

Ramblers route Introduction

The Ramblers Route is 26 mile/ 41.8km circular walking trail that passes through attractive countryside on the outskirts of Bracknell Forest.



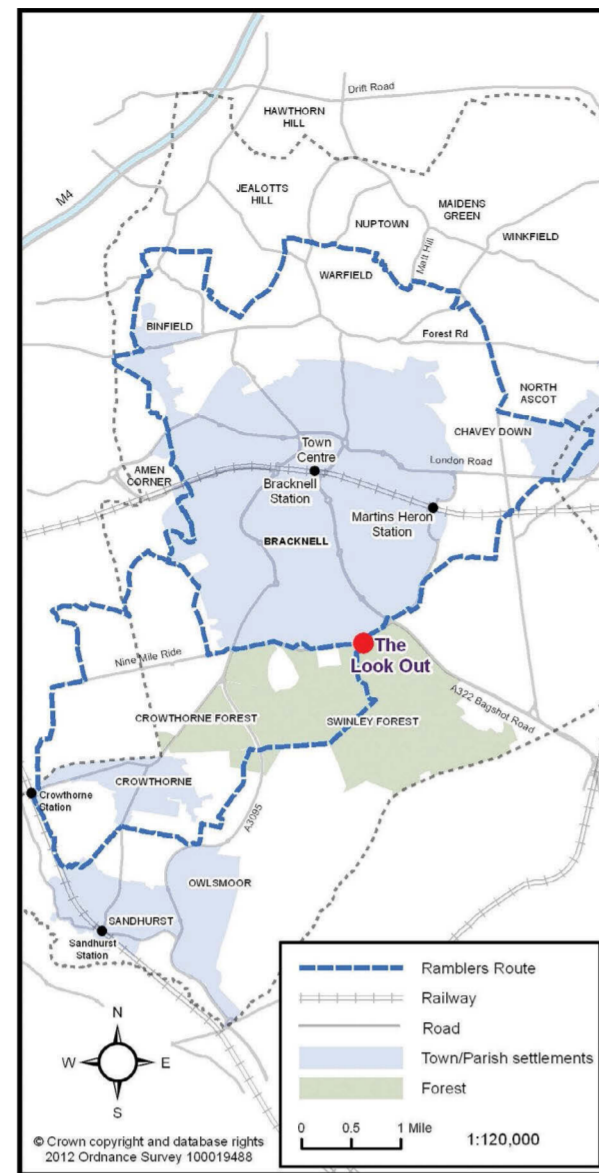
The route follows footpaths, bridleways, woodland tracks and stretches of road. It passes through remarkably varied scenery, from coniferous forest and heathland in the south to open farmland in the north.

It is recommended that you attempt the route in stages, using the four sections described in this leaflet. The shortest of these is 4.5 miles (7.2 km) and the longest is 8 miles (12.9 km).

To help you find your way, distinctive waymarkers (a black arrow on a white background) signpost the route in a clockwise and anti-clockwise direction.

Please come prepared; in places it can be very wet and muddy underfoot. See under 'Useful Information' for suggestions about suitable places to park, maps you may find useful and where to find refreshments.

Location map



Section 1

The Look Out to Wildmoor Heath: 4.5 miles (7.2 km)

Numbered text relates to numbered route sections in the maps.

The Look Out Discovery Centre is open daily and provides many attractions for the family, with over 90 science and nature exhibits. The Look Out is situated on the edge of Swinley Forest which is the largest area of unbroken woodland (mostly Scots Pine) in Berkshire at 1,052 hectares. The Crown Estate provide a number of walking trails and cycling routes (mountain bike hire is available) that suit a range of abilities

1 From the front of The Look Out, follow the signs around the left-hand side of the building and through the gate. The route leads southwards, up Gravel Hill and past an old triangulation pillar, part of a network of disused trig points once used by Ordnance Survey. Follow the track to a crossroads and then continue ahead for about 100 yards (91m) to the next junction. Turn right onto a forest track and continue straight ahead for just over half a mile (1km).

i In the late 18th century Swinley Forest was used for military training manoeuvres at a time when this country braced itself for attack from Napoleonic France

2 Pass a reservoir on the right to reach Upper Star Post, a 'star' junction, where six forest tracks meet at one point. Take the second turning on the right, signposted the Devil's Highway.



i This broad, straight track is part of a Roman road which once linked London with the Roman town of Silchester. Even though the Romans constructed the road, local people who lived here after the Roman Occupation believed that only the Devil could have been responsible for such a feat of engineering - hence its name.

