



Walks in West Berkshire

Snelmore Common Country Park, Easy Access Circular

Just 4 miles north-west of Newbury, Snelmore Common is a haven for wildlife, where rare heathland, woodland and wetland habitats come together to create one of Berkshire's most special landscapes. This easy-access circular trail offers the chance to discover conservation-grazing ponies, nationally important lowland heathland, peaceful woodland and picnic spots along the way.

Useful Information

- 0.75 miles / 1.2 km circular
- Start point: [Disabled parking area](#)
- What3words: [areas.rave.rock](#)
- Grid Ref: SU 463 710
- OS Explorer Map: 158 | Newbury & Hungerford
- 5 rest points (benches) enroute
- Dogs: permitted, please use a lead during the nesting season (1 March – 31 July)
- [GPX file available for download](#)
- Parking: onsite (free), summer hours 8am-8pm, winter hours 8am-6pm
- Easy access, hard and level surface
- Kissing gates with radar key
- Refreshments: [The Snugg Café](#), onsite
- Toilets: Onsite, next to the café
- Multiple picnic areas
- Bus (Mon-Fri): [West Berkshire Community Connect](#) ([Northwest Downlands Zone](#))

Route Directions

- 1) Follow signs to park in the disabled parking area, where there is a combination of allocated disabled spaces and general parking. [W3W: [easily.belong.worlds](#)]
- 2) Head to the kissing-gate in the north-west corner of this parking area. [W3W: [baseline.commuted.livid](#)] The kissing gate is wheelchair accessible but larger mobility vehicles will require a RADAR key.
- 3) Pass through the kissing gate and continue straight ahead on the tarmacked path following the green arrow way markers displaying a wheelchair icon. When the path branches after approximately 100meters, stay left. [W3W: [rounds.animals.bookings](#)]
- 4) Continue on straight ahead for another 200meters, passing two separate rest points with benches, until you reach a fork in the path. [W3W: [highways.embedded.suitably](#)]
- 5) Head to the right, following the tarmac path and it curves into the wooded area. Continue straight ahead on this path through woodland for 130meters, until you reach a set off crossroads. [W3W: [patrolled.petted.pretty](#)]





- 6) Follow the hard surface path for approximately 115m as it bends gently to the right. At the point where the path straightens out there is a bench offering a rest-point with a nice view across the heathland. [W3W: [publisher.promising.displays](#)]
- 7) Continue straight ahead for another 265m, the path starts to curve to the right as it is joined by another track just before you reach another kissing gate leading into the parking area. [W3W: [soon.curls.retract](#)]
- 8) Continue straight ahead along the road, passing by the first parking area to your right hand side. When you reach the second parking area, turn right and head to the far corner where there is a gap through to a picnic area. [W3W: [glory.bins.tiptoes](#)]
- 9) Follow the marked path cutting across the near corner of the picnic area. This short section of path takes you past some covered seating and ends at the disabled parking area, completing this circular route.

Points of Interest

- **RADAR kissing gates:** A RADAR key-operated kissing gate helps improve access for people while preventing grazing ponies from wandering away from the common. The gate can be opened using a standard RADAR key, providing easier access for those who may find conventional kissing gates difficult to use. A key can be borrowed from the café during opening hours.
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- **Snugg Café:** Located at the main entrance, this is a small café offering fresh baked goods, hot and cold drinks, sandwiches, ice-creams and more to take away or enjoy outside at picnic tables. Please check their social media for latest opening times, generally open Mon-Sun 09:30-16:00. ([The Snugg – Snelsmore Common Facebook page](#)).
 - **Toilets:** Gendered toilets and an accessible bathroom. Toilets are open the same hours as the café (see, 'Snugg Café' above), and a RADAR key can be borrowed from the café team for the accessible toilet.
 - **Ponies:** The ponies you see at Snelsmore Common are hardy Exmoor and New Forest ponies, well suited to living outdoors and grazing rough heathland vegetation. They're an important part of the site's conservation management, helping to keep the heathland open by grazing grasses and scrub, which creates habitat for wildlife such as nightjars, woodlarks and other heathland species. Please do not pet or feed the ponies.

North Wessex Downs National Landscape



- **Lowland Heathland:** Snelsmore Common is an important area of lowland heathland, one of the UK's rarest and most threatened habitats. Made up of heather, gorse, grassland, bogs and scattered trees, this habitat supports a variety of specialist wildlife, including birds such as nightjar, woodlark and tree pipit, as well as reptiles, and dragonflies.
- **Woodland:** The woodland at Snelsmore Common provides an important contrast to the open heathland, with mature trees, shaded paths and a rich variety of wildlife throughout the year. In spring, the woodland floor is carpeted with bluebells and filled with birdsong, while species such as nuthatches, treecreepers and several species of woodpecker can be found among the trees.
- **Crayon rubbing trail:** Along the route, specially designed rubbing posts reveal different nature-themed artworks when you place paper over them and rub with a crayon. It's a fun way to engage with the landscape while learning about the heathland, woodland and wildlife around them. You will need to print copies of the trail sheet before arrival, available on the BBOWT website ([Heathland crayon rubbing trail](#)).
- **Picnic areas:** located next to The Snugg café and around a green between the parking areas. Bins and benches on site, including a bench with space for a wheelchair.



OS Map (see next page)

North Wessex Downs National Landscape



Snelsmore Common Country Park, Easy Access Circular Map:

