

## ELSTEAD COMMON



Easy Terrain

7 km  
Circular  
2 hours

250716



### Access Notes

1. The walk is generally flat with only a few gentle gradients and can be lengthened or shortened to meet your own requirements.
2. All the paths are wide tracks and there are no stiles, gates or steps on route. The first mile stretch is on a tarmac track and the next 0.75 miles follows a compacted stone track (which can have some shallow surface mud).
3. By following these paths there and back (a total of 3.5 miles) this version would be suitable for wheelchairs, pushchairs and disability buggies for most of the year.
4. The remainder of the route follows unmade dirt and sand tracks that are all wide but can be very soft underfoot so wellies are a must in the winter.
5. Dogs are welcome on the common, in fact it is a popular dog walking spot. The common is an MOD training area so visitors are asked to comply with all instructions and byelaws on noticeboards.

**A 7 km (4.5 mile) easy access walk around Elstead Common, enjoying sections of woodland, open areas of heath and several ponds and streams.**

This walk is part of the Explore Surrey collection, published through a collaboration between iFootpath and Surrey County Council.

There are no toilets or other facilities on the walk itself. If you are looking for refreshments before or after your walk, there is a choice of three pubs in Elstead village (The Woolpack, The Golden Fleece and The Mill) just a mile from the start of the walk. Ordnance Survey Map: Explorer 145 Guildford and Farnham. This walk follows public footpaths and bridleways which cross private and public land. Information is included for your interest, but please respect people's privacy, keep dogs under control and remember the Countryside Code.

### Getting there

Elstead village is located on the B3001, about half way between Farnham and the A3 junction at Milford. The walk starts and finishes from the Royal Common parking area on the B3001, about one mile east of the village. It is large stone parking lay-by with space for about 12 cars and has no height restriction barrier.

The post code **GU8 6LA** will take you to the eastern end of Elstead village.

From here, continue east on the B3001, keep right at the fork (signed A3) and 0.2 miles later you will find the parking area on the right (by a sign for a public bridleway). If you are coming by bus, the nearest stop is in Elstead village itself. For help with planning your journey by public transport please visit <http://journeys.travelsmartsurrey.info>.

### Walk Sections



#### Start to Royal Common Pond

From the parking area, pass through the wide gap alongside the gate. Take a moment to read the byelaws on the noticeboard at this point. Follow the obvious wide tarmac track ahead. The track leads you south, with Royal Common to your left.

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The commons here are part of Longmoor Training Area, owned by Defence Estates. The training area is used for logistics and minor infantry manoeuvre exercises. Public access is permitted at all times but please be sure to follow the byelaws you read by the car park to ensure you stay safe.

Follow the long straight path through the trees. Just a few paces after passing under some power lines, you will see the first of the common's ponds on your right, Royal Common Pond.



bridleway stone track).

Follow the main track as it enters and then winds through a section of pine woodland. Further along, the heathland area of Elstead Common opens up on your left. Elstead, Ockley and Royal Commons are part of a Site of Special Scientific Interest. The commons are covered with heather, bracken and woodlands of birch and Scots pine. There is a rich diversity of wildlife to be found including nightjar, Dartford warbler, woodlark, sand lizard, smooth snake, natterjack toad, roe and muntjac deer and many species of butterfly. Look out for green woodpeckers and hobbies in the skies above Elstead Common.

The track leads you under power lines and then over a concrete slab which spans a stream running through a pipe. You are now 1.75 miles into your journey and this marks the end of the surfaced tracks for this walk. If you are reliant on these (for pushchairs, mobility scooters etc) you will now need to turn round and retrace your steps back to the car park.

## 1 → 2 Royal Common Pond to Major Crossroads



Stay with the tarmac track as it bears slightly right and then continues for another long straight section. At the end of the straight stretch, stay with the tarmac track as it bears left, leading you over a pretty shallow stream.

A short distance later the track bears right leading you gently uphill and under a smaller set of powerlines. You will reach a fork in the bridleway. Keep right, staying with the main surfaced track. Go straight ahead at the next small waymarker post (which marks a sandy bridleway crossing your path). 50 metres later, you will come to a major crossroads at the edge of an area of open heath. This marks the one mile point in your journey, so time to turn back and retrace your steps if you want to limit the walk to 2 miles.

## 2 → 3 Major Crossroads to Pipe Bridge

To continue, turn right and follow the wide compacted stone and sand track leading you through the beautiful section of heathland, Ockley Common. The track leads you gently uphill to reach a fork. Take the left-hand branch (staying with the

## 3 → 4 Pipe Bridge to The Moat



To continue, cross the pipe bridge and keep ahead on the track. Immediately before you enter the section of pine woodland, turn left onto the narrow path (marked with a blue bridleway arrow). Follow this path ahead, winding through the edge of the trees and then continuing with the woodland on your right and the open common on your left.

Further along, a set of powerlines merge with your path as you continue along the woodland edge. Stay with the path (which can get muddy in part) beneath the powerlines all the way down until you reach a waymarker post marking a crossroads of bridleways. Here your route takes a short diversion to visit another beautiful pond.