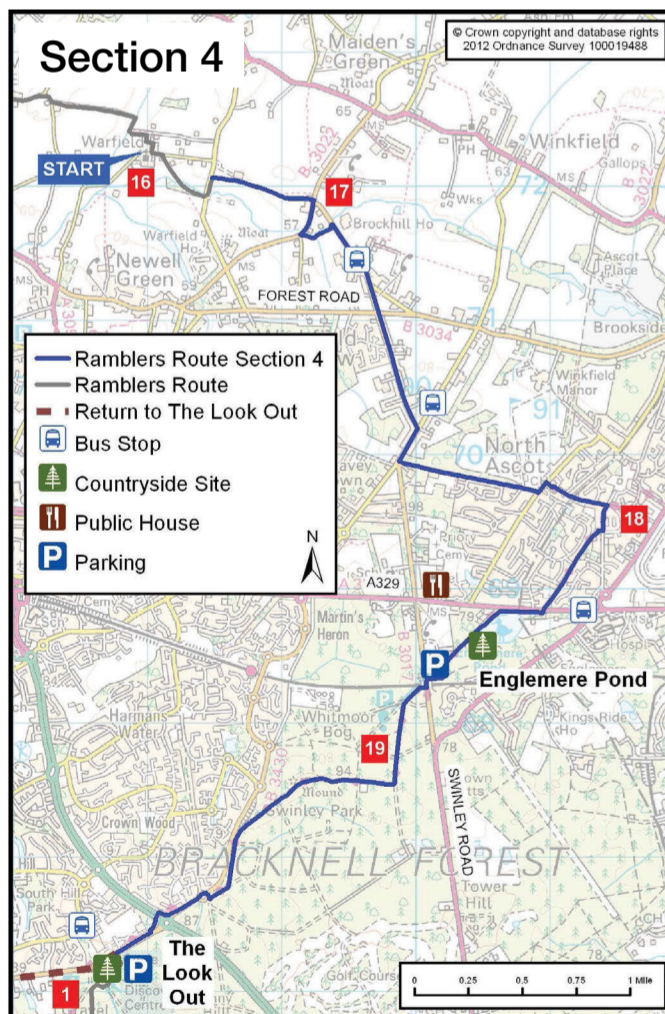
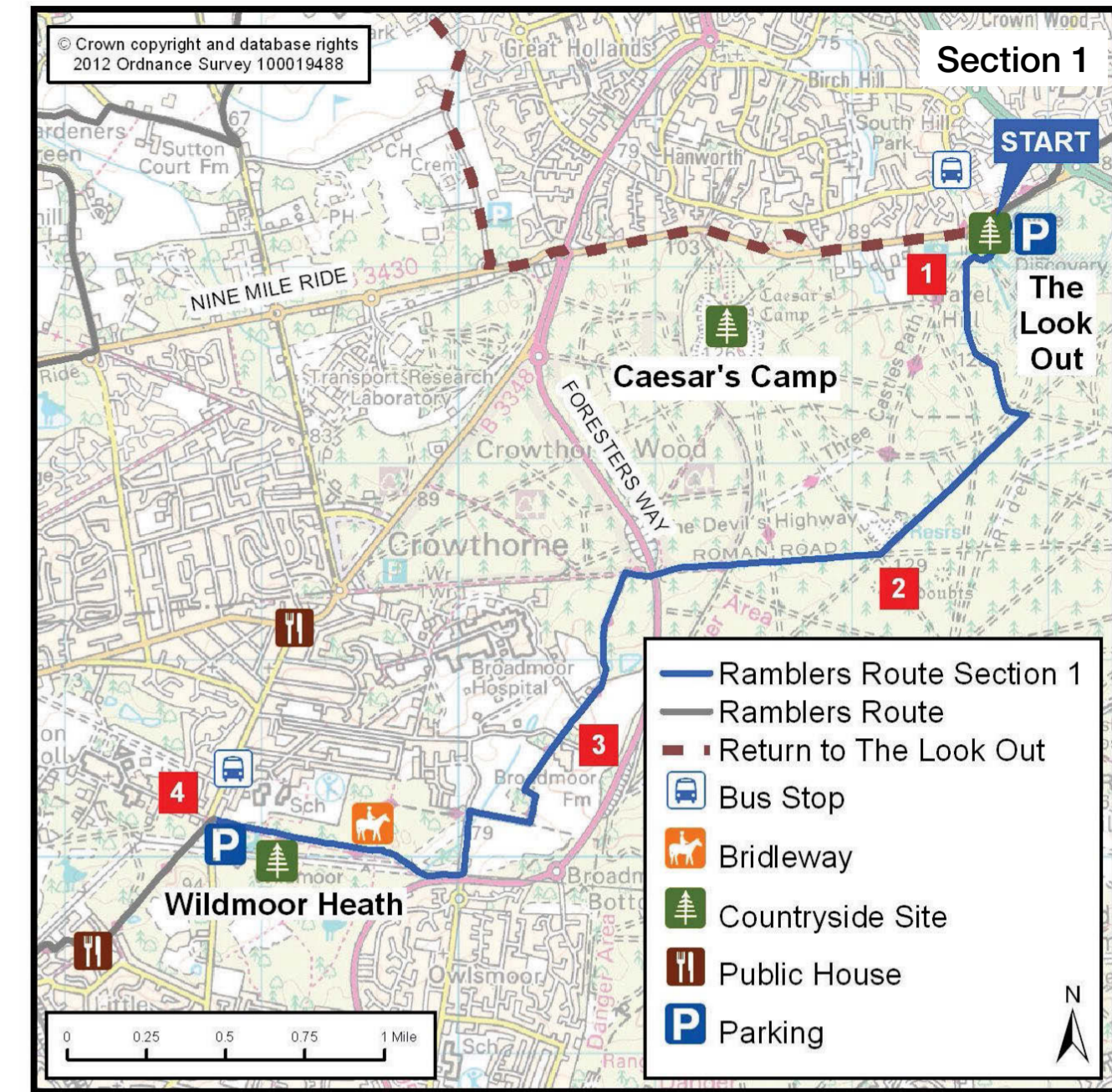
Continue straight along the Devil's Highway, drop down a slope to a gate and follow the track beneath the route of the Sandhurst-Crowthorne bypass. About 175 yards (160m) beyond the bypass, turn left onto a footpath and head south. Pass a pond on the left-hand side, join a tarmac road (Eastern Lane) and continue along it, with Broadmoor Hospital seen up on the hill on the right. This section of the route is likely to have local diversions due to the current development of new housing and open space.

