



# Lovelace Bridges Longer Trail

Walk created by Horsley Countryside Preservation Society

Length  
5.21 Miles

Elevation Gain  
560 ft

Route Type  
Circular



This long walk within the Surrey Hills, an area of outstanding natural beauty is about 5 miles and passes 10 of the Lovelace Bridge/Arch sites. This route involves some gradual climbs and descents and can be muddy after wet weather.

Start and finish location: Sheepleas Green Dene Car Park

Postcode KT24 5TA Map Ref: TQ091509 what3words: sheep.defend.still

## Description

The 15 Lovelace bridges were built in the 1860s on the orders of Lord Lovelace who owned the East Horsley estate and who was the Lord Lieutenant of Surrey.

The bridges were to make possible the extraction of timber from the woods on the North Downs creating smooth gradients and going above existing roads and paths. The timber was brought out using horses.

Ten of the bridges still exist and the sites of the others can be identified by the embankments leading to them and remnants of masonry, flint and bricks.

The bridges were built of local flint and bricks probably from the Earl's own brickworks. They vary in size with the most elaborate being the Dorking Arch over the Crocknorth Road ornamented with arrow slits. The others are simpler, working bridges with the narrowest being Meadow Platt.

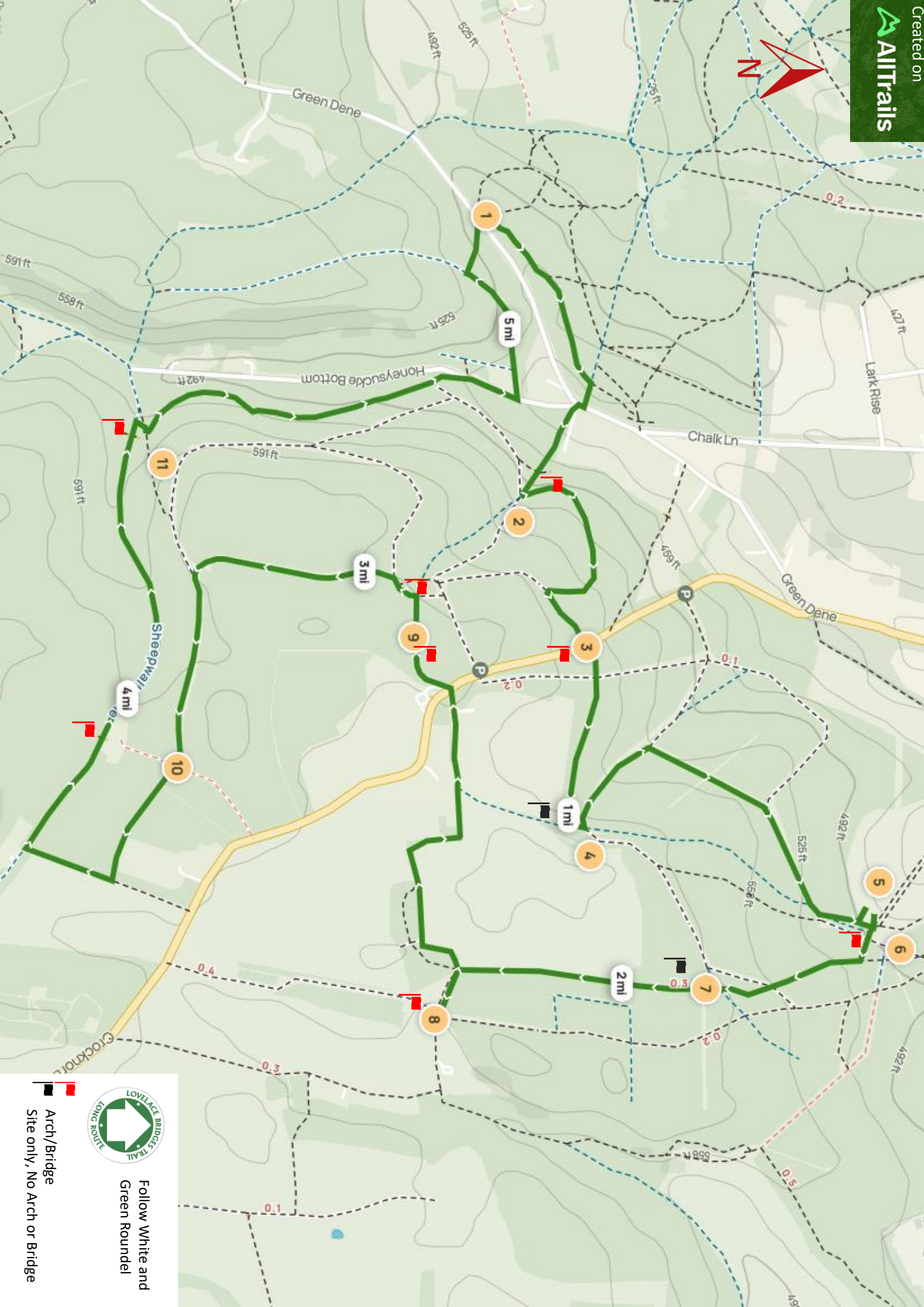
Horsley Countryside Preservation Society won an award from the Surrey Archaeological Society for its conservation work on Stony Dene Bridge.

