



Farnham to Blackwater walk

Farnham Park, Caesar's Camp, Beacon Hill, Bourley Reservoirs, Gelvert Stream, Fleet Pond, Foxlease Meadows and Hawley Common

Length 22.3 kilometres

OS Maps Explorer map 145. Farnham, map reference SU844466 is in Surrey, and Blackwater, map reference SU853599, is in Hampshire.

Toughness 5 out of 10 (4 out of 10 if ending at Fleet).

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Features The walk crosses Farnham Park to Upper Hale then enters remote MOD land (careful navigation needed) including a steep climb to Caesar's Camp and equally demanding descent from Beacon Hill, overlooking a network of water channels and reservoirs. After lunch at The Foresters you follow Gelvert Stream to Fleet Pond, get your feet wet in Foxlease Meadows, dry out over a cuppa watching cricket at the Crown and Cushion and view the boats from the sandy shores of Hawley Lake, before crossing Hawley Common to Blackwater station.

After Upper Hale the walk is largely within or close to MOD land until the outskirts of Blackwater. The area is designated on the OS maps by clear rather than red triangles, signifying managed access subject to the displayed by-laws, as opposed to danger areas. In practice this means that you are free to roam and the paths are clear on the ground, but there are no footpath or bridleway signs. The section through Foxlease Meadows is also not marked and is usually 'spongy' underfoot, so a drier alternative is given in the text.

Special thanks are due to the excellent www.fancyfreewalks.org website for kind permission to draw on their route directions for the MOD section of the walk.

Shortening the Walk An alternative start from Aldershot station is described (via Rowhill Nature Reserve), joining the main walk at Point 1, just before Caesar's Camp. The distance from Aldershot to Blackwater is 21.8 kms. It also gives the possibility of walking from Farnham to Aldershot via Farnham Park, Caesar's Camp and Rowhill, a distance of 10.2 kms. You could avoid the rather suburban section to/from Aldershot by catching Stagecoach bus number 18 or 19 or Fleet Buzz 70/72 from Aldershot bus station to the

Duke of York pub on Weybourne Road, which would reduce the distance by 2.3 kms. There are four buses an hour except on Sunday when the number 18 leaves every 2 hours. Alternatively you could catch Stagecoach bus 4 or 5 from the bus station to the Cranmore Lane/Farnborough Road roundabout, which runs frequently but only every 2 hours on Sundays. This would reduce the distance by 3.7 kms.

An extension via Ewshot (between Points 2 and 3) is described which adds 0.9 kms to the distance but gives the possibility of an early lunch at The Windmill after 8.3 kms. It avoids a section of the main route which runs parallel with the busy Beacon Hill Road and the steep descent from Beacon Hill itself. This would be a good option if you intend to end the walk at Fleet (see below). Fleet Buzz 72 runs along Beacon Hill Road, stopping near the junctions with both Badger Way and Tadpole Lane (according to Traveline it is 15-17 minutes to Fleet and 18-19 minutes to Aldershot, the stops are between Heath End and Quetta Park on the published timetable).

From The Foresters you could walk along the Aldershot Road to the right (or through the woods on either side of the road) for about a kilometre to Crookham Crossroads, where you can catch Fleet Buzz bus 70/72 to Fleet/Reading or Aldershot (not on Sundays) or 71/79 to Fleet or Farnham (not at weekends or on Bank holidays). Timetables for all Fleet Buzz services are available at: <http://fleetbuzz.co.uk/bus-information/>

An extension within Fleet Pond Nature Reserve is suggested in the text, which would increase the distance between Point 4 and Point 5 by 1.7 kilometres.

You could leave the walk at Point 5, continuing to the North-West corner of Fleet Pond, where there are steps to Fleet station car park (15.6 kms in total or 16.6 kms via Ewshot). These directions are contained in the extension referred to above, in reverse, but it is simple enough to follow the shore of the lake. Alternatively you could begin at Fleet for a walk of 8.3 kms to Blackwater.

From the A3013 (Ancells Farm/Bramshott Bridge) you could catch Fleet Buzz 73 (except on Sundays) to Farnborough (or Frimley) or Fleet Buzz 82 either to Fleet or to Farnborough/Reading (Monday to Friday only). The A3013 is 15.2 kms in to the walk.

Between Point 6 and Point 7 the route passes through a nature reserve known as Foxlease Meadows. There are no clear paths and the ground is very uneven in places and 'spongy' underfoot after average rainfall on this section – definitely not suitable if wearing trainers in winter. The alternative

is to follow the Brenda Parker Way, which is an easier route but adds 1.2 kms to the distance.

An alternative ending at Farnborough station is also described, which would enable you to catch a direct train to London Waterloo. The route diverges from the main walk at Point 8, by Hawley Lake, and the distance from Farnham to Farnborough is 23 kms. You could cut out 3.2 kms or 2.5 kms respectively of largely suburban walking by catching Stagecoach bus 2 from Sandy Lane or from Fernhill Road to Farnborough (or to Frimley/Camberley). This service runs every hour on Sundays and every half hour on other days.

Travel

Take the train nearest to 9.15 from Waterloo to Alton. South West Trains run direct from Waterloo to Alton via Aldershot and Farnham, every half hour on Monday to Saturday and every hour on Sunday (journey time 56 minutes to Aldershot and 61 minutes to Farnham), and also every half hour on Monday to Saturday and every hour on Sunday between Guildford and Ascot via Aldershot.

South West Trains serve Fleet and Farnborough Main stations by fast trains to Waterloo from Basingstoke, Poole or Portsmouth (journey time 40 minutes from Fleet and 34 minutes from Farnborough). There are generally four trains an hour from Farnborough and three from Fleet (two on Sundays).

