

Epsom & Walton Downs

Map and Information



Introduction

Epsom & Walton Downs, famous for its racecourse, is an area of 600 acres of unspoilt downland. From here, on a clear day, the view takes in the much of London as well as panoramas of rural Surrey.

The Downs are owned by Epsom Downs Racecourse and are not common land. However the general public has a right of access on foot under the Epsom & Walton Downs Regulation Act 1984 (see page 2 of this booklet for further information).

The area is an important chalk grassland habitat and there are a number of rare plant species present in some locations on the Downs, including three national scarcities; Round-Headed Rampion, Bastard-Toadflax and Chalk Hill Eyebright. The variety of habitats also provides breeding and feeding places for several declining bird species such as the Skylark and important populations of Small Blue and Chalk Hill Blue Butterflies are present.



Round-Headed Rampion



Bastard-Toadflax



Chalk Hill Eyebright



Small Blue Butterfly



Skylark



Chalk Hill Blue Butterfly

Background

The original Epsom & Walton Downs Act (1936) aimed to safeguard the interests of the public from the development of the Downs for racing and training purposes. This has since been replaced by the Epsom and Walton Downs Regulation Act 1984 which covers the use of the Downs and gives the general public right of access for 'air and exercise' on foot over the Downs. Racehorse training activity however, has priority over all other users before midday each day.



Management

The Conservators are responsible for managing Epsom & Walton Downs and they employ a dedicated team of Downskeepers who manage the Downs on a day-to-day basis.

The Conservators are a mix of Borough Councillors, representatives of the Racecourse and racehorse trainers. It is the duty of the Conservators to preserve the Downs in their natural state of beauty and to have regard to the rules of good forestry and the desirability of conserving flora, fauna and geological features of special interest.

The Downs Consultative Committee, is an advisory body set-up in 1984 to give casual horse riders (also known as 'hack' riders) a voice. Its membership has since been extended to include other users of the Downs.

All meetings of both the Conservators (held on a quarterly basis) and Consultative Committee (held twice annually) are open to the public.

Horse Racing

The first recorded horse race meeting to be held on the Downs was in 1661 and races continued until 1779, when The Oaks was established. The following year saw the inaugural running of The Derby. The first winner was Diomed, owned by Sir Charles Bunbury - some consolation for losing the toss of a coin to the Earl of Derby for the naming of the race. Race meetings on the Downs are restricted to a maximum of 16 days in any one year by the 1984 Act.



Racehorse Training

The maintenance of the Downs in their present condition is enhanced by the presence of the racehorse training industry. The Conservators seek to work with the Epsom Trainers Association to sustain the long-term viability of the industry and to secure further improvement to the appearance of the Downs. There have been horses in training in Epsom for over 200 years, and recent years have seen a resurgence of horses in training and racing success by locally trained horses. This success has ensured that Epsom Downs continues to maintain its place as a major racehorse training centre in the United Kingdom.



Cyclists



Cyclists may use public roads and bridleways which are shown on maps located in the car parks on the Downs. Particular care should be taken when cycling near horses, particularly racehorses, which are easily frightened.



Dog Walkers

The Downs are used for many conflicting purposes and the cooperation of dog owners is sought to ensure that their animals do not interfere with others and to avoid the Conservators having to resort to formal legal proceedings to enforce the Byelaws. Please follow our simple code of conduct to ensure your visit is a safe and pleasant experience for everyone.



- Please keep your dog(s) under effective control. Your dog should be in sight at all times and come immediately when called or be kept on a lead. You must always have a lead with you while visiting the Downs
- Please do not let your dog(s) disturb other visitors
- Please do not let your dog(s) chase or disturb horses, wildlife, or livestock
- Please clear up after your dog(s). Bagged dog waste can be disposed of in a normal litter bin or in a dog bin
- Please ensure that every dog has a collar and identity tag with your contact details clearly marked. Ideally have your dog(s) micro-chipped
- Regular worming protects your dog(s), people and many other animals.



Kite Flying



Kite flying is an activity which can cause distress to horses, and is limited to a specific time and area. Please refer to the separate kite flying leaflet for further information.

Hack Riding



There are over 20km of rides and areas on the Downs designated under the 1984 Act for use by casual riders (also known as hack riders). In addition there is access along several roads and public bridleways. Use of some of the hack areas and rides is restricted until noon to reduce conflict with racehorse training. Hack areas and rides are marked by posts with blue arrows (allowing riding at any time), red crosses (no hack riding) and yellow arrows (riding allowed after noon). Please refer to the separate hack riding leaflet for further information.



Model Aircraft

The area for the flying of model aircraft and the rules relating to their flying are contained in the Byelaws. The Epsom Downs Model Aircraft Club (EDMAC) was formed in 2005 with the support of the Conservators. The Downskeepers work with EDMAC to ensure compliance with the Byelaws. Anyone flying a model aircraft (whether radio controlled or free flight) on the Downs is required to be a member of this Club.