i Founded in 1863, Broadmoor is one of four special hospitals providing treatment for psychiatric patients under secure conditions.

3 When the road bends right, go straight on along a PROW Footpath, with Broadmoor Farm on the left. Keep alongside the fence, and having passed through a small wood south of the farm, turn right at the fence corner towards Wildmoor Heath.

i Wildmoor Heath is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) for its rare communities of plant and animals. It also falls within the Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area (along with Swinley Forest), which is an internationally important habitat for rare ground nesting birds, the Nightjar (pictured left), Woodlark and Dartford Warbler. Please help protect the wildlife; during the bird breeding season (March to September) when we ask that you stay on the paths and keep your dog close by.

Follow a cinder track for 350 yards (315m) and then turn left off the footpath by some white fencing, where you'll follow an old tarmac road for a further 350 yards. Turn right just after the gas pumping station and follow a bridleway, which runs parallel to power lines, in a westerly direction, crossing a stream at one point. Stay on this path for 0.8 miles (1.3 km) until you reach the Crowthorne to Sandhurst road.



Section 4

Warfield Church to The Look Out Discovery Centre : 8 miles (12.9km)

This section of the Ramblers Route starts in Warfield parish and continues for the most part in Winkfield. It briefly crosses into Windsor and Maidenhead (from Burleigh Road to its entry into Englemere Pond) and then ends up in Bracknell. Key sites of interest include Englemere Pond and Swinley Park.



Swinley Forest

16 From the church car park, turn left, follow Church Lane for about 100 yards (90m) and then turn right onto a footpath. This path cuts across a field before crossing The 'Cut' river by a footbridge and following the river for about 200 yards (180m). Turn left where the path emerges on a tarmac road, at Wane Bridge, then right onto another footpath. Keep straight ahead, following field boundary paths for about half a mile (0.8km) and then turn right at the main road (B3022). Pass Brockhill Farm, cross a bridge and bear immediately left to follow a riverside path to the next road. Turn right onto Winkfield Row Road (B3017).

i The parish of Winkfield covers over 9,000 acres and is one of the largest in the country. Before the Norman Conquest, most of the land was owned by the Abbey of Abingdon. William the Conqueror annexed part of it after 1066 to enlarge his new estate at Windsor. In the 18th century George III owned most of the parish, and after his death the lands were gradually divided amongst new owners.