First Great Western serve Blackwater (two trains an hour Monday to Saturday, one an hour on Sunday, minimum journey time to Guildford 18 minutes) and Farnborough North by trains from Reading via Guildford to Gatwick Airport. South West Trains from Guildford to Waterloo via Woking take a minimum of 34 minutes (trains via Effingham Junction take much longer).

Buy a return to Blackwater and a single from Woking to Farnham.

Points of interest

Farnham Park

Farnham Park is a 320 acre (130 hectare) medieval deer park near to Farnham town centre. It has an impressive tree avenue over 1km long (crossed on this walk) and is managed both for its wildlife and for its amenity value. The northern end consists of the more typical open landscape associated with deer parks, whilst much of the southern end is more formal with a café and the usual facilities for play and recreation.

Caesar's Camp, Aldershot

This is an Iron Age hill fort thought to date from c500 BC. King Alfred allegedly camped here when driving the Danes towards the Thames.

Aldershot and Minley Training Area

The two Training Areas cover an area of approximately 2000 hectares of lowland heathland habitat which supports a wide range of associated fauna and flora. They comprise heathland, conifer woodland, broadleaved woodland, mire, scrub, acid grassland and grass meadows. The majority of the areas are designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and form part of the European designated Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area. Open access on foot is allowed in areas within the managed access symbol on the OS Explorer maps, subject to the byelaws which are displayed at the principal access points. The training areas are used for dry training exercises only, which may include the use of pyrotechnics, blank ammunition and other battle simulators such as smoke grenades and thunder flashes. Be prepared for sudden noises!

Brenda Parker Way

This waymarked path runs for 49 kilometres from Aldershot to Andover and was set up in memory of Brenda Parker, a member of Hampshire Ramblers. The Eastern section passes stations at Fleet, Winchfield and Bramley.
www.brendaparkerway.hampshire.org.uk

Fleet Pond Nature Reserve

Fleet Pond was probably created by the deliberate damming of natural watercourses in the 12th century, draining a wide area of heath and woodland. It is known to have been a thriving fishery by 1324. The Reserve's reedbeds, marshes, heathland and woodland provide sanctuary for a rich community of animal and plant life. Over 2,000 species of plants and animals live in or visit the Reserve, including most of the common mammals, amphibians and reptiles and many species of birds, fish, flowering plant and fungi. The total area of the Reserve is 57 hectares (141 acres) most of which is designated as an SSSI. However due to the silt carried by the Gelvert and Brookly streams, the depth of water is less than a metre, so the management of the Pond is a major conservation challenge.

Foxlease Meadows

This site is jointly owned by the Ministry of Defence and the RSPB and leased to the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust to manage the conservation of its important habitats and species. The field system dates back to c1600. Today it is a mosaic of meadows with a range of wet

grassland, fen, acid grassland, heathland mire and woodland habitats, grazed by Highland cattle. Designated as an SSSI for its flowers and insects, the oak trees dating back up to 500 years are also an ideal home for bats.

Lunch

The Alma, 21 Alma Lane, Farnham, GU9 0LJ. Tel: (01252) 344148. This is only 3.7 kms in to the walk so too early for lunch unless you are doing the Farnham to Aldershot short walk. Opens at 12. www.thealmafarnham.com

The Windmill Inn, Church Lane, Ewshot, GU10 5BJ. Tel: (01252) 850439. This is a possible early lunch option, reached by a detour after 8.3 kms, which adds 0.9 kms to the total distance. Restaurant open from 12 every day except Monday, to 4pm on Sundays and 2.30 Tuesday to Saturday. Massive beer garden which doubles as a putting green!
<http://www.thewindmillewshot.co.uk/>

The Foresters, Aldershot Road, Church Crookham, Fleet, Hampshire, GU52 9EP. Tel: (01252) 616503. The recommended lunch option, reached after 11.3 kms. Open 12 till late seven days a week. 'A delightful country pub tucked away in the woods.' All meals are created and cooked on the premises, using regional suppliers whenever possible to obtain the best raw materials. www.forestersatchurchcrookham.co.uk

The Station Pizza Kitchen and Bar, 1-3 Fleet Road, Fleet, Hampshire, GU51 3QL. This is one of several possible refreshment places in Fleet if you decide to end your walk there after 15.6 kms as explained above. Cross the station car park and the main road; the pub car park is to your right. Serves food up to 10pm every day. Tel: [01252 614839](tel:01252614839).
<http://www.pizzakitchenbars.co.uk/>

Café Destino at Fleet station is open until 3.30pm on Saturdays and 2.30pm on Sundays.

The Tree House, Cove Road, Fleet, Hampshire, GU51 2SH. Tel: (01252) 816655. Harvester Restaurant, opens 11.30am - 10pm, except Sundays when it opens at 11. Reached after 15.4 kms and 400 metres off route.
www.harvester.co.uk/thetreehousefleet

Tea

The Crown and Cushion, Minley Road, Blackwater, Camberley, Surrey, GU17 9UA. Tel: (01252) 545253. This pub dates back to 1594 and is full of character and rustic charm. It has a tenuous connection with Captain Blood's attempt to steal the Crown Jewels during the reign of Charles I. Today it boasts award-winning food, all freshly prepared by Thai chefs. The restaurant is open from 12-9 on Saturday and 12-8 on Sunday, but closes

in the week from 3 to 6. A possible early tea option after 17.3 kms.
www.crownandcushionminley.co.uk

Refreshment options near Blackwater station are limited. Neither Mr Bumble nor the Royal Swan serve beverages in the afternoon at weekends. Wholemeal Café opens until 2pm on Sundays and 3pm on other days. There are takeaways in White Hart House Parade and you can get a takeaway coffee from either Tesco Express or Shell.

On the alternative route to Farnborough:

The Snow Goose, 135 Fernhill Road, Cove, Farnborough, Hampshire, GU14 9DX. Tel: (01252) 888300. 20.7 kms in to the walk.

