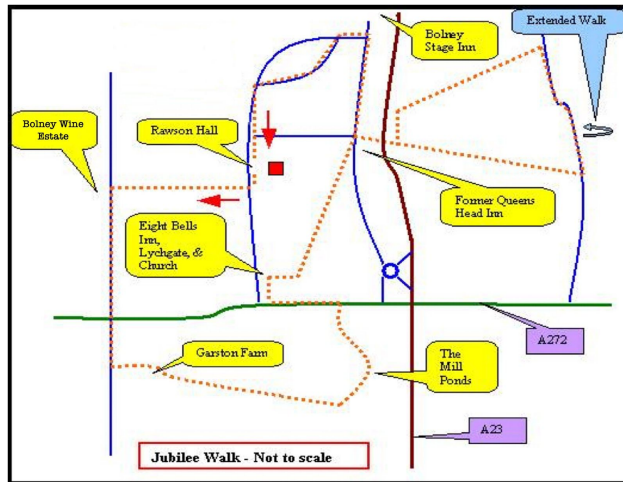


## The Diamond Jubilee Walk

A route along the footpaths within the Parish of Bolney has been designated the Diamond Jubilee Walk to commemorate the 60 years of the reign of Queen Elizabeth II. The Walk, officially opened on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2012, meanders through the Sussex Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and passes many local points of interest in the Parish of Bolney. As well as rambling through the natural habitat, where many species of flora and fauna can be seen, there are many places where spectacular views of the South Downs can be enjoyed.



From the Rawson Hall car park take the footpath south and on leaving the recreation ground cross The Street veering to the right and take the footpath west, passing between "Bramble Cottage" and "Leacroft".

The name Bolney derives from two Saxon words, meaning "Bolla's Island". The Bolla tribe dominated the higher ground which was surrounded by marsh. During recent excavations under the main street Saxon road timbers were found suggesting this was an old route to the north leading to St. Leonard's Forest.

This path is approx. 400m long, emerging onto Foxhole Lane, a quiet country lane but please be aware of traffic. To follow the Walk turn left, or to visit Bolney Wine Estate turn right, entrance 75m up the hill.

Bolney Wine Estate, established in 1972 with three acres of vines, is a family run business. The winemaker, Sam Linter, is the founder's daughter. Since the early days the Estate has expanded and with the addition of Pookchurch vineyard now totals 106 acres. Sam has a passion for making red wine and has become a specialist producer of red wines although the Estate also produces award winning sparkling and white wines having won many prizes, in both national and international competitions. The café and shop are open every day so why not call in for lunch, choose a bottle or two and pick them up later? Drop in tours and tastings are offered subject to availability.

After 650m you will reach the A272. Cross with care or use the pelican crossing, 75m left, and continue south along Bolney Chapel Road.

Immediately to your left is Providence Chapel which has been converted into a private residence. The original chapel was built in 1892 and the gravestones in the garden are maintained by the owner.

Approx. 400m south from the A272 follow the footpath on the left up the concrete drive leading to Garston's Farm. Enter the farmyard through the metal gate to walk past Chapel Barn and follow the drive around to the right to pass the tile hung farmhouse and the timber framed granary.

The main building gives no clue as to its true history. At its centre is a 22-foot medieval hall built in the 1400's and still very much intact. Around and above this the house was extended in Elizabethan times with the staircase being added later in the 1650's. In the upper storey of the granary is a unique medieval door. This 16<sup>th</sup> century nail-studded door probably came from the old house and the iron handle is believed to be the original.

Join the gravel track bearing left, follow it ahead through the first hedge line. At the second hedge line turn left, enter a field by a metal gate. Keep to the fence on your left until you reach an intersections of paths in the field corner. Turn right and again keeping the fence on your left continue to the next corner of the field and leave the field through another metal gate. Follow the track to pass along by large pond on the left.

This is the lower of the two original Bolney Mill Ponds where a watermill once stood throughout the 1700's. In 1903 the renowned Sussex historian, E.V. Lucas, stood here and remarked: - "The reverberation of the sound of the eight bells of Bolney coming off the water is peculiarly striking". Today while the beauty remains sadly much of the tranquillity is lost to the noise of traffic on the A23.

