



Kingley Vale

This walk starts at the amenity car park at West Stoke.

From Emsworth, head north along North Road, Horndean Road and up the hill turning right at the junction with Emsworth

Common Road at the top of the hill.

Follow a distance along this road past the airfield on the left, through Funtington and along the B2146 until just past the signs for East Ashling where the road swings right. You turn left along the road signposted to the National Nature Reserve.

Continue north up this road until you come to the car park signposted on your left.

From the north end of the car park, pass through the gate and up the footpath heading north.

The path passes between some fields and woods until you reach the entrance to the National Nature Reserve.

The reserve has its own nature trail and network of footpaths, but I enjoy the walk up the bridleway running up the western

edge of the reserve because of the great views you get from this path down to the sea.

So don't enter the Reserve, but instead turn left and walk west along its southern edge for about 100 metres and turn right onto the bridleway, which heads north between the Reserve and a large field.

As we are going up this way, don't miss the opportunity as you walk up this hill to look over your left shoulder at the great view down to Chichester Harbour and beyond.

At the end of the field on your left, branch right onto bridleway that heads north along the edge of the Reserve, rather than the bridleway that swings left.

Continue up through the woods as the path swings slowly round to the right and brings to you to the top of the hill.

Climb one of the tumuli at the top of the hill for a bit of a rest and an opportunity to take in the fantastic panoramic view

Down to the south east you can see the steeple of Chichester Cathedral, and looking more south you can see Itchenor and the top end of Chichester Harbour.

Looking down to the south west you see Emsworth Channel, Thorney and Hayling Islands, and beyond that across the Solent

the cliffs and hills at the eastern end of the Isle of Wight.

Looking north, you see into the downs rolling away before you – see if you can spot Uppark House in a NNE direction.

Come down from your viewing point, you follow the footpath on in a north east direction and keep right as the path enters the Reserve and curve slowly right downhill along the top of the valley.

Continue on this path until you end up joining the line of the nature trail and begin to see sign posts.

The footpath turns right and down through the yew forest for which Kingley Vale is so well known.

This is a truly unusual experience in the dark of the forest with these organic and ancient trees winding around you. Some date back 2000 years and are some of the oldest living things on earth.

Stick to the nature trail, following the signs and heading south until it brings you down to the visitor centre at the entrance to the Reserve.

Pass through the gate and retrace your steps south on the footpath to the car park where you started.