

## The LDWA Games Hundred



The London Olympics has given us an opportunity to stage an event linked to the Games which utilises walking routes in and around London. We hope it will be a reminder to all of the many walking routes in our towns and cities throughout the UK. We have been awarded the 2012 Games Inspire Mark for this year's Hundred with the aim of encouraging participation by the general public in sporting activities. We are organising a series of short *Inspire Walks* to achieve this objective, as detailed in Strider. The main features of the Hundred are described below and we hope this

information will add to your enjoyment of the event.

The route has been devised to visit some of the Olympic sites in London. The event starts at White Post Bridge, which is adjacent to the Olympic Stadium, the site of the field and track events for the 2012 Games.

From White Post Bridge the route enters Victoria Park, the first public park to be created in Britain. For the poor in the nineteenth century the East End of London was a very unhealthy place to live. Conditions in the workplace were appalling and houses were shabby and overcrowded. There was hardly any clean drinking water, little or no education and no access to open spaces or leisure facilities. In 1839 a report by the Registrar General drew attention to the extremely high mortality rate for the East End compared to other areas of London and recommended the creation of a public park. In response, Victoria Park was created and to this day continues to be a well used and popular park. During the Second World War the park became a huge anti-aircraft gun site with some areas cultivated to grow food.



The park is split into two by Grove Road. The smaller western section is the more picturesque with its large lake, ornamental gardens and deer park.



From Victoria Park the route joins the Regent's Canal which links the Grand Union Canal with the River Thames. Opened in 1820, the canal enabled goods to be transferred from sea-faring ships via barges to the Midlands. Today the canal is used for pleasure cruising and its towpath is a busy cycle route. British Waterways has carried out studies into the effects of sharing the towpath between cyclists and pedestrians, all of which have concluded that despite the limited width there are relatively few problems.

After half a mile the route leaves the towpath and cuts through Mile End Park. Created from industrial land laid waste by World War II bombing, the park forms a green area linking housing developments to the River Thames. The two areas of the park, divided by the Mile End Road, are linked by the Green Bridge. It was here at Mile End in 1381 that the 60,000 *Men of Essex* camped and met Richard II during the Peasant's Revolt.



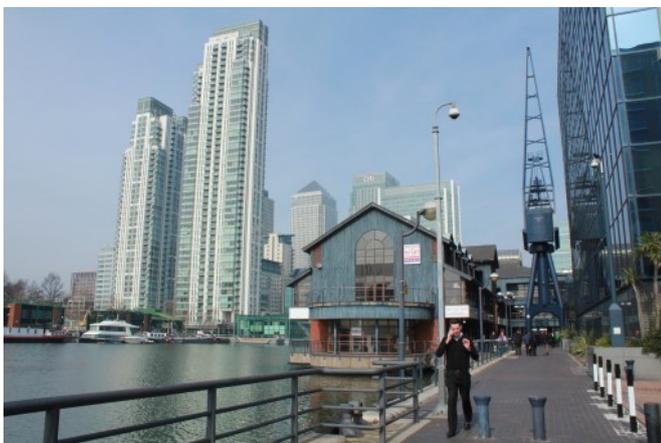
After crossing the Green Bridge the route returns to the towpath and follows the canal to Limehouse Basin. The basin was originally used to transfer cargo from seagoing vessels to canal barges. Today it is used by pleasure craft, and blocks of luxury apartments sit on the once derelict land surrounding the basin.

After Limehouse Basin the route passes through Ropemakers Fields, now a peaceful park. It is the largest open space in Limehouse and for several centuries ropes for shipping and mining were made in this area. The route then joins the Thames Path which, at this point, offers good views of this area of docklands once busy with many merchant ships.



The route then crosses an area of land, known as The Isle of Dogs, bounded on three sides by a large meander in the Thames. In the 16th century, when Henry VIII had a magnificent palace at Greenwich, opposite the southern tip of the meander, his dogs were housed on the marshy land across the river. Hence the name Isle of Dogs .

The route cuts through Canary Wharf, now one of London's two financial centres, with its iconic tower. The wharf houses the European Headquarters of many of the world's most prestigious banks and financial service companies. Located on the site of the former West India Docks, once part of the busiest port in the world, the docks closed to commercial traffic in 1980 and were redeveloped at the end of that decade. In addition to the many office buildings, there are large retail areas sited, Canadian style, below ground.



