

06 SURREY LEITH HILL

▶ Distance: 13.2km/8¼ miles ▶ Time: 4½ hours ▶ Grade: Moderate



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PHOTO: TOM BAILEY

The view from Leith Hill into the Weald.



CHOSEN BY... PHILIP THOMAS

The childhood playground of composer Ralph Vaughan Williams, Leith Hill is the highest point on the Greensand Way, affording expansive views over the rural patchwork of the Weald. It's topped by an eye-catching Gothic folly built by an 18th eccentric to take the hill's height over the magic 1000 foot mark. After the short walk to the top, our route dips into the warren of heathland, wooded dells and hidden hamlets of the Surrey Hills, returning to the top before passing Vaughan Williams's home, Leith Hill Place, in a figure-of-eight.

1 Start

From the Rhododendron Wood car park entrance, follow the National Trust's woodland trail (orange signposts) over Leith Hill Road and up steps to join the Greensand Way east to Leith Hill Tower (small admission fee).

2 1.2km/¾ mile

From Leith Hill Tower, pick up the NT Heathland Trail northeast on the paths along the top of the scarp towards Coldharbour. Several tracks and trails converge soon after descending from tower; ignoring track cutting down to the right, take the fork curving up to the right. Ignoring path R to Landslip car park, continue along the green signed

PLAN YOUR WALK



ROUTE

Start/parking

NT Rhododendron Wood car park, grid ref TQ131427 (alternatives nearby)

Is it for me? An undulating route on woodland paths, bridleways and byways, including sections on well-marked trails. Briefly on lanes and road

Stiles None

PLANNING

Nearest town Dorking

Refreshments Leith Hill Tower, The Plough (Coldharbour), Stephan Langton Inn (point 5)

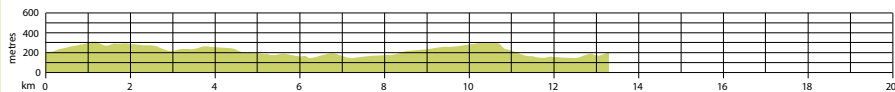
Public toilets None

Public transport Buses 50 & 363 Dorking-Coldharbour, plus limited seasonal service 765 to Leith Hill Place, www.buses4u.org.uk

Maps OS Explorer 146; Landranger 187

footpath to Coldharbour's cricket pitch. Then turn R on byway track to Coldharbour.

GRADIENT PROFILE



DON'T MISS...



The National Trust's Leith Hill Place, the childhood home of composer Ralph Vaughan Williams.

3 1.2km/¾ mile

From Coldharbour, swing L onto byway track (Wolvens Lane). After about 0.6km, turn L onto a clear track (bridleway, gated with NT sign) and continue to a crosspath at gap in wall, turning R onto bridleway through gate for Duke's Warren. Continue straight at crosspath with NT trails, going downhill to Whiteberry Gate to meet Greensand Way marker in dell. Turn R, going north to reach paved lane at Broadmoor.

4 6.4km/4 miles

Turn L onto lane, then R onto path at fingerpost, then R again, then a L fork onto a cut path towards Friday Street. Right of way crosses two lanes and passes a menacing Private Property sign; ignore NT path for Sevrall Copse, continue west to Friday Street millpond.

5 7.2km/4½ miles

Go around millpond, L on lane to Friday Street (signed), continuing past pub to pick up bridleway into woods, eventually emerging onto another lane. Turn L, then (ignoring paths forking off)



continue straight at curve - in lane to pick up bridleway south into Abinger Bottom. Continue straight to meet fence line, then after 0.3km, fork R up onto Leith Hill Road over a driveway. Turn L briefly beside road, picking up sign for bridleway into woods.

6 9.2km/5¾ miles

Continue straight towards Leith Hill, where path splinters, eventually emerging at tower (point 2). From here, follow NT's orange woodland trail again, taking path and zig-zag steps S, down to Windy Gap

car park, crossing road into Leith Hill Place woods. Follow orange marked trail through woods, beneath Leith Hill Place, into more woods, and back to car park. **CW**



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