

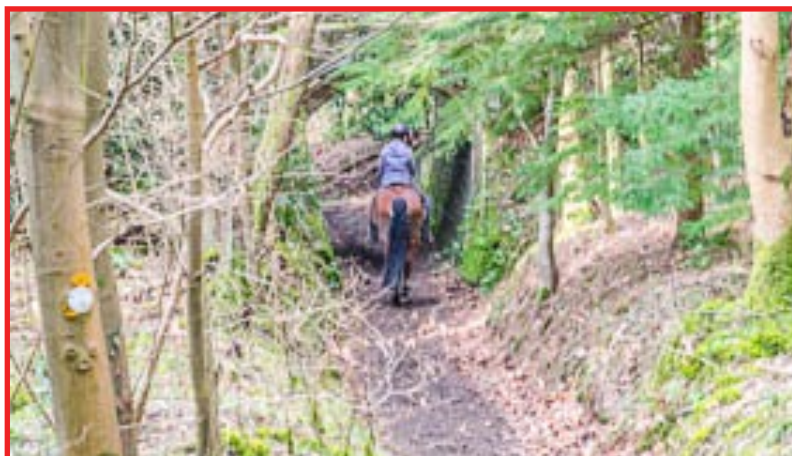
HORSLEY WOODLAND TRAIL



Challenging Terrain

**12 km
Circular
4 hours**

190716



A 12km (7.5 mile) circular walk exploring the woodlands and open spaces of East and West Horsley and Effingham, including Great Ridings Wood, Oldlands Wood and the Sheepleas. The route also takes you past a number of the beautiful flint bridges built by Lord Lovelace in the 1800s.

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, the Stockyard Coffee Bar (open weekdays only) is next to the rail station at the start of the walk and the parade of shops in East Horsley is just a short walk from the station. The Barley Mow pub is located about 7 miles into the walk, at waypoint 8. Ordnance Survey Map: Explorer 145 Guildford and Farnham and 146 Dorking, Box Hill and 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 and finishes from Horsley rail station in East Horsley. For help with planning your journey by public transport please visit <http://journeys.travelsmartsurrey.info>. If you are coming by car, the rail station has its own car park which costs £2 per day Mon-Fri off-peak (after 10.30am), £6 on Bank Holidays and is free on Sat and Sun (correct March 2016).

Approximate post code **KT24 6QX**.

Walk Sections

Access Notes

- 1. The walk has several climbs and descents throughout.*
- 2. The paths through the woodlands can get very muddy and slippery after wet weather so good boots are essential (or wellingtons with grips in the winter months).*
- 3. Some of the paths are fairly narrow, there are no stiles on route but you will need to negotiate a number of gates, staggered barriers and two kissing gates.*
- 4. There is minimal road walking, but there are a few road crossings that require care.*
- 5. All the paths are enclosed from adjacent fields so you will not be sharing the paths with any livestock.*



Start to Old London Road

Leave Horsley Station via the main exit on Platform 2. Turn right along the pavement which leads you down the station's access road, passing the Stockyard Coffee Bar on your right. Just after the first stretch of terraced houses on your left, turn left onto the tarmac public footpath (just by a sign for Thornleas Place). Follow this tarmac path between houses, climbing steadily and you

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will emerge out to a residential road, alongside a large green.

Go straight ahead, passing the green on your left. Beyond the green, keep directly ahead on the quiet lane, Cobham Way, between houses. At the end, pass alongside the vehicle gate to reach a junction with the main road. Cross over with care, turn left along the pavement and then take the first right into Norrels Drive (signed as a public footpath). Follow this quiet private road and, part way along, you will come to a fingerpost marking a crossroads of paths, just before you reach a pair of brick and flint old gatehouse properties called Norrels Lodge North and South. This is one of the former entrance gates for Horsley Park (more about that later).

Turn left to join the footpath following the line of the lodge wall on your right. Stay with this path which swings right to reach the end of another residential road. Keep directly ahead along this road, passing houses on your left. At the end of the road, go ahead to join a footpath which soon leads you to a junction with a woodland track, Old London Road.

1 → 2 Old London Road to Orestan Lane



Turn right along this woodland track. The Old London Road is an ancient packhorse route from the Tillingbourne Valley to London. The earth banks that run to the sides, known as hundred banks, once served as parish and manor boundaries.