Further information about the Club is available at www.edmac.org.uk



Golf

Epsom Golf Club has a lease (from the Racecourse) for part of the Downs. It was established in 1889 following the mapping of a rudimentary course by a group of masters from Epsom College the previous year. Today it has over 700 members. More information can be found on the website www.epsomgolfclub.co.uk













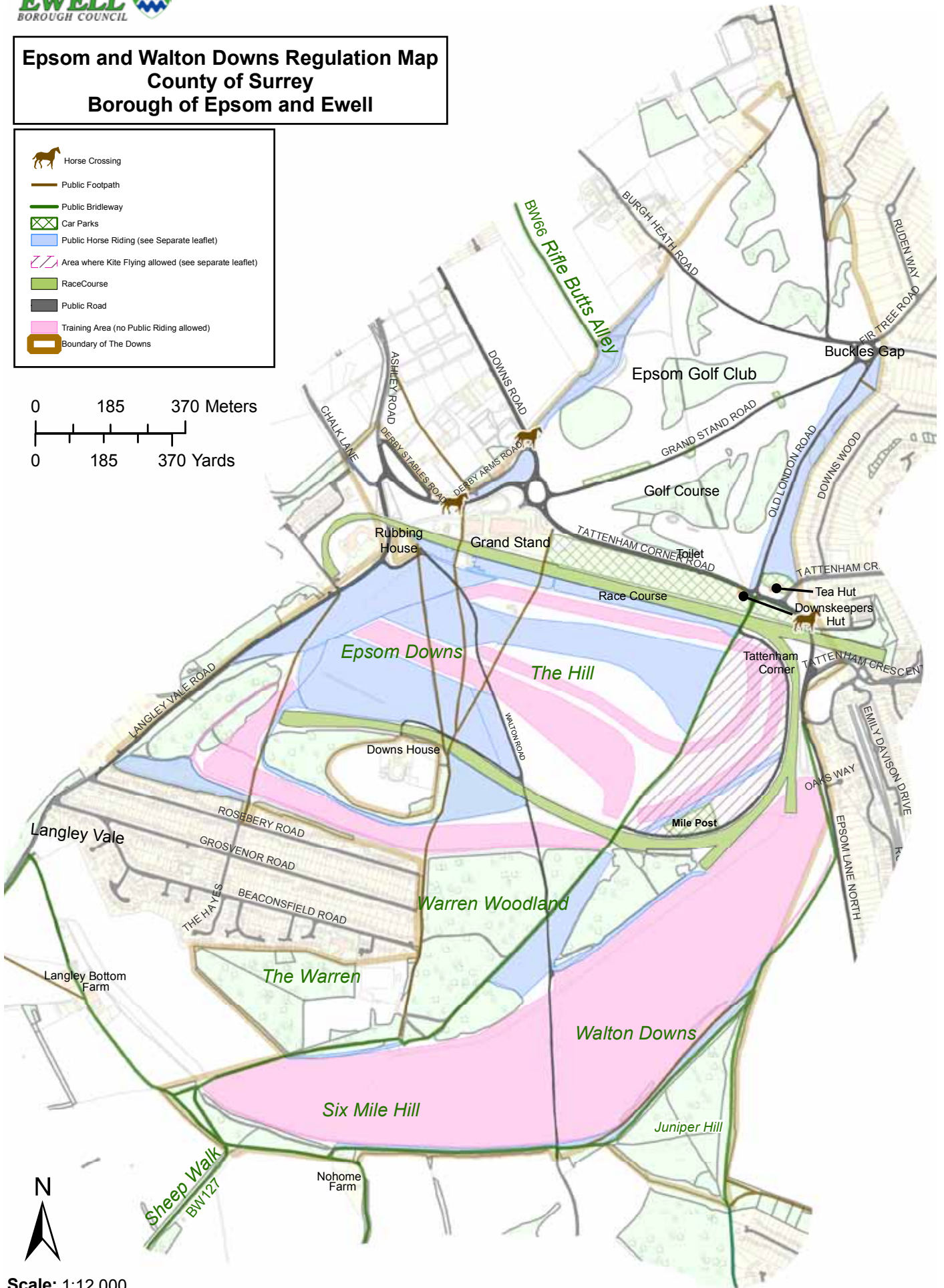
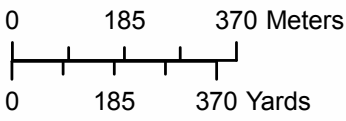
Parking, Refreshments and Public Toilet Facilities

The only public facility on the Downs for refreshments is the Tea Hut at Tattenham Corner which the Racecourse lets to a private operator. Public toilets are located to the west of the Tea Hut. Free parking is available on parts of the Downs as marked on the map.



Epsom and Walton Downs Regulation Map
County of Surrey
Borough of Epsom and Ewell

	Horse Crossing
	Public Footpath
	Public Bridleway
	Car Parks
	Public Horse Riding (see Separate leaflet)
	Area where Kite Flying allowed (see separate leaflet)
	Race Course
	Public Road
	Training Area (no Public Riding allowed)
	Boundary of The Downs



Scale: 1:12,000



For further information about the Downs, or the Act or Byelaws referred to, contact The Clerk to the Conservators at the Town Hall, The Parade, Epsom, KT18 5BY or telephone 01372 732000. Details are also available on the Council's website, www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk



**Epsom & Walton Downs Conservators
in partnership with**

