



Sunningdale to Windsor & Eton Riverside walking guide

Tramp along a trail redolent with history and royal connections.

This walk from Sunningdale station to Windsor & Eton Riverside station is spectacular in late spring and early summer when the flowers are in bloom. The walk passes through the Crown Estate land of Windsor Great Park, created for hunting deer and wild boar during the 13th century, along Virginia Water lake, past Savill Gardens, through the Deer Park, and finishes with the two-and-a-half-mile Long Walk to Windsor Castle, home to kings and queens since the 15th century. You also pass the polo fields of Coworth Park (www.thepolocentre.com).

Exiting Sunningdale station from Platform 2, turn left crossing the railway tracks. Follow this road, the A30 (London Road), to Broomhall Lane (the B383), and go left. When it becomes Station Road, go right and right again on Church Road to the end. Then go left up Whitmore Lane, past the bowling club, looking out for a field gate and public footpath sign on the right. Follow this to Coworth Park and the polo fields. Head for the white clock tower in the distance and go left on the tarmac road to reach the gate lodge, where you turn left to reach Blacknest car park. Go diagonally left to a wooden gate entering Windsor Great Park.

Follow the path ahead by a byelaw sign and, when you reach Virginia Water, a lake built in the 1740s by the Duke of Cumberland, turn left following the track to the stone bridge. Cross the bridge and go right on the trampled path by the water's edge through the woods to the estate cottages. Follow the red arrow marked Lakeside Walk to the left, bringing you in front of the cottages. Look for a path in the grass diagonally to the right and follow it until you reach a sandy horse track, where you go right, down then uphill by a burgundy sign to Valley Gardens. Wander through the azalea and rhododendron glades descending down to a sandy track and turn left. Look for a wooden bridge to the right, cross this and go steeply uphill for about 20 yards, taking a right at the log bench on the right. Cross a stand of beech trees and keep on downhill to the lake. Follow the track left to reach the 100ft Totem Pole, a gift to HM The Queen from Canada.

To reach the Obelisk, you can follow the fingerpost sign to Savill Gardens, along the carriage drive. For lunch, picnic at the tables by the Obelisk or continue to Savill Gardens Restaurant. Go past Savill Gardens (no dogs allowed) until the road curves left. Take a right on to a grassy track marked 'No Cycling' and, at the first crossroads, go left to reach Cow Pond.

Head for the top left-hand corner, cross the stream and through the wood. Go right at the edge to a sandy horse track and continue for about quarter of a mile, then turn left to reach the tarmac. Go left in the direction of the pink lodge houses to the Royal Lodge, formerly one of the residences of the Queen Mother, and then right through the Deer Park gates.

Pick up a path to the right across the grass until you come to the edge of a pine wood. You can go through the wood or downhill on a wide grass track, keeping the wood to your left. As the ground levels out, go left along a track flanked by oaks. Windsor Castle (last admission 1600 in winter, 1500 in summer) is to your right.

After about 550 yards you come to the Long Walk, planted in 1680 to link the Park to Windsor Castle. Go right, heading towards the Castle. At the Castle gates, go left on Park Street. At the top, a sign directs you to the Castle entrance by Church Street.