Thatched Cottage, 122 Prospect Road, Farnborough, Hampshire, GU14 8NU. Tel: (01252) 543118. 21.9 kms in to the walk. Restaurant opens 12-11, seven days a week. The pub is a two storey, restored timber framed 18th Century structure with a thatched roof and a gable at the side.
www.reallocalpubs.com/pub-food/thatched-cottage-farnborough/pid-C2398

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By Car **Start** GU9 8AD **Finish** GU17 9AB

Help National Rail: 03457 48 49 50 • Traveline (bus times): 0871 200 22 33 (12p/min) • TFL (London) : 0343 222 1234

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Walk Directions

1. A) Farnham to Caesar's Camp (5.1 kms)
2. From platform 2 at Farnham station, cross the line either by the bridge or the level crossing. Turn left on to the B3001 (Station Hill). Pass The Mulberry Hotel in 70 metres and cross the A31 by the traffic lights in another 50 metres. Pass Emmanuel Church on your left, cross the main road and in 120 metres, immediately before the

- bridge, turn right on to Borelli Walk, the tarmac riverside path (there are public toilets here). Cross over the wooden bridge in 220 metres and turn right, with the River Wey now on your right. In 200 metres you pass a car park on your left and an information board for Hatch Mill and two bridges on your right. In 150 metres your path turns away from the river. Go round a wooden gate to your left in 100 metres and up an unmade road (Kimbers Lane) to reach the A325 (Guildford Road) in 150 metres. Cross the main road and turn left past the Albion pub. Cross Hale Road (B3007) in 150 metres and turn right up St James Avenue, which leads in to Farnham Park in 250 metres.
3. Inside the Park, go to the left of the children's playground in 20 metres, then turn right. Cross the open grassland ahead, heading directly for the impressive tree-lined avenue. Turn right on the avenue in 200 metres and go through the stepless stile on your left in 20 metres (possibly more if you did not take the most direct line across the grass). Take the grass path ahead (355°). Turn right at the bottom of the slope in 90 metres, just before the wood. Turn left in 80 metres up a possibly muddy path, with a copse on your right. In 50 metres go through a wooden kissing gate to the side of a metal gate, now with a fence to your left. The path ends in 130 metres at the corner of the fence with a pond just ahead. This is Yo-yo Pond, so named because of the fluctuating water levels. Turn left, still following the fence. The path turns to the right and you ignore a gate on your left in 120 metres. The fence turns left but your path veers right and crosses a dry ditch. In 160 metres you emerge in an open meadow and pass a pond enclosed by fencing on your right.
 4. Stick to the right edge of the grass. The path bends to the left (355°), roughly following the course of the Nadder Stream below you on the right (Nadder meant 'winding one' in old English). You go under pylons in 220 metres and veer further to the left, parallel with the pylons. Turn right on to a tarmac path in 80 metres (5°), cross two bridges over the stream in 50 metres and leave Farnham Park in 180 metres.
 5. Cross a road (Parkside) in 25 metres and walk up Nutshell Lane ahead to reach Hale Recreation Ground on your left in 120 metres. Walk up the drive to the right of the grass (The Green), past Hale Methodist Church in 100 metres. Cross Upper Hale Road (A3016) in 50 metres and turn right in to Wood Road, then left at the end of the road in 150 metres in to Heath Lane and in 150 metres turn right in to Heath Close, which is signposted as a public footpath. Where the road turns to the left in 50 metres you take the enclosed path ahead marked by a faded arrow, which also turns left, leading to Highlands Road in 100 metres, where you turn right. Follow Highlands Road as it turns to the left, right and left again. You come out on Alma Lane (B3005) in 250 metres, to the right of the Alma pub with the Roman Catholic Church of the Holy Family opposite. Cross the road and turn left.
 6. Turn right on a gravel public footpath in 140 metres (the signpost is to your right but may be hidden), passing Beam Cottage on the right. Where the footpath turns right in 60 metres, you go straight on past the yellow danger signs which mark the

boundary of the Aldershot and Minley Training Area. Take the left fork in 20 metres, with a fenced enclosure on your right and houses on your left. Go through a metal kissing gate at the top of the climb in 200 metres. Turn left then right (North West) in 20 metres on a stony path which takes you downhill, with views of Caesar's Camp ahead (you are heading for Jubilee Clump, a group of prominent trees at the right edge of the plateau). When your path divides in 120 metres, fork right (5°). Cross a path in 60 metres at a staggered junction (your path veers a little to the left - 350°) then cross a second path in another 60 metres and begin to climb again. Ignore a path on your right in 220 metres. Cross another path in 60 metres, taking the narrow and possibly overgrown path opposite (340°) and climb steeply. Keep left when you merge with a stony path on your right in 25 metres.

7. **(Point 1 - the route from Aldershot joins you here).** The path gradually levels out as you near the top of Caesar's Camp. On reaching the plateau you merge with a path on your left in 175 metres and continue ahead to reach Jubilee Clump (planted in honour of Queen Victoria in 1887) and pass in front of two memorial seats in 60 metres. From the top of this Iron Age hill fort (182 metres above sea level) the view to the North is dominated by Farnborough Airport.

