Warlingham Circular walk

Bluebell woods, fields, valleys and nature reserves on the London/Surrey border.

**Length**  
**Main Walk:** 21¼ km (13.2 miles). Five hours 15 minutes walking time. For the whole excursion including trains, sights and meals, allow at least 8½ hours.  
**Short Circular Walk:** 14 km (8.7 miles). Three hours 25 minutes walking time.  
**Alternative Walk, finishing at Woldingham:** 16 km (9.9 miles). Three hours 55 minutes walking time.

**OS Maps**  
Explorer 146 & 161. Upper Warlingham station, map reference TQ338585, is on the London/Surrey border, 8 km S of Croydon.

**Toughness**  
5 out of 10 (4 for the Alternative Walk, 3 for the Short Walk).

**Features**  
Although only a few miles from Croydon and well inside the M25, this part of London's border with Surrey feels anything but urban. Away from the main roads you are soon in woods, fields and isolated valleys which escaped the post-war expansion of south London's suburbs. Now part of the Green Belt, the area is protected from large-scale development and remains a rural haven, with plenty of fine bluebell woods to admire in April and May.

The walk starts with a climb to the top of Riddlesdown and the adjoining Sanderstead to Whyteleafe Countryside Area, which since July 2019 have been part of a new South London Downs National Nature Reserve. It then heads east via Hamsey Green for a short stretch through King's Wood, the best of the bluebell woods. After crossing an isolated valley the full walk continues with a meandering excursion through Selsdon Wood Nature Reserve, which also has good displays of wood anemones. A tiny 11th C church and more bluebell woods are then passed on a convoluted route through the hamlets of Farleigh and Chelsham Common, with a choice of lunch pubs.
The return leg of the circular walk goes through **Ledgers Wood** (another small nature reserve) and loops around the **Greatpark** estate. It takes a different path back across the valley to King's Wood and this time goes through its full length. The walk ends with a longer stretch through the designated Countryside Area, with a flight of steps taking you down to a park café in Whyteleafe Recreation Ground and a choice of return stations.

| **Walk Options** | The meandering nature of the walk route allows for a couple of short cuts. In the morning you can omit the section through Selsdon Wood (saving 3½ km), and in the afternoon the loop around Greatpark (saving 3¾ km). Taking both short cuts still leaves a varied and interesting **Short Walk**, suitable for shorter days. This walk originally finished at Woldingham station and its shorter ending down the side of Halliloo valley has been retained as the **Alternative Walk**. A few other short cuts are mentioned in the directions. As you might expect for a walk near the London boundary, there are several places where you could cut the walk short by catching a bus (see Transport below). |
| **Additional Notes** | This walk has been much altered over time, in response to changes in access to the area’s nature reserves and the availability of suitable refreshment places. As noted above an earlier version finished at Woldingham station, originally with a longer afternoon through Woldingham Garden Village (now incorporated in the Woldingham Circular via Titsey Place walk, #244), but this was not well suited to the rather early closing time of Woldingham's only tea place (especially in winter and on Sundays). A circular walk returning to Whyteleafe was always the most convenient option for transport reasons, and the opening of its Pavilion Café in 2019 has allowed this even older variation to be restored as the Main Walk, with some tweaks to reduce its overlap with the Whyteleafe to Hayes walk (#38). |
| **Transport** | The most convenient starting point for this walk is the rather misleadingly named **Upper Warlingham** station (see Walk Notes), which is close to **Whyteleafe** station in the valley below Warlingham. Upper Warlingham has a fast half-hourly service from Victoria, taking 31 minutes; Whyteleafe (on a different line) has more frequent but slower suburban trains from London Bridge. Whyteleafe's stations are at the outer edge of TfL Zone 6 so a Travelcard or London Freedom Pass are sufficient for the **Main (Circular) Walk**. However, these options (and Oyster PAYG) are not valid at Woldingham. For the **Alternative Walk** you should either buy a **return to Woldingham** (valid to both Upper Warlingham and Whyteleafe on the way out), or a single from Woldingham to Upper Warlingham to supplement a Travelcard or pass. If driving, the station car park at Upper Warlingham costs £7 Mon–Fri, £6.60 Sat; Whyteleafe £6.70 Mon–Fri, £3.70 Sat; both are £2.25 Sun & BH (2020). These two stations are popular with commuters and you might not be able to find a parking space during the week. There are two useful bus routes in the area. Travelcards and Oyster PAYG can be used on London bus 403, which runs every 12-20 minutes from the Sainsbury's on Limpsfield Road through Warlingham and Hamsey Green to Croydon; but not on Southdown 409, which runs hourly (Mon–Sat) from Selsdon via Old Farleigh Road and Chelsham (near both lunch places) down to the stations in Whyteleafe. |