At the far corner of the lake turn left to follow the footpath heading north again. After 300m, at the T-junction of paths in the woods, take the left fork to pass between the upper and lower mill ponds.

During the year the reed beds here are home to Swans, Canada Geese, Coot and occasionally a visiting Cormorant coming up from the coast. Take a moment to sit quietly and watch. The crushed oyster shells on nearby footpaths are testament to the freshwater oysters that were previously cultivated in the ponds.

The broad and pleasant track leads out of the woods and back to the A272. Carefully cross this busy road to the north side and turn left along the pavement. Continue to the Bolney sign at the bottom of The Street.

The Bolney sign at the village entrance depicts the Lychgate and the ring of eight bells to be found in the tower of village church.

Turn right into The Street. After 100m you will reach the Eight Bells Inn. You are now about halfway through the Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Walk so this might be a good opportunity for refreshments in the Eight Bells.

The Eight Bells Inn, named after the eight bells to be found in the tower of the nearby church of St. Mary Magdalene, is very much a traditional village pub offering homemade food as well as Bed & Breakfast accommodation. The Eight Bells was formerly owned by the church and was a hostelry for pilgrims and originally produced its own brew. With a menu for every occasion and a recent winner of a Pub of the Year award the Eight Bells remains a cornerstone of village life sponsoring many village clubs and hosting many annual events including the famous Bolney Pram Race held every Easter Monday in aid of local charities. Adjacent to the Eight Bells Inn is Walnut & Well Cottage which was once home to 16<sup>th</sup> century charcoal burners.

Leaving the Eight Bells, take the steps opposite up to the Lychgate.

Before passing through the beautifully crafted Lychgate you will walk over the first of two millstones set into the path to the church. Built in 1905 to replace a previous one, the Lychgate houses a stone table on which pallbearers would rest the coffin to await the arrival of the priest. Both millstones came from the windmill that once stood in Top Street.



The church of St. Mary Magdalene was built in the 11<sup>th</sup> century. The tower, built by John Bolney in 1536, houses a rare peal of eight bells which together weigh just over three tons. To the left of the door to the tower is an inscription in the stone which reads "This steeple is 66 feet". In the south wall of the nave where it narrows into the chancel there is a scratch sundial at chest height. A stick placed in the centre hole formed a simple sundial giving the time for the next mass or bell ringing. On the south side of the churchyard you will also see the unusual barrel graves dating back to the 1600's. No other church in England has so many of these strange and extraordinary features.

After visiting the church continue along the path to the north side of the church, to pass by Bolney Primary School, keeping the stone wall of the playground to your left. On your right is the Glebe Field, home to Bolney Cricket Club. After 550m you will arrive at Ryecroft Road and a few paces to the right is the junction with London Road, the old A23.

On the opposite side of London Road is Chantry House, formerly the Queens Head Inn, which was a major staging point for the horse drawn stage coach service from London to Brighton when the "new" road from Handcross to Brighton was built in 1815.

*Cross London Road and walk down the metalled drive to the left of the original Queen's Head Inn to pass under the new A23 highway. On leaving the underpass continue straight ahead rather than following the drive to the right. At the metal gate to Harlyn Farm fork right to follow the footpath. In winter or following prolonged rain parts of this footpath are likely to be waterlogged. You'll negotiate two small planked bridges crossing streams. After 500m the path emerges onto Buncton Lane.*

*Turn left along Buncton Lane and after 200m on the right there is a drive into Pickwell Estate.*

*[If you wish to extend your walk by a further 2½km follow the footpath through Pickwell Estate and you will pass wonderful Rhododendrons and Camellias. After 1km you will reach Pickwell Lane. Turn left and walk up the steady incline and after a further 800m, by a house called Ragget's, turn left onto a footpath that returns you to Buncton Lane approx. 100m beyond where you began the extended walk]*

*Continue north up the incline of Buncton Lane and 300m past the Pickwell Estate entrance, opposite Buncton Lodge, take the footpath on the left, turning sharply back on yourself. Follow this footpath through Bolney Wood to return towards the village.*

**Bolney Wood was one of several local woods producing the charcoal used for the iron workings in the villages to the north of Bolney.**

