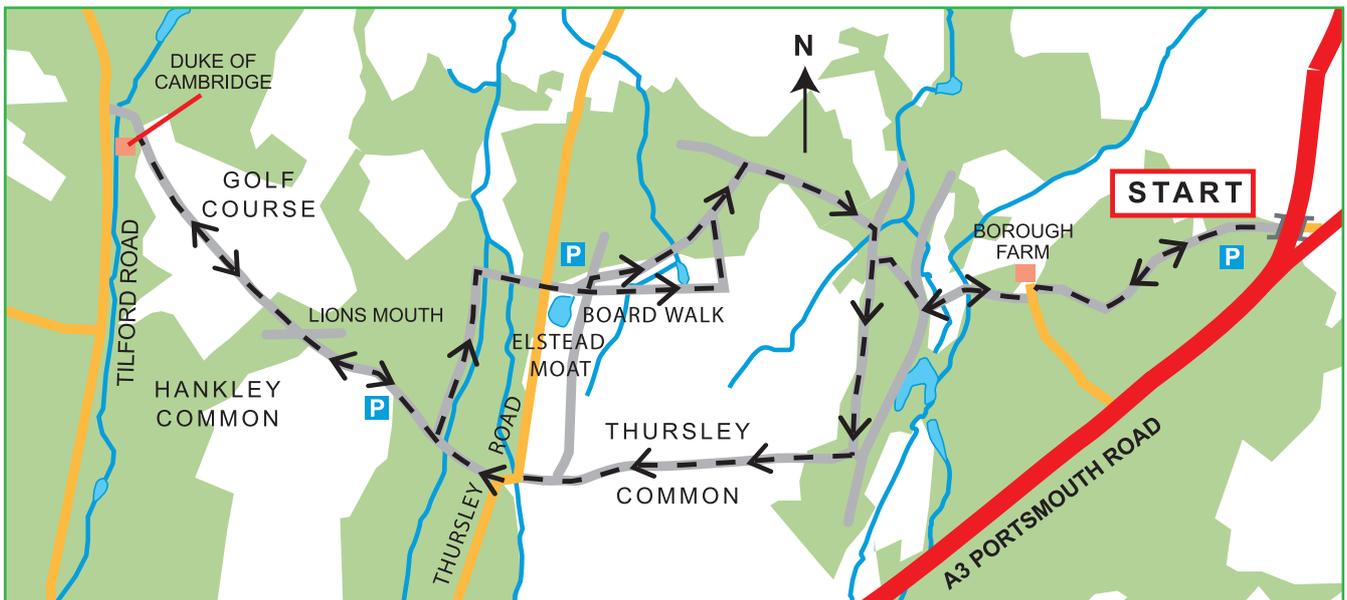




Rodborough Common to The Duke of Cambridge

via Thursley and Hankley

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



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

Map: OS Explorer 145 Guildford & Farnham

Start: Rodborough Common car park

Grid Ref: SU938419

Distance: 10 miles

Parking:

Refreshments: The Duke of Cambridge

This route does not go to the cricket green at Tilford. There is room at the barriers, mentioned on this walk, to pass by using an all-terrain mobility scooter and the gates are not latched.

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 at the far end on a wide track going downhill. At the bottom bear left onto the wide track coming in from the right and pass, on the left, the driveway to Moushill Corner. Continue on this bridleway (BW), soon passing another house, Burchetts and a gateway across the BW. After some distance arrive at another barrier and soon the BW reaches the tarmac driveway to Borough Farm. Cross the drive and continue on the BW past a house, Little Borough, on the right and through a gate to a fenced path. The path goes over a stream and after passing a farm gate on the left it narrows and arrives at another gate.

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. 26 species of dragonflies have been recorded. Plants such as bog asphodel and marsh orchid may be seen. Birds include woodlark, Dartford warbler, nightjar, stonechat and curlew. Reptiles include the rare sand lizard and smooth snake.

