

WALK 6: PEARMANS COPSE AND NORES HILL

A circular walk through two areas of designated woodland on either side of the Shinfield Road (A327).

LENGTH: 2.5 miles, no stiles; 3 steps in 2 locations

Some paths may be very muddy. Appropriate footwear is recommended. Dogs should be kept on a short lead.

STARTING POINT: Entrance to Pearmans Copse, Ryhill Way on the Shinfield-Earley border.

OS grid ref: SU 735196 69458
Lat/long 51.419, -0.944
w3w: ///anyone.puff.makes

CAR PARKING: Along Ryhill Way near the starting point.

BUS: Reading bus **Leopard 3**. The nearest bus stop is 'Ducketts Farm' (marked in pink on the map below) on the Shinfield Road, near point 10 (from where you can walk to point 1).

ROUTE: (numbered points on map are described below)



1. START from the grass area off Ryhill Way and walk towards the information board at the edge of the copse.



- With the information board on your left, walk ahead along the track, over a bridge and down 3 shallow steps.
- After a short distance the track meets another at a T-junction. Go right, leading to a second wooden bridge.
- Pass a narrow track on the left and another on the right.
- At the next track crossroads turn left.
- Continue for several hundred metres to the next track junction (point 2).

Pearmans Copse is named on old maps and is a special habitat of semi-natural ancient woodland. The coppiced trees are mainly ash, with field maple and hazel. The trees in this part of the wood were re-coppiced in 2008. At point 2 (and throughout the wood) there are several old lapsed coppiced ash trees.

2. At this junction turn left and follow the path downhill, passing minor paths, until reaching a wooden bridge.



- Immediately after crossing the bridge take the right fork.
- After about 8m turn right and after another 10m turn right again onto a wide path.
- Cross another bridge over a small stream and pass a manhole cover.
- Within a few metres take the left path leading to a small clearing (with two oak trees at the centre).

- Take the right path and follow that as it bends to the left and uphill passing a track on the right. You will reach a wide track running parallel with the main road (Lower Earley Way).
- Turn right.

The remains of the old wood bank and ditch, the boundary of the ancient woodland, are clearly visible on the right. This side of the bank has been planted with native species as a community woodland and to act as a buffer zone for the adjacent ancient woodland.

3. Walk along this wide path through the ash grove, parallel with Lower Earley Way.



- Follow this path when it becomes narrower (ignoring a path on the right into the woods).
- Passing a seasonal pond on your right, the path bears right.
- Follow the path to the gate on the Shinfield Road (A327).

The bank by Lower Earley Way was constructed to help screen the road.

4. Turn left and cross the Shinfield Road at the traffic lights.

- Turn right and walk uphill for 50m then turn left on to a tarmac footpath into the Shinfield Park housing area.

Roadside trees were retained as a setting for the Shinfield Park housing development.

5. Walk ahead into Cirrus Drive and on into Pascal Crescent to reach a metal kissing gate into the Nores Hill woodland.



The three magnificent old oak trees bordering Cirrus Drive are reminders that this area was once part of Windsor Forest and the royal hunting ground. The tree in the foreground is over 400 years old.

6. Pass through the gate and take the track leading left and left again, to follow the path alongside the metal boundary fence (beside the Foster Wheeler site, formerly Shire Hall).

This is an ancient woodland, officially designated as Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW) and a Local Wildlife Site (LWS) with a variety of wild flower, especially bluebells. Previously the woodland was coppiced in a rotation system whereby hazel trees in different areas were cut back at different times. The mounds that divided these areas are still apparent in parts of the wood.



- Continue downhill until you reach a wide path on the right. This is a concrete road, partially covered in mud and earth. Turn into this old road.

During World War II the concrete road was part of an [RAF camp](#)

- Follow this road, passing a relic lamp post on the left.
- Where the path ends at the boundary fence turn right.
- Follow the wide path alongside the fence.

7. Follow the wide track as it turns right, uphill parallel with the fence. After a short distance take the left fork to meet the boundary fence again.
 - Turn right along the fence until you reach the metal kissing gate on the left.

8. Go through the gate into Pascal Crescent and walk ahead until you reach the open grass area.
 - Cross diagonally over this area noting the ancient 'King Henry VIII' oak and the Queen's Diamond Jubilee oak sapling on the right.



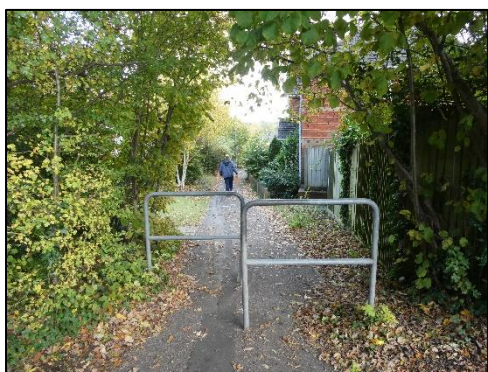
The [pollarded oak](#) is about 700 years old, having germinated around 1350. Henry VIII (1491-1547) is known to have hunted in this area. Perhaps he rested under our tree. The [Jubilee oak](#) is one of 60 planted across the Borough to commemorate the diamond jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II and will hopefully be a suitable replacement when the old tree dies. Oak trees are known to support over 2000 species of wildlife, more than any other British tree.

9. Turn left into Aphelion Way to note the RAF Flying Training Command Memorial in front of The Lodge



- Take the path opposite the memorial into Perigee.
- Go past the Parish noticeboard, the bat roost and then the map board, and out onto the Shinfield Road.

10. Cross the Shinfield Road at the traffic island. Turn left and in a short distance take the access path on the right into Wilsford Close.



- **Walk down the road and, just past the garage of number 9, turn right onto the footpath leading back into Pearmans Copse.**
- **Go down 3 steps and turn left at the track junction.**
- **Continue ahead to return to the start of the walk.**

This section of the copse is managed to allow natural regeneration. Thorny scrub provides secure nesting places for birds such as chiffchaff, song thrush and whitethroat. The wildflowers are best in the spring.