

Section 17

Great Gaddesden to Berkhamsted

14.5km (9.0 miles) Route profile page 50

This section passes through hill and valley on country lanes, descending into Berkhamsted to join the towpath on the Grand Union Canal.

Route information: This route is on lanes, roads and the well-paved canal towpath between Berkhamsted and Dudswell. The route includes a number of steep hills, in particular on both sides of the valley at Berkhamsted.

Amenities and Attractions

1 Berkhamsted Common is the largest common in the Chilterns and is owned by the National Trust. At the turn of the 20th century the area would have been one expanse of heather. However after the First World War grazing gradually ceased and much of the area developed into woodland.

2 Frithsden Beeches at the east end of the common include huge pollarded beeches that are remnants of the medieval Chilterns landscape.

There are many old pits, banks and other earthworks across Berkhamsted Common which are evidence of the hundreds of years of human activity in this special place.


The small hamlet of **Frithsden** has a small vineyard with a shop open to the public. Open Friday to Sundays most of the year, call 01442 878723

3 Potten End (just off the main route) has a village green, a pond and a pub. A section of Grims Ditch (an iron age earthwork) can be seen from the green.

4 Berkhamsted is a busy town with shops cafés and pubs. It has a history going back to at least 1066, when William the Conqueror was handed the crown of England here. You can still see the remains of the Norman Castle that was subsequently built in stone during the mid 12th century. The remains of the castle and the beautiful grounds can be visited free of charge.



Ancient beech, Frithsden Beeches

 Berkhamsted Station - Trains from London Euston and the Midlands

0 1 2km
 0 1mile
 north
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Great Gaddesden

Busy crossing

Steep gradient

Steep gradient Gravel on narrow road

Water End

BERKHAMSTED

Potten End

Busy crossing Staggered junction

Cross under railway bridge, then right along Station Road for 100m. Cross over the canal bridge to join the canal towpath.

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