

Common Sense Horse Riding & Cycling on Epsom Common

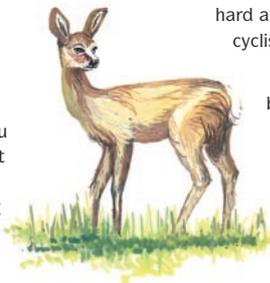
A site for wildlife

Epsom Common is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and became a Local Nature Reserve in 2001. It is one of about 5000 sites in the country which are specially identified as important for wildlife by English Nature, the government's nature conservation advisers.

Epsom Common is important for its lowland heath which has a number of uncommon species of plants including heather and many orchids. There are also pollarded oak trees, which are several hundred years old and are home to a number of rare insects.



Today the grassland is maintained by cattle grazing and with help from volunteers. This keeps the scrub down to promote a wider variety of plant and animal life. Local residents and visitors of Epsom Common can be proud of the fact that they have such a nationally important wildlife site on their doorstep. This leaflet will show you how you can help to conserve that wildlife and respect the wishes of other users whilst riding or cycling on the common.



A site for horse riding & cycling

Epsom Common Covers an area of about 430 acres. There are woodland and grassland paths and a 4.5 kilometre (3 mile) hard-surfaced track, which allows riding and cycling all year round. To conserve the site for its wildlife and the safety of other users, horse riders and cyclists, there are a number of common sense guidelines we would like you to follow.

Why have guidelines?

To avoid damage to the grass surface.

During the winter months and occasionally at other times of the year the clay soil of Epsom Common is waterlogged. The grass surface is easily broken up by the hooves of horses and eroded by wheels. This is unpleasant for all users of the common. In the summer this uneven surface dries hard and can cause problems for horse riders, cyclists and pedestrians.

There is an all weather track, which is of benefit to horse riders, cyclists and pedestrians alike. This allows you to ride on the common when the ground is wet. In the interests of the long-term management of the site we would ask that if you have to use the grassland paths, only do so in dry conditions.

For good relations between the many visitors to the common

Over a number of years there has been much concern from local residents and users of the common regarding the activities of some horse riders and cyclists. This has led to considerable pressure to restrict access to the site for both horse riders and cyclists. We would ask that riders and cyclists use their "common sense" and respect the needs of other users of the common.

For the safety of the users of the common

Some horse riders and cyclists put themselves, their horses and other users at risk. When a horse rider canters or a cyclist speeds they may not know what is around the corner. It could be another group of horses or cyclists, a family with a pushchair or a fallen tree. It would be advisable to ring a bell if on a bicycle when going around blind corners. Everyone who uses the common has a responsibility to ensure that they have regard for the safety of other users.



If you have a problem

If you need assistance on the common, **IT IS POSSIBLE** to pinpoint where you are. The main all-weather track is colour coded. You will see coloured squares screwed to some of the trees along the track, which correspond to the colours on the map.

There are also new landmark posts made out of tree trunks. The name of the site is engraved on to them e.g. Bramble Heath.

If you have a problem e.g. a fallen branch blocking a path, then please report it to us. We cannot guarantee to resolve every problem immediately but tell us and we will deal with it as soon as possible.

How you can help

Epsom Common has a number of paths and tracks. You can help in a very practical way by assisting us to maintain these. Please report any problems to us. We have had some problems with people making ramps and jumps, which, being a SSSI site is against the law. You may like to take part in a work party to maintain and develop these tracks. Please ring for more details.

Help cut crime

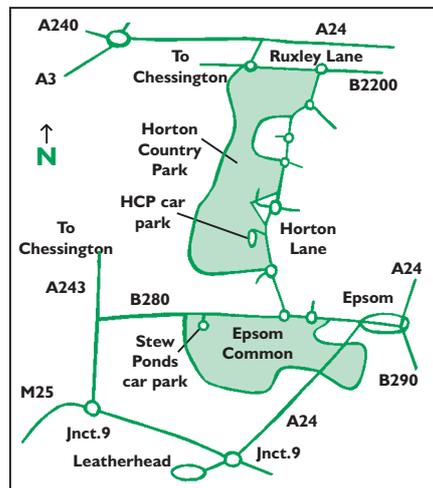
There is a HORSE WATCH scheme run in conjunction with the Metropolitan Police. For more details phone 020 8649 0494.

Get your postcode stamped onto your bicycle.

Ashted Common Wardens

Contact: 01372 279083 Monday - Friday 0800-1630
Out of hours emergency number: 01372 279488

How to find us



For more information...

About Epsom Common or any of the other green spaces in Epsom & Ewell, please contact the Ranger's Office on: **01372 732000**

24 hour contact number 01372 732589

Or write to:

The Countryside & Community Development Team

Horton Country Park, Horton Lane,
Epsom, Surrey KT19 8PL

or email: hcp@epsom-ewell.gov.uk

Or visit our web-site: www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk

Produced by The Countryside & Community Development Team
April 2004



Common Sense Horse Riding & Cycling

on Epsom
Common
Local Nature
Reserve



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Guidelines for horse riders

- Keep to the winter horse ride in wet conditions to avoid damage to the grass surfaced areas.
- Do not use the summer horse rides when the closed signs are up.
- Take care not to spoil the enjoyment of others.

- Do not set up jumps or other obstacles across horse rides.
- Do not leave litter.
- Keep to the way marked horse rides.
- Do not use horse rides which are badly worn.
- Speak to other riders you see acting inconsiderately.
- Take care when visibility is restricted.
- Slow down when passing pedestrians and give way.

- Do not gallop at any time.
- Be aware of the management problems of Epsom Common.
- Wear an approved riding hat, which conforms to BS 4471.
- Report activities such as motorcycling and fly tipping.
- Always be pleasant to other users of the common.
- Obey the Highway Code and ride safely.
- Obey any warning signs displayed for your safety.
- Leave details with someone of your expected route and time of return.



Landmark Posts

- 1 Horton Heath
- 2 The Stew Pond
- 3 Woodcock Corner
- 4 The Great Pond
- 5 Low Meadow
- 6 High Meadow

Landmark Posts

- 7 West Heath
- 8 Barons Pond
- 9 Castle Heath
- 10 Blakes Pond
- 11 Webb's Folly
- 12 Bramble Heath



Guidelines for cyclists

- Keep to the hard surfaced areas in wet conditions to avoid damage to the grass surfaced areas.
- Follow the Country Code.
- Take care not to spoil the enjoyment of others.
- Ensure your cycle is safe to ride and prepare for emergencies.
- Do not leave litter.
- Do not use tracks which are badly worn.
- Take care when visibility is restricted.
- Slow down when passing pedestrians and horse riders and give way.

- Be aware of the management problems of Epsom Common.
- Wear a safety helmet.
- Speak to other cyclists you see acting inconsiderately.
- Report activities such as motorcycling and fly tipping.
- Always be pleasant to other users of the common.
- Obey the Highway Code and cycle safely.
- Obey any warning signs displayed for your safety.



- Do not speed at any time.
- Leave details with someone of your expected route and time of return.
- Horses can be frightened by cycles. Slow down and give them plenty of room.

