

Chislehurst, Hawkwood, Petts Wood, Scadbury

- 1** As you approach a gate, take a path left and across the brook. Climbing on the far side look for a fork right (signed with a yellow walk waymarker) and follow the path round, down and round the bottom of the pond. Continue following the waymarkers until you get to note 3.
- 2** When leaving the lane take the foot path, not the bridle path. At some point these will diverge and you will pass Flushers Pond.
- 3** At the end of the field on your left, swap over to the green walk, around Petts Wood. After a short spell on a bridle path (shared with LOOP) watch for a green walk sign to the right. Follow it to the Willets memorial then continue on a track that bends round to regain the bridle path.
- 4** Just before the lodge of Scadbury Park turn right for the longer walk and follow LOOP signs. For the shorter walk turn left and follow the track along the common to Royal Parade.
- 5** For more of Petts Wood take the long way round the green walk to the Willets monument.
- 6** The route here passes a Rhododendron Walkway and then patches of heather.
- 7** The route down to the station is busy with traffic and not pleasant. Consider getting a bus from one of these stops

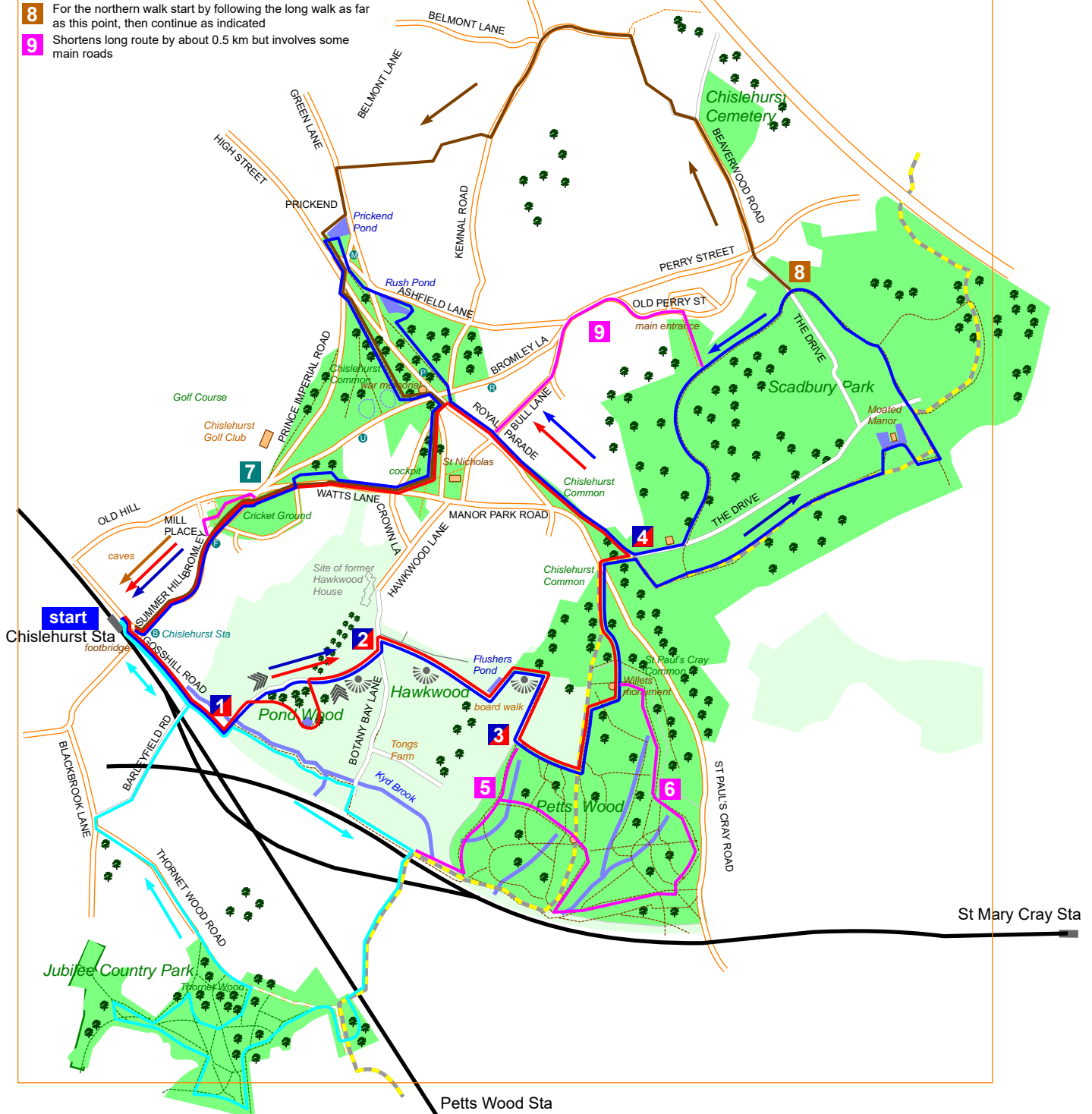
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| 269 | R | U | F |
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- 8** For the northern walk start by following the long walk as far as this point, then continue as indicated
- 9** Shortens long route by about 0.5 km but involves some main roads

