

Gilwell Park Scout Campsite Hike Routes



6 Miles (10km) Walk

Gilwell - Baldwin's Hill Pond - Loughton Camp - Gilwell
(The favourite day's outing of our local group)

Notes to Leaders

1. Baldwin's Hill Pond outlet falls down a shaft and flows through a brick tunnel to a stream. An opportunity for Cubs to get in a glorious mess. Akelas should take some spare clothing. Refreshments and loos are NOT available. Take food and drink with you.
2. Loughton Camp is an Iron Age ring of banks used to store cattle during tribal warfare. A good place for a wide game.
3. The Forest is usually muddy, wellies are recommended.
4. 1:25000 map is useful either Pictorial map of Epping Forest, cheap and accurate, or the official green covered map of Epping Forest (more detailed, dearer) sold at the Providore or Bargain Books, Station Road, Chingford. Who also sell O.S. Explorer sheet 174. Take a Compass.
5. In an emergency, telephone Gilwell 020 8498 5410.

The Route

From Gilwell camp square walk past the LID to the Camp entrance gate, turn right on to the cart track alongside the Lid Car Park. Ignore the track to the right, but go over the stile ahead in the field. Follow the hedge on your left down the field and through a kissing gate. Then continue still with the hedge on your left, to a further gate. Beyond is an unmade road with houses, follow this round to the right, keeping Tewksbury House on your left, to arrive at BURY ROAD.

Cross the road with care and turn right along the horse track in the forest fringing Bury Road. When you emerge from the trees on to CHINGFORD PLAIN aim diagonally across the Plain to pick up the drainage ditch on your right. At the far end continue ahead through the belt of trees to CONNAUGHT WATER, where you turn right and follow it round to the car park (see sketch).

From there take the straight gravel path, veering away from the lakeside and follow it to join a rough road. The busy Epping New Road lies to your right. Make your way along the open land between the two roads gradually approaching the Epping Road a sanded horse track crosses the land ahead of you leading to a crossing of the Epping Road. With great care, cross the road to the car park on the other side (see another sketch) and find the footpath running up NE to Strawberry Hill Pond. Follow the shore around to a horse track on the far side, where you turn left to another pond and a road. Cross the road and continue down the horse track called the 'Green Ride' - to a tiny bridge. Here pick your way off to the right down to a brook meandering along the valley bottom. Follow it upstream. Do not be tempted along side streams. Eventually you will come to the brick tunnel from which the stream flows (yet another sketch), a crossing horse track and BALDWIN'S HILL POND.

EAT

Then, either visit the LOST POND or go back up the path NW to the Green Ride. To visit the Lost Pond, go at NNW 338deg up through the beech trees (there is no clear path). From the Pond a NW direction through the trees soon returns you to the Green Ride. Turn left, to arrive at the top of the bridleway coming up from Baldwin's Hill Pond. It is a fairly open intersection, with a rotting old log seat by it, and a white post is visible in the Ride going down to Baldwin's Hill Pond.

Go SW through the trees and in 15 minutes arrive at the earth mounds of LOUGHTON CAMP, now incomplete and very reduced by weathering, but still genuinely Iron Age. Set a course of 245deg up and down banks and across streams through the forest. There is no direct path, but listen for the traffic on the main road on your right and look for a white house before you and aim just to the right of it. It is ROBIN HOOD pub (sketch).

The Road and Crossing are dangerous.

Gather the party together before crossing with great care to the opposite corner scrambling up a bank.

Continue in the same direction (the difficult bits are over now) to a minor lane; cross it and continue on to a sanded horse track. Turn left along it. It drops gently down to open ground, swerves right and left and re-enters the forest still going roughly SW. Not long after it is crossed by another horse track, but continue ahead for another half mile (having passed a pond on your left) to another crossing, (so minutes to Gilwell).

Turn right (West) to meet Bury Road and return to Gilwell as you came.

