

Sheering History

The first records of Sheering exist in the Domesday Book over 900 years ago. Already a thriving settlement, the village was noted for possessing one of only two mules in the country. The name Sheering probably originates from Scira, a Saxon leader who first cleared the area. As a result, the settlement was named Sciringa which has gradually been corrupted to Sheering.

Today, the village is quite extensive, but several old buildings survive along The Street. The oldest building is the church with which the marauding vicar of Sheering is associated. In 1320, the parson of Sawbridgeworth claimed the parson of Sheering was part of a renegade band of clergymen who grievously assaulted him, damaging his house, imprisoning his servants and stealing his seven horses and forty sheep.

In recent times, transport systems have greatly affected the village and its surrounding countryside. The Stort Navigation tow-path forms much of the northern and eastern section of the walk, and although originally built for commercial reasons, use of the canal is now mainly for leisure. It also forms an excellent habitat for wildlife. On a warm summer's day, dragonflies can be seen hawking over the water, and if you are lucky you may even catch a glimpse of a bank vole or a kingfisher.



St Mary's Church

About the Walk



Veteran Pendunculate Oak (near no. 2 on the map.)

The Sheering Country Walk is an attractive 7 1/2 mile circular walk off the Stort Valley Way. It will take approximately 5 hours to complete. Alternatively you can split the walk into two shorter circuits; the northern circuit is 3 3/4 miles long and the southern one is 5 miles.

The footpaths on the walk are in good condition, but they will become muddy after wet weather. There is a small amount of road walking involved along main roads. Please be aware of traffic and take care whilst walking on the road. In addition, please take note of the safety signs at the pedestrian railway crossing. As you walk please follow the Country Code. Keep dogs on a lead near livestock and keep to the footpath when walking across privately owned land.

There are several parking places, these are marked with a **P** on the map.

For any footpath queries please contact Essex County Council on 08457 430 430.

Countrycare website: www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/countrycare
Email: contactcountrycare@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Sheering Country Walk



Points of Interest

1. St Mary's Church

St Mary's Church dates back to Medieval times. Its claim to fame is that it has the largest central beam in Britain measuring 12 meters long. It was cut from an Oak in Hatfield Forest and then had to be dragged five miles to the church.

2. Sheering Copse

Most of the trees in the copse are relatively young with the exception of several ancient field maple coppice stools on the boundary ditches. The largest of these measures 4.8m in circumference. The presence of several Scots Pine indicates this may have been a plantation on a semi natural woodland site. In 2014 Countrycare signed a five year agreement with Sheering Parish Council to manage the site.