https://www.walkingclub.org.uk/walk/warlingham-circular/
**Suggested Train**
Take the train nearest to **09:20** from Victoria to Upper Warlingham if you will be doing the full morning route; at least half an hour later if taking the morning short cut.

**Lunch**
Unless you take the afternoon short cut there are two possible lunch places. The first is **The Harrow** (01883-627565) on Great Farleigh Green, after up to 11 km on the full walk (depending on the route taken in Selsdon Wood); 7½ km with the morning short cut. Part of the Vintage Inns chain, this is a large and popular pub/restaurant with a wide range of food options and plenty of outdoor seating, but is on a fairly busy main road.

The alternative lunch place is **The Bull Inn** (01883-627735) on Chelsham Common, which serves typical pub food and has a beer garden overlooking the common. It is just over halfway through the full Main Walk but less than 4 km from the end of the Alternative Walk.

**Tea**
In Whyteleafe the suggested tea place is the small **Pavilion Café** (01883-770666; open daily to around 4.30pm) in the Recreation Ground, a friendly place serving hot drinks and a selection of home-made cakes.

On the A22 between the two stations stronger fare is available at the refurbished **Whyteleafe Tavern** (0121-272 5499) and a small micro-pub, the **Radius Arms** (07514-916172). In the same parade of shops there is also a Village Bakery and the Whyteleafe Café, but both are likely to be closed at the end of a walk.

The only available tea place near Woldingham station is **The Dene** (01883-652712), “an eating place for tea lovers” in Knights Garden Centre, ten minutes before the station. This has a good selection of cakes and desserts but it stops serving at around 4.30pm (and at least half an hour earlier on Sundays, and daily throughout January & February).

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[swcw44](swcw44) [swcw45](swcw44)

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**Start** CR3 0EP

**Help**
National Rail: 03457 48 49 50 • Travelline SE (bus times): 0871 200 2233 (12p/min) • TFL (London) : 0343 222 1234

**Version**
Jun-20

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Walk Options ( Circ. | Alt. )

M. Main (Circular) Walk (21¼ km)
   i. Circular Walk, omitting Selsdon Wood (17¼ km)
   ii. Circular Walk, omitting Greatpark loop (17½ km)
   a. Short Circular Walk, with both short cuts (14 km)
   b. Alternative Walk, finishing at Woldingham (16 km)
   bi. Short Alt. Walk, omitting Selsdon Wood (12½ km)
Walk Directions

A. Upper Warlingham • Whyteleafe Station to Tithepit Shaw Lane (2¾ km)

The most convenient station for this walk is Upper Warlingham, but Whyteleafe station is very close.

1. Starting from Upper¹ Warlingham Station
   - Arriving from London, go up the steps in the middle of the platform and turn right on the footbridge to come out onto Westhall Road. Turn left, go down to the bottom of the hill and turn right into Hillbury Road. In 80m turn left into Whyteleafe Recreation Ground.

2. Starting from Whyteleafe Station
   - Leave the station by a path at the front of the platform and turn sharp left. Go across the roundabout on the A22 (there is a pedestrian crossing off to the left), up the B270 (Hillbury Road) and under the railway bridge. In 100m turn left into Whyteleafe Recreation Ground.

