

WEIR WOOD AND SHARPThorNE

This is a particularly attractive walk as at both ends it gives the very best views across Weir Wood Reservoir and also finest picnic spots in the locality. Thus it is very photogenic. It passes alongside the site of the old Bluebell Railway station at Sharpthorne, the half-way point of the walk.

Distance: 5 or 4½ miles (8 and 7.2 kilometres)

Map reference: O.S. Explorer 135, 381349 (Stone Hill Rocks)

The [parking](#) for the five mile walk is in a rough lay-by suitable for two or three cars only.

This lay-by will be found on the Grinstead Lane road about half a mile past Saint Hill Green on your left.

For the shorter walk park in [Stone Hill Rocks](#) car park a few hundred yards further along from the lay-by on your right.

There are wide panoramic views from the car park. To the north towards Saint Hill Manor and through the whole southern arc which includes Weir Wood Reservoir.

For the longer walk from the lay-by, cross the stile into the field and turn right immediately to pass the map and to go through the gate by the footpath sign. Turn left to go downhill to the next similar gate and footpath sign on the left.

Follow the path to the left and downhill through the wood and meet a track going slightly uphill to the left towards a footpath sign up on the left. At this point turn away to the right going downhill towards the water ahead. You will see the stile ahead which will bring you onto the Sussex Border Path round the reservoir fence. Note also the notice board describing Standen Rocks and Weir Wood.

Cross stile and turn right and follow the path to the end and onto Admiral's Bridge Lane which takes you up to Stone Hill House.

At this point you will join up with the shorter walk as described below taking you down to Whillet's Bridge.

The shorter walk starts along the bridleway above Stone Hill Rocks to the south of the car park.

The more tricky route to the bridleway is to follow the signs "To Stone Hill Rocks". Facing south go down the headland on the left, turn the corner at the bottom to reach a hole in the hedge and a steep bank onto the bridleway. Turn left.

Proceed along the footpath until you reach the road, opposite Stone Hill House, turn right and walk downhill to Whillet's Bridge.

Take great care as this is a narrow twisting road and there is no footpath.

Just beyond the bridge turn left into Legsheath Lane and walk alongside the water for approximately a quarter of a mile. Up on the right you will see Neylands Farm and below near the road a footpath sign and stile.

Go up the right-hand side of the field to the top corner leading into the farmyard. Now a few yards to the left then right to follow the wide track up and out onto the road.

Go to the left a few yards then cross the road to an iron gate and stile by a footpath sign. Go straight ahead along the right-hand side of the field (sunken track). The fields on either side are used by various organisations for camping. The sunken track takes you into Blackland Wood.

As you enter the wood bear left onto a wide track going downhill to pass a pumping station and cross a stream with the choice of wide concrete or narrow wooden bridge, then up to a stile into a field.

Here over to the right are the woods you will later pass through, the Bluebell Railway, and below, water works.

Straight ahead is New Coombe Farm and before it you will see the next wooden footpath sign by a concrete track. Make for this across the field and forward along the concrete track to pass the farm to the left.

Continue along the track under railway bridge passing Old Combe House pond on the right, until you reach a rough car park on the left at the site of the old Bluebell Railway station at Sharpthorne. The house opposite the old station was once the Bluebell Inn and a track goes off to the right, and a yard or so off this also on the right an entrance leading onto a wide Forestry Commission track. Pass four permissive bridleway signs before turning off to the right just before a fifth to join a footpath at a footpath sign situated off the bridleway.

In three or four yards turn left and follow this (sometimes muddy) path through the wood, keeping straight on to a stile leading into a field. Birch Farm is on your right. This is Ingwersen's alpine plant nursery. Keep straight on down the field to a stile into the track to Birch Farm.

Turn left for perhaps twenty yards to the next fingerpost on your right and again turn off right into a narrow path which takes you up onto the Bluebell railway trackway and down the other side. Keep forward along a narrow path at first between small trees then across an open field to a footbridge on the right.

Once over the bridge turn left to a fingerpost and straight ahead up the fairly steep slope of the next field. There is a fingerpost on the left by the field boundary but go to the top right hand corner towards another fingerpost and pass through a gate into an enclosed track.

This is the bridleway you joined at the start of the short walk, your exit is about four hundred yards along on the left up the steep bank.

Here it is very pleasant as the track passes along the top of rocks where climbers often practice. The track passes several small paths going off to the right between the rocks and it may be pleasant to take one and walk along the foot of the rocks to get better views of the reservoir below.

If your walk started from the small lay-by go up the steep bank to the short walk car park and walk out towards the road. Turn left along this busy narrow road for about four hundred yards to the lay-by on the right.

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