

SPELTHORNE U3A K2 WALKING GROUP

Programme of walks for April to June 2024

Wednesday April 3rd – Gracious Pond Loop – about 6 miles

NB this walk will be repeated on 17th July 2024, when it should be drier!

Description: This is a lovely varied walk and takes us over Chobham Common to the Fishpool (we have visited there recently on another walk). We then walk west and take a diversion to the Four Horseshoes pub, where we will be able to stop for a drink and toilets at around 1pm. It is then a little under 2 miles back to the car park. The pub only serves a full menu (not snacks or sandwiches), so please bring a packed lunch; we will eat in the open before going to the pub.

Important information: The walk is over a variety of paths, mainly tracks and bridleways, woodland and farmland paths and a few short stretches of road. There are a few narrower paths that we have to use to get to the wider paths. When we did the recce, it was relatively easy walking for most of the time, **however** on all of the paths, (even the wide major paths) there were a large number of extremely wet/muddy areas. These were extensive, so they could not be avoided. This means that you will need to be prepared to walk directly in the muddy areas, where the mud will be several inches deep (not over the top of your boots, but would be over the top of walking shoes). Good waterproof boots are essential and walking poles are recommended for balance.

There are 4 stiles on the route and some areas of prickly gorse and holly.

There are unfortunately no toilets or refreshments available at the start of the walk. There are some areas with bushes (or gorse!) along the walk.

Meet: At the start in Staple Hill Car Park (see directions below) which is FREE.
Start time 10am.

Directions:

Confusingly, there are 2 car parks with a sign saying Staple Hill! The car park we need is off the Staple Hill road (see map). If you put “Staple Hill Car Park Chobham” into Google maps it should take you there. There is a small car park nearby called the Longcross Car Park – if you find yourself there, turn left out of the car park and head up Staple Hill, the car park we need is on the right, up an incline.

There are no toilets or refreshments there.

Car share: please use the U3A car share (walking) Whats app

Please remember to bring some sandwiches for your lunch and something to sit on.

Leader: Della and Mike

Wednesday 17th April – Basingstoke Canal meets Wey Navigation – 6.5 miles

Details: A flat walk along the towpaths made circular by town roads and extending to take in Byfleet and Wisley churches. This walk was last done in July 2019. It is now prettier with lots of blossom & fortunately not too muddy.

Description: The walk starts at Lock no 6 on the Basingstoke Canal in Sheerwater and continues to its junction with the Wey Navigation near to the M25. After walking a stretch of the Wey we reach Byfleet Church and eventually the mid 12th century Wisley Church . lunch at the Anchor Pub by Pyrford Lock on the Basingstoke Canal.

Refreshments and toilets: There are no toilets at the start of the walk but bushes by the side of the canal. Lunch and toilets will be at the Anchor Pub – menu on the internet- but a sample starter is soup of the day & wholemeal bread £6.95, or sarnies e.g. egg & cress £8.25 incl. skin-on fries or toasted ham & cheese £7.45. Picnic lunches can be eaten outside the pub.

Meet: At the junction of Old Avenue & Sheerwater Rd at 10.15am.

Directions: According to your starting point, you may cross Chertsey Bridge & turn left at the lights along the B387, cross the A317 to follow the A318 to go thro' Addlestone to New Haw. At a roundabout, take 2nd exit to the **B385** along Woodham Lane. Cross 2 roundabouts to take the turning on the **A245 into Sheerwater Rd**. Cross the hump of the canal going towards a bridge over the railway. You can park on the bridge, before that on Old Ave on RHS or on Hollies Ave on LHS. Postcode **KT14 6AD**

Leaders: Marion and Di

Wednesday 24th April – Capital Ring stage 3, South Kenton to Hendon – 7 miles

Starting from South Kenton railway station, the walk, which has several inclines, crosses Preston Park and passes Preston Road underground station, before reaching Fryent Country Park. It then heads south and east to Brent Reservoir and West Hendon where it crosses the Edgware Road, M1 and A1 and finishes at Hendon Park. Some of the route is very muddy at present and boots are recommended. While the terrain is uneven in places there is also a fair amount of pavement walking. With no opportunity for a coffee stop early in the walk, lunch will be taken in the Country Park and there will be a coffee and toilet stop in the afternoon.

