

Chineham Nature Walk



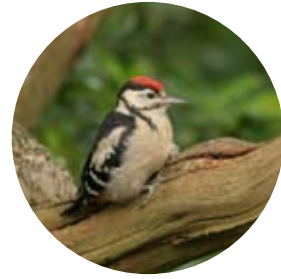
became dependent on this type of management in order to survive. When the cutting of hazel (which is called coppicing) ceased, many of the animals and plants in our woodland disappeared. Work has begun to re-coppice areas in Great

Sorrell's Copse which still has many of the species lost elsewhere. Continue along the path until you come to an open area which has recently been re-coppiced and you will see how much extra light is getting through to the woodland floor. This encourages the growth of wildflowers which in turn encourages butterflies into the woodland.

12. Turn right at the fork and look for an old cherry tree on the left with its horizontal markings. This tree has several wood pecker holes in it. You now join the wider path. In the spring the whole area around your feet is a mass of Lesser Celandine which is a spectacular sight. Cross over the ditch by the holly bushes, turn left and cross over the bridge into Mulberry Way.

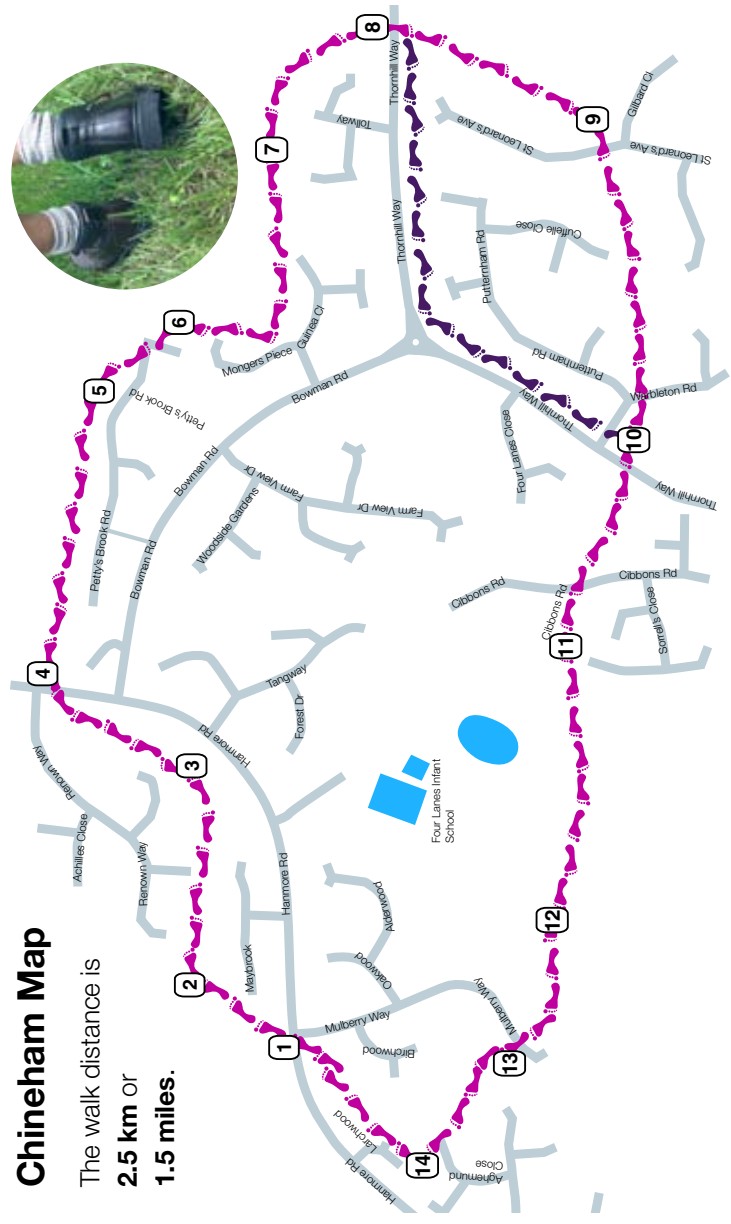
13. In Mulberry Way take the footpath towards Hanmore Road. Most of the bushes on your right are snowberries, which have distinctive white berries in the Autumn.

14. On the left side of the path is a small copse. Many different birds can be heard singing, including wren, robin, blue tit, great tit, blackbird and nuthatch.



15. Take the right fork. A little further on you will pass a small clump of Scots pine trees. Continue along the footpath to Hanmore Road, taking care as you cross, and rejoin the footpath on the other side. You are now back where you started.