17 Follow the road for just over a mile (2.8 km), walking along pavements. Pass Lambrook School (on your right), the restaurant on your left, go straight over the lights into Chavey Down Rd. Keep straight on leaving Carnation Hall on the right. At the junction with Locks Ride turn right. Just after the sign for Chavey Down, at the point where the road veers slightly left at a junction, turn left into Sandy Lane. Follow this lane through the trees for half a mile (0.8 km) and carry straight on where the lane becomes a tarmac road (Mill Ride). Turn left onto Fernbank Road, then right at North Ascot Community Centre and Library. Pass through the car park and on down the road, The Heathway. At the bottom, go straight on along a tarmac path. Go through the barrier into Burleigh Lane and continue uphill to the junction with Kennell Green and Burleigh Road. Turn right into Burleigh Road.

i The lane to your left housed the Royal Kennels until the late 19th Century.

18 After 200 yards (183m) turn right and follow a byway, Blythewood Lane, south-west for about half a mile (0.8km). At London Road turn right, cross over at the first traffic island, and after a few paces turn left into Englemere Pond Nature Reserve. Walk down to the water's edge and follow the Ramblers Route waymarkers through the reserve for about half a mile (0.8 km), eventually turning right into the car park.

i Englemere Pond Nature Reserve supports a number of rare wetland plants and a rich variety of insect and bird species and is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest for its exceptional wildlife value. Why not take some time to explore the site using the Woodpecker and Dragonfly wildlife trails?

Leave the car park via the bottom left gate and very soon turn right to follow the path until it joins the Swinley Road at the railway bridge. Cross this busy road with care, passing over the railway bridge then turn right into Swinley Park. The route now follows a 2 mile (3.2 km) long 'permitted path' through the wooded park, which is owned by The Crown Estate

i Swinley Park is also designated an SSSI, noted for its ancient broad-leaved trees and rare insect species found on dead or decaying wood.

19 Follow the permitted path and Ramblers Route waymarks and don't be tempted to leave the woodland track at the first exit. Stay in the woods until the waymarks clearly indicate the exit into New Forest Ride. Turn left, over a roundabout, and follow New Forest Ride for about 250 yards (228m) to cross a footbridge over the dual carriageway (A322). Passing the Coral Reef Waterworld on your right, cross Nine Mile Ride to return to The Look Out (back to no. 1).

Please follow the Countryside Code:

- Consider the local community and other people enjoying the outdoors
- Leave no trace of your visit and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under effective control
- Be safe - plan ahead and be prepared
- Follow advice and local signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them and follow paths.

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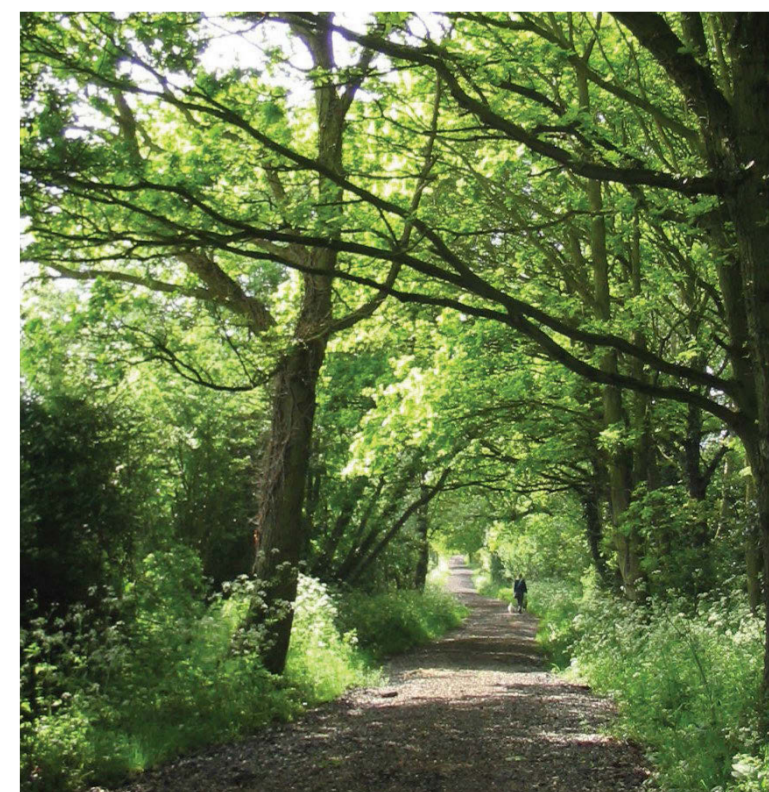
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Discover ... Ramblers Route in Bracknell Forest



