

Welcome to the new series of **circular pub walks along The Ridgeway National Trail**. These walks have been designed by Charles Whyhne-Hammond and the Friends of the Ridgeway.

Ivinghoe and the Rose & Crown and neighbouring Village Swan

An exhilarating walk to the top of Ivinghoe Beacon and the start (or finish) of the Ridgeway National Trail, 87 miles from Avebury in Wiltshire.



The ascent up to Ivinghoe Beacon

Distance: 8.5 km (5¼ miles); distance on Ridgeway: 1.8 km (1.1 miles)

Maps: OS Explorer 181, OS Landranger 165 and [AllTrails.com](https://www.alltrails.com)

Highlight: Ivinghoe Beacon and the Iron Age hillfort.

Accessibility: Challenging with kissing gates, a steep ascent and descent from Ivinghoe Beacon, very slippery in the rain!

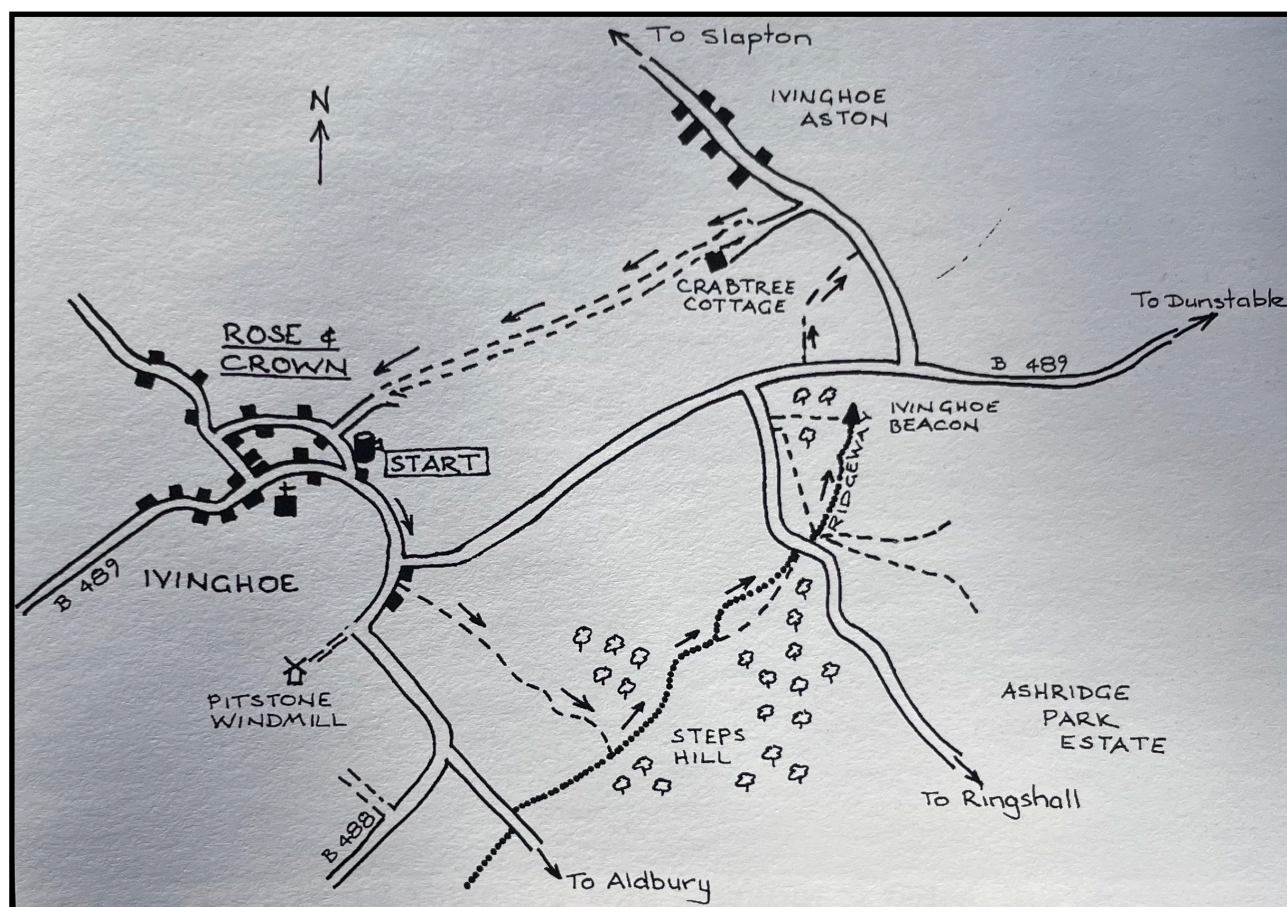
Getting there: Ivinghoe is 6 miles south of Leighton Buzzard and 3 miles north of Tring, on the B489 road to Dunstable. The Rose and Crown is in Vicarage Lane, in the northern part of the village.

