

INTRODUCTION

The countryside around the village of Warlingham is wonderfully diverse and provides plenty of opportunities for walks and other recreational activities. There are two walks described here each approximately 6 miles long and starting and finishing at the Parish Council Notice Board in the centre of the village. One walk will take you north to the chalk grassland of Riddlesdown and the historic woods and farmland around Farleigh. The other heads south through Blanchman's Farm Local Nature Reserve to the grassed hillsides of Halliloo Valley, before continuing on to the richly wooded areas near Chelsham.

BIODIVERSITY

Our natural environment makes a positive contribution to health, feelings of well-being and the quality of our lives. The countryside around Warlingham helps to shape its rural character which in turn creates a stronger community identity and sense of belonging for its residents. The variety of habitats, such as woodland and grassland, add significantly to biological diversity, also known as biodiversity. This describes the amount and variety of life on Earth as a whole or within a local area such as Warlingham. We, and all other living things, depend on the ecological health of our shared environment. Many local organisations such as the Downlands Countryside Management Project, Blanchman's Farm Local Nature Reserve, Surrey Wildlife Trust and East Surrey Ramblers actively work to help protect against habitat loss as well as ensuring that access to the countryside is maintained and enjoyed by everyone.



HABITATS

Woodland has a vegetation dominated by trees but can also include a shrub layer and ground cover. Even dead trees make a contribution to biodiversity by providing food for insects, birds and a place for fungi to flourish.

Surrey's open grassland attracts a wide variety of fauna such as grasshoppers, butterflies and bees. Many insects are drawn to the cover and nourishment provided by the longer rough grasses and flowers and are themselves food for birds, reptiles and mammals such as bats.

The chalk downland of Riddlesdown has low fertility which prevents more common and less specialised plants from taking over. In terms of the number of plants and associated insects, chalk grassland is one of the richest vegetation types found in the British Isles.

Churches and churchyards provide wildlife havens for lichens and plants such as mosses and ferns. Many bird species such as Blue Tits, Wood Pigeons, Robins and Dunnocks thrive in these quieter places.

Birds and mammals will often visit ponds to drink and bathe but also to feed on the many insects that use ponds for food and breeding. Frogs, toads and newts all use ponds as their only breeding sites. The damp ground around water is often a source of rich and diverse flora and fauna.

The Countryside Code:

- Be safe - plan ahead and follow any signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants and animals, and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under close control
- Consider other people

WALK 1 - including Blanchman's Farm Local Nature Reserve and Chelsham

1 From the Parish Council Notice Board and facing the Green walk to your left and turn left at the corner. Bear left (signposted Woldingham) along Leas Road. Turn into Chapel Road. At the main road turn right and after 200 metres turn right into Blanchman's Farm Local Nature Reserve. Continue straight on and turn right after the pond. At a junction of paths turn left then continue straight on ignoring a path to the right. At the end of the field, go straight ahead through the trees and a kissing gate. Turn left down Bug Hill looking out for traffic.

School Common. This was designated common land in 1866. A school stood there between 1874 and 1882.

Almshouses. Built in 1675 as part of the benevolence of Harman Atwood. A small school was held here in the Mission Room until 1784.

Village Hall. The nearby Turkey Oak is over 100 years old.

Blanchman's Farm Local Nature Reserve. Blanchman's Farm was worked until 1945 and the earliest records date back to the 16th Century. The site gained Local Nature Reserve status in 2006. A community orchard was planted here in 2011.



Yellow Rattle (*Rhinanthus minor*). This native annual obtains some of its nutrients from surrounding grasses thus allowing other plants to thrive improving biodiversity. The fruit is a dry capsule which contains loose rattling seeds when ripe.



Pond at Blanchman's Farm Local Nature Reserve

4 FOR A SHORTER WALK

continue ahead to a road, turn left to rejoin the main walk (see paragraph 7).

OR

4 FOR A LONGER WALK

turn right at the post and proceed along a wooded path between fields. At a junction of paths and with the waymark sign on your right, turn left. Go straight through Henley Wood, which is a mass of bluebells in the Spring, and turn left at a T-junction. Stay on the path ahead for 100 metres.