Your guide to the 26 mile (41.8km) walking trail around Bracknell Forest's countryside

Useful information

Start/Finish: The Look Out Discovery Centre is located off Nine Mile Ride (B3430) and is 2 miles (3.2km) south of Bracknell town centre. Parking (postcode RG12 7QW) and a tourist information centre are among other facilities available. For further details, including information about car parking charges, visit:

www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/thelookoutdiscoverycentre or call them on tel: 01344 354400.

Other suitable access points with parking:

- Wildmoor Heath, off Crowthorne Road, Sandhurst, GU47 8PD
- Ambarrow Court, off A321 Lower Sandhurst Road, GU47 8JB
- Pope's Meadow, off B3408 St Marks Road, RG42 4AY
- Englemere Pond, off B3017 Swinley Road, SL5 8BA
- Swinley Park (same as for Englemere Pond).

Useful maps: Ordnance Survey Landranger 175 Reading and Windsor, or Ordnance Survey Explorer 160 Windsor, Weybridge, & Bracknell. Grid reference for start of walk is 881662.

Refreshments: The Look Out includes a coffee shop and picnic area. There are various inns along the route - including The Crooked Billet near Easthampstead Park and The Shepherds House at Moss End in Warfield.

Public transport: Bus services coincide with parts of the Ramblers Route. The route also passes Crowthorne Train Station (in Section 2) and close to Martins Heron station (in Section 4) on Bracknell's eastern outskirts.

Google Maps is a useful tool to help you plan your journey by car, public transport, walking or bicycle.

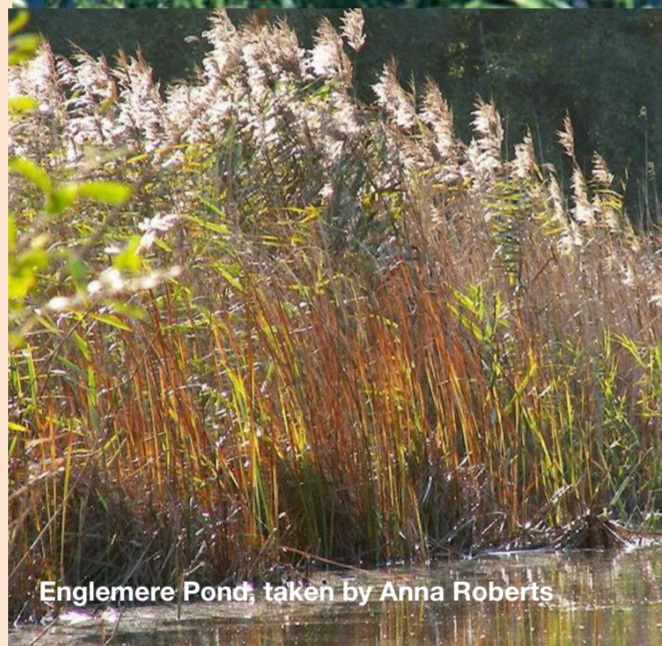
<http://maps.google.co.uk>



Wildmoor Heath



Bluebells at Ambarrow



Englemere Pond, taken by Anna Roberts



How Ambarrow Court used to look

Section 2

Wildmoor Heath to Easthampstead Park : 5.5 miles (8.9 km)

This part of the route takes you along the eastern boundary of Bracknell borough, and briefly into Wokingham district. The route passes through mixed woodland, residential areas, a golf course and farmland. Places of interest include Ambarrow Court, Wellington College and Easthampstead Park.

4 To start the route from the car park at Wildmoor Heath, turn right along the main road for about 160 yards (150m) until you see the brideway sign on opposite side of the road. To continue the clockwise route, cross the main road and follow the brideway downhill through mixed woodland for about half a mile (0.8km). Avoid turnings off and continue ahead onto Sandy Lane. Turn right into Chiltern Road, then first right into Cheviot Road. Follow the road round to the left through the housing area and then turn right onto a signed footpath.

5 Founded in 1859 and built as a monument to the first Duke of Wellington, the college was originally a school for the orphans of army officers. Crowthorne Station was originally named Wellington College Station and was built principally for the College in 1861.

