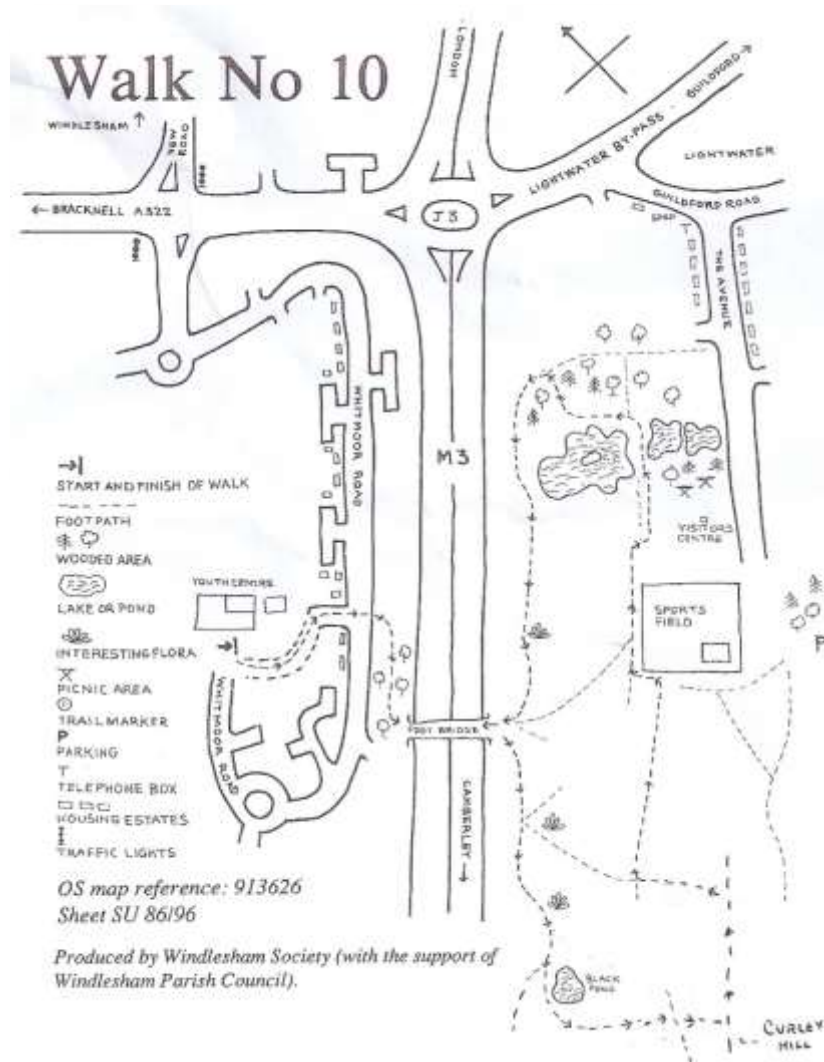


WINDLESHAM WALKS Walk No.10

Start/Parking: Community Centre, Whitmoor Road, Connaught Park, Bagshot. Distance: 3.6km, 2.25 miles approx. Type of walk: Undulating, one steep climb.



The walk starts from Bagshot Community Centre – to find the centre, follow Whitmoor Road as far as you can through the Connaught Park Estate.



A public footpath crosses the entrance to the centre; follow the path to the right as you face the centre, passing children's play equipment on your left, then fork left at the public footpath sign.

The path bears left around the edge of a playing field past some houses before bearing left again to pass between gardens. A sharp turn to the right on a short

metalled stretch brings you to Whitmoor Road where a pedestrian barrier marks the spot where the footpath crosses the road. Cross over and follow the track which bears right bringing you to the footbridge and then cross the motorway.

Ahead of you is Lightwater Country Park. Typical heathland criss-crossed by sandy tracks between the silver birches and contrasting dark green pines. Carefully maintained in its natural state, it is enhanced by well-marked nature trails with places to sit and rest, while further on there are some excellent sports facilities.

Leaving the footbridge, take the wide right hand path and follow parallel to the motorway, keeping near the fence. Wildlife thrives in the strip of land between the path and the motorway; kestrels can frequently be seen hovering. When the wide track bears left, away from the motorway, take a very narrow track off to the right downhill through the bracken and gorse, from where the Black Hill Water Tower can be seen across the valley. The path leads down to Black Pond, once a popular place for local swimmers but now for most of the year



only a rather boggy area, where marshland plants, such as tormentil and the cross-leaved heath, have become established. Much of the vegetation in this area is festooned with the pink tendrils of the parasitic dodder plant with a backdrop of heather, a blaze of purple in late summer.



Continue on until reaching a short planked footpath. Half way across the planked footpath which skirts the pond veer left as indicated by the planks and continue up a steep hill, which becomes a narrow rutted track through the heather. At the top, look back across Bagshot village and pick out places of interest such as Bagshot Park, Windlesham

Golf Course and the Ascot Racecourse Stand glinting on the skyline.

The path continues downhill passing a purple marker post and rises again to where a well-placed bench on the left can be found.

Continue on passing the bench and arriving at a main path. (Ahead observe a steep climb towards Curley Hill if you wish to enjoy a broader view.) Or turn left at this juncture on to the main path ignoring the first pathway off to the left and taking the next track, just before you reach a dog waste bin.



At the end by the rest seat, bear right on to a pleasant winding bridleway which leads towards the playing field following the orange posts.

Turn left to cross a wide sleeper bridge, and then immediately right into a wide sheltered path beside the boundary ditch of the sports field. A little way along is one of several information boards to be found in the park, giving details of the wildlife to be seen.



From time to time there are glimpses of the sports centre with its badminton hall across the football pitches. The gravel path leads you to Hammond's pond, a peaceful setting where Canada geese, moorhens and even the elusive heron may be seen.

Keep right of the lake by a marked trail post to cross an **iron railed** bridge over an outfall and then follow the path left round the edge of the pond. The path veers to the right through a tunnel of rhododendrons to a copse of silver birches.



At the end of this track, mount the rise onto a winding track which joins the main track, turn left towards the sound of the motorway. The path widens and the trees thin; bear left on to a path alongside the motorway and follow this track back across the heath to the footbridge and retrace the route back to the youth centre.

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