Parking: There is no car park but cars can be left along the neighbouring side streets, including Vicarage Lane itself, but please park with consideration and care as these are residential lanes. Ivinghoe is well-served by local busses no.61 and X61 from Tring (Tring Station), Aylesbury and Dunstable.

Refreshments: Rose & Crown, Vicarage Lane, Ivinghoe, Bucks LU7 9EQ
The Village Swan, Ivinghoe Aston, Leighton Buzzard LU7 9DP

Walk Directions

Outside the Rose and Crown turn left up Vicarage Lane, and then left again along the B489 to leave the village behind. There is a pavement along here. Cross the B489 where it turns left to Dunstable, and continue for about 45m beyond the road junction. Immediately before the second bungalow a footpath signpost points left. Follow the direction indicated, proceeding on a narrow path between a fence and a hedge. Soon the open fields are reached and the hills ahead beckon.



The route to the Ridgeway is very clear. The footpath is fairly straight as it crosses sheep pastures. It climbs steadily towards the wooded slope in front. Up to the left is Ivinghoe Beacon (properly called Beacon Hill), while behind and getting smaller is the Pitstone windmill. Half way up the slope you go through a kissing gate and enter National Trust land. An obvious path has been created by the feet of countless walkers over the generations. Continue upwards until you join the National Trail as it comes in from the right. The Ridgeway now proceeds to climb the ridge at an angle, towards the trees on the Steps Hill (the one next to Beacon Hill) skyline. It skirts the top of a little combe down to the left, and ascends to a gate and stile. By this time, the view is truly widening.

From the gate and stile, there is a choice of routes. The Ridgeway proper curves to the left and proceeds along the top of the grassy slope, contouring round below the line of trees. The wide track beyond the stile and gate, on the other hand, continues through the woodlands of the Ashridge Estate. The former route avoids the gate or stile and the latter

route provides a pleasant stroll through scrubland's and woods. The two routes meet again just before the col, where the ridgetop dips and the road from Ringshall cuts through the Ivinghoe Hills. Beyond this road the Ridgeway makes its last ascent, to the top of Ivinghoe Beacon. You will see the stone plinth and trig point, the remains of an Iron Age hillfort, the low mound of a prehistoric burial chamber and, best of all, a wonderful panorama. This is the official start and end of the Ridgeway National Trail that links Avebury in the Wiltshire with this historic site.

The way back is down on the B489 below, reached either by scrambling down a very steep path that descends the western (left-hand) flank of Beacon Hill then turning right at the bottom, or by retracing your steps to the Ringshall road and turning right down the road (ignore the squiggle here on the PGX directions!). Watch for traffic if you take the road. At the T junction with the B489, turn right for 25m and carefully cross the road to go through a kissing gate on a signposted 'Two Ridges Link' path. This is a footpath joining the Chilterns with the Greensand Ridge at Leighton Buzzard. The route skirts the edge of two fields, turning sharp right in the second one alongside the far fence (a slight variation on the route shown by the OS maps). In the field corner go through a kissing gate then turn right and left to walk beside the road (which leads to Ivinghoe Aston) but still inside the field. Further down the high street is the Village Swan pub if you are hungry.

Turn left at the bottom onto a track leading to Crabtree Cottage, but which quickly forks right into an enclosed bridleway. This takes you straight back to the Rose & Crown



The trig point & plinth on Ivinghoe Beacon

With thanks to Countryside Books, Charles Whyne-Hammond author, Glenys Jones the walking maps and photo's from Tim Lewis of Friends of the Ridgeway.