6 Ambarrow Court on Lower Sandhurst Road (A321) can also be used as a starting point for this section of the route. This mainly wooded countryside site contains interesting original Victorian features including bamboo, yew hedges and large specimen trees such as Douglas fir and Cedar. Please take care when using the level crossing.

6 Turn right along Duke's Ride, then first left into Ravenswood Avenue. This section of the walk passes briefly through Wokingham District. Continue northwards along Ravenswood Avenue and cross the East Berks Golf Course - beware of flying golf balls and keep to the footpath. Skirt the fairways until you reach a path on the left, running along the edge of some woodland. Follow this and join a tarmac road which serves 'Ravenswood', a village providing lifelong care for children with learning disabilities.

7 Follow the drive north (the same direction in which you have been heading) and turn right to join a woodland path just before the road junction. This footpath runs parallel to Nine Mile Ride for about half a mile (0.8km). When the roundabout is in sight, bear left through an opening to the road. Cross over and follow Nine Mile Ride past the roundabout, taking the first left into Honey Hill. Follow this minor road northwards for 1 mile (1.6km), to the Crooked Billet public house.

8 Turn right into Redlake Lane and where the road passes through a ford turn right again onto a farm track. Pass a stable block on your right and continue straight ahead along a cross-field footpath. Turn right and follow the Easthampstead Road for just under half a mile (0.8 km), then turn left along another cross-field footpath which emerges on Old Wokingham Road, marking the boundary between Wokingham District and Bracknell