After crossing a footbridge over West India South Dock, the route later follows the edge of Millwall Dock, the southern docks on the Isle of Dogs. In its heyday, Millwall Dock was the centre of the European grain trade, its huge Central Granary holding enough to feed the whole of London for a week. Hundreds of men and boys worked on the dock. For over a century the inner and outer dock basins were crowded with barges, tugs and steamships moving goods around the globe. Today Millwall docks is a sailing centre and dockside housing development.



Leaving Millwall Docks the route cuts through Mudchute Park. When Millwall Dock was being constructed in the 1860s, the spoil from the excavation of the Dock was dumped on this land using a conveyor system. The rich Thames mud was very fertile and the area quickly established itself as a wildlife habitat and a playground for local children. Over time it has developed into a park and a small city farm, and is very popular with local residents. The route then enters Millwall Park, a recreation ground facility, and the location of the first checkpoint, Millwall Rugby Club.

From the checkpoint the route takes the Greenwich foot tunnel under the River Thames. The tunnel is 1,217 feet in length and approx 50 feet deep. Its original purpose was to allow south London residents to work in the docks on the Isle of Dogs. It replaced an expensive ferry service and was opened in August 1902 at a cost of £127,000. It remains popular, with about 1.5 million people using it each year. It has recently been refurbished at a cost of £11.5 million. The circular entrance buildings are similar on both sides of the river and contain a lift and a long spiral flight of stairs. It is open 24 hours a day, although the lifts do not always run.



The view of the Royal Naval Hospital and the Queen's House from the riverfront near the tunnel entrance is named 'Canaletto' after the artist's 1752 oil painting. It is the only one of his London views which is little altered today. The painting is held in the National Maritime Museum's collection. Wren, the hospital's architect, claimed that the view 'was the finest view in Europe'.



Emerging from the Greenwich tunnel on the south side of the river you see the Cutty Sark. She is the only surviving tea clipper in the world and was built for the tea trade with the aim of out sailing the clipper Thermopylae. The trade was an intensely competitive race from China to London with the first ship to arrive each year making a substantial bonus. The Cutty Sark, launched in 1869, was named after the local Scots dialect words for a short petticoat, as worn by Nannie Dee in Burns' poem Tam o'Shanter. The Cutty Sark broke the world

sailing record by completing the trip from the Orient in only 107 days, and won the wool race from Australia 10 years out of 10, beating Thermopylae every time they met. She posted times of 67 days from Australia, and in one instance out sailed the fastest steamship.

The gates of the Old Royal Naval College are on King William Walk. This was originally the site of Greenwich Palace, the favourite palace of Henry VII. It was the birthplace of Henry VIII and of his two daughters Mary I and Elizabeth I. It was here that his son Edward VI died before reaching his sixteenth birthday. James I gave the palace to his wife, Queen Anne, who built a house here which became known as the Queen's House. During the English Civil War the palace fell into disrepair and was later demolished.



In 1694 Christopher Wren was commissioned to build The Royal Hospital for Seaman on the site. Now a World Heritage Site, its renowned twin buildings sit either side of the Queen's House. The hospital opened in 1712 as a residential home for injured sailors, on the model of Chelsea Hospital.



In January 1806, Lord Nelson's body lay in state in the Painted Hall before being taken up the river to Saint Paul's Cathedral for a state funeral. After 157 years, in 1869 the hospital closed. From 1873 to 1998 the site became The Royal Naval College, Greenwich. In 1967 Francis Chichester was knighted on the river steps of the College by Queen Elizabeth II for being the first person to single-handedly circumnavigate the world by the old clipper route.

Today the Painted Hall, the Chapel and the grounds are open daily to the public, free of charge. The site is also the home of The National Maritime Museum, the University of Greenwich and Trinity College of Music.





From the Greenwich section of the route you can see Greenwich Park. A former hunting park, it is the oldest Royal Park and covers 180 acres. It has good views over the River Thames, Isle of Dogs and the City of London. In the early 1600s, the park was laid out in the French style and many trees were planted, some of which remain today.

Roughly in the centre of the park, on the top of the hill, is the Royal Observatory. It was Charles II's great interest in science that resulted in the founding of The Royal Society in 1661. Sir Christopher Wren was commissioned to build The Royal Observatory, named Flamsteed House after the first Royal Astronomer John Flamsteed.



Outside, in a small plaza, is a statue of General James Wolfe, famous for his victory over the French in Canada.