8. B) Caesar's Camp to The Foresters (6.2 kms)

9. Continue ahead (West) at the right hand edge of the plateau, with steep drops to your right. The futuristic round structure below you on the right in 250 metres is a covered reservoir. The path swings to the left (210°). Ignore a path branching to the left in 120 metres. (!) The path turns further to the left and divides in 180 metres; you fork right through a gap ahead (210°), passing an open area on your left in 50 metres. Turn right on a wide path in 150 metres (240°), passing a lake on your left. At the end of the lake in 250 metres, ignore paths to the left and right.
10. Continue along this wide track, and ignore another path to the left in 100 metres. In 25 metres there is a conifer plantation on your right, with gorse and wild heathland on your left. In another 350 metres turn right going through a metal gate or over a deer grid onto a wide track heading downhill (North) through a birch and conifer wood. Continue on this path for 350 metres; it levels out at the corner of a green metal fence with danger signs on your right. (!) Turn left opposite the fence on a narrow level path that runs to the right of an old water channel, which is now largely dry (going West at first). The intricate network of drainage channels was built to carry the water down to the reservoirs.
11. The path bends to the left then makes a wide sweep to the right. Various watercourses descend to join or cross the channel, crossed by small bridges. Keep to the level path, then in 320 metres turn sharp left (South West) on to a wide path which climbs steadily, then turns to the right. In 300 metres, at the top of the climb **(Point 2 - see the alternative route via Ewshot below if you intend to have lunch at The Windmill)**, you turn right on to a wide level path, with the traffic on Beacon Hill Road close by on your left. In 50 metres ignore a path forking downhill

to the right. In 450 metres the path divides and you take the right fork (probably signed 'telecoms'). Go past a radio mast on your right in 130 metres. In 50 metres you can see the triangulation pillar for Beacon Hill (177 metres) among the trees to your right (GR 823503).

12. (!) In 25 metres at the end of a clearing, turn left in front of a prominent pine tree (ahead of you and to the right there are very steep drops, so be sure to take the correct route). In 20 metres turn to the right (North) on a narrow path which descends very steeply. In 15 metres take a rough path branching to the right (North-East), which descends more gently at first. In 20 metres the path divides - take the left fork, which descends more steeply. In 120 metres you reach another old water channel. Ahead and below you, you should be able to see a wide path and beyond it a lake with a red safety ring visible on its left shore - this is where you are heading. Cross the water channel and take a rough path opposite (355 degrees at first). The path turns well to the left and in 60 metres you take a path to the right (30 degrees) through the trees. In 40 metres fork right again (East). This path turns to the left and in 80 metres you come out at a junction with the wide gravel track which you saw earlier (Point 3 - the route from Ewshot re-joins you here). Take the track opposite passing a large pond on your right in 180 metres. This is the evocatively named Reservoir No. 1, one of a group of reservoirs which were constructed in the 1860s to supply the water for Aldershot Camp. As you near a grassy meadow visible ahead, cross a track and go over a cattle grid in 180 metres. In 20 metres, veer right to the edge of the grass and turn left off the track in 30 metres to cross the meadow diagonally (40 degrees), aiming for a metal barrier. In 300 metres cross the Bourley Road and (probably unnoticed) the embryonic Gelvert Stream, to the left of a large parking area (GR 831511).
13. In 30 metres turn left on a wide path that goes to the left of a metal barrier by a No Parking Emergency Access sign. In 200 metres you reach the end of the meadow on your right, marked on the map as Bourley Road Camping Ground. You have the Gelvert Stream alongside on your left and you pass a bridge over the stream in 80 metres and a crossing path in another 100 metres. Continue on the straight shaded path heading due North. Turn left on a wide gravel track in 270 metres opposite a yellow danger sign. You go round a metal barrier by a warning sign about a high-speed test track in 200 metres. In 40 metres fork left on a very wide sandy track with a wire fence shortly on the right. To the left you should be able to glimpse Tweseldown racecourse (one of Britain's premier horse trials venues). Your path goes over a deer grid in 300 metres. (!) After another 50 metres, go through a kissing gate on your left, to the right of a metal gate, heading North-West.
14. Your track bends left and you pass a small pond on your left in 200 metres. In another 50 metres you pass a tiny pond (which may be dried up) on the right. (!) 30 metres after the pond, before the path swings further to the left, turn right on a faint grassy path through the gorse bushes (350° at first). Keep following this undulating and winding path with a hillock on your left, heading towards the

pinewoods. Your path curves left to meet a clear crossing path in 180 metres. Turn right here towards the sound of traffic on a narrow path through brambles and gorse (335 degrees). The path goes past some pines and you go through a wooden kissing gate in 120 metres.

15. For The Foresters, take the path directly ahead, immediately to the left of a small copse. In 50 metres you enter the wood, then veer to the right and up a bank to cross the road opposite The Foresters in 50 metres (*if you do not intend to visit The Foresters, turn right after the wooden gate and cross the Aldershot Road in 150 metres - the walk continues opposite*).
16. **Alternative route via Ewshot.** Turn left at the top of the climb (**Point 2**) and go over a cattle grid in 60 metres. Immediately turn right to cross Beacon Hill Road in 30 metres (Badger Way bus stop to your left). Turn left and take the sign-posted bridleway on your right in 25 metres. Stay on the wide track which takes you gently downhill with fenced off woods to your right and soon with residential gardens on your left. In 350 metres you pass Oakwood House on the left. In 120 metres continue ahead on an unmade road, ignoring a private road to your left. In 200 metres you turn right on Church Lane to reach the Windmill Inn in 40 metres.
17. Turn right out of the pub and in 150 metres turn right again on Tadpole Lane, past the village hall. In 40 metres enter Queen Elizabeth II recreation field on your left. In 120 metres go through the wooden kissing gate at the top right hand corner of the field (not the gate to the right leading back to the road). Continue ahead with a very new wooden fence to your right and go through a gap in the fence then down steps and over a wooden boardwalk in 60 metres. In 30 metres go through the first of three wooden kissing gates in close succession, the last of which takes you to the right and back to Tadpole Lane in 20 metres. Follow the road to the left and uphill. Ignore a footpath to the left in 150 metres and another path to the right in 20 metres (this path is poorly maintained and if the nettles don't get you, the electric fences will).
18. In 300 metres, at the top of Tadpole Lane, cross Beacon Hill Road again (with a bus stop to the left) and take the wide path opposite by a barrier and yellow danger notices. In 20 metres ignore a metal kissing gate and cattle grid on the right. In 70 metres turn right at the next metal kissing gate and cattle grid. In 100 metres turn left at a path T-junction and continue for 120 metres, turning left at the next junction where you re-join the main route at Point 3 above.

