

Explore, Discover & Enjoy! The Ayots

There is some great countryside in Hertfordshire for you to discover. This leaflet covers the area around the Ayots between Welwyn Garden City and Wheathampstead.

Quiet Lanes, many footpaths and bridleways including the Ayot Greenway make this area ideal to explore by foot and bicycle.

Why not leave the car at home and take the bike on the train to Welwyn Garden City? You can cycle through Sherrardspark Woods on the Ayot Greenway to explore the area.

A three year improvement programme on the greenway was completed in summer 2007 to provide a good surface throughout for all users. The path now provides a link directly into Wheathampstead village centre.

This leaflet shows you what you can see and visit in this beautiful area from historic houses and churches to ancient woodlands and old railway lines. What's more these places can also be accessed without the car.

Quiet Lanes



The Quiet Lanes project was developed by the Countryside Agency to preserve the character of country lanes and encourage walkers, cyclists and horse riders to 'share with care.' Ayot St Peter Rd, School Lane, Whitehill and Waterend Lane all form part of the Quiet Lanes network in the parish of Ayot St Peter linking footpaths, bridleways and cycle tracks.

Want to explore further?

There are a number of other free publications covering old railway lines in the area including the **Cole Green Way** (WGC - Hertford & Ware) and **Alban Way** (Hatfield - St Albans). **Cycling Discovery** maps also show some great rural rides in Hertfordshire.



Take the taxi bus - and get half price entry to Shaw's Corner!

To make it easier to get to the Ayots by public transport a taxi bus operates three times a day on Sundays and Bank Holidays between April and October. This service connects with local bus services at Wheathampstead from St Albans and Harpenden. Just call the taxi bus operator 20 minutes before its scheduled departure time and it will pick you up. Journey time between Wheathampstead and Ayot St Lawrence is only 10 minutes.



Through ticketing is available from St Albans. Bus services to Wheathampstead serve St Albans City station making it easy to go by train from London and the north. Ask for the "Plus Bus" add on at your railway station to include the bus and taxi bus fares. What's more, on production of your ticket you can get half price entry into Shaw's Corner at Ayot St Lawrence.

Pick up the 904 taxi bus leaflet for more details including things to do, places to eat and fare information. Alternatively contact Intalink for information.

Want to know more?

Walking & cycling

- For the Welwyn Hatfield area contact Pedal Point: Tel: 01707 357551 www.welhat.gov.uk/pedalpoint
- For the St Albans & Wheathampstead area contact St Albans City & District Council: Tel: 01727 866100, www.stalbans.gov.uk
- The Countryside Management Service has a series of local maps for walks & cycle rides: Tel: 01727 843067, www.hertsdirect.org.uk/cms
- Rights of Way: Tel: 01992 555555, www.hertsdirect.org.uk/row

Public Transport



- Bus information, timetables & fares: Tel: 0870 608 2 608, www.intalink.org.uk
- 904 Taxi Bus: Harpenden Taxi's: Tel: 01582 822822



- First Capital Connect rail services serving Welwyn Garden City, Harpenden & St Albans: www.firstcapitalconnect.co.uk
- National Rail Enquiries: Tel: 08457 48 49 50, www.nationalrail.co.uk

Local attractions



- Shaw's Corner, Ayot St Lawrence: Tel: 01438 820307, www.nationaltrust.org.uk

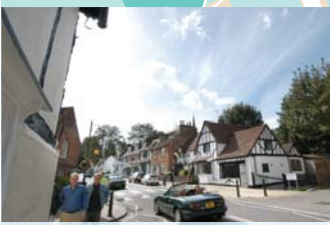


- Welwyn Roman Baths: Tel: 01707 271362, www.hertsmuseums.org.uk
- Lemsford Springs Nature Reserve: Tel: 01727 858901, www.wildlifetrust.org.uk/herts
- Stanborough Lakes, Welwyn Garden City: Tel: 01707 327655, www.stanboroughpark.com
- The Howard Centre, Welwyn Garden City: Tel: 01707 320026, www.howard-centre.co.uk



Described by former resident George Bernard Shaw as a "twelfth century village where the last thing of real importance was perhaps the Flood!" You can now visit the author's residence at Shaw's Corner (veteran cyclist in the gardens, below), discover the old church ruins or visit the 'new' 18th century church reminiscent of a classical Greek temple left.