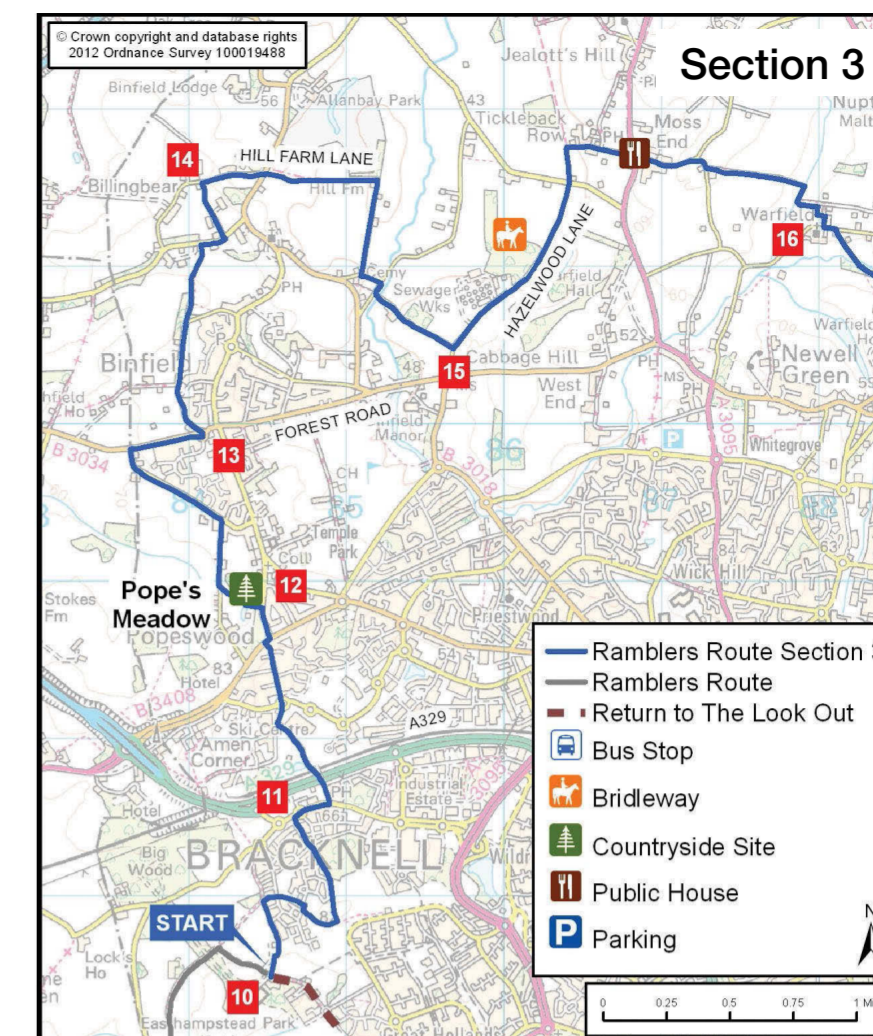
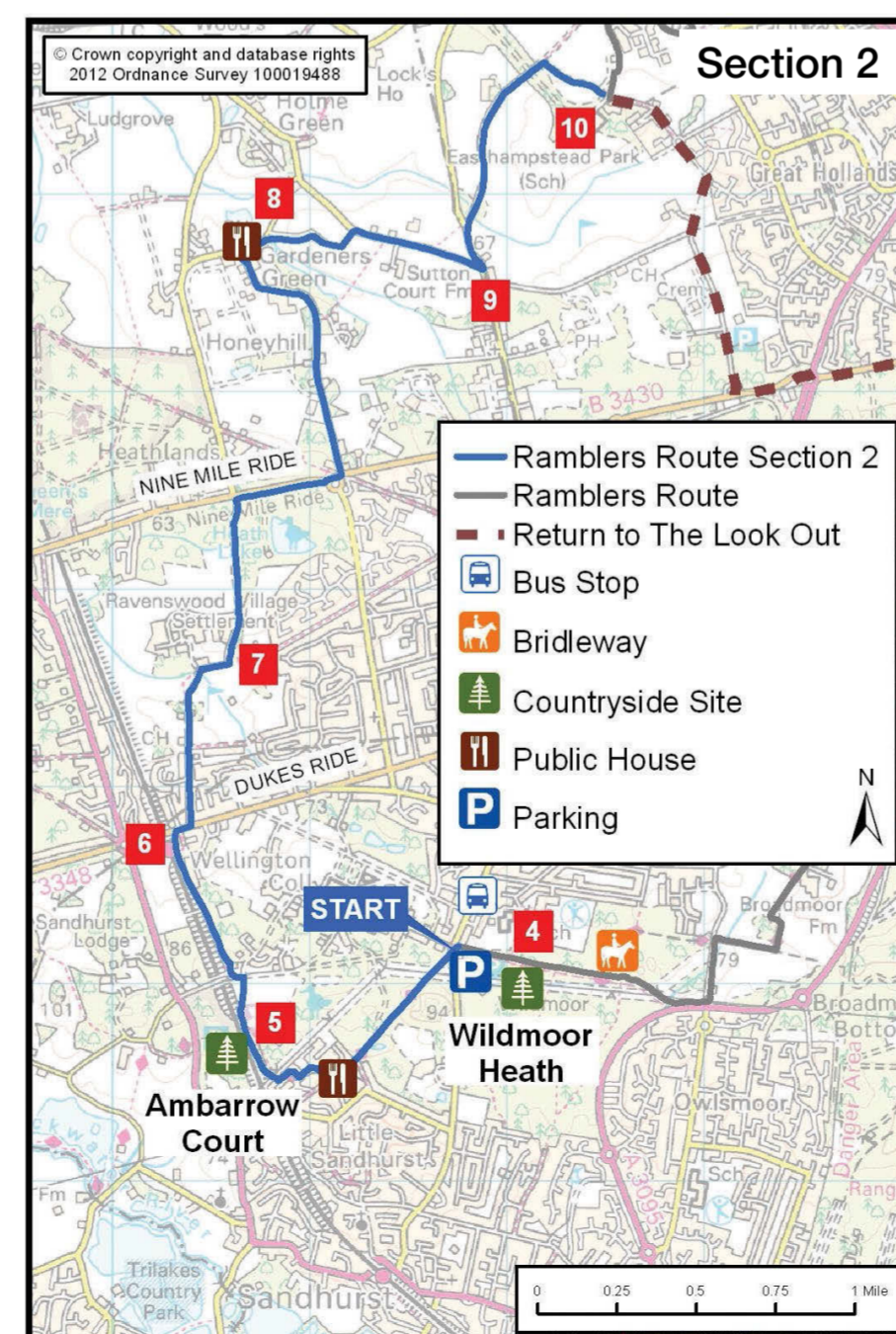
Forest Borough. Cross the road and take the PROW footpath along the farm track almost opposite, which leads to Easthampstead Park. This track is also a driveway and if the metal gate is closed the pedestrian gate on the right will be unlocked.

9 Easthampstead Park was owned by the Downshire family from the 17th century. The present house, built in 1864 by the Marquis of Downshire, is a listed building and is now owned and managed as a conference centre and wedding venue by Bracknell Forest Council.

9 Cross Easthampstead Park drive, to the north of the house, then turn right onto a footpath. After about 360 yards (330ms) the path joins a tarmac roadway. At the large metal gates across the road the route continues to the left into the Jennett's Park Development.

