



Circular walking guide to Guildford station

Follow this walk from Guildford station through gorgeous countryside taking in a fascinating gallery and exquisite chapel, beautiful gardens and a magnificent house

Leaving Guildford along the River Wey, this walk follows the North Downs Way (NDW) to the atmospheric Watts Gallery at Compton, which celebrates the work of the Victorian painter and sculptor George Frederick Watts. The return is via Loseley House, pictured above, a splendid Elizabethan mansion, with an optional detour to see the walled garden and taste Loseley's delicious Jersey herd ice cream.

Using the pedestrian underpass from the station, follow the blue signs to "Town centre via Riverside Walk". On reaching the river, turn right along the path, passing the White House pub and continuing to the pedestrian bridge at Millmead Lock. Cross the bridge, turn right before the second bridge on to the towpath.

Opposite Guildford Boat House, take the footpath to the right, cross the meadow and continue along the River Wey towpath. River trips and canoes for hire at the boat house (01483 536 186; www.riverweytrips.co.uk).

Before the next bridge, turn right and follow the NDW arrow steeply uphill passing Pilgrims Cottage on your right. Emerge opposite the College of Law. Turn right and then left on Sandy Lane. After about 250 yards, turn right at Piccard's Manor following the arrow, ignoring the tracks off to reach Piccard's Farm.

Continue past the farmhouse, on to the farm road then left and right following the NDW signs. The sign "Authorised access only" on this gate only applies to vehicles. Enter the woods by the stile to the right. Follow the sandy track to reach a T-junction, go left and, ignoring the track now coming in from your left, follow the bridleway through the woods of West Warren to emerge on a sandy track.

Keep straight on to reach the Watts Gallery, housed in a Lutyens-style building. It's a memorial filled with the work of George Frederick Watts, the Victorian artist and sculptor who was briefly married to Ellen Terry, one of the greatest actresses of the period. Admission is free but donations are welcome. The Teashop close by has an excellent choice of teas, cakes, soups and sandwiches.

Leave The Teashop and go left along Down Lane walk past Coneycroft Farm & Stud to reach the entrance to the Watts Memorial Chapel—a remarkable terracotta building in the shape of a Celtic cross, built by Mary Watts in memory of her husband. Retrace your steps to Coneycroft Farm & Stud and follow the public footpath signs through the stable yard, along the concrete drive, right over the first stile, left over the second and then across the field following the obvious track to another stile and along a path bounded on both sides by a wire fence.

Pass houses on your right and emerge down a flight of steps, turn right and then in about 30 yards turn left at the junction. Continue along this footpath, passing Polsted Lodge on your left. Look out for the footpath signs bringing you around Loseley House and grounds for fantastic views.

When you reach the lake and, if you intend to use the charged facilities at Loseley, take the lake-view path to reach the tea room and the walled garden. Otherwise keep straight on over open fields separated by stiles to emerge on a narrow road by Littleton Youth House.

Cross the road, continue up the lane, past bungalows and on to a track. Ignore turn offs and continue past Mount Browne police headquarters. Emerge on to the road and keep straight on to junction with A3100. Turn left and before the bus stop cross the road and pick up the footpath sign by the barrier.

Go under the railway bridge to join the River Wey towpath. Turn left following the sign to return to Guildford station.