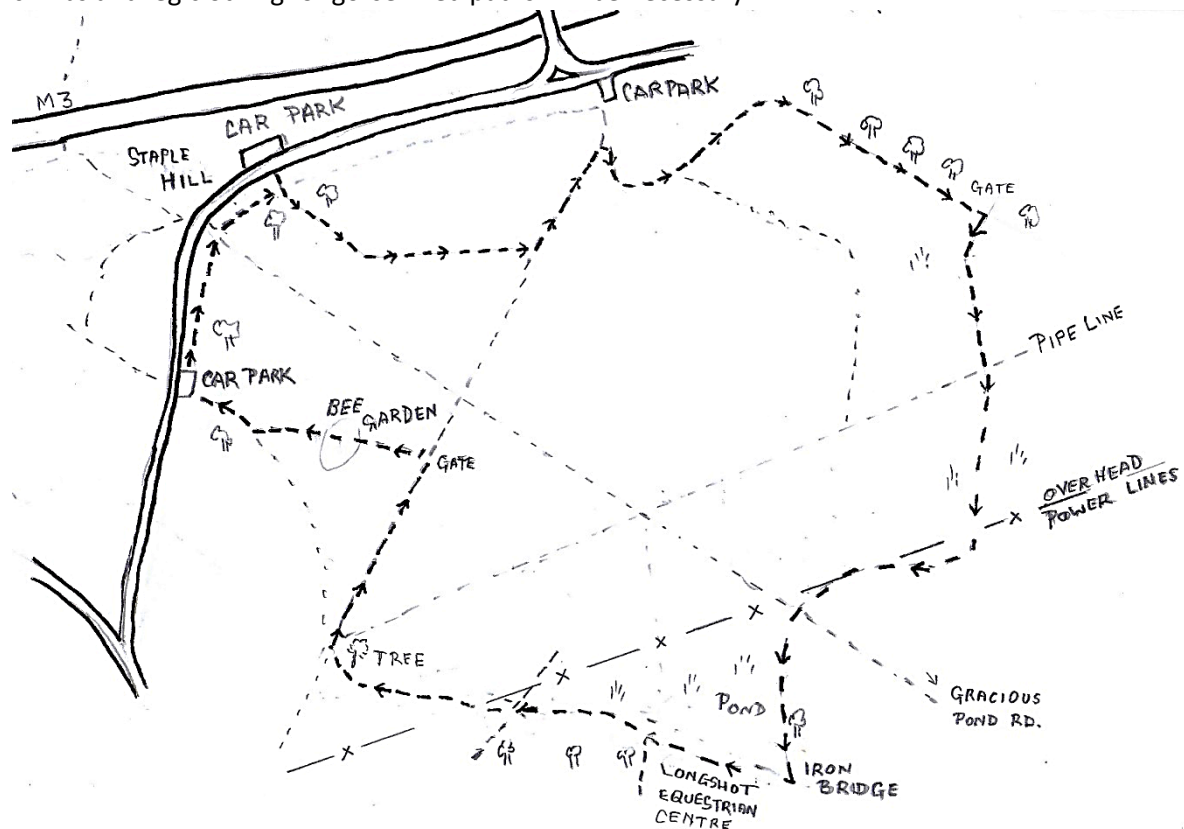


WINDLESHAM WALKS Walk No.20

Start/Parking: Staple Hill Car Park, Chobham Common.

Distance: 4.5km, 4 miles approx. Type of walk: Undulating. Gravel track. Sometimes demanding climbs and leg clothing for gorse lined paths will be necessary.



Chobham Common is recognised across Europe for its variety of bird life with over a 100 different species having been recorded here. Additionally it is a premier site for ladybirds, bees, wasps and dragonfly and also a medieval earthwork known as 'The Bee Garden'.



Banked stepped path

This walk starts on the north side of Staple Hill Road in the very uneven Car Park.

Cross the busy road to enter the south eastern side of the common descending downwards using the banked stepped pathway.



Staple Hill Car Park

Go through a gate and continue, using the railway sleeper walkway across the sometimes boggy ground.

There are numerous ponds contained within the common, fringed by mixed broad-leaved and pine woodland.

Proceed to a second gate and turn left onto a broad gravelled major pathway which takes you almost to the north car park.

Follow the track round to the right marked by sleepers on the left. The path bends round to the left where you are confronted with a choice.



To continue left or take a side trip to observe the excellent view across the common where sometimes local model aircraft enthusiasts are flying their aircraft from the prominent hillock, before returning to the fork.



The left way path follows the boundary of the common before coming to an obscure right hand turn marked by a way-sign. Look to the left to observe a marked gated footpath opposite.





Take the right-hand pathway which progresses away from the hill to the left, ensuring you keep left by way of another way-mark (pictured) and follow the sleeper walkway.

You are now heading towards the electricity pylons after crossing a major pathway (said to cover a pipeline and other power services to Heathrow and Gatwick airports from Fawley oil refinery).

Continue until you reach a way-mark by a pond. There, leaving the main path turn right going over the rise and take a sharp turn left at the next intersection to once more pass under the overhead power cables reaching a main pathway, which runs between Gracious Pond Road and Staple Hill. Evidence of the distinctive grey sandy soil can be seen.



Way-Mark by a pond



Overhead cables



Shaded Wood



Main Path between Gracious Pond Rd. and Staple Hill

Continue directly across and follow the shaded pathway into woods passing a pond and bearing right to arrive at a right-hand turn to cross an iron footbridge.



Iron Bridge

To the left through the trees can be seen Langshot equestrian centre with horses grazing in

the fields. Follow the path initially through the woods and at the end of the equestrian centre head into the open heathland which is on your right.

During the Second World War, the 'Tank Factory' was built on private land but extended onto part of the common and, as a result, much of the common was used for testing armoured vehicles and tanks that were being designed and developed (i.e. Chobham Armour). Additionally a Canadian attachment was billeted there and the common also housed an Italian prisoner of war camp. This contributed to the damage of the commons vegetation and encouraged erosion at the time. It is still not fully recovered. After the war a large area of the common had to be ploughed and reseeded.

Follow the tree line on your left which eventually crosses another major pathway marked by a way sign. Continue across, gradually ascending to the treeline, which bears right to cross a main bridle track. Take care to continue on the correct path which is straight on. Take the right fork, noting the tree on your right.



After approx. 100 meters you see a gate off to the left. Go through the gate.

Ahead, you can make out the raised surrounds to the ancient Bee Garden. The earthwork is an oval enclosure surrounded by a bank and an external ditch which may have played a role in stock management during the medieval period.

Follow the path through to the other side where another gate leads you up a stepped hill turning right to arrive at a car park.



Leave the car park to the right and follow alongside the road looking right to remind you of where you have trodden, arriving at the road giving you the choice of crossing Staple Hill Road early or continuing to the original crossing at the beginning of your walk.

Should you choose to cross early then walk through bushes towards the Motorway, turning right onto a clear walkway uphill to the original car park.

In the event of an emergency please telephone the emergency Services and the Chobham Common ranger team (office number 01276 858013). Please give your location relative to the nearest Post number or location name e.g. Albury Bottom, if known

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