

MOLE GAP TRAIL



Moderate Terrain

**10 km
Linear
3 hours**

260515



Access Notes



- 1. The walk has a few gentle gradients throughout plus one short steep climb.*
- 2. The paths through parkland and woodland can get muddy so stout footwear is required.*
- 3. You will need to negotiate several kissing gates and some steps but there are no stiles on route. Whilst most of the paths are fenced, a couple of sections cross fields/parkland where you might come across livestock (although all livestock was behind temporary electric fencing when we walked), so take particular care with dogs.*
- 4. On rare occasions the riverside paths can flood, so avoid this walk after prolonged heavy periods of rain.*

Take the train for a wonderful day out in some of the most beautiful countryside in the south east.

The Mole Gap Trail offers the opportunity to visit two historic market towns and the outstanding countryside of the Mole Gap, including England's largest vineyard. You will discover a river that has carved a route through the chalk of the North Downs, some of the best ancient yew and box woodlands in Europe and historic parkland that has inspired famous writers and artists through the centuries. Step off the train at Leatherhead Station and you will soon pick up the silver metal arrows that will guide you along this 6 mile (10km) walk to Dorking. This walk is part of the Explore Surrey collection, published through a collaboration between iFootpath and Surrey County Council.

If you are looking for refreshments there are several options. You could stock up on supplies in Leatherhead for a picnic along the way on one of the benches or at Swanworth Picnic Site (Waypoint 4). If you'd rather sit down for a full meal, The Running Horse pub is in Leatherhead just by the Town Bridge (Waypoint 1), The Stepping Stones pub is in Westhumble (just a 2 minute walk along Chapel Lane from Waypoint 5) and Denbies Wine Estate has a restaurant/cafe (just before Waypoint 6). You have an option towards the end of the walk to detour into Dorking High Street, where you will find The White Horse Hotel.

Ordnance Survey Map: Explorer 146 Dorking, Box Hill & Reigate. 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

The walk starts from Leatherhead rail station and finishes at Dorking rail station. The return journey can be completed with a single 5 minute train ride. For help planning your journey by train, visit www.nationalrail.co.uk. If you are coming by car, both stations have large car parks but a more cost effective solution would be to use the Randalls Road long-stay pay and display car park (just opposite Leatherhead Station) which costs £3 for 5 hours (correct March 2015).

Approximate post code **KT22 7SQ**.

Get the iFootpath App for a smarter walking experience. Hundreds of walking guides in the palm of your hand with live maps that show your progress as you walk. Say goodbye to wrong turns!



iFootpath.com

Walk Sections

Go → 1 Start to Town Bridge



To begin the walk, make your way to Platform 2 of Leatherhead Station. Leave the station via the exit on Platform 2 (the back exit which leads to the station car park) and follow the access road down the hill. At the junction with the main road, cross over using the pelican crossing and take the tarmac path ahead into the park (passing the long-stay car park on the left).

You will come to a fork, keep left (signed for the Town Centre). Follow this diagonal path through the centre of the park. At the next junction, keep straight ahead. Just before you reach the tall metal flame sculpture, look for a silver metal arrow set within the path. This is one of many dedicated waymarks for the Mole Gap Trail, so look out for them along the whole route.

Continue ahead to reach the corner of the path. Cross the pelican crossing (as instructed by more metal work set in the path) and turn left along the pavement (signed Town Centre). Follow the pavement uphill and, as you reach the bus stop, you will see Wesley House across to the left. Keep straight on along the pavement, heading into the town centre and passing the war memorial on the left.

Stay on the right-hand pavement as it turns right and heads downhill. Pass The Running Horse pub on the right and, immediately after the mini-roundabout, swap to the left-hand pavement to cross the elegant eighteenth century arched Town Bridge.

1 → 2 Town Bridge to Young Street



Immediately after the bridge, turn left onto the surfaced footpath signed to Norbury Park. Follow this path alongside the River Mole on the left. Stay ahead on the main riverside surfaced path

which leads you past the football ground and leisure centre across to the right. Soon afterwards, across to the left, you will pass the shell bridge which has a large shell covering its keystone. Through the fence to the right are the grounds of Thorncroft Manor.

You will emerge via a staggered barrier to a T-junction with a tarmac drive. Turn right along this, passing the entrance to Thorncroft Manor on the right. Keep ahead between several properties and soon afterwards you will come to a signed crossroads of paths. Turn left here (signed for Norbury Park) and follow the path through the metal kissing gate. (Note: there may be an electric fence on the right so take care with children and dogs).

Follow the path which leads you past the old Thorncroft Vineyard on the right to reach a wooden kissing gate. Pass through this and keep ahead on the riverside path passing under the road bridge which carries Young Street overhead. NOTE: On the rare occasions that the path is flooded at Thorncroft/Young Street, the rest of the route will also be difficult. It is therefore advisable to turn back and return to do the walk on another day.

2 → 3 Young Street to Railway Bridge



Follow the riverside path and soon you will come to a metal kissing gate ahead. Pass through this to enter Norbury Park. Follow the path across the centre of the field with the River Mole across to the left and the railway embankment across to the right. Soon, the river swings right to run directly alongside your path once again. The path swings left to become a stone track.

Follow the track down the slope and through the gateway then keep straight ahead following the line of the wooded railway embankment on the right. Where the track swings left (with a cottage ahead) turn right through the kissing gate. Follow this track which leads you under the railway bridge.

