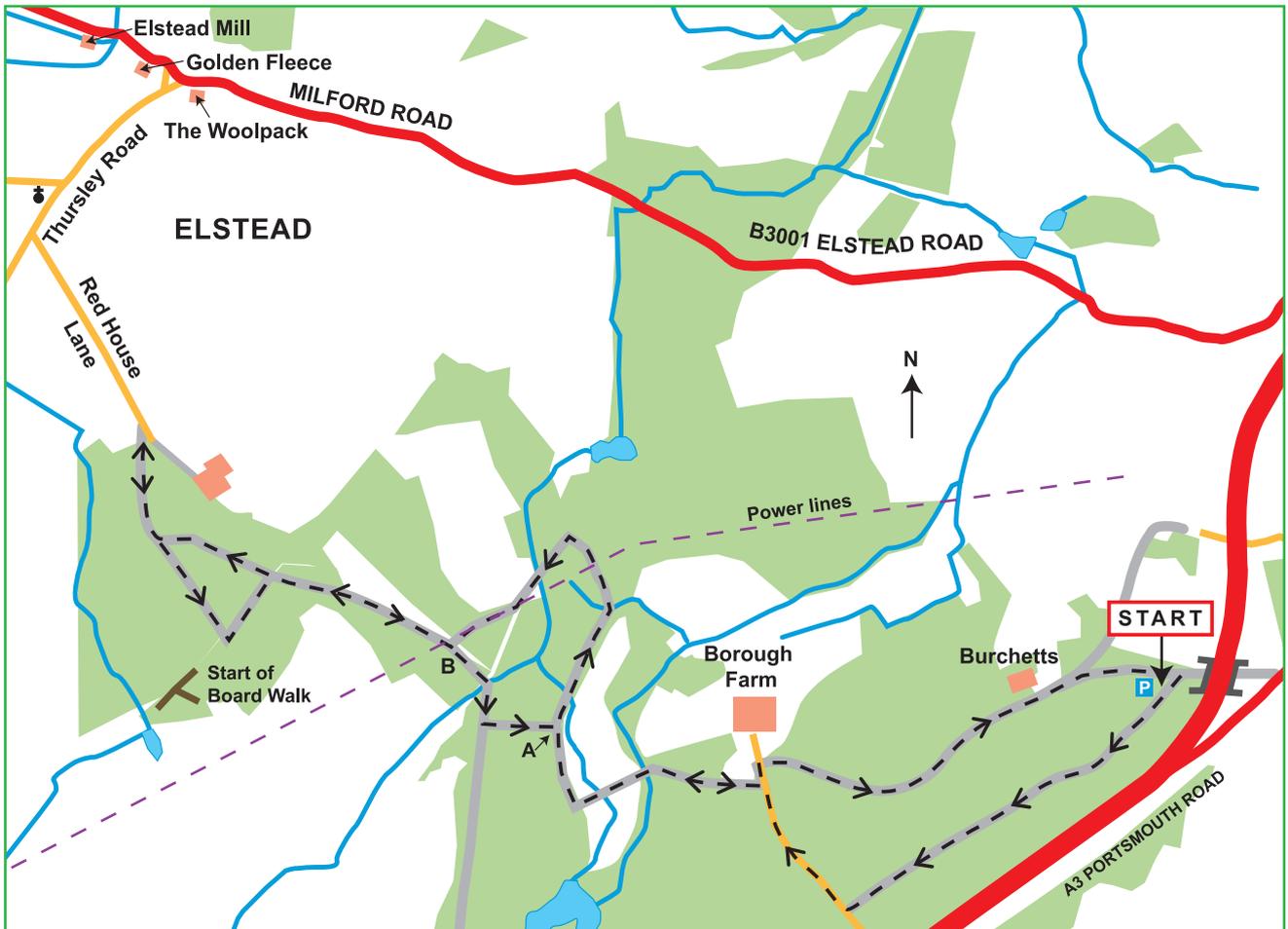




# Rodborough Common to Elstead

This walk has been designed for Trampers, off road cyclists and walkers



-  ROADS
- 
-  FOOTPATHS & TRACKS
-  ROUTE OF WALK
-  WOODED AREAS
-  BUILDINGS

**Map:** OS Explorer 145 Guildford & Farnham

**Start:** Rodborough Common car park

**Grid Ref:** SU938419

**Distance:** 8.5 miles

**Parking:**

**Refreshments:** The Woolpack, The Golden Fleece (serving Thai food) The Mill – all at Elstead.

Rodborough Common is managed by Surrey Wildlife Trust. It is home to many reptiles including Common Lizards, Slow Worms, Grass Snakes and Adders. Butterflies include the Silver Studded Blue.



