Hidden Wootton

Welcome to Wootton Bridge. This leaflet is one in a series of five walks designed to help you explore some of our village's history and beautiful surroundings. Enjoy your walk.

Distance: Approximately 6 miles.
Timing: 2½ - 3 hours
Nearest car park: Brannon Way.
Bus routes: Ryde - Newport No. 9, Ryde - East Cowes No 4.
Recommended: Bring your binoculars.
Not recommended for disabled.
Start and finish: Brannon Way car park.
Takken at a gentle pace this walk is fairly easy going along footpaths and gravelled byways. Sundae footwear is recommended. You will cross fields and stiles.

1. Start at the car park in Brannon Way, which is opposite the Community Centre. Turn left from the car park into Brannon Way and then right up into Mary Rose Avenue, which meanders through the estate into Fernside Way as far as the junction with Station Road. Turn left into Station Road.

2. Proceed a few yards until you reach Packsfield Lane North, footpath N8. Continue down the lane for approx. seven hundred yards when you will reach Packsfield Farmhouse, on your right and then the level crossing for the Steam Railway. Wootton Station can be seen up the line to your right. Do NOT WALK UP THE LINE.

3. The line originally opened in 1875 as the Ryde and Newport Railway, with stations at Ryde St John Road, Ashley, Haven Street, Wootton, Whippingham and Newport. Both Wootton and Whippingham closed in September 1953 and the line itself in February 1966. However, its unique charm has been perfectly preserved by a largely volunteer-run organisation, which began life in 1971. Trains run in season from Wootton to Smallbrook Junction for onward connection to Island Line stations and the mainland. You may be lucky and see a steam train passing. Taking great care, cross the line.

Take footpath N7 to your left and walk up the hill until you reach the junction with footpath N4. You are now in Littletown.

4. Here opposite Woodford Cottage in 1845 was the old Little town chapel built of brick and slate by the Bible Christian Movement. Littletown was then a self-supporting and thriving hamlet. The coming of the railway in 1875 and development of Beech Lane into Station Road spelt the erosion of community activity in Littletown. The Great Gale of 1897 destroyed the chapel.

Turn left taking N3.

5. After 100 yards turn right passing "Shiloh" which was once Mousehill Farm. Continue walking for about half a mile until you reach the junction with Briddlesford Road. CAUTION: THIS IS A VERY FAST SECTION OF ROAD.

Turn right.

6. Proceed with extreme care to Briddlesford Lodge Farm, which is situated a few yards away on the opposite side of the road. Hops were grown on this farm until World War 1 and in the farmyard is a relatively small rectangular brick structure divided into two hop kilns. Both kilns have unusual low curved roofs with a central ventilation hole to which a cow would probably have been fitted.

Turn round so that Briddlesford Lodge Farm is now on your right and proceed back along Briddlesford Road along the grass verge, again with great care, and take the left hand track directly opposite Blacklands Lane at Knights Cross Cottages.