Today Greenwich is most famous for Greenwich Mean Time. During World War II, there were anti-aircraft guns in the Flower Garden and the tips of some of the trees were cut off to widen the field of fire. Evidence of this can still be seen in the truncated shape of some of the trees. After the war, the park was restored to its former glory.

During the 2012 Olympics, Greenwich Park will be the venue for the equestrian events and the riding and running events of the modern pentathlon. For the Summer Paralympics in 2012, Greenwich Park will be used for the equestrian events. After the Games, the park will be restored to its original state.

From Greenwich the route takes the Thames Path to the Millennium Dome. Originally used to house the Millennium Experience in 2000, the project was the subject of considerable controversy as it failed to attract the number of visitors anticipated and had recurring financial problems. All of the original exhibition has since been demolished. Now called the O2 Arena, the Dome houses an indoor arena, a music facility, a cinema, an exhibition space, bars and restaurants.



From the Dome the route continues along the Thames Path passing the cable car link across the river. This project, estimated to cost £50 million, began its construction phase in August 2011. The cable car, at roughly the same height as the Dome, will offer spectacular aerial views of the Olympic Park. It is designed to cross the river every 30 seconds carrying up to 2,500 passengers per hour in each direction. The cable car will also carry bicycles, and passengers will be able pay for their journeys by using an Oyster Card.



From the Thames Clipper terminal on the North Greenwich Pier adjacent to the Dome, a water-bus service operates between eastern and central London carrying around 7,500 passengers daily.

The route follows the Thames Path to the Thames Barrier. The barrier has a span of 520 metres across the Thames at Woolwich. It was constructed in 1982, and took 8 years to build.



The 1953 floods in which 300 people were drowned and 160,000 acres of farmland were flooded, prompted an enquiry into solving the threat of flooding. The barrier was chosen from 41 proposals because it minimises interference with the flow of the river, does not restrict the headroom for shipping, and is aesthetically pleasing. It was designed to protect the capital until the year 2030.



The barrier has four main gates each as high as a five storey building and as wide as the opening of Tower Bridge (61 metres). Each gate is operated by its own 'hydraulic power pack', which is housed below a stainless steel roof. When fully open the semicircular gates are flush with the river bed in concrete supporting sills. They can also be raised clear of the water for maintenance purposes. Since its completion the barrier has been raised over 100 times as a precaution against flooding. The gates are also raised monthly for a test period at low tide.

From the Thames Flood Barrier the route heads south on the Green Chain Walk. A 40 mile network of trails, the Green Chain Walk provides a link between the River Thames and many of the open spaces in South-East London. It passes through woodland, grassland, parks and gardens and includes some interesting heritage sites, such as Eltham Palace. Most of the section we use is shared with the Capital Ring, a 78-mile circular walk around London.





The route passes through Maryon Park and Maryon-Wilson Park. This area of parkland was presented to the London County Council in 1891 by the Maryon-Wilson family. Maryon Park is built on the site of one of the old Charlton sandpits; another one nearby is occupied by The Valley, home of Charlton Athletic Football Club. Maryon Park has a flat centre and two sides that are heavily wooded and steep. The area was originally known as Hanging Wood, the retreat of highwaymen who robbed travellers on Shooters Hill and Blackheath. Those who were caught were

hanged here.

The Games 100 enters Charlton Park and later Hornfair Park. The land occupied by these parks also belonged to the Maryon-Wilson family and was bought by the then Metropolitan Borough of Greenwich in 1925. Part of the grounds were opened as Charlton Park in 1929 with another area opened as Hornfair Park in 1935. To the west of the route in Charlton Park lies Charlton House, the best preserved Jacobean house in Greater London.



The route crosses Woolwich Common, an area of military land. Once used extensively by the Royal Artillery as a training area, it is close to the former gun foundries in the Royal Arsenal, Woolwich. The Olympic shooting events are to be held at Woolwich Common.

After Shooters Hill Road, the route crosses Eltham Common and goes through a series of woods, the remaining areas of an ancient deciduous forest dating back over 8,000 years. Severndroog Castle, a three-sided folly in Oxleas Wood, was built to commemorate Commodore Sir William James who, in April 1755, attacked and destroyed the island fortress of Suvarnadurg on the western coast of India. James died in 1783 and the castle was built as a memorial to him by his widow, Lady James of Eltham.



