

About Langley Mead

Langley Mead is in the flood plain of the River Loddon. The river flows behind the shrubs at the edge of Langley Mead, and the parish got its name 'Shinfield' when people saw all these fields full of water, shining in the sun. The land is now being restored to a typical water meadow landscape with flowering grasses and plants surrounded by hedges and water-tolerant trees. Slow-moving ditches cut across to the river, or flow along the edge of a low river terrace to find their way to the Loddon. Mature oak, ash and alder trees grow around the boundaries, and there is a group of old willow trees near the edge of Millworth Moor. The names of the fields are shown on the map.

The main entrance and car park is on Hyde End Road. There are three pedestrian entrances along Millworth Lane (near School Green). One is at the corner of the Recreation Ground (smooth ground) and the other two are further along the Millworth Lane track itself. Access is free and you are free to walk anywhere. The surfaced routes are suitable for buggies and wheelchairs of all kinds and there are seats at intervals along the paths. The meadows are intended to hold flood water in this part of the Thames catchment area. At times of heavy rain, water will lie on parts of Mr Chitty's Moor and on Langley Common Meadow. The board walks provide access at most of such times and across the ditches and where the ground is almost permanently wet.

The special seed mix for these fields used plants typical of waterside meadows, along with green hay from a nearby nature reserve. New trees and hedges add to the diversity



of the habitat and will attract more butterflies and other insects, as well as the small mammals and birds that feed on them. The range of plants will become more evident over the years, as the land is allowed to flood seasonally, and cattle are used to graze away unsuitable plants.

The land will be open space in perpetuity, and at present is owned and maintained by the University of Reading.

Cattle

Langley Mead is grazed seasonally by a small herd of traditional breed beef cattle (without calves), as this is essential to the maintenance of the conditions needed for wildlife and biodiversity. The special breeds of cattle are accustomed to people, and are managed by a ranger who is always happy to talk to visitors.



Dogs may be let off the lead but please act responsibly when near cattle and avoid walking through them with a dog; find an alternative route or wait for them to move on.

Do not allow your dog to chase or worry the cattle.

If you see anyone interfering with cattle, or an animal that looks unwell, please inform the Ranger by calling the Freephone number **0800 028 5485**

Any other problems or queries should be directed to Shinfield Parish Council
0118 988 8220

E-mail: clerk@shinfieldparish.gov.uk



SHINFIELD PARISH EASY WALKS FOR ALL

Nº 1: Langley Mead

Langley Mead is free and open to the public for enjoyment, recreation and education. It is located off the B3349 Hyde End Road, to the south of the village of Shinfield and to the east of Spencers Wood. There is a public car park with eight spaces plus a disabled space. Alternative parking is available at School Green car park and usually at the tennis court car park in Millworth Lane (if not reserved for events).

The main paths are suitable for wheelchair users and pushchairs.

This leaflet shows three easy all-ability circular walks for local people to enjoy.



WALKS

A Short Walk of about half a mile from the Car Park.

Follow the green markers.

Walk past Loddon Triangles with new tree planting, turn right and follow the path around Costrill's Coppice, returning past the Triangles to the car park.

A Medium Walk of a mile.