Turn right, follow the wide dirt track ahead (with another car park visible across to your right) and it will lead you directly to the edge of the large pond, The Moat. There is a picnic bench here as well as several pontoons, should you wish to pause and



enjoy the views. Moat Pond supports several rare spider, water beetle and dragonfly species.

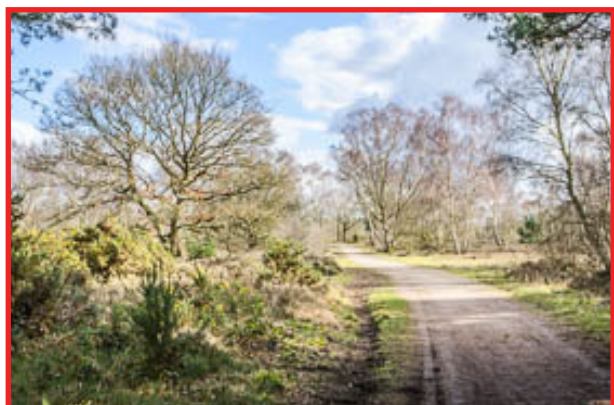
## 4 → 5 The Moat to Thursley Boardwalks



When you have finished at The Moat, return back along the path from which you came to reach the crossroads under the powerlines. Go straight ahead and follow this bridleway through the centre of the commons.

Further along the path leads you over a stream and opens up to become a wider sandy ride. A few metres later, you will see the start of a section of boardwalks on your right. Whilst our route does not include this section of Thursley Common, feel free to explore a section of the boardwalks should you wish. Just a short way along them you will find another pond, Pudmore Pond, which makes a good place to watch for wildlife. When you have finished, return to the main sandy ride to continue your journey.

## 5 → 6 Thursley Boardwalks to Stream Bridge

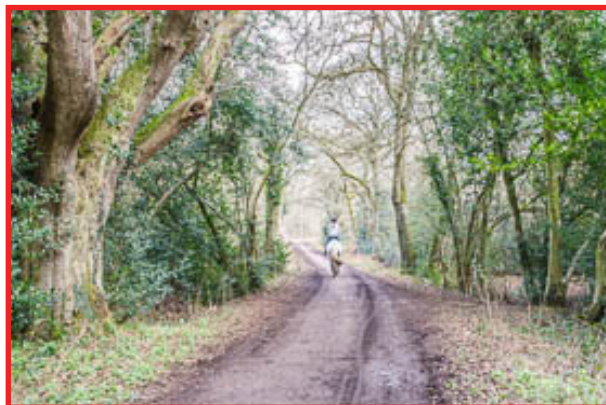


For the main route, ignore the boardwalks, simply keep ahead on the wide sandy ride. At the next crossroads of bridleways go straight on, entering a section of trees. (NOTE Spring 2016: There is currently a construction project underway to raise and improve the drainage of this section of path. As a result, the path may be very uneven and soft underfoot, but it should still be passable).

At the end of the sandy ride you will come to a T-junction with

the stone bridleway that you used for the outward leg. Turn right along this. (From this point you will be retracing your steps back to the car park). Follow the stone track through the pine woodland and out into an area of open common. Go over the brow of the gentle rise and then gradually descend to reach a waymarker post with blue arrows, marking a crossroads of bridleways. Turn left here, staying with the main stone track. The track leads you through woodland to reach a bridge over a pretty stream.

## 6 → 7 Stream Bridge to End



Cross the bridge and stay with the main track. You will pass Royal Common Pond on your left. Bear left to continue on the tarmac track (passing under powerlines) and follow the track which leads you directly back to the car park where the walk began.

This walk is part of the Explore Surrey collection, published through a collaboration between iFootpath and Surrey County Council.

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[www.surreycc.gov.uk/explore](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/explore)



**Disclaimer**

This walking route was walked and checked at the time of writing. We have taken care to make sure all our walks are safe for walkers of a reasonable level of experience and fitness. However, like all outdoor activities, walking carries a degree of risk and we accept no responsibility for any loss or damage to personal effects, personal accident, injury or public liability whilst following this walk. We cannot be held responsible for any inaccuracies that result from changes to the routes that occur over time. Please let us know of any changes to the routes so that we can correct the information.

**Walking Safety**

For your safety and comfort we recommend that you take the following with you on your walk: bottled water, snacks, a waterproof jacket, waterproof/sturdy boots, a woolly hat and fleece (in winter and cold weather), a fully-charged mobile phone, a whistle, a compass and an Ordnance Survey map of the area. Check the weather forecast before you leave, carry appropriate clothing and do not set out in fog or mist as these conditions can seriously affect your ability to navigate the route. Take particular care on cliff/mountain paths where steep drops can present a particular hazard. Some routes include sections along roads – take care to avoid any traffic at these points. Around farmland take care with children and dogs, particularly around machinery and livestock. If you are walking on the coast make sure you check the tide times before you set out.