- Longer route 11 km
- Shorter route 6 km
- Northern walk 12 km
- Jubilee Park walk 6 km
- options
- London LOOP
- Railway

10 connection with another walk

1 kilometre

Northern walk is under review



walk background notes

In addition to its ponds and commons, Chislehurst is lucky to have several neighbouring 'publicly owned' areas which can be connected to form a variety of walks. The walking is variable - some uneven surfaces and mud, paths and gravel tracks.

Chislehurst

Chislehurst probably dates back to Saxon times, as its name suggests, a woody place and until the mid C19 and the coming of the railway remained a rural community. It was originally part of Dartford Manor until in 1611, Thomas Walsingham IV, Lord of the Manor of neighbouring Scadbury, purchased Dartford Manor and promptly sold most of it, retaining Chislehurst, to become Lord of both Scadbury and Chislehurst Manors.

In 1391 the Manor of Kemnal was purchased from monks by William of Wykeham, and used to endow his New College at Oxford and was held by New College until the 1870s.

Chislehurst's four communities were separated by three Commons.

● **Prickend**

The area around the High Street was originally known as Prickend, from which Prickend Pond derives its name.

● **Royal Parade**

The Bull's Head Inn was a busy coaching inn located at an important cross-roads and this, together with the nearby Parish Church of St Nicholas, were reasons why the area around Royal Parade became a community. The later named Royal Parade is reportedly a reference to the French Imperial Family, who arrived in exile in 1871.

● **Mill Place**

On the hillside between Summer Hill and Old Hill, Mill Place was, even in the 19th Century, an independent community with its own church, police station and of course public houses. It may have developed because of the chalk works at the Caves.

● **Old Perry Street**

A fourth settlement grew up along what is now Old Perry Street, as a result of the needs of the nearby estates, especially Scadbury, Homewood and Frognaal, and included a laundry, school, shops and a public house.

Camden Place

Historian and antiquarian William Camden moved to Chiselhurst in 1609 at the age of 58 until his death in 1623. The estate, including a

later house, was bought by Charles Pratt, who took from it the name of his Baronetcy. He was later to call his London development Camden Town. (See walk 22c). A later occupant of the house, from 1871 until his death there in 1873, was the exiled French Emperor, Napoleon III. The house is now the Club House of Chiselhurst Golf Club.

The church of St Nicholas

For one thousand years until Victorian times this was the only parish church. Rebuilt many times, the current church was built in the 15th century, and enlarged in the 19th. The 15th century rebuilding incorporated the west wall of the earlier church, and a small Saxon window is visible outside the west door. The Norman font is also still in use. Nikolaus Pevsner remarks upon its 'tall shingled spire, quite a landmark.

The church of the Annunciation

In the 1860s, small houses were being built for workers in the village of Prickend. Canon Francis Murray, Rector of Chislehurst, realised that the area was rapidly developing and needed its own church. His vision as part of the Anglo-Catholic revival was for a lofty building with beautiful stained glass and wall paintings designed to uplift and inspire the worshipper. The church of the Annunciation was funded by the people of Chislehurst, designed and built by James Brooks, consecrated in 1870 and became a parish church in 1871.

St John's Mission Church

St John's Mission Church was built in 1886 in red and yellow bricks with a bell turret, and space for mission rooms below. Congregations dwindled in C20 and in 1938 worship ceased. It was demolished in 1998, replaced by housing.