3. Go through the small car park, which has an information panel about the Sanderstead to Whyteleafe Countryside Area². Take the tarmac path to the right of a toilet block and head for a bridge under the railway ahead on your left, 250m away: either along tarmac paths through the Recreation Ground, or by cutting across the grass.

4. Just before reaching the bridge, bear right onto a grassy path heading N, parallel to the railway and climbing steadily for 500m, later through woodland. At the end turn right at a T-junction in front of metal railings guarding the disused Riddlesdown Quarry³, with a belt of trees on your right.
   - If the narrow path alongside the railings is too awkward you could go through a gap in the trees to walk along the field edge parallel to it.

5. At the top go through a wooden kissing gate and turn half-left onto Riddlesdown⁴ to continue with a hedge on your right. At the end keep ahead through a gap and cross over a stony path. Go up to a hedge and bear right to continue alongside it, heading ENE.

6. In 150m keep ahead at a path crossing, now with a copse on your left (Dipsley's Shaw). In a further 250m turn half-right at the next path crossing onto a grassy path heading SE towards a corner of the open space. Go out through a small parking area and bear left onto a road (Tithepit Shaw Lane) at a sharp bend.

B. Tithepit Shaw Lane to Old Farleigh Road (2¾ km)

7. Go along the road for 400m, now on the London Outer Orbital Path⁵ (LOOP). At the end cross the B269 (Limpsfield Road) carefully; behind the railings opposite there is an information panel about the long history of Hamsey Green Pond⁶.

8. There is 500m more road walking: go all the way along the tree-lined Kingswood Lane, starting to the right of the pond. Immediately after the last house turn left onto a track, briefly leaving the LOOP. Follow the track past some paddocks into King's Wood⁷, initially with a fenced-off enclosure on your right.
   - King's Wood is a notable bluebell wood and this enclosure is particularly colourful in spring (perhaps because it avoids being trampled by admiring visitors). This section only makes a brief incursion into this open-access wood and you might be tempted to explore it further, but note that the return leg of the Circular Walk goes through the full length of this large wood.

9. In 150m turn right at the corner of the enclosure to continue alongside it, now heading NE. As noted above you could detour off to the left, but for the most direct route carry on in this direction next to the dilapidated fence. Where the path comes to the end of a long broad avenue, veer right onto a narrow path which leads out to an unsurfaced track, the continuation of Kingswood Lane.

https://www.walkingclub.org.uk/walk/warlingham-circular/
10. Turn left briefly onto the track, rejoining the LOOP and heading **N**. In 75m **go over a stile on the right** onto a signposted footpath, along the edge of a large field. In the far right-hand corner go over another stile and follow a path downhill into **Mossyhill Shaw**. At the bottom of the valley the path curves round to the right.

*You might be able to see the top of Selsdon Park Hotel* above the trees to the left, **1½ km away.**

11. Follow the path as it winds its way up the other side of the valley, merging with a farm track from the right near the top. In 250m the path comes out onto a grassy strip in front of Old Farleigh Road; this has quite fast traffic, so **cross over carefully.** Unless you want to take a short cut to The Harrow (the first of the two lunch pubs), **turn left** onto the grass verge.

- If you want to go directly to the pub turn right instead and walk alongside the road for 800m on Great Farleigh Green. If you take this short cut, continue the directions at [25] in §F.

12. At the end of the verge continue on a permissive horse ride, shielded from the road by a tall hedge. This leads to the access road to Farleigh Court Golf Club, with a bridleway straight ahead and a signposted footpath off to the right alongside the driveway.

