

# The Hemingfords, Houghton Mill & St. Ives Circular Trail



**Distance:** 9.32 km

**Difficulty:** Easy

**Dog Friendly:** Yes

**Ascent/Descent:** Easy (+/- 350 metres)

**Toilets:** At the pubs, watermill and St. Ives

**Wildlife:** Nothing of note

**Endomondo GPS track:** [View/Download here](#)



*The Hemingfords and St. Ives circular walking route (Google Maps)*

**Starting location:** at The Cock pub in Hemingford Grey (satnav: 47 High Street, PE28 9BJ).

1. With your back to the pub, set off down the road to the right (on High Street, towards the river). Take the riverside path, with the river on your right (pictured right), following it along and ignoring a worn path off to the left. The path crosses two fields and then passes through a narrow passage, emerging on the street in Hemingford Abbots.

2. Here, turn right and follow the road along, passing The Axe and Compass pub on the right. Continue straight on down the road, which becomes Common Lane, until you see a signpost off to the right down Meadow Lane. Follow the lane along and cross the bridge over the River Ouse. Continue ahead and cross the field and then cross over at the weirs. You will then be at the National Trust Houghton Water Mill (pictured right).



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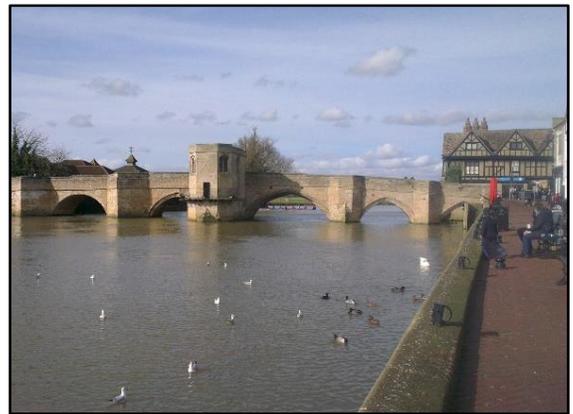
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Although The Three Jolly Butchers pub is not on the route, we recommend searching it out in Houghton. Standing with your back to the front of the café at the water mill, set off right and then almost immediately left, across to the back of the caravan park, where there is a marked footpath sign. Go right on the footpath, which follows a wall along on your left.



3. You will shortly come out on a track; turn left and at the tarmac road, turn right. Follow the road (pictured left) along until you come out at a church in St. Ives. Here, turn left and then almost-immediately right down Church Lane, which follows the wall of the church yard on your right. You come to a road with the Merchant House pub on your left. At the road, however, you will turn right and follow the road as it bears left and heads into the town centre. St. Ives is a lovely little town to explore – stay a while, like we did, and enjoy its charm! When you are ready to continue the walk, look for Free Church Lane (on

your right as you entered the town, about 30 metres before the statue) and follow it, coming out by the riverside. Here, go right and cross over the old bridge (pictured right) you will see ahead of you.



4. Cross the bridge and then, after the hotel on your right, follow the path which sets off through the hotel car park and into a grass field on your right. The path heads over to the left of the field and follows the field boundary along. Pass through the gate at the other end of the field and continue to follow the road track straight on. You will come to a green (Meadow Close) with several houses facing it. Turn right and the foot path goes off ahead and to the left (to the left side of number 5 Meadow Close). Where the path comes to a road, turn left and the after 100 metres, turn right onto the marked footpath known as Love Lane. When Love Lane comes to a road in Hemingford Grey, turn right onto Church Street, and then take the first left onto Church Lane; this will bring you back to our start point at The Cock pub.

### **Pub 1: The Axe and Compass**

The Axe and Compass dates back to the 15th century and is dog and walker-friendly. This picturesque pub offers well-kept real ales, fine wines and freshly prepared food. It has a beautiful beer garden with an AI fresco bar and dining area, large patio & children's play area, all set against the backdrop of the village church spire. You can access their website [here](#).



## **Pub 2: The Three Jolly Butchers**

The Three Jolly Butchers is a rustic inn with an inglenook fireplace, ceiling beams and a large beer garden that leads down to the Jolly Butcher moorings on the River Ouse. The building's chimney has the date 1622 on it, giving you an idea as to the age of the building. The Landlord of this free house since April 2000 is Ian, who offer ales from Greene King - IPA, Abbot Ale, London Glory and a guest ale. Lagers from Peroni, San Miguel, Becks, Stella 4 and Carlsberg. Draught cider from Aspoll Harry Sparrow and Thatcher's. You can view their website [here](#).



## **Pub 3: The Merchant House**

The Merchant House is a traditional pub fayre classic, offering food-themed nights such as pie night, burger night and Sunday roasts at very reasonable prices. The ale choices are fairly unimaginative, but you have a few staple choices to select from. This one is ideal for a quick half before continuing on with the walk, although the food has been receiving excellent reviews on TripAdvisor lately... website [here](#).



## **Pub 4: The Cock**

The Cock is a simple, yet elegant, village pub/restaurant serving fine real ales and seasonal, modern, British cuisine. The pub even has a wood-burner, making it ideal to warm those cold feet after completing this walk. The Cock featured in the Top 10 Pubs in the Country for 2016 (Good Pub Guide) and won National Pub of the Year in 2013. If that wasn't enough, you *must* try their home-made sausages... website [here](#).

## **Tips**

The final stretch of the walk can get a little waterlogged, particularly after rainfall, so bring good footwear and/or a change of socks.

The Houghton Water Mill is an idyllic spot for a pic-nic, should you wish to bring your own food, although it can get quite busy during the warm weather periods.

