



WALK 5 OLDWICK

Distance: 6 km

Rating: MODERATE

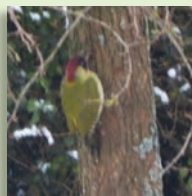


HISTORY

- A** **Reynolds House** and **Gainsborough House** form part of the large house built in 1797 by Miss Harriet Pool. The poet and artist William Blake and his patron William Hayley used to visit her there for coffee during Blake's time at Felpham.
- B** The name **Centurion Way** was suggested by a local schoolboy, and is based on the fact that the path crosses the course of the Roman road from Chichester to Silchester.
- C** The road **Hunter's Race** was also locally known as "Snake's Lane", probably because snakes would have thrived in the area formerly known as Mid Lavant Common.
- D** The extensive **gravel deposits** south of Park Lane date from the time when this flat area was once part of the sea plain. Today a solar farm generates electricity on the site of the former gravel pits that were developed here in the 1970s.
- E** The **Chichester Entrenchments** probably marked a pre-Roman tribal boundary. Orientated broadly east-west, at Little Tomlins Copse the earthworks form a three-sided 'bastion'. The nicknames "**Devil's Ditch**", or "**Devil's Dyke**", derive from a local tradition that the earthworks were the devil's attempt to channel the sea and flood the churches of Sussex.
- F** To the east of Oldwick is the **Sennicotts estate**, with its Georgian Villa built in the early 19th Century by Charles Baker of the East India Company. In 1829 he built his own church (Sennicotts Chapel) after falling out with the local Vicar.
- G** The first **turnpike road** in Sussex was created in 1749 and ran from Fernhurst to Chichester, passing through Lavant. There were turnpike gates at Yarbrook, and by the present Pook Lane mini-roundabout on the main road.
- H** Since its formation in c.1910 **Lavant FC** football matches were played on the village green. In 1954, following complaints by the Cricket Club that playing football was ruining the cricket pitch, a football pitch was created in the meadow at the top of Pook Lane.

NATURE

On this walk, the cackle of **green woodpeckers** can often be heard from the tall **oak trees** that line the route, while **buzzards** patrol the adjoining fields in search of **rabbits** and other small mammals.



Green Woodpecker

The walk along the Centurion Way is accompanied by the raucous overhead chorus from the **rookery**, especially noisy in spring at nest-building time. At this time the verges are lined with the massed white flowers of **cow parsley**, which often has a second flowering in the autumn.



Buzzard

Throughout the year, the wooded path of Park Lane provides a habitat for a variety of woodland plants. In the late spring, it is festooned with the blues and pinks of **bluebells**, **foxgloves**, and **red campion**, while the flowers of **yellow archangel** add a touch of gold. In early summer the air becomes thick with the scent of **honeysuckle**.



Bluebell, stitchwort

Fragrant **wood sage** grows in the late summer shadows, while in its sunlit sections the path comes alive with **meadow brown** and **small and large skipper** butterflies.



Red campion

Autumn brings **blackberries**, while the downy seeds of **Traveller's Joy**, or "**Old Man's Beard**", provide food for **goldfinches** and **greenfinches**.



Yellow archangel

The poisonous red berries of **black bryony**, **bittersweet** and **deadly nightshade**, are also on show, while in the winter those of **butcher's broom** add a cheery note to the dark woodland.



Honeysuckle

LARGE SKIPPER



Butcher's Broom



Meadow Brown



Wood sage

Running parallel to the Iron age "Devil's Ditch", this route passes through a woodland track before opening out to the lush fields of Oldwick farm. The route is flat, but can be a little rough in places and is not suitable for buggies or wheelchairs.

DIRECTIONS

1. Leave the Village Green on the path up to the Earl of March pub and cross the A286. Turn left, and after 50m turn right into Meadow Close. **(A)**
2. Take the right fork, and then round to the left to steps down onto Centurion Way. Turn left. **(B)**
3. At the first opportunity, take the footpath to the right. **(C)**
4. Continue straight on at the cross paths, passing the solar panel field on the left, **(D)** to the flint house (Little Oldwick Cottage) and cross the road. **(E)**
5. The footpath leads off to the right of the gravel driveway ahead, and bends to the left along the fence of the horse fields. **(E)**
6. At the T junction turn left onto a track between two horse fields, and once you meet the road turn right, proceeding up the verge to Oldwick Farm and Wellie's Café. **(F)**
7. Return the same way until you reach Centurion Way, and go straight over to the A286. **(G)**
8. Turn left, cross the A286 at the island, to the football field at the top of Pook Lane. **(H)**
9. Follow the path along the Dyke and return to the Village Green via the car park.

Please take care when crossing roads, and follow the Countryside Code (www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code).



Supported by Lavant Parish Council.

