

In the map above, the green dots represent the route of the Midlands to London drive route while the yellow dots represent the route from mid-Wales to Barnet.

The red dots represent the circular route of about six miles. Where it is on the exact route of one or other drives it is shown as small red dots. Where the walk is not on a drovers' route it is shown as larger red dots. These may be slight differences where, for example, the walk is on the other side of the river Misbourne from the drovers' route, or completely different where the walk returns to Amersham through Coleshill.

<p>Start in Amersham High Street.</p>	<p>We usually say that the width of the street was to allow the twice yearly fair. It was clearly helpful to have this space for livestock pens, but I suspect that another (perhaps the main) reason was to allow cattle to be driven through the town. Cultivated fields on either side of the valley would have forced a large detour if animals could not be driven straight through.</p>
<p>Walk towards Tesco. You are following the Midlands, Aylesbury to London drove route. Opposite Tesco car park, at the former Bury Farm take the footpath on the right which leads under the by-pass and, keeping to the valley floor.....</p>	<p>You will pass a new small lake which has been created by the Environment Agency to encourage bio-diversity (to compensate for the loss of habitat caused by work on HS2.</p>
<p>....continue towards the London Road Recycling Depot.</p>	<p>On the left side of the river there is a short road called Drovers Lane which is part of the other mid-Wales to Barnet route. This would have continued up Finch Lane to the White Lion and then followed the high ground to</p>

Chorleywood dropping down to Rickmansworth and continuing past Watford to Barnet.
I imagine that where two drovers' routes crossed there might be a danger of confusion. I surmise that livestock which had come from the Amersham direction would be travelling on the left bank. The mid-Wales to Barnet drovers would have travelled for a few hundred yards up the right bank and forded the river at this point. There would still be confusion if two drives met at the same time. Each drive had someone riding ahead and blowing their horn to warn farmers to look out for their livestock. This would alert other drovers and I expect there was some informal 'rule of the road' that would lead one drive to give way to another.

Continue to walk down the valley to Lower Bottom Lane.
 Because of the HS2 works at this point, I suggest you **continue walking down the valley beyond these workings for about half a mile.**



HS2 are constructing a ventilation vent in this valley. This bridge takes construction vehicles over the river.

The route from mid-Wales would have come down Lower Bottom Lane and, I think, would have cut the corner following the contour above what is now Lower Bottom Farm and then going a short way upstream before fording the river at Drovers Lane and continuing up Finch Lane (shown below right).






A footpath from a footbridge will join from the left. After perhaps 50 yards turn right on a wide path between fences. (It is easy to miss but there is a wooden footpath post pointing to it a few yards further on.) Climb steadily to Hill Farm House. Turn right and almost immediately left past a pond on your right to a corner of Bottrells Lane. Continue straight on for 30 yards and then right, keeping a pond on your right to the edge of Hodgemoor Wood.



There is a surprising direction post at the top and a good view up the valley towards Amersham.



*All the time you have been walking uphill from the river you have been on the green Midlands to London route. If you look at the first map of drovers' routes you will see that the route deviates towards Beaconsfield. This seems odd and may be a mistake...or it may be caused by an obstruction that prevented the drive continuing down the valley. There is evidence elsewhere. (quoted in *The Drovers* p. 47) that they avoided paying tolls on the turnpikes and would deviate quite considerably to save money.*

	<p>The green route continues south through Hodgemoor Wood into Seer Green (where there is a 'Drovers Road' on a relatively new estate) and then to the east of Wilton Park onto the route of the A40 before Gerrards Cross.</p>
<p>Walk west along Bottrells Lane (There are no clear paths parallel to the road inside the woodland so walking on road is the only option)</p> 	<p>The turning on the right is the top end of Lower Bottom Lane which the yellow route drovers would have gone down. From this point you are walking the drovers' route back to mid Wales.</p>
<p>Continue along Bottrells Lane past Stockings Farm. At the point where the road goes back into woodland take a footpath diagonally to the left downhill through beech woods to the Amersham to Beaconsfield Road.</p> 	<p>The Harte and Magpies is a drovers' inn. Drovers were often not welcomed into inns within towns but formed the regular clientele of out of town inns. The Ivy House on the A413 is another drovers' inn.</p> 
<p>Cross this main road and walk up Magpie Lane opposite.</p>	<p>The yellow route continues to Winchmore Hill and Penn Street by turning left down a track to Ongar Hill Farm. This is where you leave the drovers' route to return to Amersham via Coleshill.</p>

Returning to Amersham

<p>Continue up Magpie Lane for another 250 yards and look for a footpath on the right through a kissing gate – no kissing!</p>	<p>There are often Alpaca in this field.</p>
<p>Continue in the same direction with Coleshill Windmill on your left until you reach a crossing path.</p>	<p>You may be tempted to continue on the path in the same direction but you would encounter a narrow path which is extremely muddy so the walk will take evasive action by turning left.</p>
<p>Turn left on the path that skirts a wood and emerges at the Red Lion in Coleshill. All Saints Church is opposite.</p>	
<p>Turn right on the road, pass the school and keep on the road for half a mile. Where the road bends sharply to the right and another road joins from the</p>	

<p>left continue straight on up a drive that is signposted as a footpath.</p>	
<p>The footpath passes low buildings on the left and enters a field. Keep close to the fence on the right. In the corner there is a stile into another field.</p>	
<p>Continue on the path which curves slightly to the right. Where the path curves left to keep on the high ground you will see a short path to the right leading downhill into a small valley.</p>	
<p>Take that path downhill and at the bottom turn left on a path which follows the curve of the valley and leads behind the gardens of Fieldway.</p>	
<p>When you reach a path crossing, turn right on the metalled path. This rises to a footbridge over the bypass with houses of Piggotts Orchard ahead.</p>	
<p>Take a footpath left into a field which soon drops down behind the Griffin Inn – recently Ask Italian.</p>	
<p>Leaving the field continue straight ahead into the yard of the Griffin Inn and under the arch into The Broadway.</p>	<p>There is building work but the path has remained open.</p>
<p>Turn left on the Broadway to return to where you started in the High Street.</p>	