

# Welcome to Witley and Milford Commons

There are two self-guided trails for you to enjoy. The longer Heathland Hike is around 3 miles (4.82km) and takes you through Witley and Milford Commons, whilst the shorter Nature Trail is just under 1 mile (1.6km) and is perfect for a family walk.



Highland cattle

Hover fly



Dartford warbler

The 235 acres of Witley Common were given in 1921 by Mr Thackeray Turner. The 137 acres of Milford Common were acquired in 1927 from the Webb family.

The first written record of Witley, known in medieval times as Witlei, is in the Domesday Book of 1087. The presence of Bronze Age burial mounds in the area is testament to the spiritual connection that our ancestors had with this landscape.

## More Information

### Find out more about what happens on the Surrey Hills

The National Trust looks after much of the Surrey Hills – from Limpsfield Common in the east to Hindhead Common in the west. In between are Box Hill, Leith Hill and Bookham Commons to name but a few of the places we care for. Our places are great for running around and exploring, building dens and seeing the wonderful wildlife that lives there.

Pack a picnic and make a day of it, or come along for just an hour or two.

Take a look on our website [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/surreyhills](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/surreyhills) to read about our latest news and events, to download more trail leaflets, or make friends with us on Facebook.



## National Trust

The National Trust is an independent conservation charity and needs your continued support. If you would like to know more about the National Trust, local places to visit, or how to become a member, please contact our local office:

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Haslemere Road (A286),  
Witley, Godalming,  
Surrey, GU8 5QA  
Tel: 01428 681050  
[www.nationaltrust.org.uk/witley-and-milford-commons/](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/witley-and-milford-commons/)

 Facebook: [NationalTrustSurreyHills](https://www.facebook.com/NationalTrustSurreyHills)

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## Surrey

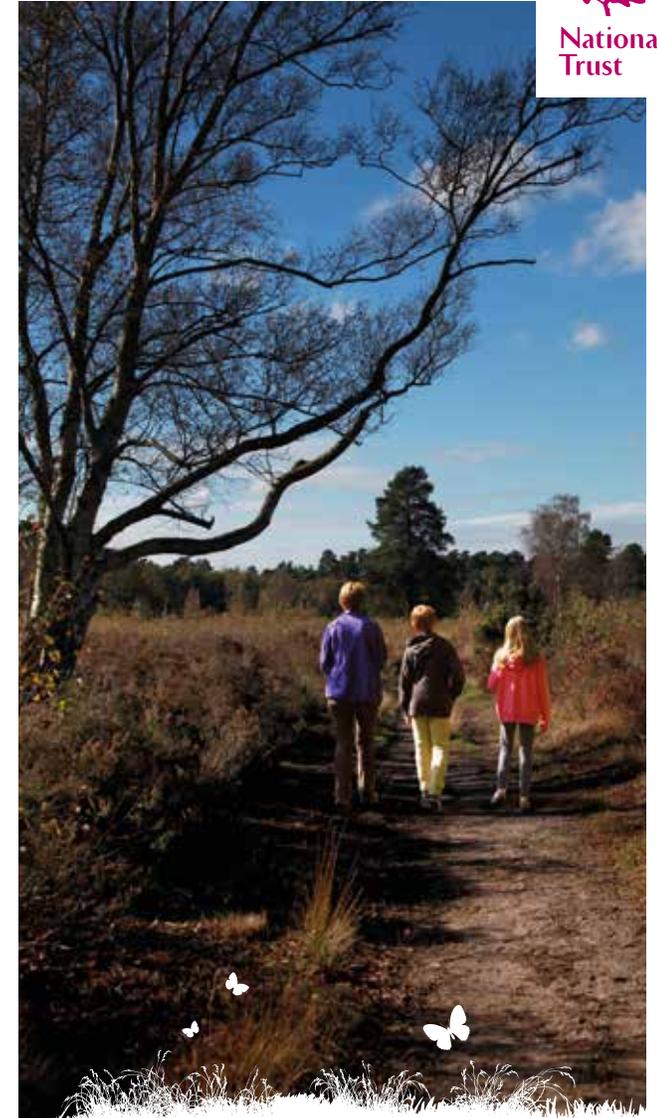
Free  
(donations welcome)

# Witley and Milford Commons

## Trail Guide



National Trust





# Things to look out for along the way

## A Witley Centre

The Witley Centre is conveniently located on Witley Common and is easily accessible from Webb Road.

Opened in 1976, it's now home to the National Trust ranger and learning team.

The centre houses a purpose built learning room, from which schools and community groups can take

part in our programme of hands-on learning experiences and outdoor fun. With its modern facilities, meeting rooms and tranquil setting, it has also proved popular with groups hosting training sessions and outdoor events.

**For booking enquiries please contact the team on 01428 681050.**

### Did you know?

For the experienced mycologist, Witley Common is a fungi paradise!

In autumn and early winter, Witley Common produces a wealth of fungi species. The poisonous fly agaric can be found growing near birch or Scots pine and the much more deadly death cap under the oaks. The birch polypore is an abundant species.



Fly agaric toadstool



Sweet chestnut

## B The Ancient Pond

This is a former cattle watering hole which was invaluable during the time when Witley Common was used for grazing. Now it's a peaceful haven for numerous dragonflies, damselflies, birds and small insects that live in and around the pond.



Yellow flag iris



Ling heather



### Don't miss

Look out for several ancient sweet chestnut trees, not far from the Witley Centre. These are believed to be around 300 years old and probably marked an historical boundary. They can be easily identified by their spiral twist and by their prickly but tasty chestnuts.

## D Second World War Parade Ground

This open area marks the location of Witley Camp's parade ground. In the heathland area opposite the parade ground, the keen eyed local historian will find some of the few remnants of the brick buildings which were torn down after the camp was decommissioned during the 1950s.

### Look out for

Dense areas of hawthorn scrub on Milford Common. We have coppiced and layered the hawthorn in order to enhance the habitat for breeding birds such as nightingales, which have now returned to breed once again on Milford Common.



Nightingale

## E Second World War Baseball Pitch

The camps, which would later become known locally as 'Tin Town,' were extensive, and as they were home to so many

National Trust rangers and volunteers help to conserve the mosaic of habitats that are home to rare and endangered species of birds, insects and reptiles including the rare sand lizard.

Sand lizard



### Did you know?

These commons were used as army camps during both the First and Second World Wars. The war poet Wilfred Owen was based here in 1916 when he wrote the poem 'A New Heaven.' He was to be awarded the Military Cross for his fine leadership when, on November 4th 1918, he was killed in action. Tragically, Wilfred's family was informed of his death on November 11th, the day of the Armistice.



soldiers, there was a need for shops, entertainment and sports facilities.

This open area still retains the layout of the baseball pitch

where Canadian soldiers once enjoyed their free time.

Amongst those who played here was the well known baseball legend Babe Ruth, who was brought in to star in a morale-boosting exhibition game.

## Explore...

An ancient landscape of extensive heathland, secluded woodland glades and diverse wildlife habitats.