The next feature on the route is Eltham Palace, one of the few medieval royal palaces to survive with substantial remains intact. Initially a moated manor house with vast parkland, it underwent significant changes most notably the addition of the Great Hall in the 1470s which is still visible today. Henry VIII was the last monarch to spend substantial amounts of money or time at Eltham. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century the Palace was eclipsed by Greenwich Palace and declined rapidly. In the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century, and for the next 200 years, the Palace was used as a farm. In 1828 a campaign to save the Great Hall from demolition resulted in its restoration but it was still used as a barn. In the 1930s a private house with an ultra-modern design was built by society millionaires Stephen and Virginia Courtauld as an art deco mansion. The most influential designers of the period created a series of rooms in a Hollywood style. They also incorporated the surviving

Great Hall into the building. The gardens were designed and laid out in the mid 1930s. The Courtaulds left Eltham in 1944 and the site was occupied by Army educational units until 1992. English Heritage assumed management of the palace in 1995.



From Eltham Palace the route takes King John's Walk and soon reaches Eltham College and its sports hall, the Eric Liddell Centre. Eric Liddell, the "Flying Scotsman" was the winner of the men's 400 metres at the 1924 Olympics in Paris. His Olympic feat and the religious convictions that influenced him, are depicted in the Oscar winning film "Chariots of Fire".

Liddell was the second son of Scottish missionaries serving in China. At the age of six, he and his brother Robert were enrolled in Eltham College, then a boarding school for the sons of missionaries. Their parents and sister returned to China. At Eltham, Eric was an outstanding sportsman becoming captain of both the cricket and rugby teams. He became well-known for being the fastest runner in Scotland. In 1922/3 he played in the Five Nations rugby matches, and at the AAA Championships won the 100 yards setting a British record of 9.7 seconds that would not be broken for 35 years.

The 1924 Olympics were hosted by Paris. A devout Christian, Liddell refused to run in a heat held on Sunday, the Christian Sabbath, and was forced to withdraw from the 100 metres race, his best event. The schedule had been published several months earlier, and his decision was made well before the Games. Liddell spent the intervening months training for the 400 metres, though his best time of 49.6 seconds, set in winning the 1924 AAA championship 440 yards, was modest by international standards.

The 400 metres was then considered to be a middle-distance event in which runners raced round the first bend and coasted through the back leg. In the 400 metres final Liddell raced the whole of the first 200 metres to be well clear of the favoured Americans. With little option but to treat the race as a complete sprint, he continued to race round the final bend. He was challenged all the way down the home straight but held on to win. He broke the existing Olympic and World records with a time of 47.6 seconds. It was ratified as a World record despite its being 0.2 seconds slower than the record for the greater distance of 440 yards. Because of his birth and death in China, some of that country's Olympic literature lists Liddell as China's first Olympic champion.

At Jubilee Country Park the LDWA Games 100 joins the London Loop for a short distance. This is another circular walk, 150 miles long.

The next notable feature near the route is Down House, the home of Charles Darwin and his family for 40 years, from 1842 until his death in 1882. It was here that Darwin worked on his theories of evolution by natural selection, which he had conceived in London before moving to Downe. His study, where he did most of his writing and microscope work, has been recreated from photographs. His "sandwalk" for his daily walks and "thinking time" is at the back of the site's large lawn and grounds. He also walked the many footpaths near to Down House including those used by the Hundred. Down House is managed by English Heritage and is open to the public on certain days. The route passes to the rear of the house.



The LDWA Games 100 continues through Biggin Hill, whose famous wartime aerodrome, lying just to the west of our route, was home to the Battle of Britain's Spitfire and Hurricane fighters. It is now a thriving business and private flying centre.

At Ledgers Road the route is briefly shared with the Vanguard Way, a 66-mile route from Croydon to Newhaven, developed by the Vanguard's Rambling Club, which traces its origins to a bottle of Drambuie shared in a guard's van on a train journey in 1965.



South of Woldingham School the route joins the North Downs Way (NDW) for the next 17 miles, leaving and rejoining at various points. The NDW is a national trail, 173 miles long, from Farnham to Dover. Much of the trail follows the legendary Pilgrims Way used by those making pilgrimages from Canterbury to Winchester to pray for St Swithun who was buried at the cathedral. The route was then used in reverse as pilgrims journeyed from Winchester to Canterbury Cathedral to pray at the shrine of Thomas Becket. The NDW has some of

the finest scenery in South East England, and the tracks it follows on top of the Downs were used by ancient Palaeolithic man some 250,000 years ago. Below are some of the features you will find on this section of the route.