Go through the gate, turn right and after a short distance take the right fork following the earth bank which is the Parish Boundary. Turn left when you reach a 'Welcome to Thursley Common' board on the right and an MOD board ahead on the left. On reaching further MOD and 'Welcome to Thursley Common' boards at a T junction turn left. Now keep straight ahead on this wide sandy track for 0.6mile until you arrive at a junction of paths by yet another 'Welcome to Thursley Common' board. *(To the left a cottage is just visible.)* Turn right here and keep on

this sandy track for a mile, ignoring all paths off, to reach a metal gate.

Go through the gate and keep to the same path which joins a wide track, coming in from the left, just before reaching a road. *(Take care on this very short piece of road)*. Turn left along the road and as the road bends sharp left cross over to the BW/MOD tarmac drive. Continue on this, passing a car parking area on the left, to the top of the hill and a gate.

This is Hankley Common which is largely owned by the MOD and used for military training. The area known as The Lions Mouth was one of the training sites for Operation Overlord, the invasion of France by allied forces in 1944. The remainder of the common is owned by Hankley Golf Club which opened in 1897.

The common has been used on several occasions for filming. It was used in three of the James Bond films and most recently for filming Macbeth.

Pass the gate and go downhill to the bend at the bottom. Ignore the wide path going right but leave the tarmac drive and go ahead uphill on the wide sandy track to reach a junction of six paths. This is the area known as 'The Lions Mouth'. Take the path that is a little to the right of straight ahead. *Stop and look for a post with a blue BW sign numbered 101 and a GW (Greensand Way) sign on the left of the path to be sure of the correct path.* Soon the path goes downhill to reach the golf course and keep straight ahead to cross the course on the marked bridleway. *It is a popular golf course so do take care.*

On reaching a car parking area amongst the trees, **mobility scooters** turn left into the car park and go through it to continue on the wide sandy track beyond. Keep to this track which bends right and eventually passes the Golf Clubhouse and carpark on the right and wooden chalets on the left to arrive at the Duke of Cambridge pub.

Walkers/cyclists keep ahead, go left on the bridleway at a fork and continue through the golf course (**cyclists** watch out for one sudden dip) eventually joining the golf course drive coming in from the left. The drive passes an area of wooden chalets on the left, then the clubhouse and its carpark on the right and arrives at the Duke of Cambridge Pub.

For the return journey retrace your steps back over the golf course. On the other side continue uphill in the same direction and reach the 'Lions Mouth' area once more. Cross over and take the right-hand wider path downhill BW 101, still

retracing your steps, to the tarmac drive. Turn left and follow the drive uphill to the gate.

Now proceed downhill to a wide crossing path with MOD boards and turn left **leaving the tarmac drive**. Continue on this track which becomes a tarmac lane and when you reach the impressive gates to Elstead Manor on the left, turn right. This track goes out to a road opposite the carpark for Elstead Moat. Cross over, go through the carpark and pick up the Heath Trail which starts just left of the information board. Follow the Heath Trail signs until you reach an information board at the beginning of a boardwalk.

The boardwalk has been constructed over wetland bog. The area is well known for the many varieties of dragonflies, damselflies and mayflies. It is popular with birdwatchers. Unfortunately the boardwalk is not suitable for mobility scooters, cyclists but adults may find they can negotiate it with pushchairs.

If using the boardwalk ignore the right turn halfway round. When you reach the end of the boardwalk turn right and continue with the instructions below.

If not using the boardwalk turn left and on reaching a crossroads of paths go right. Continue until you reach the board at the far end of the boardwalk.

Now continue on this wide sandy track to a T junction. Turn right onto a well-made track and keep to the track for about 800 yards until the point where it turns sharp left at a junction of paths. Now leave the track and keep ahead on narrow sandy path. Another path joins on the left and then after a short distance arrive at a 'Welcome to Thursley' board and also a MOD board. *(You may recognize this junction from the outward journey.)* Turn left here, keep left when reaching a fork and arrive back at the Parish boundary by another 'Welcome to Thursley' board. Turn right following the boundary and keep watch for the gate on the left and go back through.

Now retrace your steps to Borough Farm along the fenced BW and crossover the road. Continue on the BW passing the two barriers met on the outward journey and the house Burchetts on the left. After the house, Moushill Corner on the right, leave the main track which swings left and fork right uphill *(ignoring the narrow path on the right)* to the car park.

