

Weekend Walk: Reigate Heath to Ironsbottom (8.25 miles)

This walk takes you through woods and fields to Ironsbottom and the Three Horseshoes. The walk was submitted by Guildford Rambling Club (see guildfordramblingclub.org.uk).

1. From the car park on the right-hand side of the road (walking away from the A25), walk further along Flanchford Road, taking a path just off the road and parallel to it. When you reach a point where you can see a windmill up on the hill to your right, take the path up to it and emerge in a golf club car park. Turn left and walk a few yards to find a footpath branching off right and down a slope to cross a fairway. Head towards a lone house and take the track running away from the golf course and along its left-hand side. At a junction by a stream (the Mole) turn left. Reach Dungates Farmhouse and turn left down a path at its far side.

2. Follow this path down through fields to reach a mill pond and Wonham Manor (a converted mill) and a road. Go left for a few yards to take a footpath out right. Follow this through a field, passing pill boxes on the right and on the left. In the next field stay on the left-hand side, ignoring a gap on the left by a power line pole. Beyond it, reach a gate/stile on the left and go through onto a track. Turn right. Ignore a footpath left which goes up a few steps. Instead, stay on the wide track to reach and cross the Rice Bridge footbridge. At a 3-way signpost on the other side, take the left-most option, staying close to the trees. Follow this as it strikes out across a field.

3. On the other side go through a gap and over a stile and another footbridge. Head out to pass the right-hand side of a lone oak and continue forward to reach a kissing gate in a hedge. Go half-left over the next field (see a small barn over

to your left) and take a stile, right, into the next field. Walk along the right-hand edge of this and the next field. Emerge on a wide track leading to a road, emerging next to Hillview Farmhouse. Go straight across the road and cross a field. On the far side go over a stile and a plank footbridge then turn right to walk along the edge of the next field. Go through a gap and then head out half-left to the far corner of a large field to reach a kissing gate onto a road. Turn left and walk a few yards to the church, the green and the Plough pub in Leigh and to a phone box displaying a history of the village.

4. Take a footpath left, into the churchyard and past the church. Go out of the back along a corridor which emerges in a field. Cross this field slightly right to reach and cross a footbridge in trees. Continue forward to emerge in a large field. Turn right and walk along the edge until reaching a stile on the right which takes you into another field. Turn left and walk to and through a gate then continue forward along a field edge (ignoring a stile that can be seen off to the right). Reach a gate through into a fence/hedge corridor. This widens into a grassy corridor between trees. At a T junction with a wide track turn right. Quickly reach an amazing old oak (see later) and, immediately beyond it, take a track forking left. Follow this out into a field and then turn right to walk towards the right-hand side of a large barn. Pass the barn and turn right to follow the access track which swings left to reach a tarmac drive. Turn left. Walk down to pass a 3-way signpost and, immediately beyond it, a bridge (Dabdon Bridge). About 25 yards beyond the bridge, take a path out right. This crosses a field and emerges on a road by the Three Horseshoes pub in Ironsbottom. You could picnic in the field.

5. After lunch, walk back across the field and over the bridge to reach the 3-way signpost that you passed earlier. Here, turn left to cross a small field. Go through a gap and half-

right across the next field. Go over a double stile into the corner of another field and walk along its left-hand edge. Exit over a stile and follow the path to emerge on a drive at a 3-way signpost. Follow a bridleway sign along the drive to the right. The drive becomes a wide track then narrows. Keep going forward. Reach a T-junction with a concrete track and turn left. The concrete gives way to dirt and you quickly reach and pass once more the amazing old oak. Continue forward. The track becomes concrete again. Pass a stile/gate and then pass a high wall and some of Burys Court School's accommodation buildings.

6. Just past the latter is a 5-bar metal gate on the right and, immediately beyond it, a stile right, into a field. In this field, head left, paralleling the river which is on the right-hand side. Go through a gap and then swing right a little to continue forward along the bottom of a grassy bank. Near the end of the bank, climb up left to reach a stile onto a road, opposite a house. In the road, turn right and walk to cross Flanchford Bridge. At the far side of the bridge turn right onto a track. Quickly reach a signpost forking left into a field. Cross this field a quarter right and go through a gap onto a wide track. Quickly go straight over two cross tracks and continue along the left-hand side of a field. Ignore a gap on the left and stay at the left-hand side of this field to reach and pass a house and emerge on a road. Turn left.

7. Walk about 300 yards along here until you can turn right, into Clayhall Lane. Again walk about 300 yards to take a footpath, through a kissing gate, left. Head out a quarter right across a field, through a gap and on across the next field. Exit through a kissing gate onto a cross track at a 4 way signpost. Here, turn left and walk down slope to reach a T-junction with a concrete track. Turn left. The track becomes broken tarmac and dirt. Reach a T-junction and turn right to walk along a wide track (ignoring an immediate yellow arrow left). Follow the track up and over a rise and down to pass

the Skimmington pub. Pass a 3 way signpost and continue on, ignoring a road right, to a junction at the corner of a section of a golf course. Take the track right, passing the course and quickly reaching a bridleway forking left and into trees. Follow this to the start.



DISTANCE: 8.25 miles

OS MAPS: Explorer 146 Dorking, Box Hill & Reigate

STARTING POINT: Pass Buckland on the A25 on the way to Reigate and, just before the Black Horse pub which is on the A25 at RH2 9JZ, turn right down Flanchford Road, alongside Reigate Heath. There are car parking areas on both sides of Flanchford Road a couple of hundred yards past the houses.

REFRESHMENTS:

The Plough, Leigh

The Three Horseshoes, Ironsbottom

Image: Houses on Ironsbottom © Copyright Robin Webster