THAMES PATH
NATIONAL TRAIL

# ETON WALK

**Description**: This walk starts at Windsor Bridge, crosses the River Thames walking towards Eton and passes Eton College Boat House. This is a wide-open meadow where local farmers can still exercise their Lammas Rights by grazing their cattle here in August. On this walk there is the most splendid view of Windsor Castle, the largest inhabited castle in Europe. Best time of year for this walk : May - Oct

**Distance:** 2.5 miles **Duration:** 1.5 Hours **Difficulty:** Easy

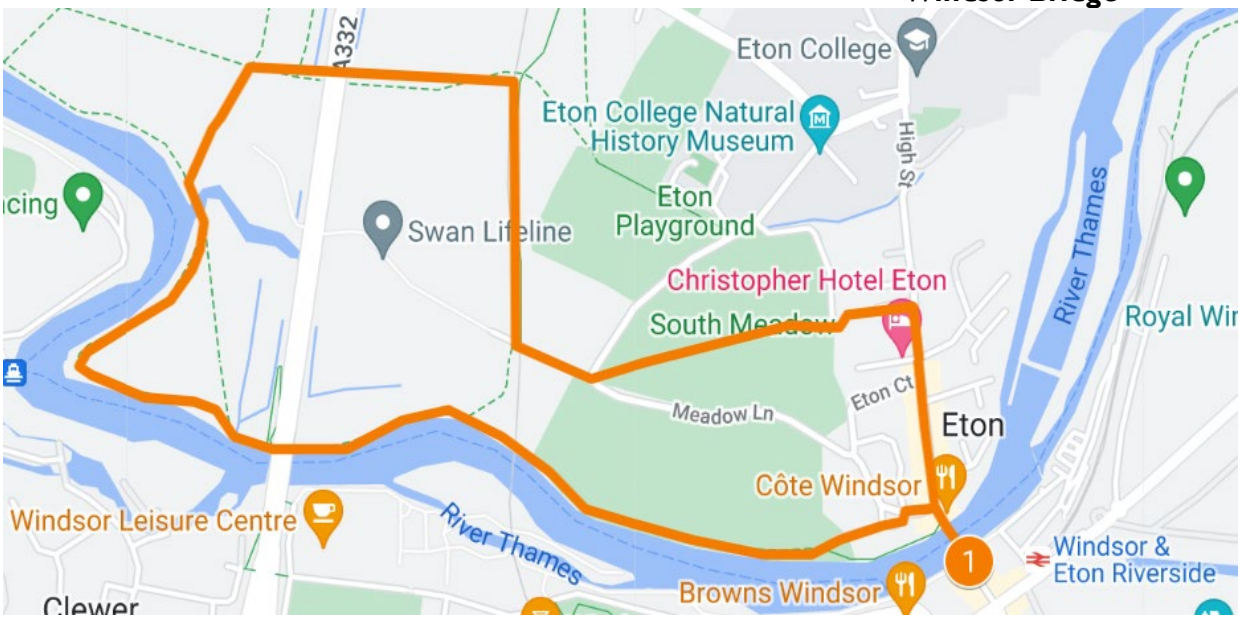
**Refreshments / toilets:** There are plenty of cafes and restaurants in Eton on the first and last stretches of this walk.

**Start point:** Windsor Bridge, 75 High Street, Eton, Windsor, SL4 6BT.

The what3words address for the bridge is ///scores.mental.lanes




***Windsor Bridge***



ETON WALK

**Route Description**

The walk starts at Windsor Bridge. The Windsor Bridge (also called the Windsor Town Bridge) is an arch bridge constructed of iron and granite and is a Grade II listed structure. It crosses the River Thames and connects the towns of Windsor and Eton. The Thames Path National Trail crosses the river here, just above Romney Lock. It is likely that the first bridge on this site was built in the 12th century AD, but it has been replaced many times since then. This current bridge was built between 1822 - 1824, and had some refurbishment works carried out in 2002.

