

Introduction

This is one of a series of routes that may be enjoyed by all including wheelchair users, families with pushchairs, those wanting a more gentle walk and walkers who are less mobile. The route has been selected as it has no barriers, such as stiles or steps. Detailed information on the route is provided - it is up to the user to decide what is suitable for them. Every effort has been made to ensure the information is correct at the time of publication, however things change over time. West Sussex County Council would like to thank John and Jenifer Fox for providing the inspiration to publish easy countryside trail information.

Other routes can be found on the West Sussex County Council website: www.westsussex.gov.uk



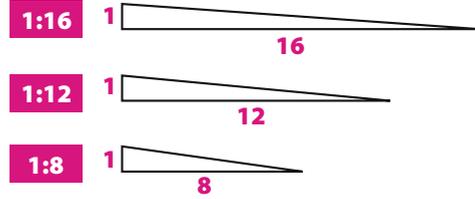
Public Travel



Some of the routes are accessible by public transport, for further information please visit www.westsussex.gov.uk or contact Travel line on 0871 200 22 33



Gradients



Gradients of slopes have been shown to help you decide if a route is suitable. To help you relate to these gradients we have attempted to describe them below assuming an average wheelchair user with an averagely strong pusher.

1:16
Gentle slope. Extra effort may be required over long distances. Gradients less than 1:16 have not been measured as they are considered easy going.

1:16 - 1:13
Fairly gentle slope, extra effort will be noticeable over longer distances.

1:12
Slope noticeable but not particularly steep, extra effort will be required over medium to long distances.

1:11 - 1:8
Steeper slopes, will require extra effort even over short distances. Only short sections of gradients of this steepness are found on any of the routes in this booklet.

> 1:8
Steep slope - nothing of this steepness will be encountered on these walks.

Please follow the Countryside Code and respect the local area you are visiting.



Key to maps Please note that some symbols may not be used on this walk.

- Easy Access Trail
- Extension to Easy Access Trail
- Public Footpath or Bridleway
- Permissive Path
- River/Stream/Canal
- Waterway/Water Channel
- Parkland/Wooded Area
- Urban/Built-up Area
- Parking
- Gradient Information
- Seating or Picnic Area
- Refreshments
- Church
- Caravan Park
- Gate
- Marshland



<i>Distance</i>	2.5km (1.5 miles) return trip
<i>Terrain</i>	Compacted sandstone. Can get soft in wet weather Maximum gradient: 1:8
<i>Start/finish</i>	Ardingly Reservoir car park (separate car park nearer reservoir for Blue Badge holders – RADAR key required) 4.5km (3 miles) north of Haywards Heath Car park is open 1st October to 31st March 9.00am till 4.00pm, 31st March to 30th September 9.00am till 5.30pm Grid reference: TQ 333 287 Post code: RH17 6SQ
<i>Directions</i>	From the village of Ardingly turn south west onto College Road. Just south of main Ardingly College buildings turn right - signposted 'Reservoir'. Follow the road to the reservoir
<i>O.S. Maps</i>	Explorer 135, Landranger 187
<i>Public Transport</i>	Bus stop: Ryelands Wood, College Road (unmarked)
<i>Points of interest</i>	Wildlife, views (including from the disabled parking bays)
<i>Facilities</i>	Several benches and picnic area. Bird hide accessible by wheelchairs. Nearest disabled toilets are Orchards, Haywards Heath (RH16 3TH), and Victoria Park, Haywards Heath (RH16 4LY)

This is a lovely walk, with spectacular views across the water for the length of the route. The reservoir and surrounding area provide an important habitat for a variety of wildlife.

The walk starts immediately in front of the disabled parking spaces. It is here that the first steep part is located, which is the drop from the car park to the walk. Construction was started on the reservoir in 1978 and to the left is the valve tower which regulates the release of water into the River Ouse, and circulates water to stop it becoming stagnant. Continuing round to the small copse you can see beech, oak and ash trees; during the 1987 storm many were damaged and these have been left to provide a habitat for fungi, lichens, mosses and insects. In spring and summer there are lots of wild flowers such as primroses, bluebells and common spotted orchids.

Access to the bird hide is through the gate on the left; this path drops down to the hide and requires steady hands on the way down for those in wheel or pushchairs, and a strong pusher on the return up to the main path. There is good access to the window, the birds are plentiful and there are identification boards - binoculars are recommended.

Continuing along the main trail there is an interesting wood sculpture which was created by a local artist to reflect the local area. For about 75m the path climbs a 1:11 slope; it then slopes down a 1:11 for another 75m until you are past the copse. Here the view widens out across the reservoir and the path continues along the eastern edge of the water where it is relatively flat. There are plenty of seats so you may enjoy the view, have a rest or a spot of lunch before it's time to return to the car.