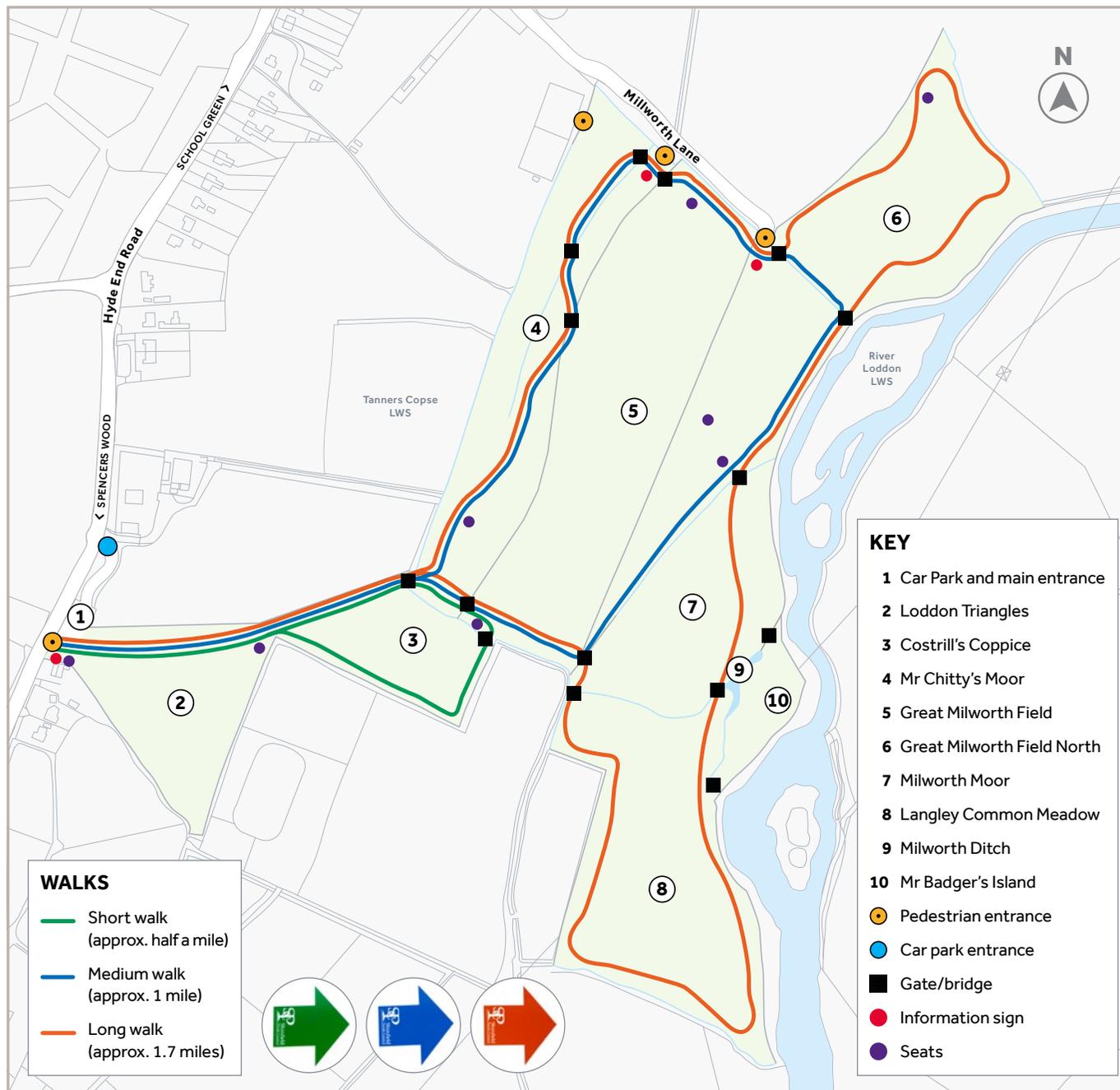
Follow the blue markers.

As for the short walk, but instead of turning right, go straight past Costrill's Coppice and turn left into Mr Chitty's Moor. Follow the path and turn right at the entry from Millworth Lane to continue back along the edge of Great Millworth Field and then past the Triangles back to the car park.

A Longer Walk of less than 2 miles.

Follow the orange markers.

As for the second walk, extending around Great Millworth Field North, returning part way through Great Millworth Field, turn left onto the board walk in Millworth Moor and around Langley Common Meadow and back past the Triangles to the car park. Some areas are liable to flooding.



WHAT TO SEE

The wonderful thing about Langley Mead, is that the flowers, insects and other animals change constantly through the year with the seasons.

In spring keep an eye open for yellowhammers and linnets. Closer to the river in spring and summer, you can see the beautiful blue banded demoiselle damselflies.

If you are quiet, you may catch a glimpse of elusive species such as deer, kingfishers or even grass snakes basking in the early morning sun.

Through the summer the grass will be getting tall, flowers will be blooming and beginning to set seed and it will be time for the traditional hay cut. There will be an abundance of day flying moths, crickets and grasshoppers.

There are some lovely old pollarded willows at the top end of Langley Common Meadow

