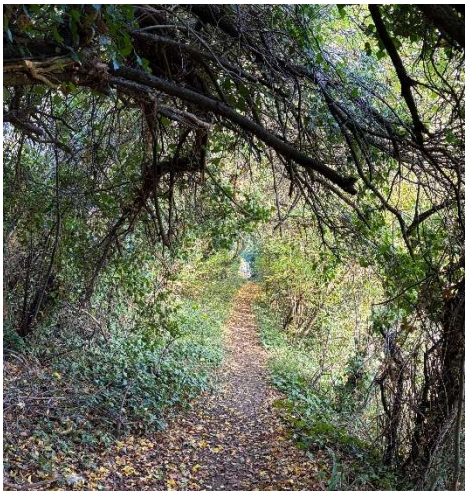
# Walk 1 - Hardwick Woods - October 2026



So: first on Eric‘s list of longer walks is a route called Hardwick Woods and like all of his walks listed he starts it at the junction of Manor Road and the High Street. But given the fact that we covered the first part of the route in the introductory walk, I thought I’d pick up the start of this walk as we head out the village, as the speed limit goes from 20 to de-restricted, on



Hardwick Road.

I love walking along the Jubilee Path, which is a raised little hidden path almost entirely overhung by a corridor of hedgerow trees like blackthorn and hawthorn along the left-hand side. You get some beautiful views peeking out in the gaps out over to the alpacas: particularly from the bench a short way along the longer second section. This is another one of my favourite village views!



As you travel further along Hardwick Road you get to see the alpacas and today and, as I was walking it, a whole field full of geese grazing on the grass. The sun was starting to get low in the skies as I walked. I set off around 2:30pm on Halloween so with the sun behind me I had some beautiful views as the trees start to turn into the autumn colours in the distance in Hardwick

Woods as you head towards them down the road.



I think one of my other favourite parts of the village at this time of year is after you have passed the Hardwick gates, now painted dark green. You walk down the quiet road feeling a little like you are in a channel surrounded and overhung by the golden oranges and yellows of the trees. It's absolutely beautiful at this late October time of year. In Eric's original walk description it talks about late October being the best time to do this walk and I totally agree with him. One of the biggest reasons is this avenue of beautiful trees looking absolutely gorgeous in the autumn.

I also quite like the fact that this flatter route until the Hardwick House turning marks a transition between the Thames Valley floodplain off to the right and the beginning of the southern edge of the Chiltern Hills off to the left. So you get two quite different geographies, views, nature and landscapes on either side of you.

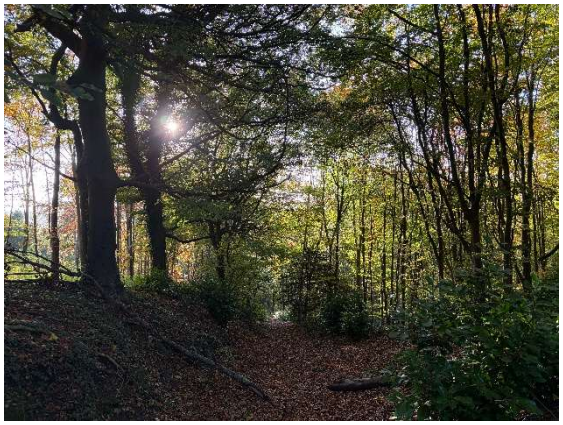


When you get to the junction of multiple paths and driveways you take a sharp left almost slightly back on yourself and you suddenly realise that you're walking on Chiltern chalk up into the beautiful Hardwick woods. You get some really lovely mixed woodland here which looks wonderful as you walk up the chalk slope. There are all sorts of different trees; my particular favourites are the large, quite old, yews. You also get some lovely little peeks through the trees at views that you can glimpse back down into the river valley: now down on your left.



As you gradually flatten out you go past whatever Eric refers to as the Bear Pit. There has been a bit of an archaeological investigation there recently so we shall see what more they find about the history of that site hopefully at some point. Then you head more into beech wood as you reach the top of the hill. I think beech woodland looks fantastic with a low sun through the trees; almost like the inside of a cathedral with the

tall trunks as pillars and the arching branches overhead like the roof.



Walking further on, past Path Hill, and again you get some glimpses of some lovely views as you turn to head down the hill, dropping back into the river basin down the steeper path with more sunlight steaming through the woodland. Late afternoon really has to be the best time to walk this route!



You then head into the field opposite, often with grazing cattle, or sledges when it snows, then back along Hardwick Road into the village. I very much had sun in my eyes today which made for some lovely views; warm coat as well as sunglasses required today. My perfect autumnal combination!

So I'd really encourage you to get out and enjoy this walk, particularly in autumn, as Eric recommends!