

WINDLESHAM WALKS

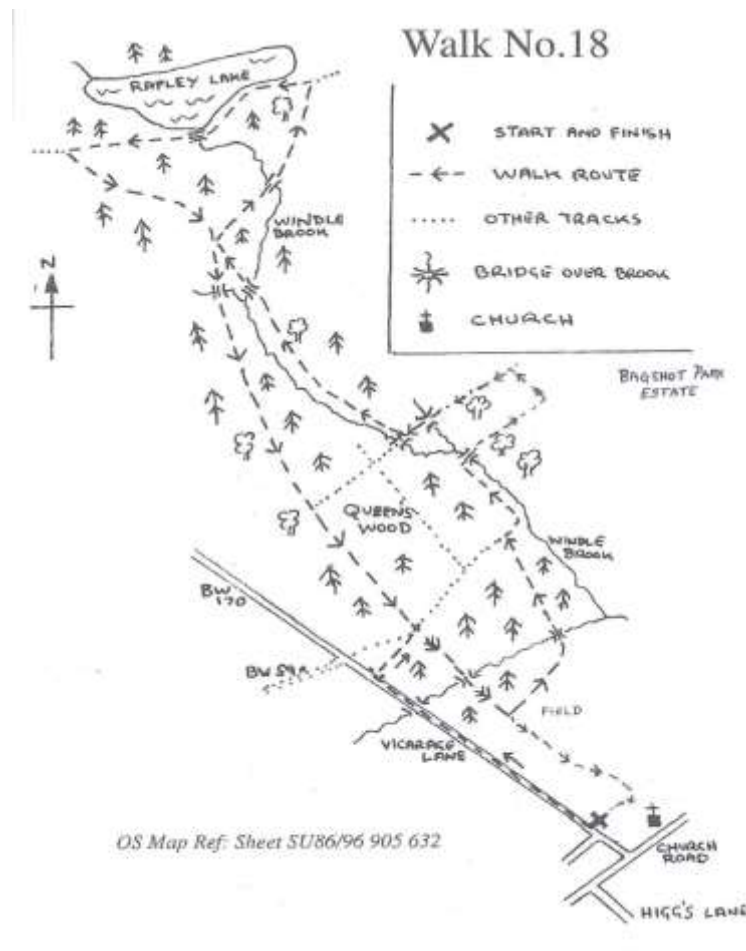
Walk No.18

Start/Parking: Vicarage Lane, Bagshot.

Distance: 4.8km, 3 miles approx. Type of walk: Mostly level, can be muddy in places.



Crown Estate Office
The Great Park,
Windsor, Berks.
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This walk uses paths which are not public rights of way, but are open to the public by permission of the Crown Estates Office. Although there is something of interest in all seasons, the best time to do it is in the spring when the bluebells are out.



The walk starts at the end of Vicarage Road where it becomes a gravel track known as Vicarage Lane. Follow the track downhill; the iron railings on the right mark the original boundary of Bagshot Park Estate. Look for a wide

entrance on the right (replacing some double gates that were there). Go through the gap and notice the narrower track to the right which meets the lane near the gate across the main track. This is a continuation of the bridleway across Poors Allotment (BWs 3 and 59a) and is an old trackway from



Bagshot Park to Kings Ride in Camberley, used when Bagshot contained a royal hunting lodge in the 7th century. This bridleway is used in Walk 3.

Walk straight ahead on a wide forestry track flanked by a newly planted conifer plantation. The turrets of Bagshot Park house can be seen above the trees in the distance.

At a crossroads of tracks turn right. This track is bordered with new trees and beech and sweet chestnut on the left which protect the conifers.

Shortly after re-crossing the stream you will see a field ahead; turn left immediately beforehand into a narrow track which winds between fallen trees, with the field on your right. The woodland on your left is sprinkled with young holly bushes, and is ablaze with foxgloves in summer, and in a short while you can see the rooftops of Bagshot



across the field.

The path turns left away from the field, re-crossing the stream and broadens out. At the T-junction, turn right and on reaching some rhododendron bushes, follow the path around to the left. The Windle Brook is now on your right; beyond it and across the field is a good view of the Victorian house, Bagshot Park, which was built by Queen Victoria as a wedding present for her son Prince Arthur, Duke of Connaught.

Soon the track passes a beech wood on the right which in May and early June provides a glorious sight, carpeted with new ferns which contrast with pale green of the new leaves. Turn right over the brook and then continue up the slight gradient emerging at the top to have a good view of Bagshot Park House.



Turn left and follow the fence until the path meets a junction, (where there is a sign

requiring you to turn left). Turn left and continue down a broad track to cross a stream, and in 50 yards turn right into a narrow track running diagonally left into the woodland, with the Windle Brook on your left.



This is Queens Wood, named after Queen Victoria. It was originally planted with oak trees, which were felled in 1949 and replaced with the current Scots pine trees. The wood is cleared in sections every five years. Deciduous trees such as oak, sweet chestnut and beech are left to mature and protect the pine trees.

The track eventually leads into a grassy ride. Cross the brook again and at another crossroads of tracks a sign to 'The Lookout' can be seen. Turn right. The county boundary between Surrey and Berkshire runs beside this track. An area on

the left can be festooned with some gorse, broom and foxgloves in the summer.

Cross the brook again, and turn left. Rapley Lake now comes into view. This was constructed about 1820 and was originally part of the Bagshot Park estate when the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester lived there. There is a beautiful display of water lilies in summer, and this tranquil scene is often used for film and TV location shots.

The track follows the lakeside and as you approach the brick bridge ahead, listen for the sound of rushing water coming from a cascade on your left. This marks the start of Windle Brook which flows through Bagshot and onto Chobham. Continue over the bridge past banks of rhododendrons, and turn left at a waymark post by a large log.



Follow the track through an iron gateway flanked by railings which mark the old Bagshot Park boundary. Bear right at the crossroads of tracks which was passed earlier in the walk.

Cross the stream and continue along the track, lined by sweet chestnut trees and bracken. At the first crossroads of tracks go straight on; at the next crossroads continue ahead over the small bridge which you crossed at the beginning of the walk, but this time continue straight ahead which leads back

to Vicarage Lane.