Our return journey is dependent on rail services on the day and we'll either use Thames Link from West Hendon station to Richmond via West Hampstead or the Northern line to Waterloo from Hendon Central Station.

Meet: Either join the group at Ashford Railway Station at 9:25 for the 9:44 train to Richmond or Richmond Station at 10:00 for the London Overground train from Richmond to Willesden Junction and then onto South Kenton Station. Buy an Off-Peak Travel Card ticket using either your Senior Rail Card or a Group Off-Peak Travel Card for a group of 3.

Please remember to bring your lunch

Leaders: Gill & Jan

Wednesday 1st May – Fancy Free walk Ripley and the River Wey (Send Marsh, Newark Priory) – 5 miles

This is a “group led” walk which won’t be reced. The idea is that participants download the walk instructions and we all follow them together. We will do one of these group led walks every month.

For this walk, we are choosing a “Fancy Free Walk” that can be downloaded from:
<https://fancyfreewalks.org/Surrey/Ripley.pdf>

Description: An entirely flat walk but there could be muddy patches by the riverside at Newark Priory.

Directions: The walk begins at Ripley Green, Surrey, postcode GU23 6AN. Full details are included in the Fancy Free Walk document.

Contact Mike if you would like to go.

Wednesday 15th May - Walk in the Surrey Hills around Polesden Lacey - 5 miles. Moderate.

Description: A lovely varied walk ,with beautiful views, in the rolling farmland and ancient woodland behind Polesden Valley. The walk is undulating, on good tracks, with two steady climbs. No stiles. Total ascent 164m. Total descent 165m.

Refreshments / toilets: Toilets, coffee shop and café at the start and end of the walk. Indoor and outdoor seating. Lunch at the end of the walk can be taken at these or as a picnic in the courtyard area where there are benches. All amenities are available to non-National Trust members.

Meet: Post Code KT234PZ for National Trust car park. Parking charges £4 for a full day, free to National Trust members. (Please take a ticket.)

Meet to start the walk at 11.00 in front of the coffee shop.

For car share please use the U3A walking group WhatsApp. National Trust members may wish to go into the grounds or house after lunch so remember to discuss your plans when arranging car shares.

Directions: Take M25 to Junction 9 (Leatherhead/Dorking). Follow A243 towards Sutton/Epsom /Leatherhead. Continue to follow A243 through roundabouts. Take A24 towards Dorking. Signposted Polesden Lacey (Pass Headley Court on the left.) Continue to follow A24 to Dorking. At roundabout with Esso Garage on right, take A246 to Fetcham. Pass Bocketts Farm. Continue along A246. Continue through traffic lights at Great Bookham, looking for the brown Polesden Lacey sign pointing left. Follow signs left, up Leatherhead Road, and left again up Dorking Road. Follow road up to the Polesden Estate and National Trust car park.

Leaders: Chris and Ian

Wednesday 22nd May, Capital Ring Walk Stage 4 - Hendon to Crouch Hill, 8 miles.

This walk takes us through some nice parkland in Hendon, Hampstead and Highgate. The walk is largely on paved or tarmac paths, but there are stretches through the parkland that will be very muddy after rain (boots are strongly recommended). The first half of the walk is relatively flat; the latter half has a number of significant inclines (both up and down).

There are several small cafes en-route, but nowhere suitable for a large party to buy lunch, so please bring your own packed lunch. We will probably have an early lunch break (around 12.30-1.00pm). There can be a coffee stop about 2/3 of the way into the walk.

There are no toilets at Hendon; it is recommended you use the toilets at Richmond Station. There are toilets about 90 minutes into the walk. Thameslink Trains have toilets, but our journey time on the train is just 7 minutes!

