

The Wind in the Willows Trail

Cookham Dean and
Bisham Woods



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TRUST



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Trust

This 8km/5mile walk (or 5km/3mile for short route) around the rural community of Cookham Dean celebrates the farmland, woodland and village lanes that inspired Kenneth Grahame, author of the classic children's tale *The Wind in the Willows*. As a child Grahame lived at The Mount in Cookham Dean, and returned to the village as an adult to write the book.

Discover fantastic views across the Thames Valley, the picturesque village of Cookham Dean and the woodland of Bisham, which was the inspiration for *The Wind in the Willows*.

Supported by



Walking directions

These directions begin from the Cookham Dean Common car park but you can join this circular trail at any point on the route.

- 1** From the National Trust car park head out across Cookham Dean Common, following the path that skirts around the left edge of the common. Continue following the path to the left of the large house and grounds at the northern edge of Cookham Dean Common, turning left by a yellow grit salt bunker. Take the lane to the right after passing the way marker to Combe End that points back from the direction you just came.
- 2** After 120m cross over the triangle of grass with lone silver birch tree and briefly continue along the Chiltern Way Berkshire Loop, turning right before the kissing gate. Follow the woodland path up a gentle hill until you reach Bigfrith Common.
- 3** Continue past the telephone box taking the next right before taking the sharp left turn onto Church Road.
- 4** Continue past St John the Baptist Church until you reach the village war memorial.

5 Short route

Take a left at the village war memorial, past the sign for Sanctum on the Green restaurant, re-joining the Chiltern Way Berkshire Loop taking a left at the No Vehicles sign. Continue down the hill past Cookham Dean Quarry on the left, taking a right before the Old Stables and following the Cookham Bridleway Circuit. After 50m, take the footpath on the left and continue uphill until you reach Dean Lane. Keep following Dean Lane until the junction and enter Bisham Woods at the Woodland Trust car park.

You have now joined point 12 on the trail.

5 Long route

Take the right fork past the village war memorial on your left. Pass Popes Lane on your left and follow Hills Lane before taking the public footpath across Harding Green with houses set back on your right. At the other end of Harding Green turn right onto a track and left after the houses on your left, following a footpath sign. Continue down the footpath to a gate for a great view towards Cookham and Cliveden House on the distant ridge.

6 Retrace your steps to the small parcel of common land that makes up Harding Green, this time turning right and crossing Hills Lane to take Warners' Hill past the sign for Uncle Tom's Cabin to the right. Continue down Warners' Hill, taking a right at the bottom where it meets Dean Lane. After 50m you will reach a triangle of land at the centre of a group of 16th Century timber framed cottages.

7 Cross Dean Lane and take the road on the left, continuing along Alleyns Lane. Take the footpath on the left immediately before Alleyns Lane meets Bradcutts Lane. Follow the footpath until you reach a kissing gate and road just beyond.

8 Continue straight past the drive way on your left until you soon come to an unmarked track on the right into woodland. Take this track downhill until you meet a crossing. Cross straight over and continue until the track joins Spade Oak Reach.

9 Straight ahead you will see brown bridleway markers. Cross Stonehouse Lane and follow the right hand bridleway marker down Gibraltar Lane, taking a left at the silver Winter Hill National Trust sign. Continue along this track until you re-join the end of Gibraltar Lane.

10 Follow the left fork joining up with the Cookham Bridleway Circuit until you reach the gates for Quarry Wood End (house). Follow the uphill path to its left. Continue past the entrance to Quarry Clyffe House and Quarry Wood Hall. After 550m

join the junction with Quarry Wood Road and take the footpath immediately on your left, climbing up the steep hill until the path re-joins Quarry Wood Road.

- 11** Cross the road and continue up the wooded footpath. Cross over Quarry Wood Road following the footpath for a 140m before taking the footpath on your right that squeezes between residential properties. At the end of this footpath you will again reach Quarry Wood Road, cross over for a third and final time and enter Quarry Wood at the small Woodland Trust car pull in area to your left.
- 12** Taking the footpath bearing right, you'll see a blue topped post in the distance ahead (make sure to avoid following the track on your left by the bench). Follow for 360m. Here you will find another bench, opposite from which is a fantastic view of the Thames Valley towards Marlow.
- 13** Continue along the path, keeping the steep slope on your right. After 280m take the right fork past another blue topped post downhill for a further 180m where you join up with a bridleway. Follow the way marker for the bridleway downhill which will lead you to a five-way crossroad.
- 14** At the crossroad take the track straight on beyond the five-way marker, with a short way marker on its right side. You are now leaving Quarry Wood and entering Fultness Wood. After 200m leave the bridleway, climbing the earthen bank to your left. Continue up the steep slope until it levels out, following the trail and crossing over a footpath before passing through the kissing gate after several minutes. Follow the hedge line on your left, cross over into the field on the left. With the hedge line now on your right, pass a bench and continue for 360m before taking the stile and small ramp through the trees on the left. Straight ahead is Winter Hill Road, and beyond the National Trust car park where you started.

