

Rail to Trail – Wokingham to Crowthorne

Leave Wokingham station at platform one and turn right. Continue over the road junction into Wellington Road. Pass the park on your left and go to the second roundabout and turn left. At the Dukes Head pub turn right. Then turn right into the very much quieter and quite pretty Gypsy Lane. The lane winds around lefts and rights until you reach Langborough Recreation Ground. Continue past this and the narrow lane turns right. At the bottom of the hill see the public footpath sign and turn right. Here you will find greater celandine and green alkanet, herb robert and other wild flowers in season. Cross the railway bridge.

At the foot of the bridge you have a choice of directions, either continue on the main path or turn right over the stile following the public footpath sign. The latter is my preference so is fully described here. Both parts can be muddy after rain.

Turning right, in June I heard chiffchaff's and whitethroats. Little owls have been seen in the field on the left (look on the posts) and contains many insects and butterflies when the sun is shining. You soon come to a bridge over the Emmbrook that need you to step over a couple of low cycle barriers. Birds like kingfishers and wagtails may be found here with a bit of luck. The next field is full of buttercups and red clover in the summer. Sorrel grows on the path edges. Small blue butterflies and speckled woods are likely to be seen along the path. In summer, song thrushes are singing and jackdaws are everywhere, especially late summer when the young have fledged.

At the path T junction turn left and when you reach the lane continue straight on. At the corner continue straight on following the path. Foxgloves are growing with oxeye daisies and red campion in the next field. At the lane turn right go through the gateway and take the lane on the left. Many ring-necked parakeets are seen and heard around here. You will now follow this lane for a long time mainly it's a tarmac track. The fields on the left have some magnificent old trees including a few dead specimens and the hedgerows along the lane are rich with bramble, cow parsley and buttercups. Pass through some deciduous woodland where you will cross a muddy stream flowing beneath the road. Pass the business premises by the old cottage, continue straight soon passing through a gate (sometimes open). What was a muddy track has now been resurfaced to a more solid version. Here you are at Gorrick Plantation and will see the huge western hemlock trees on the right hand side. This track is a good place for wild flowers. Look for common columbine (granny's bonnet), also common vetch and tutsan (a large version of St John's Wort). This is Gorrick Plantation. Birds will be found in the open areas, mostly chiffchaffs and dunnocks with blackbirds and song thrush. See walk number six in the [book](#). Continue on this track to a road.

Cross carefully, continuing in the same direction. At the end of the houses pass Heathlands riding establishment and continue on the same track soon becoming a woodland track with a fruit growing farm beyond the trees on your left. Reach Nine Mile Ride. Cross the main road and turn right. Cross New Wokingham Road and enter the woodland opposite. Turn left at the first opportunity on a well walked track. After less than 50m angle right towards a piece of open heathland. Take the path leading down the left hand side. There's a sunny bench here for a rest if you want one. When you meet a track at a T-junction turn right. You soon see the waters edge of Heath Lake. Turn left to the corner platform giving you a view of Heath Lake. Lots of water birds are here, swans, geese and black-headed gulls, moorhen and mallard, they are all used to being fed! Behind the platform is a power installation take the path on the left and then avoiding the road turn left along the wooden fence following this path now until you meet Merriman Drive. Cross and turn right along New Wokingham Road. Pass a small brick gas networks building and turn right onto a wide tree lined public footpath. See how many different types of tree you can identify on this before you reach the golf course. Continue carefully on the same path crossing the fairway and through the glade. Continue on this path as it finally turns left across the golf course. Continue through the trees and car park passing the Club House to the road. Follow the road to a T-junction, turn right and Crowthorne station is in front of you.

Trains are hourly Saturdays and Sundays and half-hourly other days.