Meet: Either join the group at Ashford Railway Station at 09.25 for the 09.44 train to Richmond or Richmond Railway Station at 10.00. From Richmond we shall use the London Overground to West Hampstead and then the Thameslink to Hendon. Our return will be on the London Overground from Crouch End to Richmond via Gospel Oak.

It is cheapest to buy two singles: one from Ashford to Hendon (changing at Richmond) and the return from Crouch Hill to Ashford via Gospel Oak (total cost should be around £7.50 with a railcard providing you choose this route and not the one via London). If you want more flexibility (but it is more expensive) you can buy an Off –Peak Day Travel Card ticket using your Senior Rail Card (if you have one) or a Group Off –Peak Day Travel Cards for a group of three.

Please remember to bring some sandwiches for your lunch.

Leaders : Mike and Della

Wednesday 29th May – Repeat of Chobham Common walk first done on 21st February – 7 ½ miles

Description: Route takes in Burrow Hill Green, M3 tunnel, Memorial Cross, Ship Hill and return to start. There are a couple of hills.

Meet: Meet at START Staple Hill Car Park which is FREE Post Code KT16 0ED

For car share, please use the U3A car share (walking) WhatsApp

Directions: Car park off the B384 Staple Hill . Car Park is not the first one (on the left) but further down the road, on the right is a large car park. No toilets or coffee.

Refreshments and Toilets: There is no pub at an appropriate time for lunch, so lunch will be in the open – remember to bring your own lunch and drink. We plan to have a coffee break and toilet break at Simply Dine about 1 hour into the walk and about 10 minutes off the route.

Leaders: Norman & Margaret

Wednesday 5th June – Ranmore Common to Polesden Lacey – 8 miles

This is a Fancy Free Walk but will be recced.

The route includes the woodlands of Ranmore Common with great views from the North Downs Way and the Polesden Lacey Estate. The walk goes through the estate with its celebrated country house. This attractive walk avoids the garden area and takes us to the entrance where you can use the shop, toilets and café. There are no steep hills or stiles.

Lunch will be either at the Polesden Lacey café or take a packed lunch for nearby.

Walking boots are recommended if the weather is wet.

Meet at 11am at the National Trust (NT) **Ranmore Common** car park, nearest postcode **RH5 6SY**, grid ref TQ127502. This is a FREE car park on Ranmore Common Road, a mile further west from the Denbies Hillside car park. There are no toilets at the start/end of the walk.

For **Car Share** use the U3A Walking Group WhatsApp.

Directions: Coming on the A24 from Leatherhead, turn **right** just before Dorking, signposted *Guildford*, onto Ashcombe Road, keep straight ahead at a mini-roundabout and turn **right** at a T-junction signposted *Ranmore*. Follow the road, passing a junction on the right with the Denbies Hillside car park on your **left** (not your starting point!). Continue another mile to find the Ranmore Common car park on your **left**. (If you pass a junction with Hogden Road on your right, you have gone 200 yards too far.)

Note: To avoid the M25 Wisley Junction 10 and the traffic delays, find an alternative route (**TBA**)

Leader: Neil

Wednesday 19th June - Fancy Free (group led) walk

This will possibly be the Devil's Punch Bowl: High Road and Pine Valley

Wednesday 26th June – Capital Ring Walk stage 5 – Crouch Hill to Stratford, 7 miles

An interesting walk via Finsbury Park alongside the New River and through the Abney Park Cemetery in Stoke Newington. We then via the Hackney Marshes by the River Lee and the vast Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park to Stratford Station.

Meet: Either join the group at Ashford Railway Station at 09.25 for the 09.44 train to Richmond or Richmond Railway Station at 10.00. From Richmond we shall use the London Overground to Crouch Hill via Gospel Oak. Our return will be London Overground from Stratford to Richmond.

Buy an Off-Peak Day Travel Card ticket using your Senior Rail Card (if you have one) or a Group Off-Peak Day Travel Card for a group of three.

Please remember to bring some sandwiches for your lunch.

Leader: Neil