

STAFFHURST WOOD



Easy Terrain

**3 km
Circular
1 to 1.5 hours**

190816



Access Notes

1. The walk is relatively flat with just a couple of gentle slopes.
2. The paths can get very muddy and slippery at times so good boots are a must (or wellingtons in the wetter months).
3. When the paths are dry and firmer, it would be possible to take a rugged pushchair or disability buggy around the route, assuming this would manage the obstacles (described here and with photos in the gallery).
4. There are no stiles or kissing gates, but you will need to negotiate a few staggered barriers and a couple of sleeper bridges (the narrowest of which is about 53cm wide).
5. The staggered barriers are tight to manoeuvre around, but they are open and tall (about 1.1m tall) so it would be possible to push a pushchair straight through the barrier instead.

A 3km (2 mile) circular walk exploring Staffhurst Wood (near Limpsfield), a beautiful old woodland which is popular with families and dog walkers and which bursts into a glorious display of bluebells in the late spring.

This walk is part of the Explore Surrey collection, published through a collaboration between iFootpath and Surrey County Council.

There are no refreshments, toilets or other facilities on the route. Ordnance Survey Map: Explorer 147 Sevenoaks and Tonbridge. This walk follows public footpaths and bridleways which cross private and public land. Information is included for your interest, but please respect people's privacy, keep dogs under control and remember the Countryside Code.

Getting there

Staffhurst Wood is located about 3 miles south of Limpsfield in Surrey. The wood has two dedicated car parks, each of them is free and has a 2 metre height restriction barrier at the entrance. This walk starts and finishes at the St Silvan's car park on Staffhurst Wood Road. From the A25 head south on Wolf's Row, then Pollard Wood Road and then Red Lane (the post code **RH8 0RS** will get you to this point). Continue south, take the next left (signed Crockham Hill) and then immediately left again (into Staffhurst Wood Road) and you will find St Silvan's car park on your left. If this car park is full (or closed) you will need to start the walk in the Grants Lane car park. Continue to the end of Staffhurst Wood Road, turn right onto Grants Lane (the post code **TN8 6QR** will get you to this point) and you will find the car park further along on the right.

For help with planning your journey by public transport please visit <http://journneys.travelsmartsurrey.info>.

Walk Sections



1 Start to Vehicle Track

(NOTE: If you are starting this walk from the Grants Lane car park, skip to the section called Glade to Bridge and start the directions where marked)

Standing in the St Silvan's car park with your back to the

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vehicle entrance, take the path at about 1 o'clock (signed as the Self-Guided Trail and marked with a green arrow). You will be following the green arrow waymark around the entire route. At the first couple of junctions, keep left, staying with the path running closest to the fenced field to your left.

Staffhurst Wood is thought to have been wooded continually for at least 1000 years, up to the 1930s when it was largely cleared to gather the timber. Today, it is being managed to bring it back to some of its former character. The grass field to your left is reminiscent of one of the original assarts (a type of forest clearing) that were created in the 1200s. Also to the left you will see High Ridge Farm, including a beautiful old thatched barn store sitting on top of saddle stones.

At the top of the woodland, you will see a stile ahead. Do NOT cross this, instead turn right immediately beforehand and follow the path steadily downhill with a fenced hillside pasture on your left. Stay with the main path until you come to a crossroads with a vehicle track (with a Woodland Trust sign ahead).

1 ➡ 2 Vehicle Track to The Glade



Turn right along the vehicle track, heading steadily uphill. This road was built during World War II when the woodland was used to store ammunition. Also in this area, a Doodlebug flying bomb fell after being intercepted by a Spitfire. The bomb exploded on impact and destroyed a local house, but thankfully the troops guarding the area were away from the house, visiting St Silvan's Church for tea. Some way along, look out for a raised circular concrete structure on your left, evidence of the old ammunition stores.

Simply keep on the main surfaced track, meandering steadily uphill. Eventually you will come to a gate at the edge of Staffhurst Wood Road. Pass through the gap to the left of the gate (there is a larger gap further left if needed) to reach the road. Do NOT take the bridleway directly ahead, instead turn left along the road for about five paces and then turn right to join the path marked as the self-guided trail.

Pass through (or under!) the staggered barrier, passing another grass field to your right which is known as Plum Park. Continue through a second staggered barrier and on to reach a crossroads with another surfaced path (another legacy of World War II, made of brick and rubble recycled from the London Blitz and used to serve the ammunition dump).