Gatton Park is a country estate whose history can be traced back to the Domesday Book. Today the eastern area of the park is occupied by the Royal Alexander and Albert School. The school, which had its origins in the 1700s as the Orphan Working School, came to the site in 1947. It is the second largest state boarding school in the UK with pupils from the age of 7 to 18. The western part of the site is administered by the National Trust. In the mid eighteenth century the park was landscaped by 'Capability' Brown. The last private owner of the Gatton estate was Jeremiah Colman, famous for Colman's Mustard. He bought the estate in 1888 and made a number of changes to it, most notably the Japanese Garden and the Pulhamite Rock Garden.



Reigate Hill, the seventh highest point in Surrey, offers magnificent views of the Weald and South Downs. Half a mile west of Reigate Hill car park is a memorial seat to the nine crew members of a wartime Flying Fortress. In 1945 the bomber, returning from a raid near the Czech border, crashed into Reigate Hill in dense cloud.

Reigate Fort on the west side of Reigate Hill was one of 13 mobilisation centres built between 1889 and 1903 to protect London from foreign invasion. These mobilisation centres form a defensive line for 72 miles along the North Downs. It was used in World War I for ammunition storage and in World War II Canadian troops were stationed at the site. Reigate Fort has been looked after by the National Trust since 1932 and was fully restored in 2000.





At Colley Hill, the sixth highest point in Surrey, is the Georgian Pavilion folly presented to the Corporation of the Borough of Reigate by Lieutenant-Colonel Robert William Inglis in 1909. It was built as a drinking fountain for horses en route to Reigate. Its bright blue ceiling depicts the sky at night. It now houses a toposcope (direction indicator).

Brockham Limeworks is in the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It is a Site of Special Scientific Interest because of its unique wildlife habitats. Decades of industrial chalk quarrying have shaped the land, and many of the plants only exist because of the chalk. The old chalk quarry lies within the centre of the site. A network of narrow gauge rail tracks carried the chalk to two batteries of lime kilns. Here the chalk was burned to produce quick-lime, used to make mortar and fertilisers.



The site reached its peak at the end of the Victorian era and digging continued until 1936. Since then the deep scar in the landscape has gradually been reclaimed by nature. The derelict remains of the lime kilns, now a grade II listed building, provide a winter roost for as many as eight species of bat.



Box Hill takes its name from the ancient box woodland found on the steep west-facing chalk slopes overlooking the River Mole. The western part of the hill is owned and managed by the National Trust. In 1914 Leopold Salomons donated Box Hill to the National Trust to protect it from development. The Salomons Memorial, overlooking the town of Dorking, is Box Hill's most popular viewpoint. Its north and south-facing slopes are noted for its orchids and other rare plant species, and are the habitat for 40 species of butterfly. An estimated 850,000 people

visit Box Hill each year. The National Trust visitors' centre has a cafeteria and gift shop.

The Box Hill Zig Zag Road is on the route of the 2012 Olympic cycling road race, with the men doing nine circuits and the women two circuits. In 1817 Keats stayed at the Burford Bridge Hotel at the foot of Box Hill. It was here that he finished his poem *Endymion*.



At Grid Reference TQ 177 514 lies the grave of Peter Labilliere. He was born in Dublin on 30th May 1725 to a family of French Huguenots. He joined the British Army at the age of 14, becoming a Major in 1760.



After leaving the services he moved to Dorking, where he lived as a tenant in the home of a widowed seamstress who had five children. He began to neglect his appearance, generally wearing a long blue coat and a tricorn hat. He was a kind character frequently purchasing items of clothing for folks he found in distress. He often went to Box Hill, his favourite spot, where he would pass long periods in meditation on the side of the hill.

In spite of his eccentricities he remained a lifelong friend of the Duke of Devonshire whom he visited each year on the 6th of June staying exactly one month. In 1799 he extended his visit to three months. On returning home he informed his landlady that he had come back to live and die with her, and that his life would end exactly nine months later. Immediately his health began to fail. After nine months, on the fateful day he stretched out his arms, folded them, and died.

His last wishes were executed. He wished that the youngest son and daughter of his landlady should dance on his coffin. His second wish was that he should be buried upside down at his favourite spot on Box Hill, having obtained permission from the owner Henry Peters. He was buried on 11th June 1800 and for many years it became a tradition to visit the grave on the anniversary of his death for the purposes of picnicking and dancing.