*At the stile in front of the embankment of the new A23, turn left. In 50m, at the foot of the steps, turn right to return through the underpass and up the incline to the former Queens Head Inn. Turn right onto London Road. After 150m, to follow the Walk, turn left into Top Street. Alternatively, continue uphill on the old A23 approx. 350m to the Bolney Stage Inn for refreshments, after which return to Top Street.*

**The Bolney Stage dates back to c.1500 but it was not as popular myth would have it, a coaching inn, although it does lie on the route of the old Pycombe to Bolney turnpike which formed part of the London to Brighton road. With the advent of the motor car the former Fords Farm became the Tudor Tea Rooms and then in the 1960s gained a pub licence to be renamed the Bolney Stage. In one of the chimneys there is a priest hole and over one fireplace an oak beam bears the date 1613 although it is thought to have been brought from a house nearby. A well known local landmark, the Bolney Stage offers a warm welcome and good food.**

*Once in Top Street after 100m turn left into Cherry Lane.*

**You will shortly pass some cottages on the left. The non-sequential numbering is reputedly the order in which the properties were acquired and merged in the new owner's estate.**

*Cherry Lane emerges onto The Street. Facing you is the Old Rawson Hall.*

The Rawson Hall was built in 1881, as the plaque over the door confirms, and was originally a coffee house and reading room for men and youths over the age of 15. Later, women and girls were admitted on condition their presence did not interfere with the menfolk's activities. In 1924 the Hall was gifted to the village by the Rawson family in memory of their late father Colonel Richard Hamilton Rawson with the stipulation it be known as the Rawson Institute. In the 1930s a larger brick and timber hall and toilets were added to the rear of the original Victorian hall which is now subject to a preservation order. After the new hall was built the old 1930s extension was demolished and the Old Rawson Hall converted into houses.

*From Cherry Lane turn left, downhill, back towards Batchelor's Field and after 50m you will pass the village war memorial. In this final part of the walk you may notice some house names evoking the use of the property in a bygone age – The Old Bakery, Butchers, Agates. The Community Café will be a welcoming sight at the end of your walk, but if you prefer, the Eight Bells Inn is only a further 400m down The Street.*

**Start and Finish:** The Rawson Hall at the recreation ground known as Batchelor's Field in The Street, Bolney, RH17 5PG.

**Distance:** Approx. 7kms (4½ miles). Allow 2 to 2½ hours for your walk.

**Public Toilet:** Wheelchair accessible public toilet at the Rawson Hall.

**Refreshments:** The Community Café, The Eight Bells Inn, The Bolney Stage, and Bookers Wine Estate.

**Route:** Parts of the route are natural or surfaced footpaths and others are country lanes with no defined footway. Please take care when walking along the country lanes. There is a stile and some steps on the Walk east of London Road. Please follow the Countryside Code.

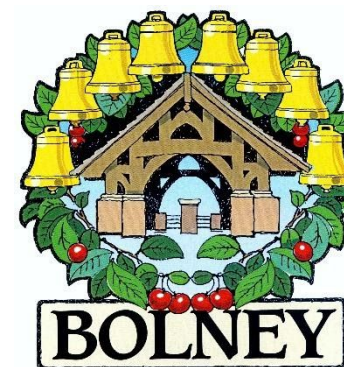
**Disabled Access.**

There are no stiles along the southern part of The Walk to the Mill Ponds, but some sections of the footpaths are narrow, uneven or steep which while likely to be accessible for those with minor impaired mobility are impassable for wheelchairs. The Walk east of London Road, featuring a stile, some steps and sections of uneven terrain is also impassable for wheelchairs and more challenging for those with impaired mobility.

The Street is wheelchair accessible and where there is no footway a pedestrian zone is marked on the road. The alternative step free route from The Street to the Lychgate and Church, is to the south end of The Street, left along the A272 pavement and left up the lane beside Bolney Nursery. From here there is also access to the Glebe Field and Bolney Primary School.

There are disabled car parking areas at the Rawson Hall and the Church.

## The Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Walk



**A Parish of Outstanding Natural Beauty set in the heart of West Sussex close to the South Downs National Park**