The meadow section of this route is unsuitable for wheel chairs or pushchairs. To avoid this section follow the alternative route indicated on the map.



Chineham Map
 The walk distance is
2.5 km or 1.5 miles.

Start from the footpath beside the scout hut on Hanmore road opposite the turning for Mulberry Way.

Please note, some sections are unsuitable for wheelchairs and pushchairs

1. Most of the trees growing next to the scout hut are oak but there are two exceptions. Can you spot them?

2. Follow the footpath until you come to a small bridge, which crosses Petty's Brook. Cross over the bridge and follow the path round to the right. As you walk, look into the stream to see if you can see any fish. Stone loach and sticklebacks can be seen if you are lucky. The shrubs growing along this side of the bank include dogwood, which can be recognised by its bright red new shoots, and elder which gives us elderberries in the autumn.



3. Follow the path along Petty's Brook, past the footbridge leading you back to Hanmore Road. You will walk through a group of large trees.

These are hybrid black poplars, which are often found near water and grow very quickly. The copse on the other side of the stream is a haven for wildlife. The bramble growing on the edge of the copse provides an important source of nectar in the summer. Some of the butterflies you may see along this stretch include speckled wood, small white, brimstone and small tortoiseshell.

4. Follow the footpath along the edge of the brook to the bridge over Hanmore Road. Take care as you cross Hanmore Road once again and rejoin the footpath on the other side.

5. Continue along the footpath running next to Petty's Brook, to the next bridge crossing this stream. The three trees growing on the left of the footpath, by the lamp-post, are field maples. In autumn, this tree has small, helicopter-like seeds. Cross the bridge and turn left, heading towards the play area outside Guinea Copse, and take the path through the copse. This is ancient woodland, which has grown on this site for over 400 years. In spring the woodland floor is a mass of bluebells.

6. When you reach the information boards, take the left fork. Just before the next lamp-post is a large wild cherry tree growing on the left. It can be recognised by the large horizontal stripes on the bark. The scrubby nature of Guinea Copse makes it ideal for nesting birds. Some migrant birds such as black cap and chaff chaff may even be seen. As you carry on you will see a holly tree on the left. Most trees have male and female flowers on the same plant, but holly has male trees and female trees.



7. Follow the tarmac path around the edge of Guinea Copse. Walk past lamp-posts F19 and F20. A plant called goose grass or cleavers grows in this area. If you bend down and touch it you will feel how sticky it is. Its seeds stick to animals as they walk past, dropping off later and colonising new sites.

8. Follow the path to the edge of the woodland and turn right. You will be walking towards a footbridge. Do not cross the footbridge, but follow the path towards Thornhill Way. You are now walking along the edge of Tollhouse Meadow. Petty's Brook runs in its natural state through the meadow, making the whole site an important habitat for wildlife. The natural banks of the river will be used by water mammals, and the sloping banks allow easy access for amphibians. Much of Tollhouse Meadow is left uncut through spring and summer, so look out for butterflies nectaring on wildflowers. (At this point you may like to divert slightly from the walk route

to explore Tollhouse Meadow.) Cross Thornhill Way, walk down the grassy slope, and turn right, crossing the ditch into the wood. This is Tollhouse Copse, semi-natural ancient woodland. Take the left hand fork and follow the path through the wood. You will see several areas with many plants with pale green flowers. These are called wood spurge. You will also see large carpets of bluebells in Tollhouse Copse in April and May.

9. When you leave the copse, go straight ahead to St Leonard's Avenue. Cross St. Leonard's Avenue and you will see another footpath. Walk along the footpath, turn right and then straight on at the path 'crossroads' towards Warbleton Road. The tree immediately on your left is a purple leaved Norway maple. Walk along the footpath leading towards Warbleton Road. This section of the walk is very good for summer butterflies, which are attracted to the flowers on the bramble bushes.

10. Cross Warbleton Road and carry on along the footpath running alongside the hawthorn hedge with the Village Hall on the left. Take care as you cross Thornhill Way. You will see two footpaths. The one on the right is Cufaude Lane. Take the footpath on the left running alongside it, cross Gibbons Road and take the footpath which runs down the right side of the hedge and ditch. This hedgerow is very old and many different species can be seen in it, including field maple, hazel, blackthorn and hawthorn.

11. Turn left at the old school gate passing a large willow tree. Turn right into Great Sorrells and take the left fork. There are many silver birches in this area of wood. Hazel grows throughout the whole area of the woodland. This used to be cut on a regular basis and was used to make stakes, broom handles and thatching spars. As this continued, a lot of the wildlife in our woods

