

1 - Wisley Common to Chatley Heath Semaphore Tower

This 8 km / 5 mile local walk will give you a chance to sample a lowland heath environment in which a large number of pine trees have been felled as part of a Heathland Recreation Scheme. Grazing animals have been reintroduced and thus produce a heathland habitat which will encourage, amongst other things, Nightjars, Potter Wasps, and even a carnivorous plant (Sundew) to flourish. Depending on the season it may be boggy here and there but it should always be possible to navigate around trouble. It is recommended to wear walking boots or at the very least heavy shoes for safety.

Starting Point: The Wren's Nest Car Park which is in Wisley Lane near the exit from the RHS Gardens. (OS Explorer Map 145 grid ref: 065589).

From the car park go through the gate and turn right on to the main track; after about 500 yards follow this as it bends left across an open area towards a clump of fir trees. Keep straight on where the path crosses a Public Bridleway and after some distance fork left (the right hand fork leads to a dead end at the A3 and then loops back to re-join main path). Continue to follow path as it skirts left around Hut and soon in the distance you should get a glimpse of the pond at Pond Farm. At the Roadway turn right and follow this around to the left until it reaches the footbridge over the A3. Please take some time here to read the notices which explain just how the common land will be regenerated.

Once over the bridge go straight on and follow the main track bending left and then right. At the junction of paths turn right along wide path and almost immediately turn left on path with blue low level signpost to Chatley Heath Semaphore Tower. On reaching the Tower have a deserved rest on the picnic benches. Unfortunately the Tower is only open by prior arrangement, but there is plenty of information on the notice board. Pass by the Tower and leave the picnic area and after 75 yards turn right at the notice "No Horses Please. Keep straight on following sign post to Old Lane. At Bridleway T-junction turn left and continue on to reach Old Lane opposite Batchford End". Turn left and after 200 yards cross road with care and over the stile at "The Gardens". Over two further stiles at the cottage and once in the field, head straight across towards the "Beacon" in the distance. (The path crosses a cultivated area but it should be trodden down and obvious). Follow path across disused Wisley Airfield runway and at the fence line turn right and pass farm and then cross Public Bridleway and go straight on following the foot path signposted alongside the boundary on the left. Go straight on where the foot paths cross and on reaching the sunken Public Bridleway turn right. After 50 yards turn left and walk across the field parallel to the

hedge down on your left, pass through tree line and head towards the A3 traffic noise.

At the A3 slip road turn left and carefully cross where it narrows just before the roundabout. Pass under bridge and cross slip road again taking great care and turn left into Mill Lane. Pass Wisley Golf Club Entrance and Millwater Nursery and turn right at Public Footpath sign. Follow path around boundary of Wisley Gardens alongside River Wey. On reaching the main road turn left and the Wren's Nest Car Park is on the right.

If you fancy some refreshment after your exertions, the nearest coffee shop is next to the shop at the entrance to the RHS Gardens, Wisley, (membership not necessary for coffee shop), or the Anchor PH at Pyrford Lock serves a wide range of food and has an excellent selection of beers.

Alternative shorter walks. There are two other possibilities for those who wish to view the Tower and maybe cannot manage much more than a mile. At the first car park in Old Lane there is a Cafe and Information Centre and a 'Blue Route' is signposted to the Tower. Alternatively from the Pond car park an "Orange" route is marked to the Tower and also Bolder Mere is adjacent to this car park (see map). Old Lane can be accessed near the junction of the M25 and A3 from the slip road joining the A3 towards Guildford.

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