Henley Wood



Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*). Native to the UK this vigorous perennial bears arching stems of fragrant violet-blue, occasionally white, flowers in Spring. The bluebell only grows in land surrounding the Atlantic Ocean.

2 100m after passing a coalpost on your left, take a footpath on your right. Cross a stile into a field and take the path ahead. Here you have a view over to Marden Park. Cross another stile and continue on the path to another stile. Cross this and turn left downhill (known as Butterfly Walk) to the bottom of Bug Hill. In the past the path across the fields was known locally as Butterfly Walk and originally the path downhill was named Clayton Road after the 17th century owner of the Marden Park Estate. In more recent years Clayton Road has been renamed Butterfly Walk. Cross the road with care and enter the golf course in Halliloo Valley.

Turn left at the finger post, continue around the golf course edge, ignoring the steps on your left, and enter trees by the waymark post. Just before a finger post where the path continues uphill and enters the woods turn sharp right down the slope ignoring the almost immediate left turn down towards the clubhouse. At the finger post on the edge of the fairway turn left and follow the edge of the fairway to the left of the clubhouse.



Track from Bug Hill

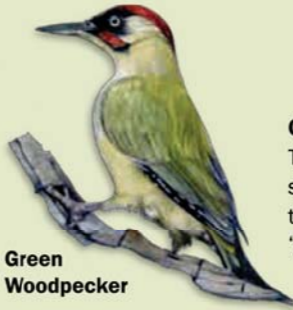


Coal Post



Woldingham Golf Course

Coal Posts. Erected in 1861 on the boundary of the Metropolitan Police area within which duty was payable on deliveries of wine and coal for the benefit of the City of London. Dues were abolished in 1890.



