



Bengo Trails 1, 2 and 3: Neighbourhood Plan Protected Views

These trails take walkers to important views that are given additional protection from development through the [Bengo Neighbourhood Area Plan](#).

The routes go past green spaces, buildings and community facilities also given additional protection. Trail 3 ends at the [Bengo Community Garden](#), which evolved out of the Neighbourhood Plan, and which residents help care for.

The trails end at or near the start of the next one. The complete route is 4.8m/7.7kmⁱⁱⁱ.

The trails were produced by the [Love Bengo Community Group](#).

Bengo Trails 1: View across Beane Marshes



Starts (and ends): [Courtyard Arts Centre](#)

Port Vale, SG14 3AA.

Distance: 0.91m/1.47 km

Conditions: Flat (other than a short, optional, detour uphill to Balfour Street bridge). Pavements and tarmac surfaces

Walk north along Port Vale, past [Mill Mead Primary School](#). Passing George Street and Russell Street on your right, glimpses of the **Former Railway Line** can be seen at the ends of both streets. The land has [Local Green Space](#) designation through the Neighbourhood Plan. It's not publicly accessible but, to see it from above, turn right into Balfour Street (no pavement here and a short uphill walk).

Looking down from the left side of the Balfour Street bridge, the former railway land continues to the north end of Port Vale. On the other side, the land extends to Sidings Court, just off Port Hill.



The land is described in the Neighbourhood Plan as 'a green corridor, recognised as having the potential to offer significant biodiversity gains. Any project to enhance and manage biodiversity on this site, and open up public access, will be strongly supported'.

Return back down Balfour Street, passing the [Little Theatre](#) on your left. Turn right into Port Vale, passing the **Millstream Pub**. Just before the **Port Vale Scout Hut**, on the left, is the small, privately owned, **Port Vale Wildlife Garden**. Its **Local Green Space** designation gives its additional protection from development.



From Port Vale, turn left into Beane Road, then over at the crossing



point and walk up to the Beane Road bridge. From there you'll see Neighbourhood Plan View 5: **Beane Marshes towards Molewood from Beane Road bridge**. The Plan says: *'the panorama to the north and north*

east takes in the River Beane and its floodplain, a rare example of a naturalised water meadow that has significant amenity and biodiversity value and provides a strong landscape setting for Bengoe's historic settlement on the hill'.

Crossing back over Beane Road at the crossing point, enter **Millmead Park**, which has **Local Green Space** designation through the Neighbourhood Plan *'to prevent encroachment from development, and to safeguard wildlife habitat'*. The River Beane (a rare chalk stream) runs through the park, and the path is a cycle route from North Road to Hartham Common. Continue south, around the perimeter of Mill Mead Primary School into a small car park, with the Courtyard Arts Centre garden to your right. This trail ends here.



The galleries and shop in the [Courtyards Arts Centre](#) are open from 10am-4pm Tuesday to Saturday with teas/coffees available. To continue on to Bengoe Trails 2, turn left from Port Vale onto the Port Hill slip road. Cross Port Hill at the pedestrian crossing, turn left and walk up to the Gates to the Warren and Hartham Common.

Route Map: Bengoe Trails 1 – View across Beane Marshes



Bengeo Trails 2: St. Leonard's Garden, Hartham, and Ware Park Manor Views

Starts: Gates to the Warren and [Hartham Common](#), near the bottom of Port Hill SG14 3EP

Ends: The Greyhound Pub at the top of Bengeo Street SG14 3EY

Distance: 1.6m/2.58km

Conditions: Some unsurfaced paths and grassy areas. Some uphill and downhill stretches

The **Gates to the Warren and Hartham Common** and **Numbers 38-40 Port Hill** (to the left of the gates) have additional protection through the Neighbourhood Plan.

Enter through the gates onto Public Footpath 86. This footpath follows a route at the base of The Warren, an area of woodland on a steep bank to the north of the Common. At the first footbridge, cross the River Beane (a rare chalk stream) into the Common, walking along the path until you reach the grassy area in front of [Hartham Leisure Centre](#).



Looking left across the Common, towards Port Hill, is Neighbourhood Plan View 7: **Hartham Common towards Port Hill**. The Plan says: *'The woods and Common are home to many different species of wildlife and this Green Finger helps the area not to feel over-developed.'*

To your right is Neighbourhood Plan View 8: **Hartham Common towards The Warren**. The view description says, *'no future development should be permitted to prevent the view of the bellcote (of St. Leonard's Church) seen from Hartham'*.



Return back along the path towards The



Warren. At the tennis courts, take the path on the right out of the Common, crossing the curved bridge across the Beane. When you reach Footpath 86, turn right, back onto The Warren. Walk to the end of the path, uphill, until you reach the [Grade I listed St Leonard's Church](#), the oldest building in Hertford. Turn left in front of the church, bear right and **St. Leonard's Garden** is on your left. The Neighbourhood Plan says: *'Although the garden is in the Hertford Conservation Area,*

designation as 'Local Green Space' gives it much needed additional protection'.

From the garden is Neighbourhood Plan View 6: **St. Leonard's Church from St. Leonard's Garden.** The Plan says: *'if St. Leonard's Garden were developed, this wonderful view of the church would be lost to the public and should be preserved in perpetuity'*. Leave the garden through the black gate and walk along St. Leonard's Road and turn right into Ware Park Road, then left into Watermill Lane.