Once across the river continue straight onto the High Street. Here you will find plenty of options for a mooch around the shops, a coffee break, or even a bite to eat. You will be on the High Street for 0.2 miles (approximately 5 minute walk), but on your way keep an eye out for the oldest building on the High Street - the 'Cockpit'. It can be found on the right pavement, near the bright red post box. The Cockpit building likely dates from around 1440, most likely to have been built by the Dean and Canons of Windsor. At the time of writing (2026) it was undergoing a sympathetic restoration. The 1856 Post Box nearby has an unusual vertical slot and is one of only a handful of survivors of this kind in the United Kingdom.

Turn off the High Street through a gate into the churchyard. You'll be able to walk past the doctors surgery to a path that joins a large open space called South Meadow.
Before you get to the Meadow, pause on the lane to enjoy the history of the Church of St John the Evangelist. This building was consecrated in 1854 but was built on the site of an earlier church dating from 1769. Due to the cost of upkeep the church was closed for public worship in 1981, but Eton College came forward with a proposal that resulted in the building we see today: the nave completely modified to provide a sanatorium for the school, along with flats for masters and other College employees. (*Information on the church is from the Eton Walkway Official Guide).

Continue in the same direction across the meadow (at some times of year a path is visible, but if recently mowed it may not be clear). In Eton, every freeholder, tenant, householder and cottager living within the old parish boundaries used to possess the right of grazing cattle on Lammas Lands following the harvest on Lammas Day'.  Lammas rights came from a Saxon tradition where every parishioner could graze their cattle on the public land for a certain period of the year. The track across the meadow will eventually end, bringing you out onto a corner of Meadow Lane.

The track across the meadow will eventually end, bringing you out on a corner of Meadow Lane. Go straight across here, following the Swan Sanctuary sign, joining a single track road. Continue on this lane for 2 minutes until you come to a large metal bridge.

Turn right before the metal bridge onto a footpath that runs alongside the arches of the brick bridge that carries the Windsor to Slough railway. Walk for approximately 6 minutes, 0.4 miles.

Turn left under bridge Turn left under the bridge when you see a signpost highlighting a footpath. The track is well worn, so you'll be able to see it easily. The path passes under the Relief Road bridge (excellent for echoes!) then in about 100m take the turn off the track on your left. The area you are walking on is a flood plain that protects the towns of Windsor and Eton, so the road and railway are both elevated above this flood plain, and the arches are there to let water flow through.

When the track splits turn left. Follow this track for 2 minutes and you will reach the River Thames. Turn left at the river.

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Turn left and cross the Chinese Bridge which takes you over a backwater called Cuckoo Weir, where Eton schoolboys were taught to swim in the nineteenth century. Look out for phrases carved in the rails of the Chinese Bridge, part of an art installation commemorating the 2012 Olympics. This is now the Thames Path National Trail. After the Chinese Bridge, turn right off the main path to follow the river. Where the path turns sharply to the left, look out for the Windsor Winding Post, a navigation aid to prevent barges missing the turn and pulling the towing horse into the river. On the opposite bank is Windsor Racecourse, which is actually on a large island.
You will return under the Relief Road (look out for the large mural by Cosmo Sarson, another art installation for the Windsor Olympic Games Trail, and the slipway on the opposite bank where the Windsor Duck amphibious vehicle splashes into the river) and under the railway line (the bridge here was designed by Brunel as part of the Great Western Railway).

As you near the end of the grassy walk you will see the impressive riverside frontage of the Eton College Boat House before you. The Boat House, known as 'Rafts' is where boats were built and kept for many years. Rowing has been a feature of school life since the late 18th century. Take the track directly behind this boat house.

Cut behind the boat house onto Brocas Street and follow until you meet the High Street again. Turn right here and you will be back at Windsor Bridge where we started from.

As you cross the bridge back into Windsor take a moment to pause and look ahead of you for a view of Windsor Castle in the distance. Windsor Castle is the oldest and largest occupied castle in the world, dating back to the 11th century and William the Conqueror. It is home to royalty and 1,000 years of royal history, and is open to visitors, so why not finish your walk and then detour to the castle for an explore? More information can be found here:
https://www.rct.uk/visit/windsor-castle