

# The Mute Swan and Bushy Park, Hampton Court, Surrey



Easy Terrain

5 miles  
Circular  
2 to 2.5  
hours

210114



## Access Notes



1. The walk is almost entirely flat and there are no stiles or steps to negotiate, just one kissing gate (which can be avoided by using the adjacent vehicle gate) and a couple of gates into the water gardens.
2. The paths are a mixture of tarmac and sand/stone surfaced path plus one section along a wide grass track. All the paths stay quite firm for most of the year.
3. The park is open during daylight hours. The water gardens (which can be excluded from the walk if necessary) are closed on Mondays (except Bank Holiday weeks when they are open on Monday and closed on Tuesday).
4. The park has free roaming red and fallow deer so take care with children and keep dogs under close control. The deer can become aggressive towards dogs in the rutting (Sep and Oct) and birthing (May to July) seasons, so the park authority recommend not taking dogs into the park at these times for your own safety.

The Mute Swan is beautifully located for lunch with family, friends or work colleagues, or a relaxing drink and a bite of supper after a busy day.s exploring.

A 5 mile circular pub walk (can be shortened to 3.5 miles) from the Mute Swan at Hampton Court. The walking route follows a loop through the adjacent Bushy Park, the second largest of London's Royal Parks. Enjoy the long tree-lined avenues, open parkland and the more formal water gardens plus meet the herds of fallow and red deer that roam freely within the park.

## Getting there

The walk starts and finishes from the Mute Swan pub on Palace Gate, Hampton Court, East Molesey, Surrey - directly opposite the Hampton Court Gates. If you are arriving by car there are a few pay and display bays (max stay 4 hours) directly outside the pub. Alternatively you can park in one of the free car parks within Bushy Park. If you are travelling by train the nearest station is Hampton Court which is just south of the river – come out of the station and cross over the river bridge where you'll find the Mute Swan on the left hand side, before the roundabout.

Approximate post code **KT8 9BN**.

## Walk Sections



Start to Hampton Court Gate



Standing facing the Mute Swan, turn right along the pavement. Over to the right you'll pass the entrance to Hampton Court Palace, a former palace of Henry VIII. The palace is famous for its hedge maze, planted in the 1690s for William III of Orange. The maze has

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featured in many novels including Jerome K Jerome's Three Men in a Boat.

Follow the pavement as it swings left, passing Palace Gate House on the corner, and after just a few paces cross right over the road using the zebra crossings. At the far side, keep right along the pavement and follow this as it swings left along Hampton Court Road. At the top, follow the road as it swings hard right. Just after passing the Kings Arms Hotel on the right, turn left through the kissing gate (Hampton Court Gate) to enter Bushy Park. (Note: there are free roaming fallow deer and red deer within Bushy Park so take care with dogs from this point).

## 1 → 2 Hampton Court Gate to Brick Bridge



Cross right over the main entrance road and then fork left onto the stone path heading diagonally through trees. You will come to a T-junction with a tarmac path alongside the end of a section of canal. Turn left along the path and this will lead you to a T-junction with the main access road.

If you look to the right you'll see the ornate Diana Fountain, the iconic image of Bushy Park. The fountain was positioned here in 1713. The statue is known as Diana (the Roman goddess of the hunt) but is missing the bow and dogs that are usually included in such statues. More recent opinion suggests the statue actually represents a water nymph from Greek mythology, Arethusa.

Cross over the access road with care and take the path continuing opposite. You'll notice the young lime trees here are surrounded by tall fenced surrounds to protect them from the deer. You will emerge to a T-junction with a wide tarmac lane, turn left along this. You are now walking along Lime Avenue, named after the double rows of lime trees that line this length of lane.

At 1,100 acres, Bushy Park is the second largest of London's Royal Parks. Bushy became a royal park in 1529 when Cardinal Wolsey gave it to King Henry VIII as part of a gift that also included Hampton Court. Red and fallow deer still roam freely throughout the park, just as they did when Henry VIII used to hunt here. There are currently about 320 deer and their grazing is essential to maintain the high wildlife value of the park's grasslands.

