

Weekend Walk: Dorking, Box Hill & Reigate (10 miles)

The morning walk starts with a stiff climb up onto Mickleham Downs and there is a corresponding climb down later but your efforts will be rewarded by some splendid views and you can always soothe your aches in the Running Horse at lunchtime. The afternoon is less strenuous but no less attractive. The walk is provided by Guildford Rambling Club (guildfordramblingclub.org.uk).

Go up the track along the right-hand side of the Grade I listed Norman church of St Michael and All Angels (right). On reaching the entrance gate to Eastfield Cottage, break off right, over a stile. After a long gentle climb, reach a yellow arrow post where you fork right. Now climb steeply up. Go straight across at a cross paths with a Box Hill Estate information plaque and continue climbing.

At the top, a yellow arrow seems to indicate right. Instead, follow the path as it swings left. Emerge from trees onto open heath at a junction and follow a purple arrow along Long Walk, a wide, grassy area. There are information plaques here, with information about the archaeology of the area. Walk over a mile, out of the far end of the open area and then through trees and along the Box Hill Hike track to reach Mill Way.

Hook back almost 180 degrees, left, on another track and away from the road. Follow this for about 1.25 miles, at first with a golf course on your right then later with fields and, along the way, crossing two drives (the first at an entrance to Cherkley Court, a late Victorian neo-classical mansion and estate, once the home of press baron Lord Beaverbrook.).

Eventually drop down a gentle slope and reach a cross paths with a 4 way signpost. Turn left. Ignore a quick right and continue up a slope between a hedge and a garden fence. Keep following this path with the houses of Givons Grove on your right. Eventually, drop down a slope and then make a short steep climb to cross the drive of a house and go up a few steps into a wood. Continue forward to reach a T junction with a bridleway.

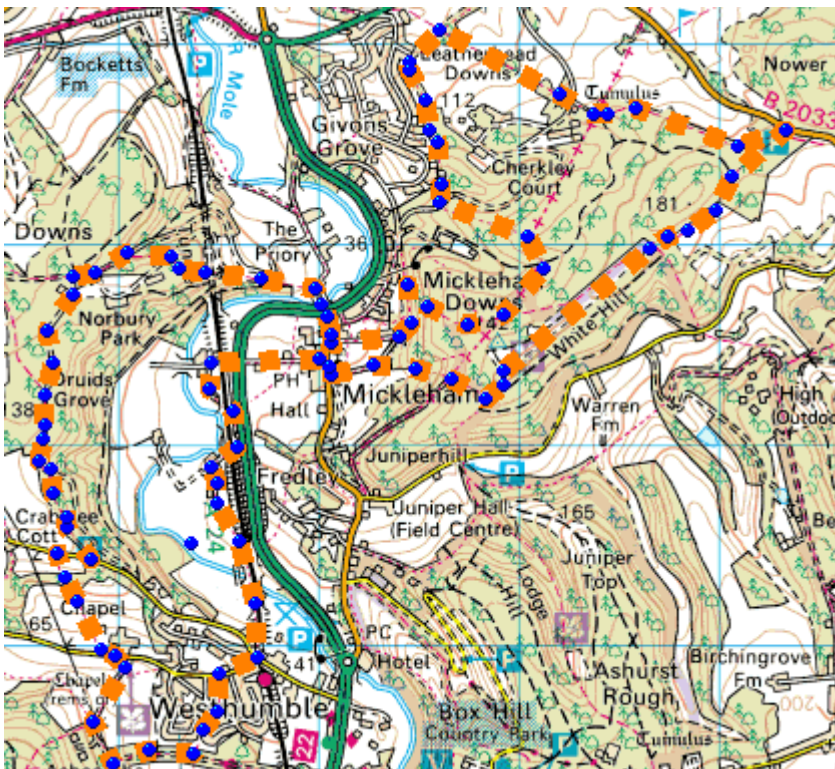
Here, you turn right, signed to Mickleham. Follow the track as it swings right at a signpost signed 'Downs Road and Mickleham' i.e. ignore the fork left at this point. At a cross paths with a red arrow pointing straight ahead, go right. Ignore rights and lefts and then climb down a narrow path on a very steep slope to reach a T junction with a wide track at the bottom. Turn left. Walk along to the end, emerging at the end of a road which you then follow forward to reach the old London Road opposite the entrance to Box Hill School in Mickleham. The Running Horses is to your left as is the church. You could picnic in the churchyard and the village shop is usually open and selling snacks. You will have walked about 5 miles.

After lunch, proceed along the track which runs down the right-hand side of the pub until you reach and (carefully) cross the A24. A few yards in, cross a level crossing and then follow a lane on the other side as it swings left and under the railway line then back under again. Reach and keep following a signed path running roughly parallel to the railway line and over the River Mole until this path reaches West Humble and emerges onto a road a little to the right of the railway station. Cross and follow the road right. Take a signed path heading left through a hedge about 200 yards beyond the Station. This takes you between garden fences to a road which you cross to continue along another such corridor. Enter and cross a field to reach a T junction with a wide track. Turn right and follow this for about 0.25 miles, passing an unsigned narrow path right and then taking the next turn right, a wide track. Turn right and walk down to the main road.

At the main road turn left and quickly reach a footpath heading right and up steep slope in a field then through some trees and another field to reach a T junction with a lane. Turn right and walk a little way to find a small car park on your left. Walk through this and follow the narrow path at the back to drop out onto a wide metalled track which you follow left, to reach the wall around the Norbury Park manor house (the estate is mentioned in the Domesday Book, the house was built in 1774). At the corner, next to a small railed off information plaque area and timber yard, turn right. Keep straight on until reaching the corner where the fence around

the house swings off to the right.

Take the path following it. Keep going, up a little at first then dropping down until you are able to see the Mole Valley opening out ahead of you. You arrive at a road and, after walking down a little way along its right-hand edge, take a footpath to the right but still heading down to cut off a corner and meet the road again. Turn right to arrive at the A24. Cross (carefully) into the Old London Road opposite and walk along to the Running Horses and the start. You will have walked about another 5 miles.



DISTANCE: 10 miles

OS MAPS: Explorer 146 – Dorking, Box Hill & Reigate

START GRID REFERENCE: 5 171 1 533

STARTING POINT: The church in Mickleham. Park in the street.