



# The Great Oak on Welling Hill

## - a self-guided walk

A 4km (2.5mile) walk up Welling Hill to Colgate Farm and home again in a loop. Take an OS map preferably at 1: 25,000 scale or more.

The paths are very boggy in places.

- Start from A40 pathway 100m east of the Charlton Kings Hotel.
- Follow the track down to Welling House for 100m, at the start of Footpath ZCK 18.
- Turn right over stile and follow line of the River Chelt for 50m before crossing the river and carrying on along the north bank for a further 100m.
- Strike up the slope for about 150m to the point where footpath ZCK 17 breaks off east, but continue straight ahead up the hill.
- Continue for 150m to the foot of a stone track. The footpath has been diverted up this track rather than across the field to the right.
- After 100m turn right through metal gates and follow track for 50m to the corner of a wood. There are great views right across Charlton Kings to Ravensgate Common.
- The Welling Hill Oak is right on the corner of this wood. Our picture shows this massive 400-year-old English oak which has a girth of over 20 ft (6metres) and may have been the "great oak on One-Tree Hill" mentioned in Dinah Craik's novel John Halifax, Gentleman, written at nearby Detmore House in 1856.
- Follow the grassy track for 500m up hill, with a final section on a raised embankment in an Ash plantation, to join footpath ZCK 20.
- Follow new path below a high, brambly hedge for 150m to junction with footpath ZCK15 west of Colgate Farm. Set off downhill for 350m, with fenceline to your left, through a kissing gate and through next field to join footpath ZCK 16.
- Follow line of path for 650m before turning left onto footpath ZCK 17. Note some very old Oak pollards in hedges and as open-field trees.
- Follow ZCK 17 for 500m to re-join path above R. Chelt and follow path downhill, back along the river and after 400m, back to the A40.