Tradition tells us that he was buried upside down because of his belief that when the world turned topsy-turvy he would be right at last. His diaries suggest a different explanation. He was a great admirer of St Peter, and always spoke of his desire to emulate him in his ideals of generosity and faith. St Peter felt unworthy of receiving a similar death to Christ, requesting instead crucifixion on an inverted cross. It is likely that Major Labilliere's faith made him wish to suffer a similar upside down fate.



At the bottom of Box Hill near to the Burford Hotel lies Ryka's cafe, an institution amongst motorbike riders. On most Saturdays and Sundays the car park will be full of motorbikes and bikers. It is also a popular stop off with cyclists and walkers.

At Ashcombe Wood the route temporarily leaves the North Downs Way. To the south lies Denbies Wine Estate, a 265 acre vineyard, the largest in England. Near to the site of a Roman vineyard, it produces some of the finest sparkling and table wines in Europe which are awarded regular certification in the annual International Wine Challenge. The estate is open to the public and has a visitor centre, shop and restaurant.





The route crosses Ranmore Common to reach Tanners Hatch Youth Hostel. In the Middle Ages the most difficult and unproductive land was frequently enclosed as "wastes" or "commons", used by villages for grazing and the gathering of firewood as fuel. On the Downs lay the "Upper or South Common", now Ranmore Common. Then it would have been open grassland, with bracken, gorse and scattered trees. Commons needed to be well-fenced or hedged, and Ranmore was no exception. There were five gates or "hatches" one of them being Tanners Hatch. In the 1330s just outside the common by Tanners Hatch, a

timbered and thatched cottage was built.

Six and a half centuries later parts of that dwelling still stand, incorporated by successive rebuilding into the cottage we know today as Tanners Hatch. From 1930 to 1944 the cottage was abandoned and decay set in. In 1942 the owner of the Polesdon Lacey died and left the estate to the National Trust. From 1944 to 1946 volunteers worked on the cottage restoring and converting it into a Youth Hostel. The cottage then began the busiest time of its life accommodating visitors from near and far.



Outside Tanners Hatch Hostel is the Blatchford memorial bench donated by the LDWA in memory of Alan Blatchford, one its co-founders.

From Tanners Hatch the route goes south. It crosses Ranmore Common Road and follows a bridleway close to Steer's Field, land owned by the National Trust and dedicated to Chris Steer, a co-founder of the LDWA.

As you descend to the valley bottom, just before the railway tunnel, the National Trust land to the north on the ridge is called Blatchford Down. As a result of donations given after Alan's death, the area was cleared, fenced and named after him.



The route passes through the Wotton Estate and Abinger Common to reach the breakfast stop at Belmont School. From Belmont the route crosses the Hurtwood en route to Peaslake.



The Hurtwood is a huge area of heath and forest stretching to the boundary of the Greensand hills. In 1926 it was one of the first privately-owned places in England to create a "right to roam". The present-day Friends of the Hurtwood look after the 3000 acres of forest and 60 miles of official paths.

It was here in the window of the old Post Office in Peaslake that Chris Steer saw the notice placed by Alan Blatchford advertising the Tanners Marathon. This led to their friendship and to the founding of the LDWA. The old Post Office is now a bicycle shop called Pedal and Spoke.



From Peaslake the route goes south through Hurt Wood to rejoin the Greensand Way. This long distance path follows the ridge of greensand rock across Surrey and Kent to the edges of Romney Marsh. It takes its name from the layers of sandstone in each of which is found the green coloured mineral glauconite. The ridge is broadly parallel to and south of the North Downs ridge. It crosses the Surrey Hills and Kent Downs providing excellent views of the North Downs, the Weald and even the South Downs on a clear day.

At Pitch Hill the route passes the information board and toposcope erected as a memorial to Alan Blatchford (1936-1980) and Chris Steer (1919-1992), the founders of the LDWA.



Pitch Hill is the southernmost and highest point of the LDWA Games 100, at 843 feet (257 metres) above sea level. From Pitch Hill the route follows the Greensand Way past Ewhurst Windmill and across Reynards Hill before heading north west across various heaths and woodlands to Chilworth.



On Blacksmith Lane, Chilworth, the route passes the site of the Chilworth gunpowder mills'. The mills were established in 1626 by the East India Company and were originally driven by waterwheels from the Tilling Bourne which rises close to the summit of Leith Hill near Forest Green. Six hundred people were employed at the mills peak, although the majority provided support services. The mills were expanded during the reign of Charles I, and later made gunpowder for Parliament during the Civil War.