19. C) The Foresters to Fleet Pond (3.2 kms)

20. Turn left from The Foresters on to the road, then left again to enter a car park in 60 metres. Ignore the path which is directly ahead and go diagonally across the car park and through a metal kissing-gate to the right by a barrier and over a deer grid in 80 metres. Continue ahead (North-East) on a straight gravel path which runs over another deer grid in 220 metres. Follow this woodland path, avoiding several minor crossing paths, and gradually moving away from the road on your right. This seems

to be the line of the ancient Maulth Way or Sheep-way (which may be as near as you will get to seeing farm animals on this walk) from Winchester to London. Your path curves left uphill and 600 metres from the deer grid you merge with paths first to the left and then to the right. You reach the busy main road in 140 metres. Turn left on the pavement then right to cross the A323 in 25 metres by a sign telling cyclists to dismount. In 60 metres you cross the Basingstoke Canal far beneath you and continue ahead on Ively Road, signposted to Farnborough.

21. Go through the first gap in the fence on the left in 100 metres (just after the end of the metal barrier and before the wooden fence), and immediately fork right, parallel with the road. At a cross paths in 75 metres turn right on a wider path. In 30 metres fork left, on a path lined with tall trees which gradually veers left, away from the road. Later the path veers right, descends and turns left. In 200 metres you merge with two paths on the left. In 40 metres turn left (North West) at a cross paths on to a wide track (you are now following the Brenda Parker Way) (GR 832541). Merge with a path on the right in 350 metres (there is a low level faded blue Hampshire County Council waymark hidden to the right here). You reach a complex track junction and a wooden bridge in 350 metres, with yellow danger signs on your left.
22. Cross the plank bridge over the Gelvert Stream (GR 825546) and immediately turn right to enter Fleet Pond Nature Reserve with marked trails. Follow the Blue Route (marked by low level posts with coloured markings) with the stream to your right, passing four seats. Ignore a bridge to your right in 300 metres. In 60 metres you reach a path junction (**Point 4**) and you have a choice, the main route or an extension round Fleet Pond which adds 1.6 kms.
23. **Main Route:** Turn right at **Point 4** on a raised sandy path, now following both Blue and Yellow routes. In 200 metres you cross the Gelvert Stream by a wooden bridge at Sandy Bay. There are wooden seats with swan carvings and good views of the lake here. In 20 metres you turn sharply to the right, away from the lake and on to a long boardwalk. In another 150 metres you turn left at a path junction marked by a post for the Blue and Yellow routes and pass a seat. Cross a ditch and veer left at a Barbara Parker Way sign in 100 metres. At the Sandy Hill Copse information board in 100 metres, take the path to the right (**Point 5**).
 . From here you can either resume the main walk at the start of Section D or simply continue around Fleet Pond to Fleet station, a distance of 1.3 kms (for this option you use the second paragraph of the Fleet Pond Extension directions which follow in reverse, taking the second set of steps to the station car park).
24. (**Fleet Pond Extension:** Turn left at **Point 4** following the Yellow route, as directed by a Fleet Pond Nature Trail arrow. Ignore an unmarked path to the left in 40 metres and continue over sections of boardwalk. At the next path junction in 130 metres turn right near an information board, now following both the Blue Route and the Yellow Route, with houses to your left. Turn left to cross a small bridge in 140 metres then follow the path round to the right (North). Pass a jetty on your right in 100 metres and an information board and seats in 20 metres. The path swings to the

right in 180 metres. Cross Brookly Stream in 60 metres, where the Blue Route turns left, to re-join you in another 70 metres. You reach a long section of boardwalk in 60 metres. Continue ahead with Fleet Pond close by on your right, past an information board and landing stage in 50 metres. You pass more seats on your right in 200 metres and an information board in 30 metres. Follow the path round to the right past steps to the station car park in 70 metres, with the railway line shortly alongside you to the left (*or for Fleet station, go up the steps to reach the station buildings in 100 metres*).

25. Go over a wooden bridge in 200 metres and pass another set of steps to the station car park in 50 metres. You reach a fishing jetty and a seat in 150 metres. Turn half right here, away from the railway line and the Brenda Parker Way, on to the Red Route. This is a pleasant woodland walk, but watch out for the tree roots (and avoid the lower path to the right, though this re-joins you at Sandy Hill Copse). Continue ahead at the next path junction in 420 metres, past an information board for the Sandyhills viewpoint, with picnic tables to your left. You are now following the Blue Route and the Yellow Route again. You veer right in 180 metres then veer left and downhill in 110 metres. Take the next path on the left (by an information board for Sandy Hill Copse) in 60 metres (**Point 5**), leaving the Fleet Pond Nature Reserve (GR 825550) **and follow the main walk directions below**.

26. D) Fleet Pond to Minley Road (Crown and Cushion) (2.8 kms)

27. **[Point 5]** Climb away from the lake with wooden railings on both sides, to the left then down to the right. In 30 metres you emerge in a large meadow. Take the path alongside the woods on your left (60°). In 250 metres as you near the end of the trees, take a wide gravel track half left (25°) in to the woods, (the path continues to your right in a straight line across the meadow). In 300 metres go round a barrier and turn right on a lane (back on the Brenda Parker Way). In 100 metres cross over Bramshot Bridge (GR 830555) to your left, which takes you over the railway line.
28. Turn right along the verge of the busy A3013 Fleet Road in 30 metres, opposite Lower Bramshot Farm (or cross the road and turn left for a 73/82 bus to Farnborough). In 75 metres, cross the road and take the signed footpath opposite. Follow this with a wooden fence on your right at first, then a wire mesh fence, to re-enter the Aldershot and Minley Training Area. You emerge from the wood, go through a wooden gate and cross a wide track in 150 metres (**Point 6**), finally leaving the Brenda Parker Way.
29. Here you have a choice, the main route, or turn right for a late lunch at The Tree House, back to the A3013 and just past the roundabout, or turn left and stay on the Brenda Parker Way, which is a much drier route underfoot, **following the alternative route below to Point 7**.

