



Guildford to West Byfleet walking guide

This lovely riverside ramble from Guildford to West Byfleet stations

The River Wey navigation towpath is a level, easy-to-follow walk along the banks of Surrey's oldest commercial waterway with plenty of flora, wildlife habitats, historic lock cottages and passing boats to keep you interested. More than 300 plant species, 50 bird species and 20 fish species have been recorded along the

Wey, as well as otters, confirming its good health.

Leave Guildford station by the exit nearest from Platform 2, marked "To town centre", then using the underpass follow the disabled access signs, "Town centre via riverside walk". Turn left at the river and follow the towpath.

On the bank to your right, pass the Electric Theatre, an arts centre and cinema in a former electricity station. The path continues alongside a mix of warehouses, industrial units and new apartments, passing opposite Dapdune Wharf (open Mar-Oct 11am-5pm, closed Tues and Wed), accessible via a footbridge further on. Formerly the centre of barge-building on the Wey, it is now owned by the National Trust and has a visitor centre with displays on the waterway—one of the first British rivers to be made navigable—and featuring one of the last Wey barges. After crossing the A25 with care (there are lights on either side of the traffic island), pass the Rowbarge pub on the far bank. At Stoke Mill, cross the busy road to the towpath on the opposite bank and continue to Stoke Lock. Short, pollarded trees with gnarled bark are a feature along this section, before arriving at Bowers Lock where the path crosses the lock bridge, continuing to Triggs Lock.

Pass Sutton Place, the former residence of Sir Richard Weston, who financed the waterway, and more recently the billionaire Getty family. After Worsfold Gate, where the buildings once housed a blacksmith's forge, you pass the New Inn with its tempting beer garden. Cross left over Cart Bridge to continue on the opposite bank. The next section, to Papercourt Lock and its pretty keeper's cottage, is very tranquil, with the Wey twisting through meadows to meet the River Thames at Weybridge.

After crossing a minor road, the ruins of Newark Priory, a 12th-century monastic settlement of "black" friars, named for the colour of their habit, appear on your left. From here, it's a short walk to Pyrford Lock and The Anchor for lunch. To reach this popular pub—its unbeatable riverside location makes it a favourite among locals—cross Walsham Weir, after about half a mile pass a red brick summerhouse on the opposite bank with a plaque to priest and poet John Donne, who lived there from 1573 to 1631 (he later became Dean of St Paul's). A roast chicken and bacon salad comes in starter and main course sizes for £5.79/7.99; likewise the red pepper and spinach lasagne. The beer is good and there's a choice of 15 wines by the glass to enjoy in the huge garden.

With the walk nearing its end, pass Pyrford Marina on your left and then go left across Dodd's Bridge and continue on the main path, ignoring turn-offs until you cross a field and reach Dodd's Lane. Turn right at the main road and, at the next intersection, follow the signs to West Byfleet station, the end of the walk. To extend the walk, continue on past Dodd's Bridge where the towpath reaches Weybridge Lock, after six miles, to meet the Thames, from where there is a long walk by a busy road to Weybridge station.