Prior to the mills being established, gunpowder was made by hand, mixing and crushing saltpetre, charcoal and sulphur with a pestle and mortar, a very hazardous process. The saltpetre was originally imported from India and North Africa. The bribery in 1561 of a German captain, Gerard Honrick, secured the recipe for making saltpetre from heapblack formed within dovecotes and stables, to which urine, dung and lime were added. In 1621 James I divided the country into districts for collection of saltpetre.

A German company took over the mills in 1885 to manufacture a new type of gunpowder that was virtually smokeless, using brown charcoal made from straw. Not long after however high explosives were developed using ballistite, and in 1889 cordite with nitroglycerin as its main ingredient. Both were manufactured at Chilworth with a second cordite factory being built there by the Admiralty in World War I. Chilworth stopped producing explosives in 1920 following a formal rationalisation of the explosives industry

The route passes Chilworth Manor then climbs St. Martha's Hill to the church, St. Martha-on-the-Hill. There is a belief that the original name of this hill was Saints and Martyrs Hill, the martyr being St Thomas of Canterbury.

In 1760 an explosion at the Chilworth powder mills destroyed the original Saxon Church, and eighteen years later another explosion damaged the remains. The church was rebuilt in 1850 incorporating parts of the 12th century church. It is accessible only by foot and lies on the Pilgrims Way. It briefly featured in the 1944 film 'A Canterbury Tale'. It may have been built as a landmark or beacon to assist travellers. During the First World War the Chilworth gunpowder mills' were provided with anti-aircraft guns, and St Martha's Church was heavily camouflaged with branches to prevent the building being used by enemy pilots as a landmark for navigation.



From St. Martha's the route descends from the Greensand Ridge and climbs the North Downs chalk ridge towards Newlands Corner. From this ridge there are good views across the Weald to the South Downs. In spring and summer, the chalk grassland is a spectacular carpet of wild flowers.

At Newlands Corner the visitor centre and cafe are popular with classic bikers whose average age tends to be a bit higher than those who meet down the road at Box Hill.



After Newlands Corner the route goes through the village of West Clandon passing the entrance to Clandon Park. Clandon Park, a Palladian mansion, was built for the 2nd Lord Onslow in the 1720s. The interiors remain faithful to the period featuring original plaster ceilings, the most impressive of which is in the Marble Hall. Since Sir Richard Onslow acquired it in 1641, the estate has been passed down through generations of Onslows. The family is unique in providing three Speakers of the House of Commons including Arthur Onslow, The Great Speaker. Today the house at Clandon Park contains a

superb collection of 18th-century furniture, porcelain and textiles. While the wider parkland is still in the hands of the Onslow family, the mansion and seven acres of gardens were given to the National Trust in 1956.

The route briefly joins the Wey Navigation. Opened in 1653, the Wey was one of the first British rivers to be made navigable. In 1764 the Godalming Navigation opened, creating a 20-mile waterway running from the Thames at Weybridge to Godalming, now the southernmost part of the inland waterway network. Originally the Wey Navigation was used for transporting barge loads of heavy goods via the Thames to London. Timber, coal, corn, flour, wood and even gunpowder were regularly moved up and down the waterway. The Wey, unlike many other less efficient waterways, survived the railway era and, under private ownership, continued to trade until well after the Second World War. The last owners, Stevens & Sons, donated the Wey to the National Trust in 1964, and today it is one of the few financially self-supporting waterways.





After passing through Woking the route crosses Horsell Common. Originally Horsell Common was part of the *Great Park of Windsor*, in a section called *King's Waste*. Like most of the original Park, it eventually passed into private ownership and in 1805 the owner was the Earl of Onslow. At that time commons were being enclosed to create much-needed agricultural land but the Earl of Onslow ensured that Horsell Common was saved by being exempted. In 1966 the Horsell Common Preservation Society purchased the freehold of the Common for £1 an acre from Lord Onslow. Since

the 1980's the Common has been designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Many birds breed within the site including the nightjar, Dartford warbler, woodcock, stonechat and grasshopper warbler. In his book 'The war of the Worlds' H.G. Wells chose the sandpit at Horsell Common as the site of the first Martian landing.

The route passes along the western edge of Fair Oaks Airport, a small privately run facility used mainly for pilot training and by small charter aircraft. During World War II over 6,000 RAF pilots were trained at Fair Oaks.