*If you are doing the morning short cut (omitting Selsdon Wood), go to §E.*

**C. Old Farleigh Road to Selsdon Wood (exit) (2¾ • 1½ • 1¼ km)**

13. Go straight across the golf club’s access road onto the signposted public bridleway, joining the **Vanguard Way** (VGW). In 200m this tree-lined path (Baker Boy Lane) bends right and starts to go gently downhill. In a further 100m you come to a fork at the entrance to **Puplet Wood.**

*There is a choice of routes for the rest of this section. The main route in [14] goes through the northern part of Selsdon Wood (ahead on your left), which has extensive patches of wood anemones in early spring as well as good displays of bluebells. The alternative route in [15] goes through Puplet Wood (also good for bluebells, but can be muddy in wet weather). The direct route in [16] simply remains on the bridleway running between the two woods.***

14. Main route, via Selsdon Wood (up to 2¾ km)

- **Fork left** to stay on the waymarked routes, going gently downhill. In 250m you come to a path crossing with a tall wooden kissing gate across a dip on your left.

- **Turn left** and go through Baker Boy Lane Gate into **Selsdon Wood**, leaving the VGW and LOOP.

*Selsdon Wood is a pleasant place to explore and you could devise your own route from the map. You would need to leave the wood at its easternmost corner, just over 500m away at the bottom of the hill; any path going downhill in roughly the right direction leads to this exit. On the mazy route described below you can sometimes confirm your position at junctions by looking for the path names on wooden plaques high up in the trees.*

- Inside the wood turn left onto the perimeter path (East Gorse). In 125m ignore a path on the right (Middle Gorse) but 25 later turn right into West Gorse.

- In 150m there is a memorial cairn and a small pond on your right (Linden Glade). Veer right at the path junction here, then immediately turn left into Smith Grove.

- In 125m turn right at a path crossing (into Bluebell Grove) and follow this for 250m, ignoring ways off. At the end turn left onto a broad path (Leafy Grove).

- In 100m turn half-right at a major path junction (with an open field visible on your left) into Court Wood Grove. In 125m you come to a path crossing with Beech Grove.

- You could turn right here, saving 600m. For the best display of wood anemones keep ahead on Court Wood Grove and then make three left turns – into Addington Border (with VGW/LOOP waymarkers), Avis Grove and Beech Grove – to return to this junction and go straight across.

- Follow Beech Grove for 125m to a path crossing (with Langford’s Way) and turn left. Go down this path for 200m to the exit, merging with other paths along the way.

- Leave the wood through Court Wood Lane Gate and go straight across Baker Boy Lane onto a signposted public bridleway.
15. Alternative route, via Puplet Wood (1½ km)
   a. **Fork right**, leaving the waymarked routes. Follow the bridleway near the right-hand edge of the wood, skirting around muddy stretches as necessary.
   b. The bridleway gradually curves left and in 750m turns sharply round, almost doubling back. It then swings right to go back down to Baker Boy Lane, where you turn right for the final 250m.
   c. Just before the bridleway leads into a residential street **turn right** onto a signposted public bridleway, leaving the VGW and LOOP which turn left into Selsdon Wood.

16. Direct route, on Baker Boy Lane (1¼ km)
   a. **Fork left** to stay on the waymarked routes, going gently downhill. In 250m you come to a path crossing with a tall wooden kissing gate across a dip on your left.
   b. Ignore this gate and carry on downhill for a further 500m, between Selsdon Wood and Puplet Wood.
   c. Just before the bridleway leads into a residential street **turn right** onto a signposted public bridleway, leaving the VGW and LOOP which turn left into Selsdon Wood.

D. Selsdon Wood to Church Road (2 km)

17. Head **E** on the chalky bridleway, climbing steadily away from Selsdon Wood with the golf course behind a hedge on your right. At the top follow the path round to the right, ignoring a narrow path into **Fricht Wood** on your left. The simplest route is to continue along the bridleway just outside the wood.
   - After 200m or so there are some inconspicuous paths into the wood which would let you switch to a parallel woodland path.

