



East Clandon and West Hanger

Distance: 10 km=6½ miles

easy walking

Region: Surrey

Date written: 17-jan-2016

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Date revised: 30-dec-2018

Refreshments: East Clandon

Last update: 23-jun-2020

Map: Explorer 145 (Guildford) *but the maps in this guide should be sufficient*

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

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Woodland, views, village, pub, bluebells

In Brief



This is a gentle walk between one of Surrey's most charming villages and the wooded hills of the North Downs. The walk is easily accessed from the London or Guildford area and the paths are all well-surfaced and easy. If you do this walk in late April / early May, you will be rewarded with the sight of millions of bluebells turning the woodland floor a deep, luminous blue.



The centrepiece of this walk (or the endpoint if you start there) is the traditional village pub, the *Queen's Head* in East Clandon. For enquiries, ring 01483-222332.



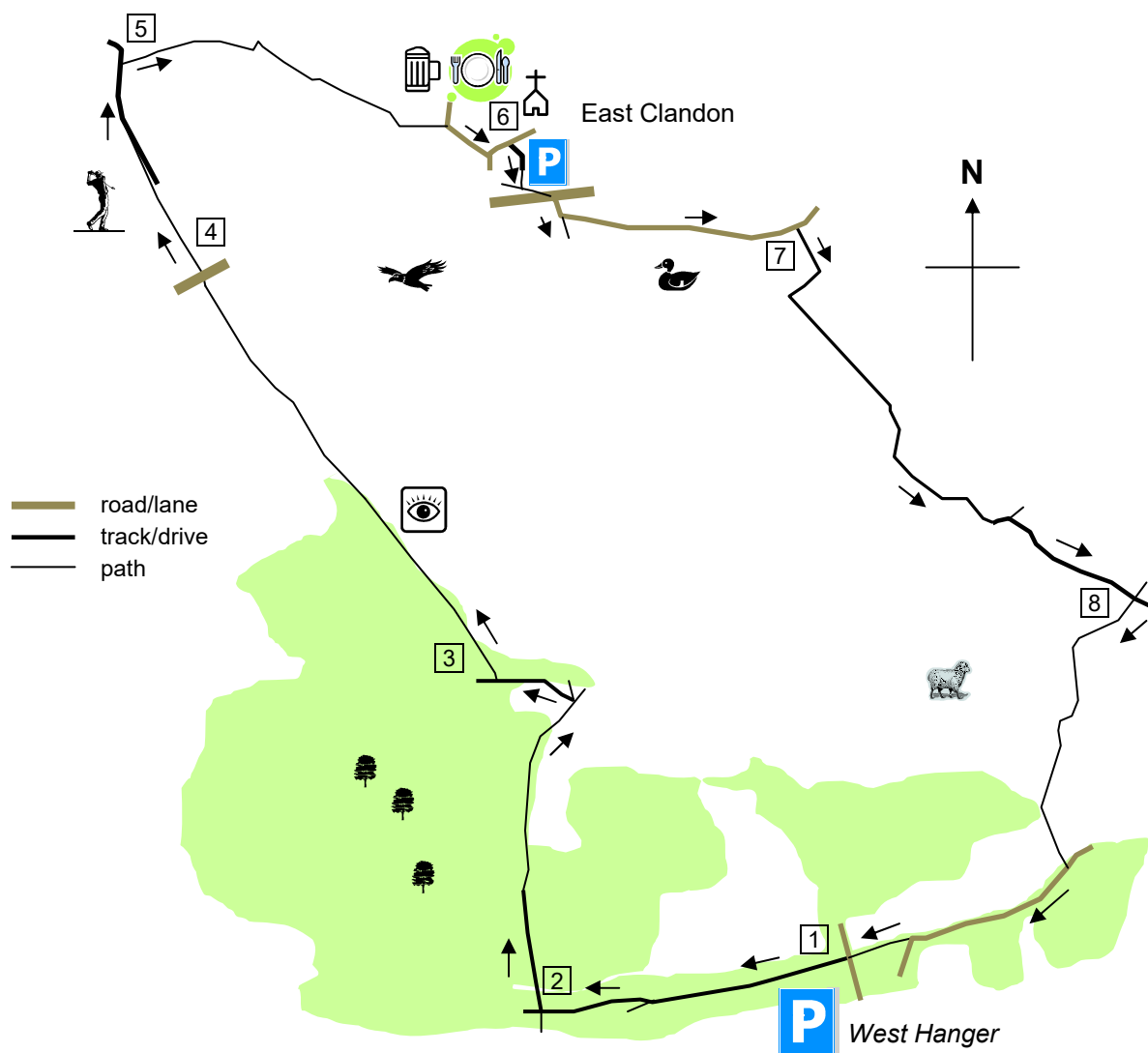
There is no undergrowth on this walk to worry a wearer of shorts. In the winter and after wet conditions, there are some muddy patches, especially along the path up to Combe Lane and along the North Downs Way, making boots a necessity. This walk is fine for your dog.