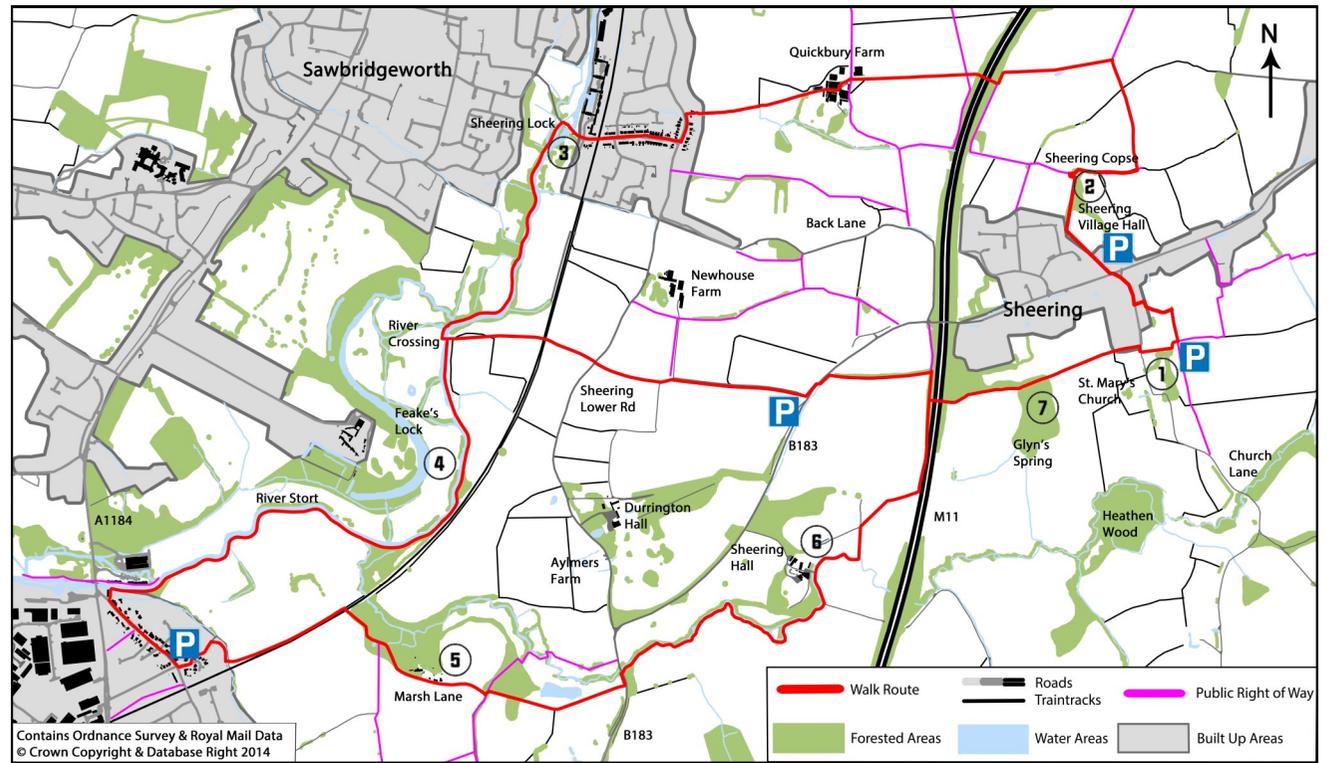


3. Sheering Mill Lane

Sheering Mill Lane once formed part of a major route from London to the North. This was probably because of the twenty-three public houses that could be found along its length. Many travellers from the capital made Sawbridgeworth their first stop. The 17th Century mill can still be found today standing beside the canal.

4. Feakes Lock

Named after the builder of nearby Durrington Hall, Feakes Lock is one of fifteen locks along the Stort Navigation. The canal was opened more than 200 years ago by Sir George Jackson as an easier way of transporting malted barley into London and bringing back timber and grain. However, the opening of the railway in 1842 marked the end of the Stort Navigation. Transporting goods by train was much faster, cheaper and allowed increased trade.



Four Spotted Chaser

5. Marsh Lane

The River Stort would have once been surrounded by wider marshland. Over time, this was drained and ditched, creating water meadows, allowing local people to take advantage of rich soils. Marsh Lane was probably a droving lane that allowed herdsmen to take cattle down to graze on these meadows.

6. Sheering Hall

Attractively positioned beside the Pincey Brook, the current Sheering Hall is over 300 years old. In the 1960s, the owner of Sheering Hall discovered underground tunnels linking the adjacent Durrington Hall and Aylmers Farm. These were large enough to stand up in, and it has been suggested that they may have been priest holes or used as arms caches during the Civil War. The original boundary to the Sheering Hall Estate is marked by hedgerows to the east and west of the M11. These hedgerows are thought to be as much as 700 years old.

7. Glyn's Spring

Almost two hundred years ago the Glyn family took over Sheering Hall, giving this relatively young woodland its name. The most famous member of the family was Elinor Glyn, who came to fame in the early 1900s through her steamy romantic novels which were adapted into Hollywood films. The nature of her books gave rise to the rhyme:

*"Would you like to sin with Elinor Glyn on a tiger skin?
Or would you rather err with her on a different fur?"*