

Leatherhead Common Walk

3 mile circular walk, mainly on public rights of way, to the north of Leatherhead.

Allow up to 2 hours, boots or stout footwear recommended.

This route has been specially devised and signposted by the Lower Mole Countryside Management Project and Mole Valley District Council to provide an easy to navigate route into the countryside. It is signposted with a series of timber finger posts with a distinctive green arrow.

A good starting point is the entrance to Tesco on Kingston Road. Take the public footpath along the edge of the Tesco car park, with the store on your right and the Rye Brook on your left. At the timber footbridge turn right to follow the path along the edge of Teazle Wood.

Teazle Wood is a splendid wood with a great variety of native trees. Taller trees include English Oak and Ash. Also present is Turkey Oak, an introduced species which grows vigorously in Great Britain. Look out for Spurge Laurel, a rare native evergreen. Beneath these are smaller trees of Hawthorn, Hazel, Holly, Elder, Dog Rose and Field Maple. In spring a spectacular display of Bluebell carpets the woodland floor.

Further along the path, on the right, is Rowhurst Forge, where fine quality metal work is produced. Just visible beyond the forge is a mid-sixteenth century building, thought to have been a hunting lodge for Hampton Court Palace.

The path winds its way between mature Oak trees before reaching the M25. Here it turns left to follow the top of the motorway cutting.

Further on the left is an open area being restored to woodland by Dorincourt, a training centre for disabled people. Their buildings can be seen beyond the new woodland. The restoration work has been carried out by the Lower Mole Countryside Management Project.

On reaching Oaklawn Road, turn right across the bridge over the Motorway. A permissive path available for public use with the permission of the landowner, runs parallel to Oaklawn Road for 150 meters before turning right into the woodland. Continue along this path for about 150 metres before crossing a small stream and, bearing left, join a straight path to Oxshott Road.

At Oxshott Road turn right and walk a few yards before crossing it (with care) and taking the tarmac road between two stone pillars, into Pachesham Park. Follow the road straight ahead. It becomes a narrow track and then crosses a golf course. Keep straight ahead, through a break in a belt of trees, to where the path emerges onto Kingston Road. Great care is needed here on this fast, busy road. Cross the road to the footpath opposite and turn left along Kingston Road for 200 metres until you reach a gate and a path leading onto Ashtead Common.

Ashted Common is an ancient Oak pasture woodland. The ancient oak pollards are characteristic of this type of woodland. Some may be 400 years old and they provide habitats for lichens, mosses, liverworts and specialised invertebrates of dead or dying wood. They also provide a habitat for birds, such as woodpeckers, owls and nuthatches and oak loving butterflies such as Purple Emperor and Purple Hairstreak. This type of woodland had a dual purpose of providing grazing and shelter for domestic animals whilst supplying wood from the branches of the pollard. Branches were cut on a rotational basis above the browse line.

Follow the signposts through the woodland , the path takes a semi-circular route south to a large roundabout. At the roundabout take the path through the underpass and then over the footbridge across the M25. Continue straight ahead, down the hill and past the B&Q store until you come to a small roundabout. The Tesco store, the starting point for the walk, is on your right.

How to Get There

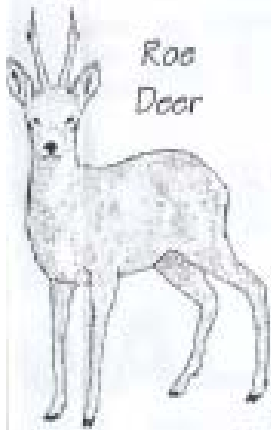
By Car – There is a car park at Tescos . Please do not park in or near farm or field entrances.

By Train – The nearest station is at Ashted. From the station there is an attractive walk across Ashted Common, along Public Footpath 28 (to the left of the open grass area by the Station) and then left along Public Footpath 25 to join the walk where it crosses the Common.

By Bus – The 516 bus service to Tesco provides a link from Epsom, Ashted, Leatherhead Town Centre, Headley, Boxhill from Monday to Saturday.

Ideally this walk description should be used in conjunction with an Ordnance Survey Map Explorer 1:25 000 146. However, there is a more basic map printed below.

Please note: The ground is reasonably level and there are no stiles, but conditions will vary according to the weather and stout footwear is recommended. There are several busy roads in the area and special care is needed when crossing them.



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