18. After heading **S** for 350m the bridleway turns left at the corner of the wood and continues just inside it, heading **E**. In a further 350m you come to a T-junction and **turn right** onto another bridleway; the woodland path mentioned above meets this bridleway just off to the left. Simply follow this enclosed bridleway **S** for just over 1 km, with the golf course on both sides. **Ahead on the left you should be able to see the top of the Clock Tower** on the Greatpark estate poking out above the trees, 1½ km away; this is passed later on the full circular walk.

19. At the end of the long bridleway go straight across Farleigh Court Road into Church Road, rejoining the VGW (in the opposite direction).
   *Continue the directions at §F.*

E. Old Farleigh Road to Church Road direct (1¼ km)

20. **Turn right** onto the footpath, leaving the LOOP but with a VGW waymarker confirming that you have joined the Vanguard Way. This narrow path can be muddy and you might find it easier to walk along the adjacent grass verge for 150m. Where the golf club's access road swings left, however, **bear right** to follow the footpath into a wood.

21. The woodland path goes gently downhill across a dip and back up the other side. On leaving the wood it swings round to the right, parallel to a roadway on the left. At the end the path goes through a belt of trees and comes out onto a lane (Farleigh Court Road). Turn left onto this lane, then in 150m **turn right** into Church Road.

F. Church Road to Littlepark Wood (1½ km)

22. Go along this cul-de-sac past stables and cottages into a parking area for the attractive small church of **St Mary the Virgin**. *The church is usually locked, but in summer it is open on Sunday afternoons when tea and home-made cakes are available in the hall.*
   - If you are not visiting The Harrow you can save over 1 km by taking the bridleway on the far side of the parking area, staying on the VGW. In 500m ignore a footpath turning sharp left into Greatpark Wood, but immediately afterwards **turn left** at a five-way footpath signpost. If you take this short cut, continue the directions at [27] in §G.
23. For the main route, turn right in the parking area and go through a wooden kissing gate in its corner. Go all the way along the right-hand edge of a large field, down to the bottom corner. Follow a narrow path into Littlepark Wood and turn right at a path T-junction to come out onto the edge of Great Farleigh Green, with Old Farleigh Road on the far side.

24. The pub is 400m off to the left on this road. Turn left onto a grassy path on the edge of the green, later forking right to move slightly away from the trees. The path gradually approaches the road and heads straight towards The Harrow. If you are stopping there for refreshments, cross the road carefully by the mini-roundabout at the far end of the green.

25. From the pub go back across the road and take the signposted bridleway from the mini-roundabout, which runs alongside the garden fences of the properties on Harrow Road. In 125m, having passed the grounds of a house on your left, turn left onto a path into Littlepark Wood. In 125m this comes to a long straight bridleway running through the middle of the wood, with a footpath opposite.

   If you are doing the afternoon short cut (omitting the Greatpark loop), turn left onto the bridleway and continue the directions at §I.

G. Littlepark Wood to Chelsham Common (1 km)

26. For the full walk go straight ahead onto the footpath and follow this down to the bottom edge of the wood. Outside the wood turn right onto a grassy path which goes alongside the trees for about 100m, then turns half-left to cut across the field to the far left-hand corner. Go through a wooden kissing gate in the tree boundary and keep ahead at a path junction with a five-way footpath signpost.

27. Go past wooden barriers onto the enclosed path heading SE. In 150m it goes under a low brick bridge (the old access road to the Greatpark estate on your left), then bends right and left. The path eventually comes out past more barriers onto the new access road.

28. Turn right and go along the road for 60m. Just before reaching a crossroads, veer left by a bus stop onto a short path cutting off the corner. Go straight across Ledgers Road onto a private road going past some cottages. This short cul-de-sac leads into the car park for The Bull Inn, the alternative lunch stop on the edge of Chelsham Common.

   If you are doing the Alternative Walk (finishing at Woldingham), go to §K.

H. Chelsham Common to Littlepark Wood (2¾ km)

29. Go past a vehicle barrier at the end of the pub's car park and follow a grassy path curving round to the left, heading E parallel to a lane on the right. Where the path forks in front of a tree-lined pond you can take either route; make your way around the pond to a crossroads.