The walk begins at the **West Hanger** NT car park, Staple Lane, near Guildford, Surrey, postcode **GU5 9TE**. You can instead park in **East Clandon** village, placing any possible refreshments at the end. In this case, park in the cul-de-sac of the **Old Epsom Road**, postcode **GU4 7RN** and start the walk by going towards the "cul-de-sac" where the majority of houses are. For more details, see at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).



On weekends and Bank Holidays you may find a refreshment van in the West Hanger car park, selling drinks, hot and cold snacks and home-made cakes.

The Walk



- 1** Beginning in the West Hanger car park, go past the main notice board, on a wide path into Shere Woods, marked as the North Downs Way (NDW). Follow this wide, fairly straight path with a field visible on your right, under beeches and tall conifers. After ½ km, at a fingerpost, ignore a bridleway that forks off to your left. In another 350m, you reach a 4-way junction with a yellow *Fox Way* badge. Turn **right** at the junction, thus leaving the NDW.
- 2** Follow this path, soon passing a black storage tank, with the woods of Clandon Downs on your left. Continue straight ahead past the woody rubble of some old timber stacks. Your path joins a track coming from your right and passes a cottage and some farm buildings. Keep ahead now, on a wide grassy path. The path descends past a large metal gate to Old Scotland Farm. Go straight over, past the house, the *Tillingbourne Brewery* and cow sheds and up a concrete track. In 20m, next to an electricity pole with transformer, turn sharp **left** on a bridleway [*care! in summer undergrowth the sign is easy to miss*], avoiding a yellow-arrowed footpath to its right. After 250m, you reach a 3-way fingerpost. Turn **right** here on a narrow footpath. (*Don't miss this turn! Look for a "Fox Way" yellow badge.*)
- 3** Your path runs beside a field on your right and a bank of yews. You come out into a clearing and suddenly there are great views ahead to the North Surrey sands. On your left is a wide grassy strip known as *The Gallops*, its purpose being obvious. Keep right, staying close to the field, on a very

narrow path in the yew forest. Your path resumes through lighter woodland. Where the path finally emerges, continue straight ahead along the right-hand side of a large field, with a hedgerow on your right. When you reach the far corner, go over a stile and carefully cross the westbound carriageway of the main A246 road. Go through a gap in the central hedge and cross the other carriageway.

- 4 Take a narrow signposted footpath straight ahead, just to the left of the entrance drive to the Clandon Regis golf club. (If you are wearing shorts in summer, it may be better to use their drive because of tall nettles, although nicely cleared in 2020.) Avoid a signed footpath on your left and keep straight on, soon walking along the grass verge and then on the tarmac driveway itself, passing a 20 mph sign. Stop as you draw level with the big clubhouse on your left where you can see the main drive bending left about 30m ahead. Now, immediately next to another red-circled sign for **20** mph, turn **right**, going over a bridge, and take a cinder path ahead, running beside a hedgerow on your right, with a large green on your left.



- 5 Watch out for flying balls! Not all the players are pro level. You pass a fingerpost as the path rises over a bank. Keep ahead along the top of the bank, parallel to a sandy golfer's path visible down on your left. Your path zigzags left-right, over the golfers' path, at two fingerposts. Keep the same direction along the left-hand side of the grass. 150m after the zigzag, your path veers left by a disused kissing-gate onto a woodland path. Don't miss this turn! Follow this old trackway, gradually nearing the houses of East Clandon. At the end, turn **right** on a tarmac lane. Soon, on your left, is the Queen's Head pub. Welcome to East Clandon, the nicer little brother!