The next feature on the route is Chobham Common. In 1968 the Common was purchased by Surrey County Council from Lord Onslow for £1 an acre and is now managed by Surrey Wildlife Trust. The Common has been recognised as one of the finest examples of lowland heath in Europe - in 1994 it was designated a National Nature Reserve. Chobham Common was used by the military during the 1920s and 1930s, and throughout the Second World War, when it was severely damaged by tanks. After the War, the southern part of the Common was ploughed and seeded with an annual grass to allow the natural vegetation to re-establish, while the area north of Staple Hill, which was not as heavily damaged, was allowed to recover naturally.



The last feature on the route is Windsor Great Park. The park, the only Royal Park managed by the Crown Estate, was once part of a vast Norman hunting forest which covered most of the counties of Berkshire, Surrey, Buckinghamshire and Middlesex. Over the years grants and encroachments gradually reduced the area and by 1600 it was a third of its original size. The present size of the park, 4800 acres, was determined by its enclosure in 1817 and the sale of 1800 acres to Sandhurst Military College in 1952. The parkland, which includes a Deer Park,

has a landscape of gardens, woodland and open grassland.



The route enters the park at Blacknest Gate and later crosses two bridges over Virginia Water. First dammed and flooded in 1753, Virginia Water was, until the creation of the great reservoirs, the largest man-made body of water in the British Isles.

The route weaves through part of the Valley Gardens. Located on the northern shores of Virginia Water, the gardens cover 250 acres and consist of grassy meadows and exotic shrubs. Visitors can see native trees alongside flowering cherries, azaleas, magnolias and numerous maples.



The route follows the southern shore of Obelisk Pond. On the northern side of the pond is the obelisk memorial to the Duke of Cumberland. It was originally inscribed "Culloden" but this was erased on Queen Victoria's orders and replaced with "Cumberland".

The route goes north west along a wide grassy avenue. The area to the left, now polo fields, is called Smith's Lawn. In 1948 the Olympic Cycle Road Race was started on the adjacent drive by Price Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh. The 17 lap circuit passed through Cumberland Gate. José Beyaert of France was the winner after a well executed attack in the last kilometre. Britain's best was Bob Maitland, in sixth place.



The route crosses the old cricket ground in front of Cumberland Lodge. The largest house in Windsor Great Park, Cumberland Lodge was built in 1652 on land which Oliver Cromwell had appropriated from the Crown. The house only acquired its present name when the Duke of Cumberland lived there in the mid eighteenth century.

After Cumberland's death in 1765 the Lodge was modified and extended by successive occupants. Though King George III never lived at the Lodge he often visited it and stored part of his book collection there, which became the nucleus of both the British Library and the library at Windsor Castle.

Throughout her life Queen Victoria was a frequent visitor . Her daughter Princess Helena lived at the Lodge for over fifty years. In 1947, the King made the Lodge available to the newly established St. Catharine's Foundation, later known as the King George VI and Queen Elizabeth Foundation of St. Catharine's. Today the organisation, an educational charity, is simply known as Cumberland Lodge. The Lodge organises its own major conference programme and initiates debate on issues of national and international significance.



From Cumberland Lodge the route passes Ox Pond and then goes along a wide grassy avenue. To the right lies the Royal Lodge. In 1931 it was granted to the Duke and Duchess of York later King George VI and Queen Elizabeth. The Queen Mother continued to use the Lodge as a weekend retreat until her death in 2002. Today it is the home of Prince Andrew.

The route passes the Copper Horse, a statue of George III on horseback. It was erected on Snow Hill by his son, George IV in 1830. George IV wanted the statue of his father to resemble that of Peter the Great in St Petersburg, hence the massive base.



There are fine views of the Castle from The Copper Horse. It is said that in 1536 Henry VIII stood on Snow Hill awaiting news of Anne Boleyn's execution which was to be signalled by gunfire from The Round Tower. This claim is also made for King Henry VIII's Mound in Richmond Park



The route follows the Long Walk towards Windsor Castle. The construction of the Long Walk was commenced by Charles II from 1680-1685, by planting a double avenue of elm trees. In 1710 Queen Anne had a road constructed down the centre of the tree-lined avenue so that coaches could head out into the park on a smooth surface. Over the years the Elms have been replaced by Oak, Horse Chestnut and London plane trees.

Where the Long Walk crosses the A308 the route leaves the Great Park for Trevelyan School.