

Access

The main point of access is The Look Out car park, which is at the northernmost point of the area. The car park gets very busy, particularly at weekends, and costs £2 for 4 hours or £4 for the day. Free parking can be found at Birch Hill shops, in the side-roads of Birch Hill and Hanworth or Great Hollands recreation ground, if you don't mind a bit of a jog.

From the south, you can park at or near to Bagshot Church.

Fauna

From time-to-time you will come across animals. Principally:

Deer – Numerous, mostly seen in the early mornings and evenings and generally harmless

Cows – These are allowed to roam the southern section from April to October. Completely uninterested in runners but will occasionally block your path!

Foxes and rabbits – Occasionally.

Snakes – Adders can be found in the woods. Venomous, so don't touch, but a beautiful creature to spot.

Lizards – Sand lizards and slow worms are often seen.

Birds – A buzzard currently lives in the woods towards Vicarage Lane. Red kites cruise the skies, and smaller songbirds can be found, particularly in the deciduous sections

Help – I'm Lost!

A common fear of running in the forest is that of getting lost. There are a number of ways to deal with this:

1. Know which part of the wood you are in. Obviously, experience helps (and hopefully this guide). This will tell you what direction to head back if you are stuck
2. Get to know a few landmarks and escape routes. Power lines and the radio transmitter help orientate you; once you are nearer The Look Out you can decide if straight back is the way you need to go, or if you need to add some extra miles to make the run long enough
3. Head north. This will usually get you out of trouble. In summer, the sun is east at 7am, south at 1pm and west at 7pm so if its lunchtime and the sun is behind you, you're going the right way
4. Use your SmartPhone. These usually have a compass app built in. You can try using the internet, but in my experience, coverage can be a bit patchy as the dips and trees interfere with signal. If you use a map, try openstreetmap.org rather than Google maps as Google maps shows fewer footpaths (though it is improving)
5. Ask someone. Seems obvious, but generally other people you meet will be able to point you in the right direction
6. Plan ahead (even if its in your mind) so that you know what part of the wood you expect to be in after X miles of running.