Two trails have been created using existing paths and bridleways, a short route and a long route. Both routes start from Green Dene car park and follow the same path as far as Stony Dene Bridge where the short route goes uphill through the yew tree bridleway while the long route carries on further southeast to the site of Horse Close Bridge and Meadow Platt Bridge.

The routes join again between Crocknorth Farm and Briary Hill East Bridge, then the long route goes to the left while the short route continues down Briary Hill.

**All walkers of the Lovelace Bridge Trails do so at their own risk.**





Follow White and  
Green Roundel

  Arch/Bridge  
Site only, No Arch or Bridge

### **1. Start Point: Green Dene Car Park**

From the car park take the path in the Northeast corner, roughly parallel to the road, turning right at the first crosspath.

At the junction with the bridleway turn right down the slope to the junction of Green Dene and Honeysuckle Bottom. Cross the road with care. Take the narrow bridleway to the left of Honeysuckle Bottom uphill to Raven Arch.

### **2. Raven Arch and 5 Paths Junction**

Go under Raven Arch, at the 5 paths crossing go first left on the Forestry track. Follow this as it bends uphill then take the first path to the left. Follow this until you reach Dorking Arch which goes over the Crocknorth Road.

### **3. Dorking Arch**

The most elaborate of the bridges is Dorking Arch over the Crocknorth Road which is ornamented with arrow slits. Walk over the arch and keep on this main path ignoring crossing paths. Go straight on and follow the path.

### **4. Oakhanger Bridge Site (No bridge)**

Go straight on and follow the path this leads you to the site of Oakhanger Bridge, no longer in existence but you can see the raised embankments. The site of the bridge is on your left just before a steep but short slope down. Descend the slope to the sunken path/bridleway and turn left. Walk about 100 yards (Oldlands sign) and turn left and follow the broad path. It then bends round to the right. Follow this steadily uphill, then it flattens out and bear right where a small path joins from the left and continue till you come to a fork. Turn left downhill for about 100 yards.

### **5. Jubilee Trail Viewpoint (Optional)**

At this point there is an optional short path on your left leading to the Jubilee Trail viewpoint. Alternatively, a little further up as you come to Stony Dene Bridge, you can go through the kissing gate on your left into the field for more views.

### **6. Stony Dene Bridge**

Go under Stony Dene Bridge and walk straight ahead onto a crossing bridleway. Turn right slightly up hill. Follow this path for 350 yards ignore crossing path to the site of Horse Close Bridge; only the embankments remain.

### **7. Site of Horse Close Bridge (No bridge)**

Only the embankments remain of this bridge. Continue along the path and in 200 yards there will be the wood on your left (bluebells in Spring) and a field on your right. At the end of the field make a short diversion down the path on your left to see Meadow Platt Bridge.

### **8. Meadow Platt Bridge**

Then return to the junction by the field where you started the diversion and turn left. Follow the path around the field and continue on to reach The Old Barn. Continue along the driveway to the road. Cross the road and go straight ahead onto the path which will then go round to the right and then under Briary Hill East Bridge.

### **9. Briary Hill East**

Once under Briary Hill East Bridge, you will come to a crossing path. If you wish to see the the Briary Hill West bridge it is just 50 yards straight over this crossing, otherwise turn left on to a wide Forestry Commission track. Follow this and as it bends to the left, ignore the minor path to the right. Continue for 300 yards along the wide track eventually it bends to the left. (Ignore the path to the right). Continue along the wide track across Dick Focks Common to a minor rough road.

### **10. Minor Private Road**

Turn right on to the minor private road, then almost immediately turn left onto the path by the Trot Path sign. Initially this goes between undergrowth and then through the woods. Follow this now wider path through the woods to a T- junction. Turn right on to a firmer track. In 300 yards turn right at the T-junction on to Sheepwalk Lane. Walk downhill along Sheepwalk Lane going under Hermitage Bridge and on for approximately half a mile to Troy Arch Bridge..

### **11. Troy Arch**

After Troy Arch, in 50 yards, turn right up a narrow path. This leads to a crossing path, turn left and follow the path with a steepish drop on your left. The path bends round to the right, stay on this path keeping Honeysuckle Bottom down on your left. Eventually, you come to a crossing path where you turn left. Continue for 100 yards to a road (Honeysuckle Bottom) and turn right along it. Then after 100 yards take a track to the left. Walk along the track and past the sign Forestry Commission Mountain Wood and continue straight on the path for a further 200 yards. Turn right onto a very small path. This goes through the wood down to Green Dene road. The car park is directly opposite.