

# Walk 16: Bough Beech

A shortish walk along fields, over streams and through an interesting organic farm and small woods with great views of a large reservoir famous for its birds

How long? 2.5 miles (4.5km), 1 hour  
Public transport: None  
Parking: Along the causeway at the northern end of Bough Beech  
Start of walk: Signed footpath by a gate heading east from road just north of reservoir  
Steep slopes? None  
Easy to navigate? Yes  
Walk highlights: Large lake, Bore Place, birdlife, views of greensand ridge and weald  
Refreshments: Cock Inn and Woodman at Ide Hil to the north; Wheatsheaf at Bough Beech hamlet to the south. All do food and decent ales (Wheatsheaf serves local brew Larkins)

## THE WALK

**Find the start:** Walk north along the road from reservoir past farm buildings on right (east) for about 400 metres until you find a rather discrete public footpath sign by a metal gate heading east. Start the walk on the signed footpath at **this point**

**Point 1-2 (700m):** take the path heading roughly east on the right hand side of a cereals field. Follow down to a damp strip of wood with a stream. Cross on the wooden footbridge and continue up the right hand side of the field on the other side. There are some nice glimpses of the reservoir to your right here and lovely views back towards Ide Hill. The fields are a bit intensively farmed though so not much of interest in them usually. As

you walk uphill towards woods, the path heads diagonally left towards the corner of the woods.

**Point 2-3 (1.4km):** At this corner of the woods you join a track passing the trees, rich with birdlife at most times of the year and particularly popular with greater spotted woodpeckers. You are still heading east. Soon, the track turns right (south) towards Bore Place. This is an organic farm and training ground for young people seeking experience of farm and rural life. It's also big into promoting conservation and wildlife, and offers an eco-friendly events venue. Idyllic spot really. Anyway, the walk continues south past the historic farmhouse, the cow pens and a really attractive walled garden. Venture off our route if you like to take a look at the lovely wildflower

meadows the other side of Bore Place (east of the house). Back on route, keep on walking for about 450m, then...

**Point 3-4: (600m)** ... just past a lovely stone house built in 1745 (it says so on it) turn right (west). There's also a lane junction here so you can't miss it. The path is up a hedgerow alley to start with by the house but emerges into a field often used as pasture by flocks of geese. In fact there's always loads of wildlife around here: dragonflies, small flocks of finches, swooping swallows and martins in summer, bats towards dusk, flocks of migratory geese in winter. Walk across the fields (there might be a stile in the middle, I can't remember, it's all easy though) heading west towards the reservoir beyond the crest of the shallow slope. Walk towards the woods.

**Point 4-5 (300m):** Turn right (north) into the woods then quickly emerge into a field with a large pile of logs (and a 'do not climb on the logs sign') ahead of you. Pass the logs then quickly turn left (west) down the field, into a strip of woods, over a stream (crossed by little bridge) and arrive back on to the quiet reservoir road on which your car is parked to the north.

**Point 5- (600m depending on where on the road you parked)** Turn right (north) on the pavement on the reservoir side of the road and admire the lovely views across the water as you stroll back to your car. The reservoir's banks are a nature reserve so there's no access apart from one very short little footpath. There's no swimming allowed either. You can always amuse yourself by reading my oh-so-funny blog on Bough Beech on this website though.

**Nearby walks:** Ide Hill, Chiddingstone, Hever, Westerham

Tell me what you think at [amac49@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:amac49@hotmail.co.uk)

