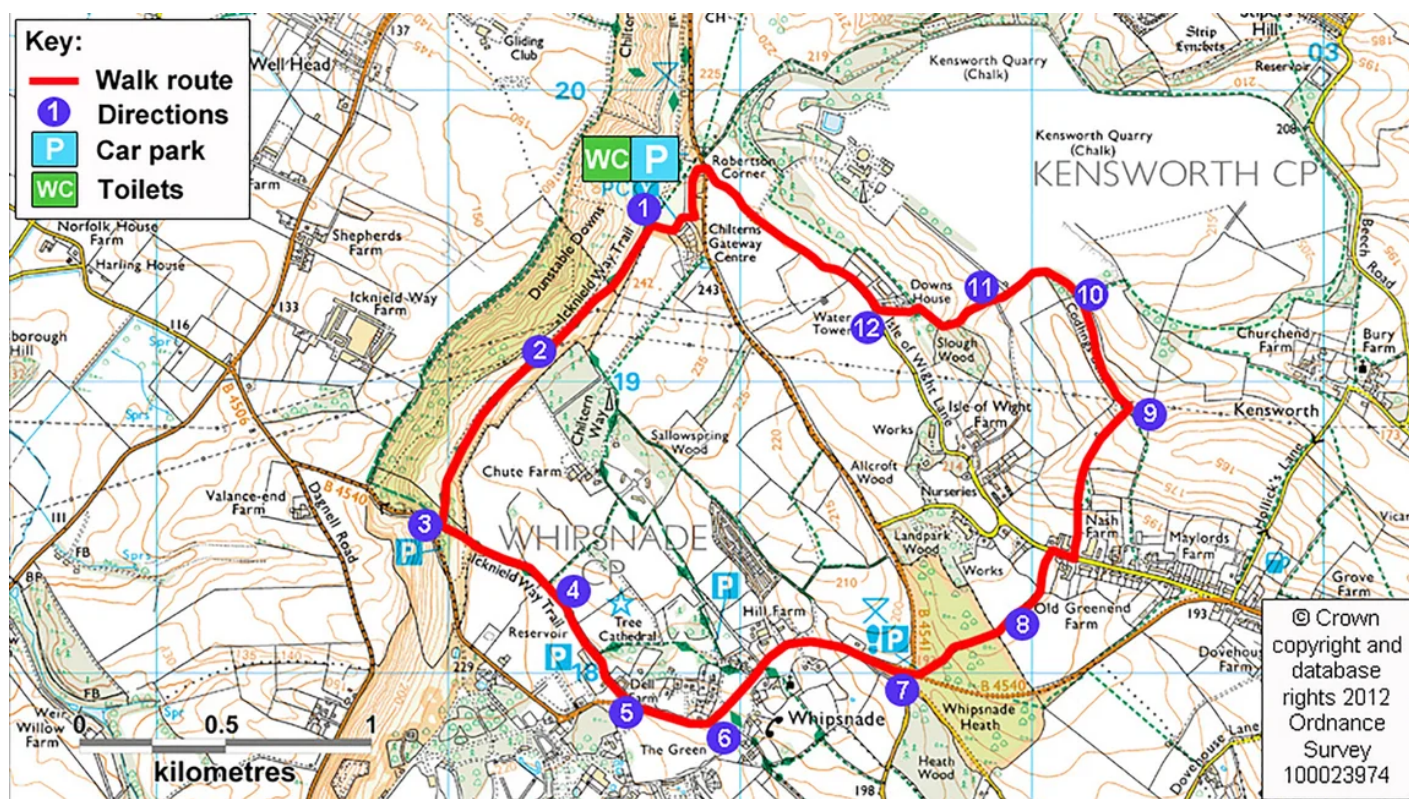


ESSEX, BEDFORDSHIRE & HERTFORDSHIRE

## Whipsnade and Dunstable Downs walk

This trail offers the chance to admire the Whipsnade Tree Cathedral before climbing up through Whipsnade Heath and returning to the Chilterns Gateway Centre. The view northwards from here is a good place to start and finish your walk.



### Information

Address: Chilterns Gateway Centre, Whipsnade, Dunstable LU6 2GY

OS map: Landranger 166; Explorer 181 and 193

Activity: Walking

Moderate: Some moderate slopes and steep gradients. For further details, please see Terrain section.

Dog friendly: Please keep dogs under close control, particularly around livestock. Please clean up after dogs and dispose of dog waste in the bins provided (or take it home with you).

Full trail: Miles: 4.5 (km: 7.2)

Access: Challenging

Duration: 2 hours 30 mins

### Terrain

Parts of the walk can become muddy after wet weather. Sturdy footwear is advised. Stiles, gates and some moderate slopes and steep gradients across grassland and woodland floors.

### Total steps: 12

Start point: Chiltern Gateway Centre car park, grid ref: TL008195

1. From the car park, walk down past the Chilterns Gateway Centre towards the windcatcher, then turn left at the waymarker post onto the bridleway that runs alongside the hedgerow.
2. Continue along the bridleway, which runs along the line of the Icknield Way, into the long grazing area and continue toward Bison Hill car park.
3. On approaching Bison Hill car park, turn left and continue along the bridleway with hedgerows on both sides. This is a good example of a holloway – a track deepened by centuries of use and occasional clearance. It's believed to be a medieval route between Whipsnade and Eaton Bray.
4. Continue along the bridleway as it opens out, passing the Whipsnade Zoo car park on your right. As you proceed along a housing boundary to your left, look out for the footpath sign to the left.
5. Turn left at the footpath waymarker and follow the path through a kissing gate, with a field on one side and fencing on the right. Follow the footpath through to the next gate, which leads to the Whipsnade Tree Cathedral.
6. Continue along the footpath with the Tree Cathedral on your left. Walk through the car park and keep to your left as you approach the B4540. Cross the road with care and proceed past the church and downhill, past the Old Hunters Lodge pub to the roundabout.
7. Cross the roundabout with care and head towards Whipsnade Heath car park on your left. Follow the tarmac path and then take the footpath straight up through the woodland.
8. Continue through the woodland and follow the footpath straight on to the kissing gate. Keep to the path as it runs alongside a pasture and into a field, where it comes out onto a quiet road opposite Green End Farm.

9. Cross the road and follow the footpath signs to the right of Green End Farm, then walk along the footpath, which traces a route round the edge of the field. Continue downhill and through to the kissing gate on your left. Walk diagonally uphill across Codling Bank and through to the kissing gate in the chain link fence.
  10. Turn immediately left and follow the footpath down through the wooded area, past a small brick shed and onto the footpath by the quarry fence.
  11. Continue along the footpath and bear right to join the rising headland path along the left-hand field edge, in the direction of a mixed woodland and tall aerial on the skyline.
  12. Follow the path into the copse and out onto the roadside, turning right to join Isle of Wight Lane. Proceed along the lane with care to the junction with the B4541 at Robertson Corner. Cross the road with care and return to the Chilterns Gateway Centre with its café and toilets.
- End point: Chiltern Gateway Centre car park, grid ref: TL008195
-