



Wych way to Pampisford?

Pampisford to Babraham Road, and for Pampisford you turn right. During WWII, airships and aircraft dumping unwanted ordnance and munitions were to be seen over these fields. After a quarter of a mile or so on this quiet road, you may spot an old wooden sign saying PAMPISFORD 1 M in the hedge. If you fancy a bit of adventure, this route will take you past some hidden cottages. However, unless you are dressed to fight head-high nettles, you are best advised to continue on the road a little further.

On your right you pass Home Farm (*bottom*), a collection of buildings being turned into business units. After that, the road emerges onto the A505, from where you can see the impressive drive up to Pampisford Hall between two stone gate posts (*top right*). Pampisford Hall is a large country house, known for its fine collection of fir trees, once the

ANN REDSHAW and GUNNEL CLARK take another family stroll from Sawston...

Photos by Ann Redshaw

largest in the country. It is still owned by descendants of James Binney, who bought and extended the house in the late 18th century. It is not open to the public.

On this corner there is a well hidden entrance to the footpath, but it is perhaps just easier to track back the few yards to Home Farm where you pick up the public footpath at the rear. Towards the end of WW2, a bomber crashed in the woods somewhere behind Home Farm near the cottages. Local

rambler John Capes suggests that there is a water-filled crater still there.

Here you will find a gate with a small green sign warning you to keep to the path and keep dogs on a lead because

This time our walk takes us to our neighbour Pampisford. It should take two hours at most. Start off along the farm track leading out of Sawston at the far end of Church Lane (*above*). At the end of the track turn left and follow the edge of the field until you come to a hedge at right angles to the path.

There is no sign here to indicate that the public footpath takes a new direction, and the track is rather narrow. As you look right and along this hedge, you will see at the far end of the field a group of buildings that you will be aiming for (*right*), all the time keeping the hedge to your right. This

stretch can be a bit of a trudge if the grass is long and wet, but eventually you arrive at the farm Pampisford Wych, where you will more than likely be 'greeted' by a couple of small yappy dogs. The word wych means elm, but it is chestnuts that dominate this little farm. An impressive avenue of fourteen sweet chestnuts of increasing size lead up to meet the



there are often horses. There is actually no discernible path, so you just have to walk across the field between the two large trees and veer left to the kissing gate in the

left corner. This field and the one after are sites of medieval moats, and it is easy to imagine that the undulations in the ground are remains of these. You come out at College Farm, and on to Beech Lane which is lined by some pretty houses and gardens.

Turn off to the left opposite an old pump surrounded by flowers. The gap in the hedge leads into a recreation ground surrounded by large trees. Walk across it to another little gate into the churchyard the other end. You probably won't be able to get into the church itself, but if you stand in the porch you can see a fascinating Norman carving called the tympanum (*right*) on the arch above the door with biblical figures thought to depict the story of John the Baptist, to whom the church is dedicated.

When you go out through the main church gate and turn left,

you find yourself in Church Lane, with the grand old vicarage to your left. Further on along this lane is a terrace of 'old' thatched

cottages, rebuilt in the 1980s. This lane, called the High Street at the Chequers end, is a picture-postcard corner of the village with the flower-bedecked four-hundred-year-old pub, restored village pump and genuinely old, quaint cottages

opposite. It is the scene of revived country traditions such as Morris dancing and Blessing of the Plough. Confusingly, the Milton Morrismen, most of whom live in Sawston, have their home base in Pampisford!

Turn right into Brewery Road, where you'll find yet another farm, Rectory Farm. Brewery Road is on the route of the Sawston bus, the Citi7, but with only half the number of services. If the children are still not exhausted there is a second recreation ground along this road on the right.

Brewery Road takes its name from a brewery on the Sealmaster site, where there was a well with particularly clean water. John Capes tells me that the brewery brewed beer until about the start of WW2 but at some point it changed to brewing vinegar. Nowadays the company produces fireproof seals.

Brewery Road looks largely residential, but it has quite a few small businesses, and some of the larger houses are in fact business premises while keeping the appearance of private, well-kept houses. On

Pampisford

Place you can see a nice example ofargeting – traditional decorative plastering typical of the East of England. Eventually you arrive at

the White Horse pub, and from there it's a right turn into London Road, and you're back in Sawston. ☺



WALKS ON THE WEB

Walkers and horse-riders can make the most of the Cambridgeshire countryside thanks to a new 'Route of the Month' feature launched on the County Council's website at www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/environment/countryside.

The site already provides an interactive map where people can find paths and natural sites near to where they live. The new Route of the Month feature has ideas from across the county, available from the first of every month. For October, the theme is woodlands, with walk maps, walk suggestions and even downloadable recipe ideas. Upcoming themes include easy access walks, literary walks and even the science of walking.