The Caves

The caves are a tourist attraction and although called caves, they are entirely man-made and were dug and used as chalk and flint mines. The earliest recorded mention of the mines and lime burning kilns above, is a 9th century Saxon charter. There is a reference around 1232 and they are believed to have been last worked in the 1830s.

Petts Wood and Hawkwood

The Pett family were shipbuilders who leased the wood as a source of timber. Originally just 88 acres were bought by public subscription and donated to the National Trust in 1927. Neighbouring Hawkwood Estate and Edlmann Wood, comprising a further 250 acres, were donated to the Trust by landowners Robert and

Francesca Hall in 1957.

The rich variety of native trees includes oak, beech, ash, alder, and hazel alongside planted species such as Scots pine, larch and sweet chestnut.

Areas of ancient woodland to the west of the estate boast a showing of wild flowers in the springtime. Bluebells, wood anemone and lesser celandine are easily found woodland flowers. There are early purple orchids on the estate and a wealth of other flowers such as wood sorrel, climbing corydalis, Solomon's seal and yellow archangel. Over 400 species of fungi have been recorded since 1976, and an average of 130 species recorded each year. Walking through the estate, the distinctive call of the chiffchaff and the hammering of woodpeckers can be heard. Siskins and tits can be seen in the woodland canopy, kingfishers can occasionally be seen in Pond Wood or along the Kyd Brook and those with a keen eye can see a hobby searching for its insect prey. A range of butterflies can be spotted, including Brimstone Yellows, Orange Tips and Speckled Woods.

The wood includes two memorials, to two locals, William Willetts (British Summer Time) and Colonel Edlmann.

Small areas of heather and an area of Rhododendron are located on the east side of Petts Wood.

Scadbury Park

Scadbury Park preserves much of the original Scadbury Manor estate which archaeological investigation has shown was first settled around 1200. The remains of the early manor-house complex, surrounded by a moat can be still be seen in the Park, albeit amongst later works. Early holders of the estate were the de Scathebury family, who presumably took their name from the estate. In 1424, the manor was purchased by wealthy London merchant Thomas Walsingham and his wife Margaret. The property remained in the family until sold in 1660. Thomas Walsingham IV went on to acquire the Manor of Chislehurst and was knighted by Queen Elizabeth I, depicted on the village sign at Royal Parade. His cousin Sir Francis Walsingham was Elizabeth's Spymaster. On 28 March 1945, the last World War II V1 flying bomb to cause damage in England fell on the Scadbury farmyard demolishing the medieval barn and damaging surrounding buildings. The estate was put on the market in 1982; the

country house, left empty in 1975, had burned down in 1976.

LB Bromley bought the bulk of the Scadbury estate in 1983 and decided to designate Scadbury Park as a Local Nature Reserve with nature trails and footpaths and it was opened to the Public.

Within the park are the remains of the manor complex which consists of the manor-house itself, the moat, two medieval fishponds and associated outbuildings. The original manor-house would have been timber-framed. However, the house on the island was demolished in 1738 and later replaced. In 2013, the manor site (including the island, the moat, the fishponds and the area around it) was scheduled as an Ancient Monument and placed on English Heritage's 'At Risk' register in 2014 and consideration is now being given to how best to conserve the early brick foundations of the Walsingham manor-house. A well signed circular nature trail has been developed within the bounds of the park, through woodland and open farmland.

Jubilee Park

In 1871 the area was farmland. In 1916 the developer of the Bickley Park Estate turned the 62 acre site into a golf course, managed as West Kent Golf Club until WWII. During the war it was taken over for the Thornet Wood Heavy Anti-Aircraft battery which was sited to the north-east, complete with accommodation for up to 200 people and all the associated buildings and gun emplacements. Following the war the land was let for grazing. Housing development threatened the site in 1968 and 1973, but Petts Wood Residents Association mounted a campaign and, following a public enquiry in 1974, the land was purchased by London Borough of Bromley in 1977 and named to mark the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II. Jubilee Country Park was officially opened as a country park in 1981. The park is made up of nearly 25 hectares of mixed woodlands, meadowland, hedges and scrub. Thornet Wood, an ancient woodland, is included. In 1996 the site was declared a local nature reserve. Our route follows a signed nature trail by the Council, pointing out many plants, including a field of rare corky-fruited water dropwort.

Acknowledgements to The Chislehurst Society, National Trust, Scadbury Park Friends, Wikipedia and others.