30. **Main Route:** For the main walk, continue in the direction of the yellow arrow on a grassy path. In 220 metres you go through a wooden gate and round a barrier, then turn left on Bramshot Lane, opposite the attractive Great Bramshot Farm House. Pass a house (The Bungalow) on your right in 300 metres, and when the road bends to the right in another 100 metres, go over a stile on your left, to the right of a metal gate on to an unmarked grassy path leading in to Foxlease Meadows. Cross the grass meadow ahead then in 75 metres veer right with a barbed wire fence on your right. Go through a wooden kissing gate to the left of a field gate in 25 metres then leave the meadow by a stile to the right of a locked metal gate in 70 metres, still keeping the fence to your right. Follow the path over the M3 in 100 metres (GR 832565), with views of Minley Manor ahead. Go through or over a locked metal field gate in 120 metres (though these gates are kept locked, Hampshire Wildlife Trust have confirmed that they are available for public use).
31. You emerge near the right hand edge of a large meadow. Be warned that the going underfoot is very uneven over the next section. Turn right over a ditch (passing to the right of a short section of wooden fence) and then left in 20 metres to follow the edge of the next meadow, with the ditch now to your left, heading roughly North-East. In 80 metres you cross another ditch and continue ahead. In 90 metres ignore a plank bridge and metal kissing gate to your left. In 15 metres go through or over a metal gate and continue in to the next meadow, now with a wire fence beyond the ditch. You pass under mini-pylons in 160 metres and under high pylons in 40 metres. Ignore a bridge and metal gate to your left in 30 metres, already with views of the pub cricket ground ahead. Continue ahead (you may need to step over the branches of a fallen tree) and go through a metal kissing gate on your left in 30 metres, then through a wooden gate in 20 metres. Continue parallel with the pylons on your left at first and with a wire fence on your right. Follow the fence round to the right in 50 metres, now with a house (Linklater Cottages) visible beyond, then to the left in 50 metres, with the cricket field to your right. In 80 metres go through a wooden kissing gate ahead and continue along the left hand edge of the cricket field, with the Crown and Cushion garden shortly on your left. In 140 metres go over a soil bank to reach the Minley Road.
32. **Alternative drier route from Point 6 to Point 7.** At **Point 6** turn left on the wide track and go past a house and warehouse (Little Bramshot Farm) in 150 metres. Stay on the track over a cattle grid in 180 metres and a second cattle grid in 220 metres, where the path turns sharp left at the edge of a wood (Ancells Copse). Continue beside fields grazed by animals, to reach a T junction in 500 metres. Turn right to cross the M3 in 150 metres. Keep straight on along the track, crossing a stream and going under mini pylons in 400 metres. In 300 metres, just before high electricity cables, look out for a blue bridleway arrow to the right of the path. Turn right here, leaving the Brenda Parker Way. Keep to the right hand edge of the meadow, with the pylons on your left at first. Go under the cables in 250 metres, then go half right in to the next meadow in 200

metres, again following the right hand edge of the meadow. Ignore a path to the right at a blue bridgeway sign in 250 metres and ignore an unmarked path to your left in 150 metres. Go through a metal barrier in 400 metres, stay on the drive past a house on the left and cross the Minley Road (A327) in another 100 metres. Take the sign-posted bridgeway opposite and **resume the main walk at Point 7 below** (or for the Crown and Cushion, take the path to the right, parallel with the road).

33. E) Minley Road to Blackwater (5 kms)

34. Cross Minley Road and enter the woods by the gap just to the left (or to the right if you have come from the pub entrance). Turn left on a path running parallel with the road. In 250 metres **[Point 7]** turn right on a bridgeway, in the direction indicated by the wooden signpost. In 200 metres, take the wide bridgeway to the right, marked by a low blue arrow. Ignore an unmarked path to the right in 50 metres and another unmarked path to the right in 200 metres.
35. Take the bridgeway to the left in 90 metres, marked by a blue arrow. At a T-junction in 75 metres, follow the path to the right marked by a blue arrow. You emerge from the woods by Hawley Lake opposite the boat houses in 250 metres and continue ahead on sand. Re-enter the woods in 250 metres. Turn left on a tarmac drive at a bend in 200 metres and go over a brick bridge in 20 metres.
36. In 10 metres ignore a blue bridgeway arrow to the right and stay on the tarmac drive, with houses close by on your right and possibly with fine views of the yachts on the lake. In 70 metres you pass a sign prohibiting swimming and boating. In 80 metres, just before a tree with a yellow painted arrow you have a choice (!) **[Point 8]**.

37. **To finish in Farnborough** : Continue ahead on the tarmac path, as per the painted arrow on the tree, and follow 'the alternative ending at Farnborough' below.