30. From the crossroads head E briefly on Church Lane, signposted as Cycle Route 21 (towards Greenwich). After passing a few houses turn left into a short driveway, signposted as a public footpath. Go through a gap to the right of a garage block to come to a Surrey Wildlife Trust sign for Ledgers Wood\textsuperscript{13}, with a stile on the right which is the continuation of the footpath.

31. Ignore the stile and take the path into this open-access wood (which is good for bluebells, wood sorrel and other spring flowers). In 50m you come to a path crossing where the suggested route is to turn right and follow a clear path which will curve gradually round to the left, staying fairly close to the edge of the wood.

   - The path going straight ahead at the first crosspaths is an equally pleasant route, eventually meeting the perimeter path at a T-junction where you would turn left. However, paths off to the left lead into the ‘wrong’ part of the wood, where there is no convenient exit.

32. After the perimeter path curves left (away from the public footpath) there is a dilapidated wire fence on the right marking the boundary with the rather gloomy Holt Wood. The path curves left again and goes through a slightly scruffy area before coming out past another Ledgers Wood sign onto a small grassy area in front of a belt of trees.
33. Turn right to go alongside these trees. At the end veer left through a gap to join a public footpath on the other side, going through a vehicle barrier and heading NE between the private Greatpark estate and the conifers of Holt Wood.

34. In 200m fork left to stay alongside the estate’s patch of private woodland. In a further 200m, shortly before the end of the field on your right, turn left at a path junction with yellow waymarkers on a post. Follow this woodland path past a redundant stile and keep left to stay fairly close to the estate’s boundary fence.

35. The path eventually swings left to go back down the other side of the estate, with Greatpark Wood on the right. Opposite its prominent Clock Tower you pass a locked metal gate into the wood, with a plaque listing the previous uses of the site. The path eventually comes out past a wooden vehicle barrier.

36. Go straight ahead on a tree-lined bridleway, crossing over your outward route at the five-way footpath signpost and soon climbing gently. In 200m you pass a white-painted Coal Tax post on your right and keep ahead across a small clearing onto the continuation of the bridleway, now with garden fences on your left.
   - This bridleway leads directly to The Harrow, so you could continue along it if you want to (re-)visit this pub.

37. For the main route turn right after 50m at a bridleway junction (with a blue waymarker post) into Littlepark Wood. In 150m this broad path goes across the footpath from your outward route.

I. Littlepark Wood to Limpsfield Road (3½ km)

38. Follow the bridleway through the middle of Littlepark Wood, eventually curving left and coming out onto Great Farleigh Green. Keep ahead on a clear path across the green, dotted with small trees (and crossing your outward route yet again). As you approach Old Farleigh Road the path bends left and crosses a horse ride. Cross the road carefully to continue on the signposted bridleway opposite.

39. Follow this bridleway for 800m, which soon becomes an enclosed path between a hedge and a belt of trees, with large fields off to the left. Halfway along it dips down across an open valley, then climbs quite steeply up the other side. After going alongside a small wood for 300m turn right onto a narrow footpath, with the wood on your right and a square field on the left.

40. The path leads out past wooden barriers onto an unsurfaced lane. Turn right and go along it for 200m, passing Kingswood Lodge on the right. At the end of the paddocks on your left turn left onto an unmarked path into King’s Wood, briefly retracing a small part of your outward route. The path soon comes to a broad avenue.

41. For a simple route through this large wood go all the way along this avenue, almost 1 km. On the far side of the wood stay on the main path as it swings round to the left, with an open space and later a large sports ground beyond the trees on your right. The path leads to an exit in the north-western corner of the wood.
   - In the bluebell season you might be tempted to take one of the paths off to the left of the main avenue and zig-zag through the wood. There is a parallel avenue 200m away with several broad connecting tracks between them, plus many smaller paths meandering through the wood.

