

Rail to Trail – Ascot to Bagshot

Through Ascot Racecourse, Englemere Pond, Swinly Park and Bagshot Heath, a lovely varied route

1. Leave the station look left and follow the wide footpath all the way to the road in front of Ascot Stadium. At the road turn right, cross the crossing and continue to the right past all the shops.
2. At the roundabout, turn left into Winkfield Road. Soon the road passes under the racecourse bridge. After the bridge, cross the road to the other side and look for a gap in the crash barrier. Go through the gap, turn left and drop down the steps to the road and turn left again under the bridge. Follow the road around sharp right and take the first tarmac path on the left at a small sign for the Three Castles Path. Another small sign will point you on a grassy path between some hedges. The huge stadium is over to your left. Keep following this slightly deteriorating path until you meet another tarmac track. Turn left. Follow this now crossing the racetrack as the path zigzags out onto the road.
3. Cross straight over into Kennel Avenue. At the end turn left into Burleigh Road. When you see the No Through Road sign and the Byway sign turn left into a continuance of Burleigh Road. At the top of the hill immediately after Burleigh Court, you will see a Byway sign pointing right. Follow this path all the way, it changes to a rough track until you meet the main road.
4. Turn right. When you reach the bollards in the centre of the road, cross to the path on the other side turn right, pass the bus stop and turn left into Englemere Pond. The prettiest views and most birds may be found by going left around the pond but the Three Castles Path takes the right-hand option which I have followed. Taking the left-hand route it will eventually take you to the same place. On the Three Castles Path the lake will disappear from view but continue on your main path which will be well worn. There are many trees and open heathland to enjoy. Before you reach the car park and to the left of it, there is a narrow path that heads towards a railway bridge you can see in the distance. Take this path keeping right towards the road and you will see an exit gate. This is the most challenging part of the walk because you have to cross the bridge on a busy narrow road. My preference is to cross to the other side and turn left up over the bridge facing the oncoming traffic in single file. Turn right into the Swinley Park car park.
5. Walk through the car park on the track to the big junction and take the left-hand wide track. You will pass a crossroads and a pile of huge tree logs just before another crossroads and then keep going to the next crossroads where we turn right at the Rambler's Route sign, there is a eucalyptus tree plantation now on your left apparently being grown for commercial reasons. Keep on this long track without deviating until after passing an open, newly planted area the now tarmac track turns to the right. After this turn, a short distance away, you will see a sign for the Rambler's Route out to the road.
6. Turn left here crossing the roundabout then out to the main A322. Cross here by way of the metal footbridge. You next come to the Coral Reef waterpark

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where you can stop for a drink or something to eat if you wish. Continue on the same path crossing the entrance road and turn left at the Rambler's Route sign using the traffic light crossing to the other side of the main road. Follow the path into the trees around to the right and through the car park. Pass the café, possibly more suitable than the waterpark in the summer. After passing the café on your right-hand side with play park on your left, go to the gate and turn left following the sign for Forest Walks.

7. Follow this wide track now until after crossing many crossroads you reach one where the wide track peters out in front of you and becomes just a narrow path. Now keep right here at an angle onto another main track to a junction.
8. Turn left and follow this very broad main track as it curves gently around to the right, ignore all the tracks and paths off this. Pass a young conifer plantation on your right-hand side. Crossover the crossroads keeping straight on. Go over the brow over the hill and keep right at the junction still on a wide track to the signpost
9. You can be saved the walk up Surrey Hill now so turn left onto Lake Ride. Keep right where the track splits. The path soon splits again and take the angled turning off to the right, it has a similar path alongside, mainly for cyclists. Now follow this lovely long straight wide track all the way to the end of the heath at Bagshot. Continue onto the road to the T junction.
10. Turn left passing the church on your left-hand side. At the A30, take the traffic light controlled pedestrian crossing to the other side of the road. Turn left and walk down along Bagshot High Street. Follow this as it bends around to the right passing the roundabout and head for the railway viaduct. Immediately before the viaduct turn left and you will see a footpath on the right running parallel with the railway This leads you to the quaint little station.