A circular walk around Oxshott Heath, a designated Site of Scientific Interest and a popular walk for dog walkers (it is Sue’s dog Holly’s favourite walk). The Heath has a varied history; at one time being owned by Queen Victoria and since the early 20th century owned by Elmbridge Borough Council. The sandpit was a source of commercial building sand in the 19th century and during World War II was used for sandbags. In WWII Canadian soldiers were billeted nearby and used the Heath for training and recreation plus lending a hand with woodland management. The Heath is criss-crossed by a maze of paths so we have tried to follow more major paths.

Parking: Limited parking is available free of charge Brown’s Corner on Littleheath Lane.

Length of the walk: approx. 50 minutes to 1 hour walk, approx. 2.4 km in length

Start from Brown’s Corner on Littleheath Lane on the edge of Oxshott and Cobham, just past the level crossing.

The Map

The Walk

1. Take the left hand path that runs parallel to Kimberley Ride (the second path is a bridleway) and follow this as it gently rises uphill; keep straight on at a small clearing with a large log and a bench until you reach a second clearing where there is an Oxshott Heath noticeboard, a bench and also access via other paths on the left to Reeds School and The Ridings.

2. Turn right and then almost immediately take the second path on your left, just after this there is a small knee high marker post and at this point take another lefthand path into more densely wooded land. At the next junction keep straight (effectively the 3rd path from the left).

3. Continue on, ignoring another path that joins from the right and then the left. The terrain rises at this point and you need to keep left as the path comes to a fork. Immediately after this the path starts to flatten out, and you come to a crossroads of paths. Continue on the path you are on keeping almost straight ahead on a very well trodden route. This undulates for a short
distance and then begins to go downhill where you eventually meet another junction with at least 6 paths joining it.

4. At this point you will have walked approx. 1 km. You will see a wooden post with a Trail 2000 carving and a white arrow on the left, continue straight on past this (which is the 3rd path from your left) and after a short distance you will also pass another Trail 2000 post on your right.

5. You will arrive at the north west corner of the sandpit; a lovely open area surrounded by gorse bushes, small oak and fir trees. Take the lefthand path along the ridge effectively walking in a clockwise direction around the sandpit.

6. You will pass the Warren Lane carpark on your left, continue round keeping the sandpit on your right. As you reach the southeast side of the sandpit keep right at a fork; the path narrows and you walk between small silver birch trees and gorse bushes until you reach a junction with another Trail 2000 wooden post. You will have walked around approximately two thirds of the sandpit. Follow the wide path ahead and slightly to your left, ignoring other smaller paths that merge in.

7. This path slightly rises and at the end you will come out on a ridge with the War Memorial on your right affording one of the best views of Surrey on clear days. This was erected by Sir Robert McAlpine, then a resident of Fairmile Court, and commemorates both WWI and WWII. There are a couple of benches where you can sit and admire the views.

8. Take the lefthand path from the ridge with another Trail 2000 post on your right. The path slopes downhill, passing a horse barrier. Just after this barrier turn right down a few steps and the path then flattens out.

9. You will see a bench on the left and at this point turn right across some recently cleared land toward the large open green area and cross the gravelly track. It is said that the Canadian troops used this as a natural baseball ground in WWII. Looking up to the right you get a good view of the war memorial and the south slopes covered in heather providing beautiful colours in July and August.

10. Continue slightly right on a small trodden path across the grassy area, with a bench ahead of you on your left and walk towards the wooded area of tall pine trees with gorse bushes on your right. Walk back into the woodland passing a cleared area on your right after a short distance.

11. At a fork take the righthand path and then cross a sandy path shortly afterwards. You will then reach another fork immediately after this and again keep right. Continue walking through the woodland, populated by large numbers of ferns, hollies and an increasing number of beech trees.

12. Take another righthand fork and cross two small wooden plank “bridges” walking underneath the branches of a stately large beech tree. You eventually arrive at a wider path sloping downhill from the right with a Trail 2000 post. Cross this path going straight ahead at the Trail 2000 post following a lightly trodden path through the wooded beech tree area into more dense woodland.

13. Walk through this wooded area with beech trees and holly bushes and then turn right onto any of the paths that you meet. The paths wind their way through woodland back to Browns Corner where you commenced the walk.

Sue Prentice and Sally Ollett

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