Ignore a footbridge into the woodland on your right. About 100 metres later you will come to a crossroads of paths. Turn left (marked with a yellow arrow for the Jubilee Trail, a waymarked trail that we will now be following for much of this route). Pass alongside a horse barrier to enter Great Ridings Wood, managed by the Woodland Trust. You will see an information board on your left. Great Ridings Wood is an ancient woodland, which can be traced back at least 1,000 years to Saxon times, but could be even older.

Keep ahead along the woodland path and after 50 metres, take

the right-hand branch at a three-way fork. Now simply stay with this main path winding through the woodland, leading you steadily downhill to reach a bridge. Cross the bridge and keep ahead, uphill. Before the top you will find a waymarker post. Follow the yellow waymarker which directs you to turn left. Continue for about 200 metres and then take the right-hand turn onto a stone path (marked with a yellow arrow). At the end you will emerge through an enlarged kissing gate to reach a vehicle track, Orestan Lane.

2 → 3 Orestan Lane to Guildford Road



Turn left for just a few paces and then turn right through the fence gap to enter the next section of woodland, known as Parrot's Copse. Follow the narrow path winding ahead through the woodland until you reach a crossroads with a waymarker post. Go straight ahead (do NOT be fooled into turning left by the slightly misleading yellow arrow here). The path leads you across a bridge and then back out to a T-junction with the main track, Old London Road.

Directly opposite are the remains of a beautiful old brick and flint wall, the trademark style of the first Earl of Lovelace. The wall is the boundary for Horsley Park, the estate and manor house built in the late 1700s for the distiller and banker, William Currie. William King, the first Earl of Lovelace bought the estate in 1840 and spent the next 25 years extensively remodelling it. Few elements escaped his attention, either being encased in or rebuilt in his signature decorative brick and flint style. The two lodge houses on Norrels Drive that you saw earlier are a good example of his additions to the estate. Today the mansion is used as a hotel and conference centre.

Turn left and follow the track passing Dell Farm on your left. You will emerge to the end of a residential road. Keep ahead along the lane, with the brick and flint wall still running on your right. Towards the end of the road you will see the Effingham Lodge former entrance gates for Horsley Park on your right. You will come to a T-junction with the main A246 Guildford Road.

3 → 4 Guildford Road to Crocknorth Farm

Turn right along the pavement for just a few metres and then cross the road (taking extreme care) to turn left onto the signed public bridleway. A short distance in, keep left at the fork and, a little further along, keep left again at the second fork. Stay with this path for about half a mile. As you reach a subtle crossroads, go straight ahead (on a slightly sunken path) to reach a crossroads with a waymarker post.

Turn right here and follow the bridleway leading you under the



beautiful brick and stone arched bridge, Stony Dene Bridge. This is the first of several Lovelace Bridges that this route will pass through. Lord Lovelace was an enthusiastic forester. In order to facilitate riding through the woods and extracting the timber on horse-drawn carts, he embarked on a programme of bridge building. Altogether he built fifteen horseshoe-shaped bridges (of which ten remain today), ranging in size from about six feet wide at Meadow Platt to eighteen feet wide at Dorking Arch, which crosses the road leading to Ranmore Common.

Just beyond the bridge, turn left onto the woodland path (ignoring the kissing gate into the field immediately on your right). A few metres along you will see a viewpoint marker. If you look to the right you will have excellent views across to the east. Keep ahead on the main woodland path which climbs steadily to reach a T-junction with a track. Turn left for a few metres and then turn right to join a bridleway leading you steadily uphill between lines of yew trees.

At the end of this path you will reach a T-junction. Turn right and follow the track which leads you down to a junction at the bottom of the slope. Bear left to join a path which passes a Forestry Commission Oldlands sign on your right and then leads you uphill between hedgerows. You will emerge out to a junction with a vehicle track, directly opposite the Old Barn at Crocknorth Farm.

4 ➔ 5 Crocknorth Farm to Green Dene



Turn right along the access drive, passing the Old Barn on your left and Crocknorth Farm on your right. Crocknorth Farm is another Lovelace building, inside the newer Lovelace encasing is a house dating back from about 1600. At the end of the drive, cross over Crocknorth Road with care and take the public bridleway ahead, leading you into woodland.

Follow this bridleway which leads you under the next arched Lovelace bridge, Briary Hill East. At the crossroads with a vehicle track go straight ahead and the bridleway will lead you

downhill, passing under two further Lovelace bridges along the way, Briary Hill West and then Raven Arch. At the bottom you will emerge directly out to the road, Green Dene (with the side road, Honeysuckle Bottom to your left).

