



WALK 1 EAST LAVANT

Distance: 2.5 km

Rating: EASY



This circular route takes in a number of historic buildings in East Lavant, crosses ancient farmland to Summersdale and returns to Lavant via some hidden pathways.

HISTORY

- A** **St Mary's** is a historic village church with Norman origins that was extensively restored in the 19th Century. It is open to visitors during daylight hours.
- B** East of the Church is the **old school** and **schoolmaster's house**, which were built in the 1870s by the Duke of Richmond. The school moved to Mid Lavant in 1985.
- C** **East Lavant Cottage** was the home of clergyman Ebenezer Cobham Brewer, best known for his Dictionary of Phrase and Fable. It was published in 1870 when he lived here.
- D** One of the oldest houses in Lavant, **Little Thatch**, was the home of the Scardeville family in the late 16th Century.
- E** The **Victorian postbox** is opposite a house once owned by the Duke of Richmond, occupied at the time by Brewer, and then James Fraser, the chaplain to Bishop Otter Theological College.
- F** **The Royal Oak** was first licensed to sell beer in 1832 and soon after became a public house, although the building is much older.
- G** **Church Farm** holds an historic association with the local 'manor' of the Duke of Richmond – now Goodwood.
- H** As its name suggests, **Fordwater Road** crossed the River Lavant at a ford just to the south of the village.
- I** "Rew" is a Sussex name for a sunken track. **Hackett's Rew** is possibly named after the Royalist general who was ambushed and captured here by the Chichester Garrison in the Civil War.
- J** The **Chichester Entrenchments**, known as the 'Devil's Ditch', or "Devil's Dyke", are Iron Age banks and ditches that probably marked the tribal boundary of the coastal settlement of Chichester at the end of the Iron Age 2,000 years ago.
- K** The **Raughmere** estate was bought by the May family in 1581. Staunch royalists, their house was badly damaged by fire during the Civil War. The architect Hugh May, friend and rival of Sir Christopher Wren, was born here.

NATURE

The old flint walls of East Lavant provide an ideal habitat for plants such as **feverfew** and **cornsalad**, while magnificent **beech**, **horse chestnut** and **plane trees** line the eastern edge of Fordwater Road.

When the River Lavant is flowing, **herons**, **little egrets** and occasionally **kingfishers** can be seen hunting its fish, while **kestrels** and **buzzards** patrol the skies overhead in search of **voles**, **field mice** and **rabbits**.

Looking north from Marchwood is the "Lavant Gap" between Chichester and the village, with fields rich with meadow flowers such as **white clover** and **meadow buttercup**.

In the summer the wheat fields are edged with bright **poppies** and **mallow** flowers. Poisonous **hemlock**, with purple-spotted stems, also thrives on the field margins.

In the spring, the **blackthorn** hedges sprout their dramatic white blossom; and in the autumn they produce an abundant harvest of dark **sloes**, an important food source for birds such as **chaffinches** and **long-tailed tits**.

In springtime the woodland pathway through Hackett's Rew is strewn with **greater stitchwort** and **wood anemones**, indicators of ancient woodland.

In summer and early autumn, woodland butterflies such as **speckled wood** dance in the path's dappled sunlight.



Feverfew



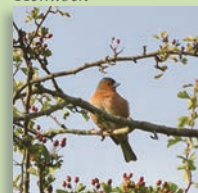
Little Egret



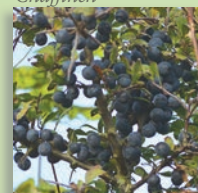
Rabbit



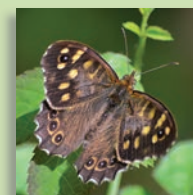
Hemlock



Chaffinch



Sloes



Speckled Wood



Wood anemone



Poppies



DIRECTIONS

1. Leave the Village Green by the War Memorial via Pook Lane, and walk over the bridge, continuing up to the Royal Oak. **(A B C D E F)**
2. Turn right opposite the pub, and right again at Lower Road down towards Church Farm. **(G)**
3. Turn left along Fordwater Road, and then right through a gap in the hedge after 200m.
4. Turn immediately left to follow the road on the path behind the hedge, and at the top turn right into Fordwater Road.
5. Follow the lane, continuing up the footpath beside the River Lavant. **(H)**
6. Go through the gate. Turn right onto the road, and after 200m turn right again down the footpath.
7. Pass through the trees, and when you reach the field turn left, keeping Marchwood (with its tennis courts and ponds) to your left.
8. When you reach The Drive, turn right, and after 30m, follow the footpath (Hackett's Rew) **(I J)** to the right up towards Raughmere House. **(K)**
9. Cross Raughmere Drive, then take the footpath opposite, beside the hedge, until you reach Pook Lane.
10. Cross the road, and follow the path to the right back down to the Village Green.

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



THE ROYAL OAK
EAST LAVANT

Supported by Lavant Parish Council.