Some way in you will come to a tarmac path turning off to the right. Take this and it will lead you to a brick bridge which passes over the Longford River. This 12 mile long ornamental canal was created in 1610 under the instruction of King Charles 1. The canal was dug by hand and it brought water from the River Colne in Hertfordshire to feed the water features in the park and in Hampton Court.

## 2 → 3 Brick Bridge to Water Gardens

Cross over the bridge and follow the main tarmac path as it swings slightly left, with a fence running on the left. You will pass the entrance to the woodland gardens on the left. Keep ahead on the path as it once again becomes stone/sand. At the next crossroads keep ahead once again, leaving behind the fence and following the path as it strikes out through an area of open parkland.

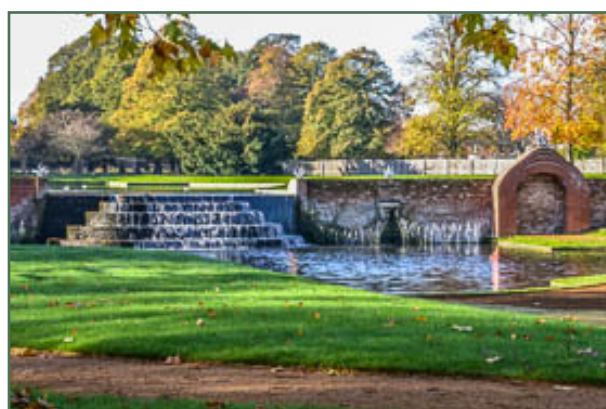


You will emerge to a T-junction with another wide tarmac path. Turn right along this, passing the fenced Round Plantation to the left. As the plantation to the left ends, you'll reach a major crossroads. Here you have two choices:

For the shorter 3.5 mile walk (which misses out the visit to the Water Gardens, which are closed on Mondays), turn right along the wide tarmac lane (taking care of any occasional traffic) and then skip to the point marked within the section 'Water Gardens to Chestnut Avenue'.

For the full 5 mile walk, turn left along the wide tarmac lane, Upper Lodge Road (taking care of any occasional traffic). Just before the lane bends fairly hard right, fork left onto the sand/stone path signed to the Water Gardens. The path swings right to reach the gate into the Water Gardens.

## 3 → 4 Water Gardens to Chestnut Avenue



Go through the gate. Keep ahead for a few paces and you will come to a junction of paths with the water cascade to your left. Take a moment to enjoy this.

Built by the 1st Earl of Halifax as a private recreational garden in 1710, the Water Gardens comprise a Baroque-style collection of pools, cascades, basins and a canal, all fed by the Longford River. The gardens disappeared beneath undergrowth and silt through the 20th century and their existence was largely forgotten, but they were restored and re-opened in 2009.

Still with the water cascade to your left, take the path opposite which swings left around the far side of the cascade. As you draw level with the end of the upper pool, fork right through the gate to leave the Water Gardens. Follow the stone path right and then left following the boundary of the gardens on the right.

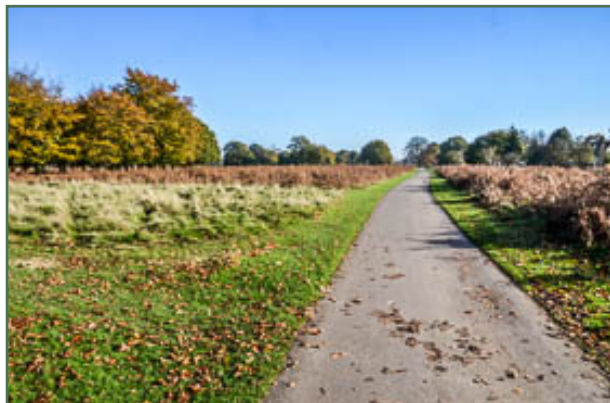
You will come to a T-junction with a tarmac lane. Turn right along this. Just after the fences on the right end, you reach a junction of multiple paths. Follow the main tarmac lane as it swings right here. This is Upper Lodge Road and you'll soon be following the section you walked along earlier. Keep ahead at the crossroads.