5 ➔ 6 Green Dene to Millenium Viewpoint



Walk diagonally right to cross the main road and join the signed public bridleway which leads you into the next section of woodland, Sheepleas. Stay with the main bridleway climbing steeply.

Sheepleas is a mosaic of woodland (both ancient and recent) and open grassland and is managed by Surrey Wildlife Trust. Some of the woods have been here for at least 400 years with beech, oak, field maple and wild cherry trees commonly found. The grasslands are rich in plants that thrive on chalky soil, like marjoram and wild orchids, and support more than 30 species of butterflies.

At the top of the hill you will come to a fingerpost marking a three-way junction of bridleways. Turn left here and follow this bridleway through a beautiful section of coppiced trees. You will come to a T-junction with a grass triangle at its centre. Turn left for a few metres and then turn right onto another bridleway. Follow this bridleway as it bends steadily right, ignoring the gate into a field on your left.

This track leads you steadily downhill. Stay with the main track as it bears right, passing a bench on your left. At the bottom of the slope you will come to a major crossroads marked with a fingerpost. Turn right, signed to St Mary's Car Park. Pass the picnic area on your right and at the next junction of paths, walk at 1 o'clock to reach the brick millenium viewpoint. Take time to enjoy the views here, which on a clear day stretch for miles. The skyline of London is often clearly visible including the iconic outlines of Canary Wharf and The Shard.

6 ➔ 7 Millenium Viewpoint to St Mary's Church

Stay with the path which passes immediately to the left of the viewpoint and then leads you steadily downhill through a section of grassland. Continue down to the valley bottom and then turn left to join the wide grass track. A short distance along keep right at the fork, joining a path which climbs gently.

Pass through the staggered horse barrier and you will come to a staggered T-junction. Turn left on the path signed to St Mary's Car Park. Keep left at the fork, passing through another horse



barrier to reach an open area of grassland. Walk directly across the centre of the grass meadow. Stay with the main path which leads you through a belt of trees and you will emerge to a second grass meadow. Bear left and follow the left-hand edge of this second meadow.

In the far corner, bear left on the track which leads you to a single wooden gate. Pass through this and walk directly ahead along the track with woodland to your left and fenced fields to your right. The track leads you past St Mary's Car Park on your left and you will emerge to a junction with the A246 with St Mary's Church on your left.

7 ➔ 8 St Mary's Church to The Street



Cross over the main road taking extreme care. Turn left along the pavement for just a few paces and then turn right through a wooden kissing gate. About 10 metres along, you will come to a fork giving you a choice of two grass paths. Take the right-hand path which soon leads you between two large fenced grass fields.

Across to your right you will have good views of the ornate red brick West Horsley Place. This old manor house retains much of its medieval timber-framed construction and sits quietly in the surrounding parkland which has changed little over the centuries. Carew Raleigh, the youngest son of Sir Walter Raleigh, inherited the manor from his uncle in the late 1640s. Sir Walter Raleigh's widow lived here for the last few years of her life and it is said she was still in possession of her husband's embalmed head, which she carried everywhere following his execution. The head was finally laid to rest in the side chapel of St Mary's.

Simply stay on this grass track ahead for some distance, until you come to a junction with a wooden field gate directly ahead. Turn left immediately before the hedgerow, following the path with an open grass field to your left. In the field corner keep ahead on the woodland path. Cross the sleeper bridge and

continue ahead on the grass track which swings right and then right again to become a narrow path with a fenced field on your right.

At the end of this stretch, join the stone access drive ahead which leads you out to a junction with The Street in West Horsley. If you are looking for refreshments at this point the Barley Mow pub, which was built in the 1500s, is just across to your left.

8 ➔ 9 The Street to End



Cross over the road and turn right along the pavement. Just before you reach the rail bridge, cross back over the road with extreme care. Pass through the staggered barrier to join the tarmac footpath with the rail line running up to your left. Simply keep ahead on this rail side path for about half a mile and you will emerge to the end of a residential road alongside the village hall.

Keep straight ahead to the end of the road where you will reach a T-junction, with the shopping parade to your right and the La Meridiana restaurant to your left. Cross over the main road, turn left and then fork immediately right to join Station Approach. Follow this access road up to Horsley Station where the walk began.

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.

