



Queen Elizabeth Park and Buriton

Distance: 9 km=5½ miles easy-to-moderate walking

Region: Hampshire

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Refreshments: Buriton, Queen Elizabeth Park café

Map: Explorer 120 (Chichester) *but the map in this guide should be sufficient*

Problems, changes? We depend on your feedback: feedback@fancyfreewalks.org

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Woodland, hills, views, nature park, village

In Brief

Queen Elizabeth Country Park is a hugely popular forest in Hampshire beside the A3 road, covering 1600 acres (600 ha), swarming in summer with excited families. So vast are the woods that within minutes you will be on a secluded path, far from the hustle and bustle, heading for the perfect little village of Buriton where there are two pubs and a chance to laze at the pond side watching ducks a-dabbling.



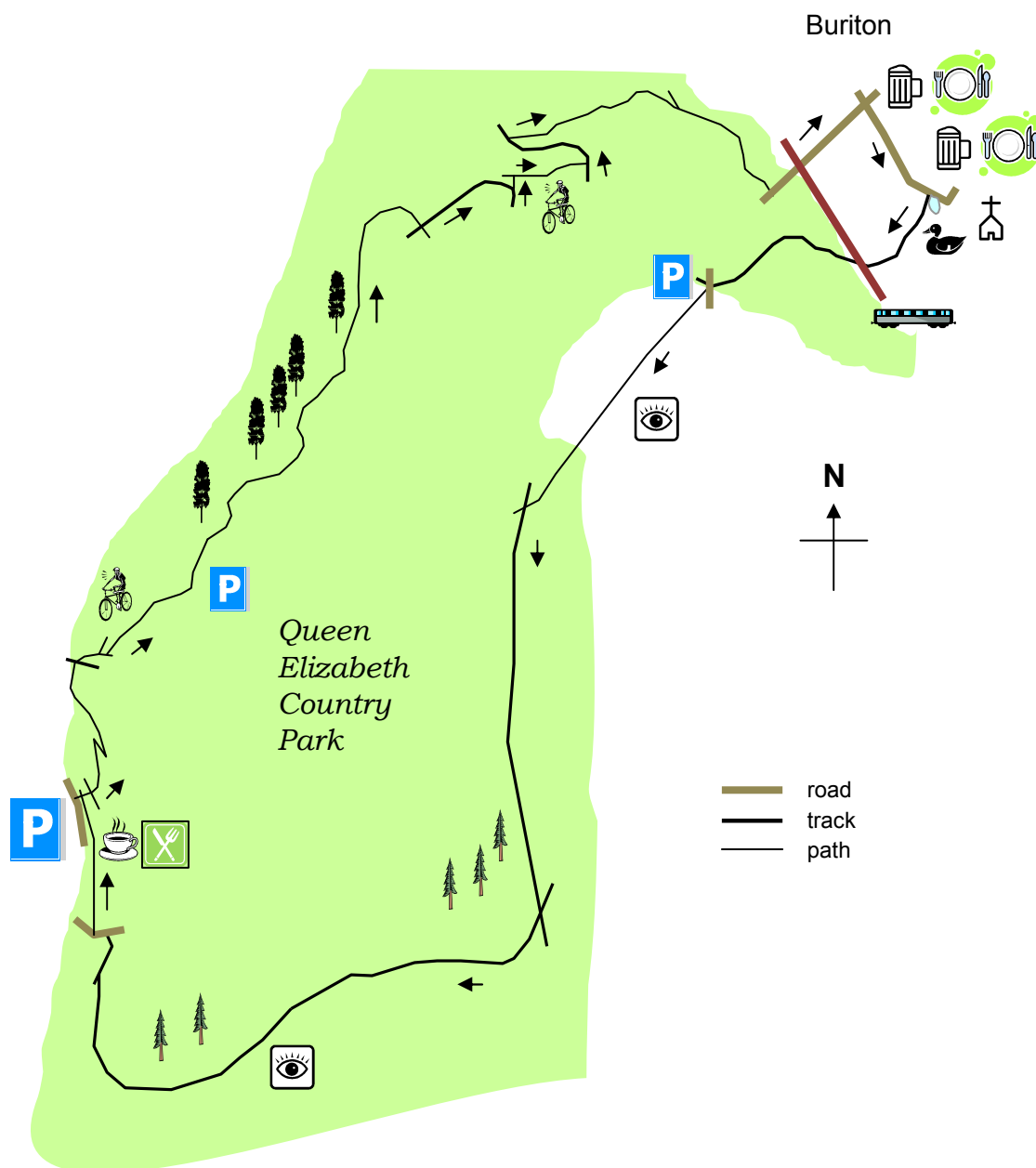
There are no nettles and **no stiles**. Any kind of strong footwear is fine. This walk is fine for your dog too. There is one short but *very steep* slope at the descent to the track before Buriton (see end of section [3](#)).

The walk begins at the car park of the **Queen Elizabeth Country Park**, Hampshire, **postcode PO8 0QE**. If the main car park is full, you can park on the huge grassy space beyond the Visitor Centre or continue further to one of the additional car parks. You can also park in Buriton (also signed off the A3) either near the village pond or in the **Halls Hill car park**, nearest **postcode GU31 5SH**, placing your refreshment break in the café of the QE Park.

The Walk



Before you set off, it is worth noting that the Visitor Centre has a loo and, open after 10 am, a café with displays of information on the other walks and facilities available here.