Ayot St Lawrence & Shaw's Corner



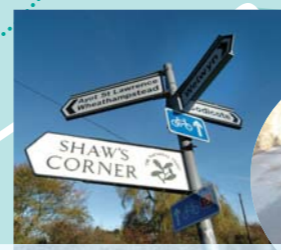
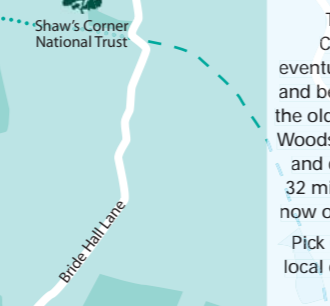
It is believed that the village name originates from 'wet homestead', being situated on the River Lea with its water meadows. Mentioned as far back as 1060, today the village is centred around the High Street with its pubs, small shops and the impressive 13th-14th century church of St Helens photo below.

Wheathampstead



Nomansland Common

Nomansland is a great place to explore on foot or sit back and watch the local cricketers during the summer months. Historically the common was used for horse racing, grazing and prize fighting, now flying model aircraft or kites are a more common sight.



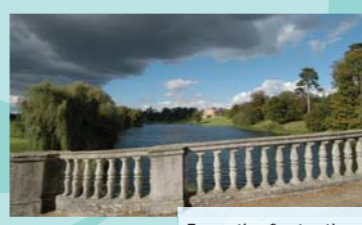
This route forms part of the National Cycle Network as Route 12 which will eventually link London with Peterborough and beyond! The Ayots section runs along the old railway line through Sherrardspark Woods, Quiet Lanes through Ayot St Peter and country lanes towards Codicote. The 32 mile route throughout Hertfordshire is now open from Potters Bar to Letchworth. Pick up information and a free map from local outlets including tourist information centres and Pedal Point.

The Great North Way



The Ayot Greenway links Welwyn Garden City with Wheathampstead. Ideal for walking and cycling, this predominantly traffic free route follows the former railway line that ran to Luton. Take a picnic to Robinsons Wood or explore one of the many footpaths off the greenway.

Ayot Greenway



From the footpath you can admire the mansion built in 1760 set in a magnificent park with a fine vista across the lake.

Brocket Hall

Built soon after World War One, the town was the second of Ebenezer Howard's Garden Cities. The concept behind the Garden City was to merge the best of town and country and help ease London's overcrowding. The first houses were occupied in 1920. Parts of the original settlement can be viewed by taking the Great North Way down Handside Lane. You can also shop at the Howard Centre or go boating at Stanborough Lakes to the south of the town centre.

Welwyn Garden City

From the old mill you can take a pleasant walk through the Brocket estate, or in the other direction along the River Lea to Stanborough Lakes. See also Lemsford Springs nature reserve - see inside for info.

Lemsford



Old Welwyn

Welwyn was of strategic importance because of its location in the Mimram Valley attracting settlers from as early as the Iron Age. Later the Romans settled in the area building their villas and bath houses. An example of which can be seen underneath the A1M at the Welwyn Roman Baths. Contact 01707 271362 for more information. In the 17th century Welwyn became an important staging post on the Great North Road.



This 200 acre wood is recognised as one of the finest examples of natural sessile oak and hornbeam woodland in Britain. There are many walks to choose from including the old railway line which can be explored from Campus West, Brockwood Lane or the B197 at Ayot Green. This path is suitable for cyclists, walkers and wheelchairs.

Sherrardspark Woods