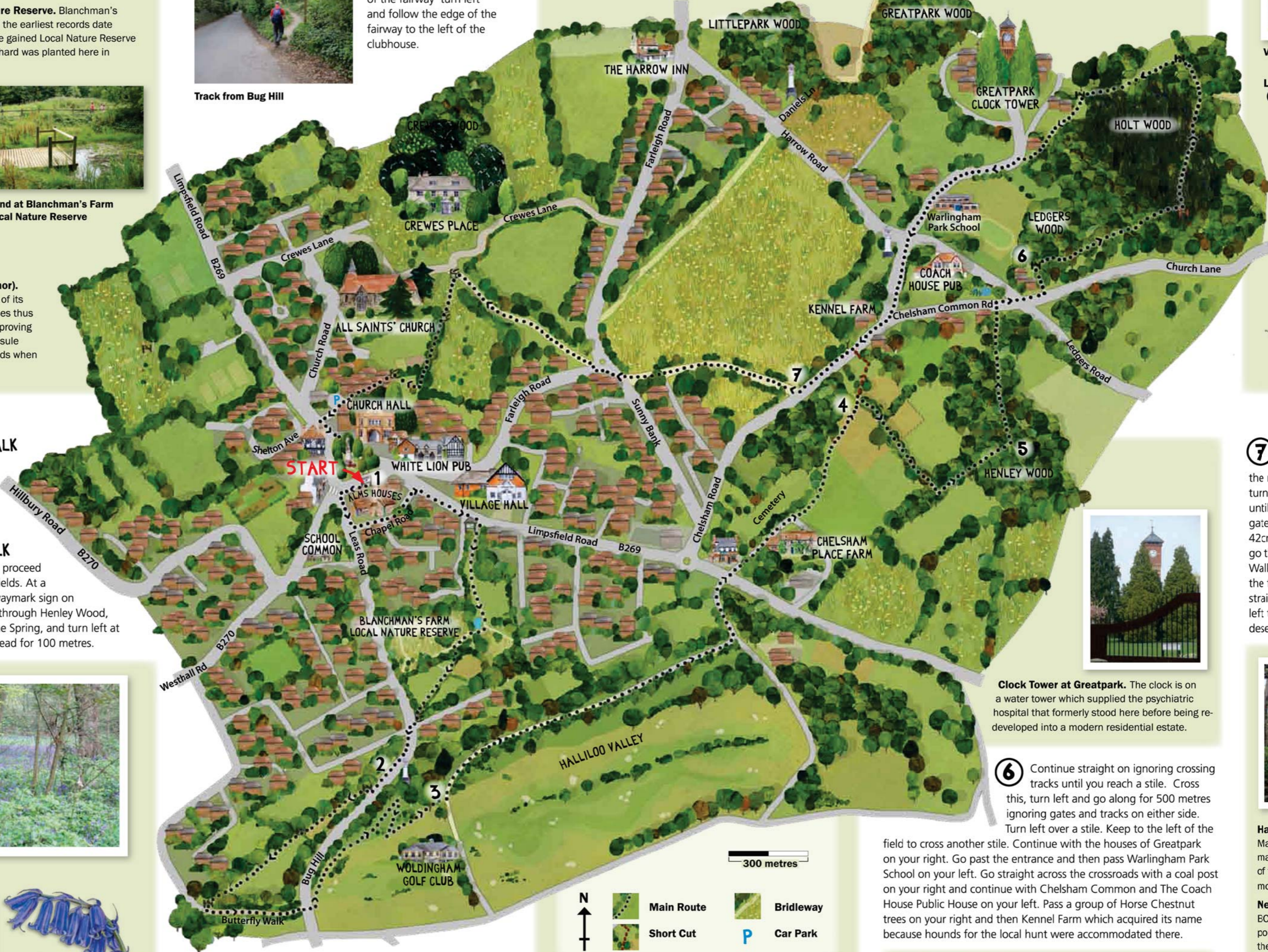
Green Woodpecker

Green Woodpecker (*Picus Viridis*). The call of the Green Woodpecker sounds like laughter and gives this bird the local country name of 'yaffle'. This, the largest woodpecker in the UK, seldom 'drums' on tree trunks and feeds more in open pasture.



Jay

Jay (*Garrulus glandarius*). Most likely to be seen flying across a woodland path or field edge giving its screeching call. They love to feed on acorns in Autumn and can sometimes be seen burying them for later retrieval in the winter.



Clock Tower at Greatpark. The clock is on a water tower which supplied the psychiatric hospital that formerly stood here before being re-developed into a modern residential estate.

6 Continue straight on ignoring crossing tracks until you reach a stile. Cross this, turn left and go along for 500 metres ignoring gates and tracks on either side. Turn left over a stile. Keep to the left of the

field to cross another stile. Continue with the houses of Greatpark on your right. Go past the entrance and then pass Warlingham Park School on your left. Go straight across the crossroads with a coal post on your right and continue with Chelsham Common and The Coach House Public House on your left. Pass a group of Horse Chestnut trees on your right and then Kennel Farm which acquired its name because hounds for the local hunt were accommodated there.



Pond at Chelsham Common



Yellow Irises



Horse Chestnut Tree (*Aesculus hippocastanum*) Candles of white flowers in May are followed by the spiky fruits in autumn containing conkers. When the leaves drop they leave a distinctive horseshoe shaped leaf scar on the twigs.



Track to Crewes Lane

Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*). Hawthorn flowers in May give rise to its other names of 'may, mayblossom and maythorn'. The fruits, known as 'haws', provide a vital source of food for birds and small mammals through the winter months.

Neolithic remains. Flint implements, dating from 4,000 EC to 2,200 BC, found at Mint Walk include a chipped and a polished axe. These are now part of the W. Wright Collection at the British Museum.



Hawthorn Flowers



Hawthorn Berries

Lords and Ladies (*Arum maculatum*)

The flowers of this plant, also known as cuckoo pint, are hidden within a sheath-like hood called a spathe. This also gives rise to its other names of 'Parson-in-the-pulpit' and 'Friars cowl'.



Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*) For such a small bird, the Wren has a very loud song. Its call is 'tit-tit-tit' while the song is a shrill rattling warble.

7 As the road reaches the bottom of the dip, take a track on your right which later becomes a road. At the main road, cross and turn right. At the mini-roundabout turn left and cross immediately to the bridleway. Continue until a track is reached and here turn left through a kissing gate and then the concealed entrance (width restriction of 42cms) into a field. Walk along the left-hand side of the field, go through another kissing gate and continue ahead to Mint Walk recreation ground. Immediately turn right to skirt round the fenced play area. Go through a kissing gate and continue straight on passing the village car park. At the main road turn left to the Green where there are various places for well-deserved refreshments.

WE HOPE YOU ENJOYED THE WALK.