3 → 4 Railway Bridge to Swanworth Picnic Site

A few paces after the bridge, ignore the wooden steps on the left. Instead, continue for a further 50m to reach a crossroads of paths. Turn left here, passing between sections of old box hedge, and follow the path winding fairly steeply uphill (including one flight of concrete steps). You will emerge out to a T-junction with a tarmac access lane. Turn left along this.



Follow the lane as it swings steadily right and leads you downhill. Soon on the left the views will open up across to Cherkley Court on the opposite hillside and Norbury Park Farm in the valley bottom. Immediately after the first bench on the right, fork right onto the grass path which leads you uphill. The path will lead you to a crossroads with a surfaced track (marked with a fingerpost).

Go straight ahead on the path which leads you downhill through the woods. Towards the bottom of the hill, ignore the first path on the left (a sharp left turn through a staggered barrier). Instead keep ahead a little further and take the second path on the left, passing through a wooden kissing gate alongside a wide wooden gate. This leads you into Swanworth Picnic Site, the perfect spot for a rest and refreshments.

4 → 5 Swanworth Picnic Site to Chapel Lane



Leave the picnic site via the kissing gate on the far side and keep straight ahead along the track with fields each side (ignoring the path signed left to Mickleham). Pass the buildings of Lodge Farm on the left then follow the track as it swings left then right and leads you across the bridge over the River Mole. At this point there are great views behind towards Norbury Park House.

Follow the track ahead and then left to reach more farm buildings. Turn right onto another track between fields and follow it past a large white cottage on the right. You will reach a kissing gate ahead, pass through this into the field. NOTE: the field may be holding cattle, although when we crossed they were held behind an electric fence. All the same, take particular care with dogs.

Keep ahead on the obvious track across the field. At the far side, pass through the kissing gate and go straight ahead (ignoring the path under the railway on the left). Cross the footbridge over the River Mole which runs directly alongside the

railway bridge on the left.

At the far side, go through the gate to enter a large area of old parkland. Walk directly ahead, following the left-hand fence line. Go through the gate ahead, follow the narrow fenced path and you will emerge out to a junction with Chapel Lane, with a small chapel and large arch visible to the right.

5 → 6 Chapel Lane to Copsse Fingerpost



If you wish to visit The Stepping Stones pub for refreshments, turn left here for just a short distance. Otherwise, to continue the main walk, cross over Chapel Lane and turn right along the pavement. Where the pavement ends, bear left to join the raised embankment walkway running alongside the road.

You will emerge through white fencing by the entrance to Pilgrim's Way. Keep ahead along the edge of the main road (taking care of traffic) for just 25m then turn left onto the (half-hidden) narrow fenced footpath. You will emerge out to a small residential road, cross over and take the footpath which continues opposite (signed to Dorking).

At the end of the long enclosed path, pass through the kissing gate to enter a short field. Cross this at 1 o'clock and leave through the kissing gate on the far side. A few paces later you will come to a crossroads with the stone track that carries the North Downs Way National Trail. Go straight ahead here, passing through a gate to enter the vineyard of Denbies Wine Estate. (NOTE: Denbies is a working farm so please take care and keep dogs on a lead).

Walk straight ahead on the wide grass track between the vines. At the end of the first section of vines, you will come to a signed crossroads with the estate concrete drive. If you wish to visit the vineyard visitor centre and restaurant/cafe turn left. Otherwise, to continue the walk, go straight ahead (uphill) on the stone track between the second section of vines. At the next junction, where the stone track swings right, keep straight ahead on the wide grass track between the third and final section of vines.

You will come to a wide gate with a kissing gate alongside. Pass through this gate to join the track with a hedgerow on the left and tall trees on the right. At the top of the slope you will come to a fingerpost marking a junction within this small copsse of trees.

6 → 7 Cope Fingerpost to End



Here you have two choices.

If you wish to extend the walk to visit Dorking High Street, go straight ahead to join a road. Continue along the road to Ashcombe Road. Turn left along the pavement and look out for a narrow path between houses on the right. Follow this path between gardens, playing fields and over the railway to reach Meadowbank Recreation Ground. Follow the path ahead along the edge of the ground, with views towards St Martin's Church. Cross Pippbrook to join Mill Lane and keep ahead to reach the High Street, opposite The White Horse Hotel.

Otherwise, for the main walk which leads you to Dorking Station, turn left. Follow the narrow path through a tunnel of trees, with an open field across to the right. Just before you reach the gravel road, turn left along the narrow path with properties on the right. Follow the path downhill taking time to enjoy the views to Box Hill ahead and across the vineyard to Norbury Park House across to the left. You will emerge via a kissing gate to a T-junction with the road. Cross over and turn left along the pavement. A little further along, turn right into Chichester Road, passing Coombe House on the left. At the end of the road, swing right to join the pavement which runs beside the dual carriageway. Follow this ahead, crossing over three side roads to reach the subway. Go through the subway, keeping ahead to climb the ramp at the far side. You will see Dorking Station, the end point for this walk, directly ahead. From here there are frequent trains back to Leatherhead Station (just a 5 minute journey).

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

Surrey is the ideal place to explore the outdoors on foot. Whether you're an adventurous walker or someone who prefers a short stroll, there's a walk to suit you.

If you would like to know more about Explore Surrey and find more walks please visit

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.