38. **Main route.** Fork left off the main path, through the woods. In 80 metres you pass through a clearing with danger signs and the end of the lake to your left. Continue heading North-East and (!) re-enter the woods in 50 metres on a faint path (take the opening closest to the lake enclosed by over-arching rhodedendrons, not the much wider opening to the right, and keep close to the lake). In 150 metres turn left on to a wide path. **[!]** Ignore a wide crossing path in 150 metres and another in a further 150 metres. In 300 metres turn right (60 degrees) at an obvious track junction. In 100 metres fork right on to a muddy path which climbs steadily.
39. In 220 metres continue ahead at a cross paths, still uphill through a cleared area. In 350 metres your path turns a little to the right and starts to descend. In 90 metres ignore a path on your left and in 15 metres you pass another yellow arrow on your right and go slightly left and downhill at a junction of several paths. In 210 metres

- you cross a wide track in a clearing under a line of pylons (with a yellow arrow pointing the way ahead on the nearest pylon, hidden among a multitude of yellow danger warnings). In 40 metres continue on a wide stony path opposite (10°), lined by tall trees.
40. In 400 metres ignore a path sharply to your left, with houses visible above it. In 50 metres, within sight of a brick house ahead, cross the ditch to your right and take the unmarked narrow muddy path which climbs gently. In 130 metres go through a gap marked by a yellow arrow and in 20 metres cross a drive and enter Hawley Green, with play facilities and Holy Trinity Church in the opposite corner.
 41. Stay on the left hand edge of the green and in 80 metres go through a gap in the bushes ahead. In 15 metres cross Hawley Road (B3272) with care. Continue ahead in to The Glebe in 20 metres and in 70 metres ignore a turning on the left. Follow The Glebe to the left at a T-junction in 50 metres. Continue round to the right in to New Road in 50 metres. In 150 metres turn left in to Vicarage Road, to reach London Road (A30) in 100 metres.
 42. Mr Bumble pub is on your left, the Royal Swan is opposite you, Wholemeal Café is up the road to your left, and Tesco Express and Shell are both further up on the other side of the road. Cross the A30 at the traffic lights and for Platform 2 and trains to Reading take the approach road (White Hart House Parade) past a parade of shops and takeaways, as directed by a sign for the station.
 43. For Platform 1 and trains to Guildford and Gatwick Airport, follow the elevated A30 to the right with black railings to your left. You go over the railway line in 120 metres and in 30 metres you go down a flight of steps to reach Blackwater station in 50 metres. If you have time to kill, cross the car park and follow the main road over the bridge, then explore the River Blackwater and Shepherd Meadows to your left.
 44. **Option : Alternative start from Aldershot station (5.1 kms to Caesar's Camp)**
 45. Trains from London Waterloo arrive at Aldershot station on platform 2. Leave by the main exit and turn right on the station forecourt and right again in 40 metres to take the footbridge over the railway line. Go past some modern sculptures in 80 metres and down the short road from the station (East Station Road). Turn left in 50 metres opposite a post box into St George's Road. In 200 metres cross over St Michael's Road into St George's Road East and follow it round to the end opposite the A323 (High Street) in 120 metres.
 46. Follow the pavement round to the right and enter Aldershot Manor Park in 15 metres. Take the middle path in 40 metres, leading to the right of Aldershot Manor, the red brick building with a bright red door (or for the public toilets, take the left hand path then cut across the grass to Aldershot Manor). At a path junction in 250 metres continue ahead then go half left in 50 metres, in the direction of a 'walk 4 life' arrow. To your left is the Heroes Shrine and Garden (including a memorial to

various towns which were bombed during the blitz and a statue of Christ calming the waves), which is worth a short detour. This marks the start of the Brenda Parker Way, marked by purple logos which you now follow all the way to Rowhill Copse – there are signs at each junction, but some are hard to spot.

47. Leave the park in 100 metres and turn right up Church Hill, passing St Michael's Church on your right. Continue into Church Lane East and cross the road, then turn left into Croft Road in 100 metres. Continue ahead to a tarmac path between a hedge and a wall in 60 metres.
48. Keep right at the first turning in 60 metres and at the second one in 160 metres turn left just before a path junction, heading South along a gravel path leading to Brickfields Park. This tiny country park was reclaimed from the remains of a Victorian brickworks and clay diggings. Ignore turnings off until you see a mud path to the left leading towards a black litter bin in 100 metres. Take this path with a lake to your left, leading on to a grassy area with some large rocks in 50 metres. After another 20 metres turn right on a gravel path, then right again at a Brenda Parker Way sign in 50 metres. The path becomes tarmac in 30 metres and continues into Laurel Gardens in another 30 metres.
49. Follow the road and turn right into Walnut Close in 60 metres, continuing ahead in 40 metres on a tarmac path leading to Highfield Avenue in 50 metres. Cross the road and turn right, then turn left in 30 metres onto a fenced tarmac path, leading to Boxalls Grove in 200 metres. Follow this to the main road, Boxalls Lane in 15 metres. Turn right to pass under the railway line in 30 metres and into Weybourne Road ahead (B3007), now following the Blackwater Valley Path, marked by navy blue logos. Keep on the right side of the road past the Duke of York pub on the junction with Aylings Lane in 250 metres. In 60 metres you cross over the infant River Blackwater (under a lamp-post and behind a low brick wall), but you will hardly notice it.
50. Take the next right into an unmade road (Parkland Grove) in 80 metres and at the end in 100 metres take the left track through Rowhill Copse (ignoring the wheelchair path to the right). The river trickles alongside on your right at first, but you cross it twice on plank bridges. You pass a green meadow on the right in 300 metres, then keep left at a path junction in 160 metres, passing a pond on the left in 350 metres, to reach the source of the River Blackwater with an information board (on your right) in 80 metres. Go up the steps to the left (leaving the Blackwater Valley Path) and at the top in 60 metres turn right following a sign for the Rowhill Nature Trail. In 100 metres at a cross paths where your path starts to descend steeply you take the path to the left, eventually descending past the Field Studies Centre and to the right of the Visitors' Centre and car park in 100 metres. There are public toilets in the Visitors' Centre, but it is normally only open on Sunday and bank holiday afternoons.
51. Cross the car park and Cranmore Lane (B3008) in 30 metres, then continue half left across the grass and over the Farnborough Road (A325) in 40 metres, to the right of

the mini-roundabout. Go through the modern swing-gate just to your left in 25 metres, which takes you in to the MOD Aldershot and Minley Training Area, which has public access subject to the bylaws. Go past an information board on Caesar's Camp in 15 metres. In 30 metres, the path veers right away from the wooden fence, ascends and comes down to a crossing path in a dip in 80 metres. Keep the same direction (North-West) on a rising path opposite between earth banks. At the top in 60 metres, turn left (you leave the unsigned Brenda Parker Way here) on a wide path with a wood of silver birch on your left and open views of the moors on your right, including the high ground around Caesar's Camp.