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Mixed surfaces including grass, multi-user paths and pavement. Some steep climbs and descents. Grassy areas may be slippery when wet and some areas of Bisham Woods may be muddy.



11 Quarry Wood

Quarry Wood and Fultness Wood are part of the Woodland Trust's ancient Bisham Woods which are a broadleaf and conifer mix, rich in bluebells and orchids in the springtime. Quarry Wood is likely to be the inspiration for Grahame's 'Wild Wood,' home to Badger.



12 The Thames Valley

Looking towards Marlow from Quarry Wood, the River Thames can be seen far below. The Thames provided great inspiration for Grahame, who based much of the early action of *Wind and the Willows* on the water, where Ratty teaches Mole the ways of the river.



1 Cookham Dean's Commons

The commons were originally part of the Royal Manor of Cookham, but were sold off by the Crown in 1818 and passed into private ownership. In the 1920s, the Maidenhead and Cookham Commons Conservation Committee was established, raising £2800 to buy the land and donating it to the National Trust in 1934.

3 Cookham Dean's Telephone Box Library

A redundant red telephone box on the corner of Bigfrith Common has been reconditioned and transformed into one of the world's smallest libraries. The library is stocked with more than 150 books for anyone in the community to borrow.



9 Winter Hill

Managed by the National Trust, the name is believed to derive from its usage as winter pasture for livestock. It consists of a mixture of open grassland, blocks of scrub and wooded slopes.



6 Sixteenth Century Cottages

The cluster of buildings at the junction are historically and architecturally the most significant in the village and were part of the draw of the rural idyll back to Cookham Dean for Grahame, whose childhood years spent in the village were his happiest.

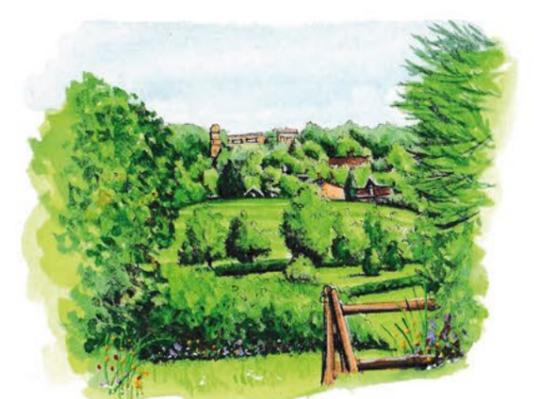


The Mount

Grahame spent a period of his childhood living at The Mount on Spring Lane with his grandmother and siblings. His many jaunts in surrounding fields and woods, as well as boating trips on the nearby River Thames inspired many of the adventures of Ratty, Mole and Toad. Taking the short route from point 5 to 12 will take you past Herries Preparatory School, which was previously Mayfield, Grahame's home in Cookham Dean where he wrote *The Wind in the Willows*.

5 Cliveden

For more than 300 years, the National Trust's Cliveden was home to dukes, earls, viscounts and for a while a prince. Successive owners sculpted the gardens and landscape, sparing no expense to create a magnificent summer retreat.



- The Wind in the Willows Trail
- Short trail route
- Permissive footpath
- Car park
- Public house





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Getting here

ADDRESS: Winter Hill Rd, Cookham, Maidenhead, Windsor and Maidenhead SL6 6PJ

BY TRAIN: The nearest railway station is Cookham Station

ON FOOT: Chiltern Way, Berkshire Loop, see OS map 172.

BY BUS: 238/239 Maidenhead - Cookham Dean. Buses stop by the Jolly Farmer Public House.

BY CAR: Free parking at Cookham Dean Common.

Nearest postcode is SL6 6PJ. Latitude: 51.551320, Longitude: -0.75882241



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Kempton Way, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG31 6LL

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