(Note: if you are following the shorter version of the walk, pick up the directions from this point).

Continue along this main road and over to the left you'll pass Bushy House (dating from 1663 and originally a keeper's lodge). When you reach a road junction, keep straight ahead and join the footpath running just to the right of the main road. Follow this path to reach a crossroads with the main access road through Bushy Park, Chestnut Avenue.

## 4 → 5 Chestnut Avenue to Diana's Car Park

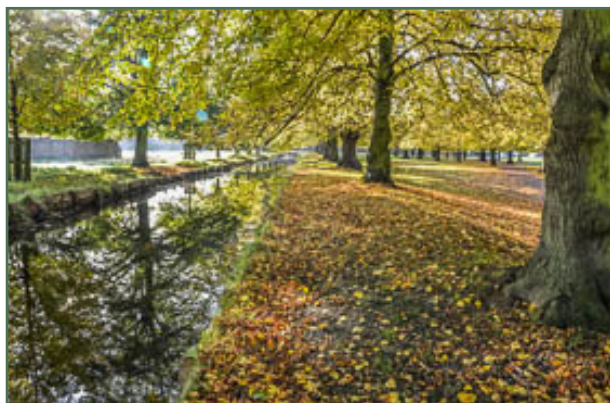


Cross over the road with care to take the tarmac path opposite. A few paces in, take the left-hand fork (signed to Hampton Wick Gate). You will pass a lodge property over to the right. About 100 yards later, fork right down the wide grass path heading diagonally through the bracken.

Keep ahead on this wide grass track and it will lead you to the corner of a large pond, Heron Pond. Keep left to merge with the path running alongside the pond. Cross over the bridge and follow the path as it swings right along the far side of the pond. (Keep your eyes peeled for the pond's namesake who can often be seen fishing from the banks!).

At the far end of the pond, take the left-hand fork which leads you to the corner of Diana's Car Park.

## 5 → 6 Diana's Car Park to End



Do not enter the car park, instead fork left at this corner to join the stone path veering away from the parking area. Follow this path all the way to its end where you'll reach a T-junction with a children's play area ahead. Turn right along the tarmac path, continue beyond the play area and you'll pass the end of a section of the canal.

Turn left immediately after this (you are now on the path which

you used to enter the park at the start of the walk – from this point you will be re-tracing your steps back to the pub). Follow this path to reach Chestnut Avenue alongside the park gates. Cross over Chestnut Avenue with care to exit the park via the pedestrian kissing gate.

Turn right along the pavement and follow this as the road bends left. When you reach the roundabout, follow the pavement as it bears right for just a few paces, and then use the zebra crossings on the left to cross the road. At the far side, keep left and follow the pavement as it swings right. You will find the Mute Swan on the right for some well earned hospitality.

### Disclaimer

This walking route was walked and checked at the time of writing. We have taken care to make sure all our walks are safe for walkers of a reasonable level of experience and fitness. However, like all outdoor activities, walking carries a degree of risk and we accept no responsibility for any loss or damage to personal effects, personal accident, injury or public liability whilst following this walk. We cannot be held responsible for any inaccuracies that result from changes to the routes that occur over time. Please let us know of any changes to the routes so that we can correct the information.

### Walking Safety

For your safety and comfort we recommend that you take the following with you on your walk: bottled water, snacks, a waterproof jacket, waterproof/sturdy boots, a woolly hat and fleece (in winter and cold weather), a fully-charged mobile phone, a whistle, a compass and an Ordnance Survey map of the area. Check the weather forecast before you leave, carry appropriate clothing and do not set out in fog or mist as these conditions can seriously affect your ability to navigate the route. Take particular care on cliff/mountain paths where steep drops can present a particular hazard. Some routes include sections along roads – take care to avoid any traffic at these points. Around farmland take care with children and dogs, particularly around machinery and livestock. If you are walking on the coast make sure you check the tide times before you set out.