52. In 250 metres, go over a crossing track and continue through trees. The path promptly veers right and joins the path you just crossed in 80 metres. 100 metres later at a complex path junction, you take the second path on your right (North West) with a pond on your left. Cross a path in 150 metres and start to climb. The path levels out and you turn left on a wide path in 250 metres (there is a secured log here). Take the steep stony path uphill to the right in 25 metres. In 25 metres a path joins you on the left and you **follow the main walk directions from Point 1**.
53. **Option: Alternative ending at Farnborough (from Minley Road 5.5 kms, or 6.9 kms to Farnborough North)**
54. 200 metres after **Point 6**, turn right at a path junction.
55. In 60 metres continue ahead at a bridleway junction, marked by a blue arrow. In 250 metres you have houses to your right. In 120 metres the path bends sharply to the left by yellow warning signs.
56. Follow the path round to the left and in 100 metres cut across to the right, towards a gap in the houses. In 20 metres go straight ahead along Lakeside Gardens. In 120 metres cross Sandy Lane (*you can get a bus in to Farnborough from here*) and go down the pedestrianised Fintry Walk ahead. In 120 metres cross Pennine Way and continue along Fintry Walk, which is now slightly to the right.
57. Cross the M3 again by the footbridge in 60 metres. Cross Medway Drive in 80 metres and take the tarmac path opposite (just to the right of the parade of shops and to the left of a post box) in 30 metres through housing estates. You pass Rye Close and Rother Road on the left. On reaching Orwell Close in 150 metres follow the path to the right the left on tarmac in 50 metres to come out on Fernhill Road in 120 metres opposite blue school railings. *You can get a bus to Farnborough from here - the stop is to the left of the school on the other side of the road.*
58. Turn right and cross the road. In 250 metres turn left in to Hanover Gardens by The Snow Goose pub. In 60 metres fork left then in 100 metres (just before number 10A) take a tarmac path to the left, with walls on both sides. This brings you out by Cove Brook, which flows North in to the Blackwater. Follow the grass path to the right and

- go past a wooden bridge in 150 metres. There are some lovely willow trees on this section. Cut across the grass ahead and take the next bridge in 250 metres.
59. Cross Giffard Drive into Brabon Road in 40 metres. Cross Beta Road in 100 metres and continue ahead on a gravel path. Turn right in 50 metres alongside a fence with school playing fields on your left. Continue on a path with a concrete wall on your left in 80 metres then continue ahead on tarmac (Squirrel Lane) in 100 metres.
60. Turn right in to Romaine Close in 150 metres. Cut across the grass and cross the main road (Prospect Road) in 60 metres (*the Thatched Cottage pub is 80 metres to the left and would be a possible tea stop*) in to Cabrol Road opposite. Enter Queen Elizabeth Park in 150 metres and immediately take a narrow twisting path to the left (*but if it is getting dark, turn left on the main path after the pond and play area, which has street lights*). In 30 metres ignore forks both to the left and to the right and continue with residential fences soon close by on your left. In 100 metres you pass a grassy area with seats on your right. In 200 metres you reach a less densely wooded area; cut across to the right here and in 50 metres you reach the main path, with a seat to your right and a blue sign indicating that the path is for pedestrians and cyclists to the left. Turn left on this path, which has frequent street lights.
61. You come out on the busy A325 (Farnborough Road) in 180 metres and turn right, crossing Queen Victoria Court in 20 metres. Here you have a choice.
62. **To finish at Farnborough Main station (for trains to London Waterloo)** Continue over the railway line in 50 metres and in another 50 metres follow the barriers round to the right in to Station Approach. In 250 metres you reach Farnborough Main station on your right. Trains for London Waterloo depart from Platform 1 on the far side.
63. **To finish at Farnborough North station (direct route)** Cross the main Farnborough Road at the traffic lights, then take the road opposite, Highgate Lane, then straight on in to Farnborough Street.
64. **To finish at Farnborough North station (via St Michael's Abbey)** Cross the main Farnborough Road at the traffic lights, then turn right along Farnborough Road, go over the railway line in 50 metres, pass Jubilee Road on your left in another 50 metres and take the next left, Rectory Road, at the roundabout in 350 metres (signed to Mytchett). Turn left again up Abbey Way in 100 metres, and left once more in to Douai Close in another 250 metres. In 40 metres continue on to the tarmac cycle path (Monks Path) ahead, which becomes a dirt track with views of St Michael's Abbey on your left, behind a tall green wire fence. Before you draw level with the Abbey, take the muddy path to the right in 150 metres, at the right hand edge of what was a grass meadow and is now Jubilee Allotment Gardens. Go through a gap in the wooden fence ahead in 100 metres into Rectory Road recreation ground, which you cross half left to the far

corner, to the right of the hill. Go round a wooden gate in 200 metres and come out on Rectory Road again in 40 metres. Follow the road to the left and go under the railway line in 40 metres then pass the Prince of Wales pub and turn right in to Farnborough Street in 250 metres (opposite Highgate Lane). Pass the former Imperial Arms pub and arrive at Farnborough North station in 150 metres. Trains for Reading leave from Platform 2 on the near side. For trains to Guildford and Gatwick Airport, allow time to cross the level crossing to Platform 1.

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