42. In the north-western corner take a short path out of the wood and turn left onto a tree-lined cul-de-sac (Lime Meadow Avenue), away from the entrance to the sports ground. At the bottom of a slope veer right and left to go up another residential street (Sanderstead Court Avenue) to the B269 (Limpsfield Road).
   - Buses go to Croydon from a stop across the road if you want to abandon the walk.

https://www.walkingclub.org.uk/walk/warlingham-circular/
J. Limpsfield Road to Upper Warlingham • Whyteleafe Station (2¾ km)

43. To continue the walk cross the road at the pedestrian lights and take the signposted footpath to the left of the entrance to a primary school. This narrow fenced path goes alongside its driveway and turns left to continue past its small playing field. At the corner of the chainlink fence turn **half-right** onto a grassy path through a lightly-wooded area.

44. In 250m go through a wooden kissing gate into the corner of a large meadow, with an information panel for the **Sanderstead to Whyteleafe Countryside Area**. Take the broad grassy path going diagonally across the meadow, heading **SW**. In the far corner go through a gap in the hedge and turn **right** to go along the edge of the next meadow, alongside a wood (Ansley Berry Shaw).

45. In the next corner go through a gap in the trees and turn **left** along the edge of a third meadow. Towards the far side bear slightly right to go through a gap in the trees into a large open space. Take the left-hand of two grassy paths ahead, heading **S** and crossing over your outward route.

46. Carry on in this direction for 500m, crossing over the stony path carrying the LOOP after 100m. On the far side take the right-hand of two paths towards the trees ahead. This goes into the trees and leads to the top of a long flight of steps.

47. Go down the steps into **Whyteleafe Recreation Ground**, which should be familiar from your outward route. The suggested refreshment stop is the **Pavilion Café** in the low building to the left of the tarmac path leading to the small car park: you can veer left towards it (or the car park for that matter) before reaching the bottom of the steps.

48. To complete the walk leave the Recreation Ground through the car park. Turn right onto the B270 (Hillbury Road) and go under the railway bridge.
   - To go directly to **Upper Warlingham** station, turn left at the mini-roundabout and go all the way up Station Approach. If the booking office is locked, there is a gap onto Platform 1 (for trains to London) by the car park ticket machines.

49. For other refreshment options, or the alternative station on the Caterham line, carry on down Hillbury Road and turn left onto the A22 at the large roundabout. The **Whyteleafe Tavern** is on the other side of the road here; the **Radius Arms** and the **Whyteleafe Café** are in the parade of shops ahead on the left-hand side (although the café will probably have closed).

50. **Finishing at Upper Warlingham Station**
   - Carry on along the A22 and turn **left** into Station Road to come to the station at the top. If the booking office is locked, there is a gap onto Platform 1 (for trains to London) by the car park ticket machines.

51. **Finishing at Whyteleafe Station**
   - Either take the alleyway from the pedestrian lights by the shops or go down the road from the roundabout. If the level crossing is down, you can reach Platform 1 (for trains to London) via the footbridge from Platform 2.

K. Chelsham Common to Woldingham Station (3¾ km)

52. From the corner of the pub's car park take a broad grassy path heading **SW** across the triangular common towards a point where two lanes meet, 125m away. Continue in the same direction along Chelsham Road, joining Cycle Route 21 (which you will be following to Woldingham Road). In 100m turn **left** onto a bridleway into a wood.

53. After passing Cherry Tree Cottage ignore a footpath off to the left to stay on the bridleway, near the edge of the wood. At the far end of the wood the bridleway continues alongside **Greenlawn Memorial Park** and later passes Chelsham Place Farm before reaching the B269 (Limpsfield Road).

   **Buses to Croydon start from the other side of the roundabout off to the right if you want to abandon the walk.**
54. Cross this main road carefully and continue on High Lane opposite, following it round to the left and gently downhill. 200m from the main road, turn right into Plantation Lane. This bridleway descends gently, with views of the golf course in Halliloo valley through the hedge on your left.