The **Watermill Lane Play and Recreation Area** on your left has **Local Green Space** designation



through the Neighbourhood Plan which describes it as being *'highly valued by residents'*. *'There are semi-natural areas within the park and owls, hawks and Red Kites visit regularly. Since its regeneration in the 1970s, many trees and shrubs have matured. This wonderful park has been cared for by residents and should be protected from development'*.

Walk up Bridleway 15 (adjacent to the recreation area) to Watermill Lane North. On your right is Neighbourhood Plan View 4:

Watermill Lane North towards Ware Park Manor. The Plan says *'this view gives the public a glimpse of a building that is otherwise difficult to access. This farmland to the north of the public footpath on Watermill Lane is unsuitable for development due to the open, unspoiled views'*.



At the top of Watermill Lane North, turn left onto Wadesmill Road and continue on to Bengoe Street. **The Greyhound** pub is on your left, where this trail ends. The pub has additional protection through the Neighbourhood Plan. Bengoe Trails 3 starts at the Greyhound pub.

Route Map: Bengoe Trails 2 – St Leonard's Garden, Hartham, and Ware Park Manor Views



Bengeo Trails 3: Bengeo Field Views

Starts: The Greyhound Pub at the top of Bengeo Street, SG14 3EY

Ends: Bengeo Community Garden, Tower Street, SG14 3HD

Distance: 1.7 miles/2.7km

Conditions: Some unsurfaced paths and grassy areas. Mostly flat with a small downhill and uphill section to the 'Lonely Oak' on Bengeo Field



With The Greyhound pub on your right, walk north along Bengeo Street, over the pedestrian crossing and turn left into Sacombe Road, walking past [Bengeo Primary School](#). Join the path to the left of the narrow pavement and turn left into the **Sacombe Road Play Area**. On the far side, behind the younger children's play area, is the **Woodland Adjacent to the Sacombe Road Play Area**, which has **Local Green Space**

designation through the Neighbourhood Plan. It's described in the Plan as '*pretty woodland used regularly by residents for walking, cycling and play*'.

Leaving the play area, turn right, then walk across Sacombe Road at the pedestrian crossing. Turn left then right into Nursery Way and left into Butterfield Drive. Bear right and, with the phone mast on your left, enter Bengeo Field. Join Byway 1, just to your right, and walk north to the brow of the hill.

On your right, the area hatched green in the image, right, is **Land at Bengeo Field** which has **Local Green Space** designation through the Neighbourhood Plan, giving it additional protection from development. The Plan says, '*views north across the site are iconic of Bengeo*'.



Looking north from the brow of Byway 1 is Neighbourhood Plan

View 2: **North from Bengeo Field towards 'The Lonely Oak'**. The view

description says '*just over the rim of the hill, on the far side of the oak tree, lies the ancient St. John's Wood. As the only agricultural land within easy access of the Molewood Estate, this view is not only iconic of Bengeo, but much enjoyed by local people. The land is part of the Green Belt and the subsoil of the pathway running through it has been registered as an Asset of Community Value*'.

Walk down the slope of Byway 1, and, just after the 'Lonely Oak' tree, on your right, is Neighbourhood Plan View 3: **Bengeo Field towards Ware Park Manor**. The Plan says: '*The panorama to the east reveals Hertfordshire's rolling countryside, whilst a manor house is seen nestling on the*



opposite side of the valley. The partly wooded valley on the other side of the River Rib provides a stunning vista in all seasons'. The Bengoe Field views are highly valued by walkers and cyclists.



Retrace your steps to Bengoe Primary School, turn right onto Bengoe Street and continue along Bengoe Street for around 5 minutes then turn right



onto Footpath 90 (signposted The Drive). At the end of the footpath, turn left onto Duncombe Road (no road sign here). A short way along on your left is [Bengoe Parish Church Hall](#), which has additional protection through the Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan says – ‘this red brick building with decorative detailing, built in 1899 by Robert Green, is the church hall for Holy Trinity Church, which is on the corner of Bengoe Street and New Road’. [Bengoe Community Garden](#) is to the right of the church hall. The Neighbourhood Plan committed to ‘support the landscaping of a community garden on the empty plot on the corner of Duncombe Road and Tower Street’. In 2023, a small group of Bengoe Neighbourhood Area Plan volunteers established the site as a community garden, working with East Herts District Council, Mudlarks, and local residents. **Trail 3 ends at the Bengoe Community Garden.**

Completing the circular route

To return to the start of Trail 1, turn left into Tower Street, then right onto Bengoe Street. [Holy Trinity Church](#) is opposite, and the [White Lion Pub](#) is on your right. From the pub car park, you can see [Castle Joinery](#), which has protection through the Neighbourhood Plan. Continue along Bengoe Street, passing the [Bengoe Club](#) on your right, and down Port Hill. Just past the pedestrian crossing at the bottom of Port Hill, walk along the slip road to the right of the bridge. When you come to the junction of Port Hill and Port Vale, turn right into Port Vale and [Courtyard Arts Centre](#) is on the other side of Port Vale.

Route Map: Bengoe Trails 3 – Bengoe Field Views



ⁱ To keep the circular route under 5 miles, Neighbourhood Plan View 1: Three Lakes towards west Bengoe, and the designated Local Green Space, North Road Meadow, are not included in these trails.

ⁱⁱ Route maps sourced from openstreetmap.org