To complete the southern loop and return to The Look Out, continue southwards, predominantly along tarmac roads, for 1.2 miles (1.9km) passing Downshire Golf Course and the crematorium on your right. On reaching the main road (Nine Mile Ride) turn left. Carry straight on at the roundabout and follow a woodland path running parallel along the left-hand side of Nine Mile Ride, for 1.4 miles (2.3km) to return to The Look Out.

To complete a circuit of the northern loop on its own, follow this route (highlighted) in reverse from The Look Out and continue on to Sections 3 and 4.



Section 3

Easthampstead Park to Warfield Church : 8 miles (12.9km)

Starting in Bracknell town, this route section takes you on into the attractive farmland and countryside of Binfield parish. Key places include Tarmans Copse, Pope's Meadow, Hazelwood Copse and Frost Folly.

10 To continue the northern section of the route turn left through the kissing gate into the housing estate. The original footpath has been legally diverted further to the north. Follow the surfaced path past the car park to the next footpath junction. Turn right and right again. Cross two roads and at the next footpath junction turn left up the slope and then down into Tarmans Copse. Continue straight, through the copse across a road and on down the hill to join Peacock Lane.

11 At Peacock Lane turn right past the pub and take the first turning to the left to the footbridge. Take the footbridge over the A329 dual carriageway and the London to Reading railway line. Head north, turn right at the next junction, pass the dry ski-slope on your left, part of the John Nike Leisure Sport Complex, and then go straight over at the roundabout, continuing along Beehive Road. Follow the road up to the junction with London Road and cross over at the traffic lights into St Marks Road in Binfield. Turn immediately left through a gate and join a gravel path running parallel to the road. This footpath leads to Pope's Meadow, an attractive countryside site managed by Bracknell Forest Council.

12 Pope's Meadow was once part of the grounds of Pope's Manor, where the 18th century poet Alexander Pope lived. Pope spent his childhood at Binfield and sang in the local choir.

12 Turn left alongside a fence, skirt a pond and follow the Ramblers Route waymarks across Pope's Meadow to an exit in its north-west corner. Turn right into Murrell Hill Lane. At the next junction bear left into Foxley Lane and continue on to join Forest Road, originally a sheep drovers' road linking London and the West Country. Turn right and follow the road for about 520 yards (475m). Pass Binfield Place on the left, dating from about 1627 and claimed to be the oldest house in Binfield parish and then turn left at the roundabout into Wicks Green.

13 After about half a mile (0.8km) leave the lane and join a footpath on your left where the road bends sharp right. The walk follows a field edge footpath to Carter's Hill. Turn right along a short section of road then take the path to the left down a surfaced driveway. Just after the large house set back on your left hand side, don't miss the path through the hedge on the left. You will emerge into Billingbear Lane, opposite Billingbear Farmhouse. Turn right and follow the lane downhill to a main road.

14 Cross the road and follow a track to the right (Hill Farm Lane). Continue for about half a mile (0.8km) to Hill Farm, where you turn right onto a tarmac road for a further half mile. At the next junction take the path on the left along the edge of the football field. Turn right into Ryehurst Lane and after a short while turn left over the bridge into Cabbage Hill Lane.

15 Turn left at the sign for Bracknell Sewage Treatment Works and follow the brideway along Hazelwood Lane north-eastwards for 0.8 miles (1.3km); this lane marks the boundary between the parishes of Binfield and Warfield. To your left you will pass Hazelwood Copse, an area of ancient woodland, and to your right, the grounds of Warfield Hall. Cross Bottle Lane and continue until you reach the junction with Buckle Lane on the right, by a bungalow. Follow this road and cross the A3095 by the Shepherds House public house. Continue straight on up Bowyers Lane for about 500 yards (450m), bearing right at the next junction to join a footpath at the entrance to Frost's Folly country car park. Follow this footpath for 0.7 miles (1.1 km) turning right through a large kissing gate near some houses, to reach St Michael's Church at Warfield.

16 Frost Folly is one of three Accessible Rural Routes, the others being Larks Hill and Jocks Lane. These routes are free of stiles and other serious obstacles which make rural paths difficult for the less mobile. In all cases the surfaces are adequate but some sections will be rough and difficult for manually propelled wheelchairs. Leaflets detailing these routes are available on our website.

Pope's Meadow

Binfield bridle circuit, Hill Farm Lane