This lovely walk connects Stoke d’Abernon and Oxshott and can either be done as a walk in itself or linking to other longer walks via the Tilt to Downside and also via Oxshott Heath to Esher Common.

The walk takes you through the lovely Green Belt area in Stoke d’Abernon that was threatened by the Elmbridge Local Plan consultation earlier in 2017, passes by the tranquil “Brickpit” lake, diverts to view the area occupied by the historic Diggers in the 17th century and/or ends up at Oxshott Heath.

How to Get There: The footpath starts from Aspen Close which is just off the A245 Stoke Road opposite Tilt Road

Parking: You will need to park on local roads (Tilt Road, Aspen Close, Knowle Park or Lodge Close where there is a connecting path between numbers 25 and 27)

Refreshments: The Old Plough in Stoke d’Abernon, further along Stoke Road, on the corner with Station Road

Length of the Walk: Approx 50 mins to an hour (3.5 kms)

Map

The Walk

1. The public footpath starts alongside Aspen Close and then passes between Knowle Hill Park on your left and after 50 yards Lodge Close on your right. There is a path that joins the footpath from Lodge Close at this point. The footpath then opens out into the beautiful Green Belt parkland of Knowle Hill Park on your left. Continue on the path for 10 mins or so as it slopes gradually uphill.
2. At the top of the parkland meadow there are beautiful views looking back, from which you can see the Semaphore Tower on Chatley Heath in the distance. The parkland meadow is a wonderful haven for birds and if you are lucky you may see buzzards, sparrow hawks, woodpeckers and even owls hunting at dusk. We are also fortunate to occasionally see the deer, foxes, hedgehogs and even badgers. During the summer you will hear the crickets and grasshoppers. The hedgerows and meadow here are brimming with Speckled Wood, Meadow Browns, Skippers and Small Copper butterflies.

3. At the top of the field keep straight on to the right and cross a stile. The Polyapes Scout camp is on your right at this point. The path then skirts across the top of a field with horses in adjoining fields below. In the top meadow you may see Common Blue butterflies, skimming dragonflies and hear the chorus of grasshoppers amongst the wonderful wild flowers where the occasional Common Orchid can be seen.

4. Having walked across the field you will cross another stile and continue along a path with Polyapes on your right. Just after you have passed 2 houses on your left take a left turn down a few steps and then cross a small wooden bridge that spans a shallow (often dried up) stream.

5. You have now reached the Brickpit Lake, which is well worth a stop to admire the views and watch and listen to the wildlife. From wispy blue and red damselflies all around the lakeside, Speckled Wood butterflies and listening to Chiff Chaffs in the trees. The lake gets its name from the brick factory that existed in the 19th century and was created as a result of clay being extracted to make bricks. The area became an ammunition dump in the 1st World War and in the 2nd World War the Canadian army occupied the factory. The brickworks finally closed in 1960 and the houses around the lake were built in the early 70’s. The area to the north is Littleheath Common with a great abundance of wildlife, birds and insects.

You now have two options; you can turn right when you reach the lake and walk around the lakeside taking two more right turns to circle back to the original footpath you turned off by the steps or turn left keeping the lake on your right. This walk will take the latter option.

6. Taking the left hand fork at the west side of the lake continue along the path (you will pass a turn off for Heathfield on your right). You can now take a heritage diversion (a) or continue onto Oxshott Heath at the far end of Littleheath Lane for a longer walk (b) or start on your return journey (7).

   a. If you opted for the Heritage diversion continue on, crossing two small wooden plank bridges with a small pond on the right. Take the next left hand fork and continue straight at the next fork where after 500 yards you will emerge onto Littleheath Lane. You are now close to the site the Diggers occupied in 1649. Keep left through Littleheath Common woods which run alongside Littleheath lane for 100 yards to see a sign opposite Links Green Way at the Bottom of Knipp Hill providing information on the Diggers. The Diggers community was short-lived on Littleheath Common and by mid 1650 Parson John Platt, Lord of the Manor of Cobham and other landowners had driven them out. Retrace your steps back into Littleheath woods.
b. To continue the walk to Oxshott Heath take the next left hand fork and then at the next fork take a right, you will cross another small wooden plank bridge and eventually you will come out on Somerville Road. To go onto Oxshott Heath turn left turn onto Littleheath Lane and then turn right and walk along the lane for approx. 1000 yards. You will arrive at Browns Corner and Oxshott Heath is ahead of you with a multitude of different routes and paths to take. From this part of the Heath you can walk towards Sandy Lane, cross it and arrive at Esher Common with its choice of paths and trails.

7. To return home turn take the left hand fork and then at the next fork take a right, you will cross another small wooden plank bridge and eventually you will come out on Somerville Road. Turn right on Somerville Road, passing Heathfield on your right and then turn right into Hawkhurst. At the end of Hawkhurst turn left onto the footpath passing a vehicle barrier.

8. You will pass a small pond on your right and the next right turn would take you back to the Brickpit pond. Keep left here with the railway track on your left hand side and continue along the footpath for about 2000 yards. This area of woodland is designated Ancient Woodland and as you walk you will see the hazel coppicing that has taken place over the centuries on your right with a wonderful display of bluebells every spring.

9. The land to your left is Polyapes scout camp once again and you have now come full circle (point 4 above). Continue along the footpath past two houses on your right until you reach a stile, cross the field and a second stile and you are back once again at the top of the Knowle Hill Park meadow. Keeping the field on your right, walk down the footpath enjoying the views and retrace your steps to the start of our walk.