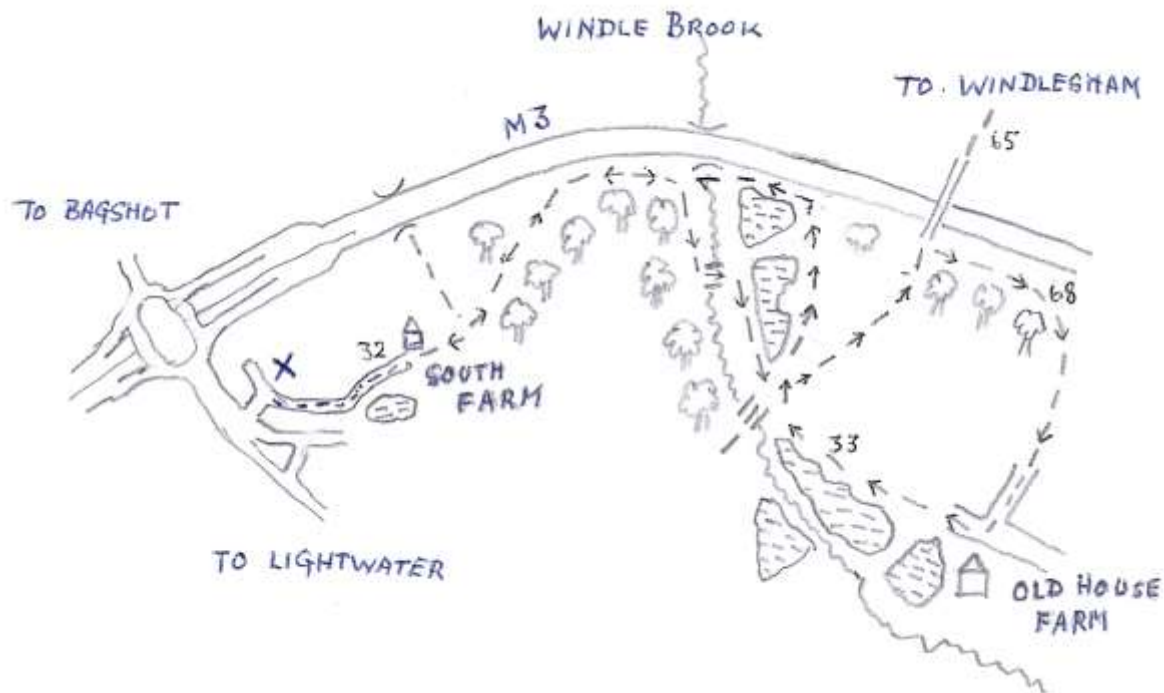


# WINDLESHAM WALKS Walk No.6

Start/Parking: South Farm Lane, off Lightwater bypass (near junction 3, M3)

Distance: 3km, 2 miles approx. Type of walk: Mostly level, two kissing gates, muddy in parts



THIS is a walk for all seasons: it takes you into Windlesham Arboretum where, whatever the time of year, there is always colour and something unusual to see. The arboretum was created by the late Major William Spowers, who acquired Oldhouse Farm and surrounding land which once belonged to Fromow's Nurseries and contained many specimen trees and shrubs. Over the years he added many more, as well as carrying out attractive landscaping with interesting statuary. It is also a wildflower haven and you may find it useful to take a field guide with you for identification purposes.

The walk starts in South Farm Lane - please make sure you park sensibly so as not to obstruct residents' driveways. Walk down the lane past a five-barred gate on to a gravelled path (Footpath 32), passing a pond on your right. In medieval times the surrounding land was farmed by William de Suthurst, but the house ahead of you, South Farm, was rebuilt in 1736 by the Rev Henry Hammond, curate of Horsell, near Woking. At the end of the 19th century Fromow's Nurseries were becoming known internationally, and South Farm was purchased to provide more land for their huge stock of trees and shrubs.

On reaching the house the gravel track swings right but the footpath continues straight ahead to the right of the house; a waymark post points the way.





Continue on a grassy path and go straight ahead at the footpath sign, crossing a ride on to a track which heads towards the motorway. Through the trees to your right you may catch a glimpse of an attractive sculpture of a winged horse on a brick plinth. Another waymark post points the way ahead towards the motorway, where the path bears right to run alongside the M3, with woodland on your right. Soon the path meets the Windle Brook.

The rusty colour of the water denotes the presence of iron ore: archaeological surveys carried out in the 1980s revealed evidence of Iron Age and Romano-British occupation and iron smelting taking place in the arboretum.

Just before the concrete bridge, turn right on to Footpath 64, with the stream

on your left, and cross the stream by the wooden bridge. The footpath bears right and continues downstream with a lake surrounding an island bearing a giant urn on your left. In spring this can be a beautiful sight with azaleas and rhododendrons reflected in the water.



Turn left on to a gravel track which crosses Bridleway 33, and where the track swings right, continue straight ahead on a grassy path which runs slightly uphill and continues between two wire fences. It then swings left through a metal kissing gate to arrive at a footbridge over the M3 which we shall use in a later walk.



Do not cross the bridge but turn right on to Footpath 68. Go through another kissing gate, after which the path turns away from the motorway and runs alongside gardens. A row of monkey puzzle trees comes into view on the left and a meadow planted with specimen trees. Looking back on an attractive pink-washed house called Strandways. In spring look out for some lovely magnolias in pink, cream and white on the left.

Follow the waymark sign observing the double headed dinosaur plant to your left and arrive at a T-junction with a tarmac driveway. Turn right on to Bridleway 33 through a gateway flanked by brick pillars.



On your left is Oldhouse Farm, which looks as though it has "grown" out of its surroundings. The earliest record of this beautifully preserved and attractive house, which has later additions and intriguing features, is in 1485 when it was tithed to St John the Baptist Church in Windlesham.



Now follow the bridleway, which despite extensive drainage works may be very muddy, crossing Footpath 65 which we used earlier in the walk to eventually arrive back at the motorway. Turn left along a wide and firm track. The lake to your left, which is home to several ducks, takes surplus water from the motorway. Cross the Windle Brook at the concrete bridge we saw earlier in the walk and retrace your outward route back along Footpath 32 to South Farm Lane

Produce by the Windlesham Society. For further information contact Reg Ward website manager 473789