The Anglo-Saxon Clandons are "clean" by name but the "Clan" part really means "open", i.e. unwooded. East Clandon is dominated by Hatchlands Park, the great country house (now National Trust), on the site of the old Manor. The villagers were treated handsomely by the various owners who designed and built new houses (to add to the many period cottages already there) and entertained the local folk with Christmas parties (an ongoing tradition). The most notable son of the village was the minor Jacobean dramatist Thomas Goffe, author of "The Raging Turk" and "The Careless Shepherdess". At the end of the 1600s, John Aubrey penned him a section in "Brief Lives", and his hilarious gossipy account can be read on-line and is not to be missed! (Just search "Aubrey, Goffe" under "Google Books".)

East Clandon church is dedicated to St Thomas of Canterbury and dates from 1110, a grade-I listed treasure. The stained glass inside includes a new window depicting Thomas à Becket just before his assassination. It is worth a visit and, if it is locked, one of the villagers will let you in (see the roster). Note the windvane on the barn opposite.


The Queen's Head is one of the best traditional village pubs in the Guildford area with consistently good food and ales that include local Ranmore and Hog's Back. A delightful stopping place, winter and summer. To book, ring 01483-222332.

- 6 After your break, turn **left** out of the pub towards the church. Just before the church, turn **right** on St Thomas Drive, a residential cul-de-sac. At the end, a fraction on the right, take a narrow path between a hedge and a fence. At the end, turn **left** on the Old Epsom Road (alternative start). Walk a short distance beside the main road and, at the end of a metal barrier, cross the road carefully and take Blakes Lane opposite. Shortly, at the entrance to High Clandon Farm, keep **left** on the lane. You pass several



houses, followed by Blakes Lane Farm on your right. About 150m further, turn **right** at a signpost (slightly obscured) on a byway, gently uphill.

- 7 Keep to this very solid track, turning **right** with the track in 150m and **left** with the track after 100m to resume your direction uphill. As you pass under trees, the surface becomes gnarled with the roots of the tall beeches.

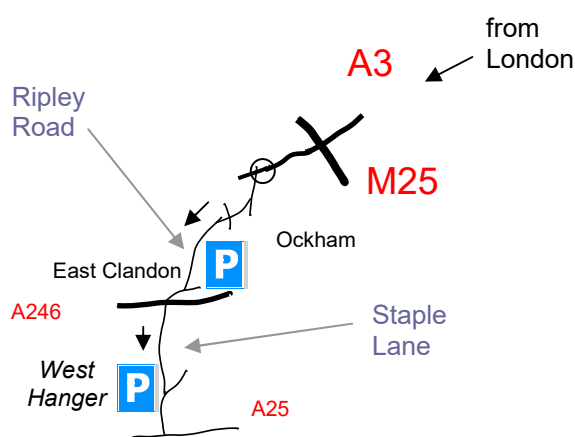
 Your track curves left with rolling fields down on your right. *To your left, the views of London open out with the Shard, the Gherkin and Canary Wharf all visible, and even the Wembley Arch on a clear day.* Under trees again, you approach a large house, *Fullers Farm*. Turn **left** on the tarmac drive beside the house and keep **right** on it, avoiding a bridgeway on your left. The drive ascends the hilltop and drops down, eventually reaching the hamlet of Hookwood Manor with its Nordic-style development.

- 8 Turn **right** by the corner of the house at a fingerpost onto a bridgeway. This enclosed path passes a tennis court and zigzags between fields mainly used for grazing sheep. *In muddy or wintry conditions, you may need to keep to one side of the path or the other, possibly straddling or hopping over some squelchy sections.* After a 1-km long very bendy course, eventually you come out to a road, Combe Lane. Turn **right** on this quiet road. In ½ km, where the road bends left, leave the road to keep straight ahead on a signposted footpath. At the end of this short path, cross another road into West Hanger car park, where the walk began.

Getting there

By car: **East Clandon** is off the A246 Leatherhead-Guildford Road. You can also reach it by a gentle route via Hungry Hill Lane / Ripley Road from Ockham and the A3. The Old Epsom Road cul-de-sac is the **first** road to the **right** after turning into East Clandon (if coming from the A246) or the **last** road on the **left** before the main A246 (if coming through the village). You can also park in the same road, on the other side of the junction, which is even quieter.

For the **West Hanger** car park, you can take Green Dene / Combe Lane from West Horsley **or** cross the A246 East Clandon opposite and go up Staple Lane. The car park is on the right, in the woods, just before a road junction.



By bus: bus 479 from Guildford to East Clandon; bus 765 from Dorking. Check the timetables.

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