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## Directions

Leave the car park by the first path on the left with a barrier across it (there is room for the scooter to pass) and walk south over an open space parallel with the A3. Ignore a grassy path to the right, and shortly after when the path forks go right. At a junction of paths, with a wide one coming in from the right and a narrow one going left, keep ahead. Now watch for when the path next starts to dip down as there is a very rough patch ahead. To avoid this take the path on the right and then left to re-join the path. The path now ascends and over to the right is a clear rectangular grassy space.

*It is here that there is a colony of the rare Silver Studded Blue butterfly which emerges in June/July. The male is blue and the female a less spectacular brown.*

Continue on the path until just before it enters a small wooded area and then take the path right, which goes down and then up, and stop to admire the view at the top.

*The flat topped skyline is known as The Hogs Back and is the A31 linking Guildford and Farnham.*

Turn left towards the seat and then in front of it turn right on the narrow path which leads out to a road. (*This very quiet road is Borough Farm road and serves only three properties.*) Go right downhill to the bottom and turn left onto the bridleway (BW) just before the gate to Borough Farm. On the right pass a house 'Little Borough' and then go through the gate (which can be nudged open). The BW is fenced, it goes over a stream where the path is often muddy, narrows and arrives at another gate (again it is not latched).

*This is part of an earth bank marking the parish boundary between Witley and Thursley. You are now entering Thursley Common National Nature Reserve. The*

*best time to visit the reserve is between May and September. Butterflies include large populations of grayling and purple emperor and also the silver studded blue. Birds include woodlark, Dartford warbler, nightjar, stonechat and curlew. Reptiles include the rare sand lizard and smooth snake.*

Turn right and keep right following the parish boundary. At a notice board on the right 'Welcome to Thursley National Nature Reserve' and a MOD board ahead on the left, ignore the path left and keep straight on. (You will return by this path to this junction **(A)** on the map). The path becomes a wide sandy track with ditches on both sides. Ignore a path right and reach a crossroads with a narrow path ahead. Turn left here and very shortly go under overhead lines to reach a metalled track.

*This well-made track is popular with families with young children learning to cycle. There is a small carpark, about a mile, off to the right at end of the track.*

Turn left here and keep right, staying on the track when you reach a fork. After about 500 yards you arrive at a junction of paths with a grassy track ahead, a sandy track left and the main track turning sharply right. (On the return journey you take the sandy track **(B)** on the map). Continue on the main track and on a right hand bend pass a very wide sandy track going left. After approximately 600 yards from this point arrive at a crossing path with a wide sandy track going to the left and a narrower path right. Turn right onto the narrower path into the woods. After a path joins on the left reach some wooden posts and arrive at a tarmac drive to a private house. Turn left down the drive to reach a residential road, Red House Lane but it is unmarked at this end. (On the right hand side partially hidden is the house name 'Red House Farm').

Ignoring the road to the left, continue ahead to the end of the lane and turn right for the village of Elstead. On arriving at the triangular green the Woolpack is on the right, The Golden Fleece is round the corner on the left and further on over the bridge is The Mill.

*Elstead is situated on the river Wey. The woollen industry flourished here as suggested by the names of the pubs The Woolpack and The Golden Fleece. Elstead mill is probably on the site of a very early mill. It was rebuilt after a fire in the 17thc.*

For the return journey retrace your steps to and along Red House Lane and up the Red House Farm driveway. Turn right onto the footpath with a MOD sign visible ahead and take the left fork, that you arrived on, through the wood and out to the wide track. Now cross to the sandy track opposite and continue to a T junction at wide sandy track. Turn right for 100 yards for an optional visit to a boardwalk giving access to the wetland area. (The boardwalk is suitable for pushchairs but not for mobility vehicles & cyclists). Turn left to continue the return journey.

*Twenty species of dragonflies and damselflies live around the ponds on the reserve. The sphagnum mosses that form the beat bog can be found. Early marsh orchids, bog asphodels, heath milkwort, cotton grass, sedges and rushes are also present. The area around the boardwalk is popular with birdwatchers.*

At the end of this sandy path turn right re-joining the well-made track. Continue until the track turns sharply left and keep ahead on a narrow sandy track **(B)**. Keep ahead when another track joins on the left and shortly reach another 'Welcome to Thursley' board and also an MOD board. Turn left here and keep left at a fork to arrive at a T junction by further boards **(A)** and turn right.

Once more following the parish boundary continue until you reach the gate on the left and go through. On reaching the tarmac road to Borough Farm do not turn right but cross over and continue on the BW and shortly pass a barrier. Keep straight on the BW and eventually pass by a gate just before a house Burchetts on the left. Soon arrive at another house on the right, Moushill Corner. Now leave the main track which swings left and go ahead uphill which leads back to the carpark.

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