55. In 800m the path curves to the left and begins to descend more steeply. Ignore a stile on the left and a couple of footpaths on the right to continue down past the clubhouse. Just before reaching Halliloo Valley Road, turn right onto a horse ride running parallel to it.

56. In 300m veer left through a gap in the hedge and cross this road carefully into Park Ley Road opposite (not the bridleway up to its left). In 30m bear right downhill on a track, following the CR 21 sign. At the bottom turn left onto Woldingham Road to come to the entrance to Woldingham Dene in 150m, with the station a further 500m along the road.

57. Detour to the Dene Coffee Shop (+150m)

- For the suggested tea place turn left into the driveway and follow it round a curve to the left. The tearoom is in the conservatory of the house at the end of the drive. Afterwards you could return to Woldingham Road via a pergola and through the garden centre, but it is simpler to retrace your steps along the driveway.

58. To complete the walk continue along Woldingham Road, passing the main entrance to Knights Garden Centre and a side road (Long Hill) on the left. The entrance to Woldingham station is on the other side of the main road where it turns sharply left uphill at its junction with Church Road. Cross the footbridge to Platform 1 for trains to London.

Walk Notes

1. The station on the Oxted line was named ‘Upper’ Warlingham when it opened in 1884 to distinguish it from another Warlingham station, lower down the valley on the Caterham line. It retained the unnecessary prefix when the other station was renamed Whyteleafe South in 1956.

2. The Sanderstead to Whyteleafe Countryside Area is jointly owned by Croydon and Tandridge Councils and the Whitgift Foundation. The three owners are working with Natural England to restore the 200 acres of chalk downland under the Countryside Stewardship Scheme.

3. Chalk was mined at Riddlesdown Quarry from the late 18thC to 1967, and burnt in kilns to produce lime. The site was bought by the City of London Corporation in 1996 and is part of Riddlesdown’s Site of Special Scientific Interest.

4. Riddlesdown is owned and managed by the City of London Corporation. It is one of the seven “City Commons” in Surrey and south London which were purchased in the 1880s to preserve the area as open countryside for Londoners.


6. Hamsey Green Pond would have been a watering hole for cattle on route to market when this area was farmland. Like many such ponds it dried up when the land was used for housing, but has been restored by the local council.

7. King’s Wood (sometimes spelt Kings or Kings’) was purchased by Croydon Corporation in 1937 as public open space. The wood had originally been laid out for pheasant shooting, with broad rides dissecting the woodland in a regular grid pattern. It is carpeted with bluebells in spring.

8. In the late 1960s the Conservative Party held conferences at the Selsdon Park Hotel to decide its economic policy. The Labour Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, derided Edward Heath as ‘Selsdon Man’ but the Conservative leader had the last laugh, winning the 1970 general election.

9. The Vanguard Way runs for 105 km “from the suburbs to the sea”, from Croydon in south London to Newhaven in East Sussex.

10. Selsdon Wood Nature Reserve was established after a local campaign to prevent development raised funds to purchase the 200 acre site. The land was donated to the National Trust in 1936 and is managed on their behalf by Croydon Council.

11. The Clock Tower was the water tower for Warlingham Park Hospital (formerly Croydon Mental Hospital) before the site was redeveloped as the Greatpark estate. The psychiatric hospital was a pioneering centre for psychosurgery, the now discredited treatment of mental disorder by the destruction of brain tissue.
12. **St Mary the Virgin, Farleigh** is a simple little church with an open bell turret. It dates from the late 11thC, with the porch being added in the 16thC.

13. **Ledgers Wood** is a small woodland reserve managed by the Surrey Wildlife Trust, with a fine display of bluebells (plus some rare wood sorrel with violet flowers).

14. Cast-iron **Coal Tax posts** were erected in the 1860s to mark a taxation boundary. A levy on coal had been brought in to help pay for the rebuilding of London after the Great Fire of 1666, and with the growth of road and rail transport it was no longer practicable to collect it in the Port of London.

» **Last updated: June 23, 2020**