- 1 From the main car park, facing the Visitor Centre, turn **left** towards the woods where there is a huge fingerpost pointing to the various trail options. Go straight ahead here, steeply uphill, with a wooden rail on your right. You will be following white chevrons and red “footprints” for a while. Your path soon rises beside a rail again and hairpins right and left. You reach a wide crossing path: continue straight over upwards with a wooden rail on your right. In 30m, ignore a cycle trail on your left and continue upwards towards another red “footprint”. Just before this sign, veer **left** on a clear path. You will be following this secluded woodland riders’ path for about 1½ km. It is marked most of the way by red-topped posts showing a horseshoe symbol.

2 Shortly, you pass on your right an open area with the Juniper car park and an adventure trail. Continue following the winding path straight ahead, a fraction uphill. 40m after the adventure trail, ignore a right fork that leads into another grassy space and stay on the level horse path, possibly marked by hoof prints. You enter an area of tall young beeches. Your path descends a little with more tall beeches and a steep drop on your left. The path rises and zigzags left-right down through more woods. It now rises to meet a wide diagonal crossing path: cross straight over on an uphill path still following the red-topped horseshoe posts. The path curves left and levels out. There is much evidence of forestry work here and, where the foliage permits, Butser Hill is visible on your left. Your path curves right along the contour and finally meets a wide crossing path. *On your right you will see an open space known as Brow Barrows, site of ancient burials.*

3 Turn **left** on this wide crossing path. After 150m or so, the path curves right along the contour. After another 60m, it bends right again, this time at a more definite bend. Here, **leave** the wide path by turning **left** on a very narrow path ([hopping over a small tree trunk](#)). In 10m keep left. In another 10m you come to a T-junction. Turn **right** here on a very narrow path.

!! *Note: there is a short steep section at the end. [The only alternative is to stay on the wide path for 500m to the next junction, turn very sharp left and go another 500m to meet the junction at the bottom of the slope.](#) This winding path is used by dare-devil mountain bikers and you need to watch out; the root-riddled surface must turn bikes into real boneshakers.* The path very gradually descends and, after 200m, comes down a short but *very steep* slope onto a wide track. *If anyone of the party is old or restricted, it might be advisable for someone to stand below and give support.* Turn **left** on the track.

4 The track curves left under trees. After about 200m, at a post with a yellow arrow, turn very sharp **right** on a wide chalky descending path. [The chalk may make this section slippery in winter.](#) In over 400m another path joins from your left. Finally the path runs between high banks and comes down through a wooden barrier to a tarmac lane opposite a house. Turn **left** on the lane, going under a railway bridge. The lane leads into the village of Buriton. At the cross roads, opposite you is the *Maple Inn*. *The Maple Inn is spacious inside and serves good food, usually with extras written up on a chalk-board; it welcomes ramblers and pets; it is also a B&B.* Turn **right** along the road, soon passing another pub, the *Five Bells*. *The Five Bells (H&W) is more of a typical quaint country pub, also with good food, with a pretty garden at the back where al fresco eating is a delight.* Continue further along the road to the pond and the church. *For more information on the village of Buriton, see the other walk in this series "Buriton and the South Downs".*

5 After a welcome rest break in this pretty village, take the lane that runs along the right-hand side of the pond, marked with an old sign for the *Hangers Way*. The lane runs between a row of thatches and a cemetery, becomes a dirt track, goes under the railway and runs uphill. *On the left and right are paths leading to the old lime works and there is a Quarry Walk that takes you around the area which also played an important role in WW2 for probing enemy mines. On the left is some sculpture with a reference to the Shipwrights Way that runs from Alice Holt Forest to Portsmouth (see the walk "Alice Holt Forest" in this series).* You come up to a tarmac lane by a junction: cross straight over into the Halls Hill car park (an alternative start).



- 6 Turn **left** in the car park through a wooden swing-gate and across a small meadow. Another wooden swing-gate leads you on a path across a larger meadow, finally free of the bikes. At the other side, a metal kissing-gate leads up the right-hand side of a narrow meadow with terrific views across the valley. You go through another kissing-gate into woods. In 150m you come up to a wide crossing path. [There are several ways to return to the main car park: the route chosen here is easy and gives you a broad introduction to the Park.](#) Turn **left** on the crossing path, ignoring the signed footpath ahead, thus leaving the Hangers Way.
- 7 Stay on the main path, avoiding several tempting paths leading off. In 1 km you come down to an oblique crossing path. Veer **right** on the crossing path uphill, thus leaving the signposted footpath. You pass a bench, one of several, and a series of timber stacks. Keep straight on all the time past several junctions. *On the left through the trees you can see Windmill Hill.* Your track takes you through magnificent mixed and pine woods. On your left soon is the site of a Roman villa, graced by another piece of sculpture. You pass a green path on your left as your track bends right downhill. *Butser Hill comes into view again.* Another track joins from the left. Ignore a fingerpost on your left shortly after and continue ahead through a metal barrier. Veer **left** on a tarmac drive, taking a parallel path on your right which leads back to the Visitor Centre and the car park where the walk began.

Getting there

By car: the Queen Elizabeth Country Park is clearly signed off the **A3 road**, about 3 miles south of Petersfield or 5 miles north of Waterlooville.

By bus/train: bus 94 comes from Petersfield to Buriton every 2 hours, bus 37 comes from Petersfield and Alton on Sundays; it also stops at the QE Country Park. Check the timetables.

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