Cross the surfaced path and go directly ahead, the continuation of the self-guided trail. Stay with the path, winding through the trees and leading you under the boughs of a large yew tree. Just beyond this, you will come out to a small grass clearing called The Glade.

2 ➡ 3 The Glade to Bridge



Walk directly ahead, passing just to the right of a large oak tree. The large oak trees within the woodland were retained when the rest of the woodland was felled for timber to support the war effort. The path now bears right, leading you over a sleeper bridge (this is the narrowest of the obstacles on the trail) and past a large pond on the left. Stay with the obvious path, passing beneath another yew tree, and you will come to a T-junction with a surfaced path (with a car park – Grants Lane car park – visible to the left). Turn left for a couple of paces and then turn right through the staggered barrier to continue on the woodland trail.

(NOTE: If you are starting the walk from Grants Lane car park, stand with your back to the vehicle entrance and walk directly ahead, passing alongside the vehicle barrier. Ignore the first path on the left, instead take the second path on the left (signed as the self-guided trail and passing through a staggered barrier. Now follow the directions from this point).

Just beyond the next barrier, you will come to a crossroads with a stone track. Walk straight ahead to reach a metal gate at the edge of a fenced pasture. This is another good example of an assart (a type of forest clearing) which may have been created as early as the 1200s.

Turn right here, following the path with the fenced field running on your left. Beyond the field, you will emerge out to a T-junction with a pond ahead. Turn left to cross the bridge between the pond on your right and the water outlet on your left.

3 ➡ 4 Bridge to End

Just beyond the pond you will come to a fork. Keep left and this path will lead you to a section of boardwalk (with a barrier that you will need to pass under). The boardwalk has been built to enable easier access across this particularly damp area of the woodland. Cross the boardwalk and then continue on the path ahead which climbs and bears right.



The path levels off and continues meandering through this section of the woodland to reach a T-junction. Turn left for about 40 metres and then turn right. Look out in this area for examples of the rare wild service tree (smooth grey-ish trunk with white flowers in spring and tiny apple-shaped fruit in the autumn), regarded as an indicator of land that has never been ploughed and so associated with ancient woodland. The fruit (sometimes called chequers) is edible when over-ripe and is said to taste like dates. Before the introduction of hops, the fruit was used to flavour beer.

Follow this path, heading for a vehicle barrier ahead and passing a raised wooden bench on your right (built in memory of a wildlife ranger). Immediately after the bench (and before you reach the vehicle barrier), turn right to join the narrow path climbing steadily through the trees. Simply stay with this path (with the road running to your left), going ahead at the first crossroads and, further along, crossing a stream via a sleeper bridge.

Eventually you will come to a staggered crossroads with a surfaced bridleway. Turn left (passing through the staggered barrier) and follow the path swinging steadily left through a section of mature woodland. Stay with this path, which later swings sharp right, leading you back to Staffhurst Wood Road. Cross over the road to reach St Silvan's car park where the walk began. (NOTE: If you are parked in Grants Lane car park, continue by following the directions from the start of the walk).

This walk is part of the Explore Surrey collection, published through a collaboration between iFootpath and Surrey County Council.

Surrey is the ideal place to explore the outdoors on foot. Whether you're an adventurous walker or someone who prefers a short stroll, there's a walk to suit you.

If you would like to know more about Explore Surrey and find more walks please visit

www.surreycc.gov.uk/explore

Disclaimer

This walking route was walked and checked at the time of writing. We have taken care to make sure all our walks are safe for walkers of a reasonable level of experience and fitness. However, like all outdoor activities, walking carries a degree of risk and we accept no responsibility for any loss or damage to personal effects, personal accident, injury or public liability whilst following this walk. We cannot be held responsible for any inaccuracies that result from changes to the routes that occur over time. Please let us know of any changes to the routes so that we can correct the information.

Walking Safety

For your safety and comfort we recommend that you take the following with you on your walk: bottled water, snacks, a waterproof jacket, waterproof/sturdy boots, a woolly hat and fleece (in winter and cold weather), a fully-charged mobile phone, a whistle, a compass and an Ordnance Survey map of the area. Check the weather forecast before you leave, carry appropriate clothing and do not set out in fog or mist as these conditions can seriously affect your ability to navigate the route. Take particular care on cliff/mountain paths where steep drops can present a particular hazard. Some routes include sections along roads – take care to avoid any traffic at these points. Around farmland take care with children and dogs, particularly around machinery and livestock. If you are walking on the coast make sure you check the tide times before you set out.

