

# EAST HORSLEY CONSERVATION AREA WALK

The East Horsley Conservation Area straddles Ockham Road South (B2039) between Bishopsmead Close and the A246. It includes a total of 22 listed structures, all of which were built or modified by the first Lord Lovelace during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century in a distinctive design style of flint and polychrome brick.

<b>Walk distance</b>	1.5 miles approximately ( <i>2 miles with optional extension</i> )
<b>Parking options</b>	Bishopsmead Parade car park ( <i>up to 3 hours</i> ) Bluebell Lane car park in St Martin's Close.
<b>Refreshments</b>	Annaré ( <i>Bishopsmead Parade</i> ), Duke of Wellington, Thatcher's Hotel.
<b>References</b>	Structures in the Horsley Heritage List are quoted here using a pre-fix HH plus their reference number. See <a href="http://www.horsleyheritage.info">www.horsleyheritage.info</a>
<b>Access</b>	Many heritage buildings on this walk are private residential dwellings; viewing is only permissible from a public footway or right of way.

## WALK DESCRIPTION:

### a) Ockham Road South, east side

Our walk starts at **Bishopsmead Parade**, a retail centre built in 1938 and designed by Frank Chown who pioneered residential development in East Horsley during that period.

Standing by the Parish Council notice board and looking across Ockham Road South we can spot **Violet Cottage** built in the Lovelace style in 1863. This house is well set back with access beside the former Post Office, now the showroom of Future Light Design. Hidden behind Violet Cottage is the other half of this semi-detached building, **Daisy Cottage**, built in 1860. Maps from 1900 show these two cottages once nestled in an open meadow beside St Martin's village school, although now are fully enclosed by subsequent developments.

Heading south from Bishopsmead Parade along the Ockham Road South pavement, we soon arrive at **Bishopsgate Lodge, (HH3)**. Bishopsgate Lodge (*see right*) was built in 1869 as one of five gatehouses surrounding Lord Lovelace's Horsley Towers estate and then provided a home for the estate carpenter. Now it is a residential dwelling.

Continuing along the Ockham Road South pavement we come next to a matching pair of Lovelace cottages, **Tower Cottage** built in 1862 and **Red Rose Cottage** built in 1867, located on what was originally the old village forge and carpenter's shop.



Adjoining Red Rose cottage is **Sartor Resartus**, a substantial, elaborately decorated Lovelace house. This site was previously occupied for several centuries by a family of tailors called Webb, hence the unusual name of this house which means in Latin ‘*the tailor re-tailored*’.

Adjacent to Sartor Resartus is **St Martin’s Church (HH21)** the oldest building in East Horsley, dating from the 12<sup>th</sup> Century, (*see right*). Pass through the wooden gate and take the footpath to the church to view the interior with its fine stained-glass windows. This Norman structure had much of its chancel and churchyard walls rebuilt by Lord Lovelace during the 1860’s. A Covid memorial window is the most recent addition. The church graveyard can be explored now or left until a short-cut near the end of our walk.



Progressing along Ockham Road South to the point where the churchyard flint wall ends, we may look up to see a decorated **belvedere** or gazebo. This small cockpit originally served as a look-out where a local choirboy would wait before signalling to the Rector on the arrival of Lord Lovelace’s carriage.



Past the belvedere is a ‘Private Road’ running parallel to Ockham Road South. Follow this road to avoid the traffic noise and also enjoy an interesting viewpoint of **Guildford Lodge (HH9)** at the end. Built in 1860 this distinctive gatehouse (*see left*) originally served as the main entry into the Horsley Towers estate. Now it is a private residence at the entrance to Guildford Lodge Drive, a short private road. Located in a very prominent position and with highly distinctive twin towers, Guildford Lodge is probably the most photographed house in East Horsley.

Next to the adjacent Shell garage lies **Thatcher’s Hotel**. It is just outside the Conservation Area but still well worth seeing. The original tea room here was built in 1934 by Frank Chown, with construction taking just 6 months.

### **b) Ockham Road South, west side**

Returning to Guildford Lodge Drive, we now cross over Ockham Road South for a closer look at **The Duke of Wellington (HH6)** and its garden. There has been a coaching inn here since 1562, although the current public house was largely rebuilt by Lord Lovelace in 1863. The adjacent **garden grotto** and **rear service buildings** are both separately listed structures.

Continue northwards along Ockham Road South on the pavement beside the Duke of Wellington and after 100 metres come to **The Old Manor House**. This large building, currently vacant, was built in 1868 and displays some elaborate Lovelace decorations and particularly fine chimneys. It was never actually used as a manor house, but built by Lord Lovelace for a wealthy tenant.

### **c) St Martin's Close & Bluebell Lane**

Turning left beside the Old Manor House into St Martin's Close, there are good views of the building from both side and rear. Continue along the St Martin's Close pavement as it curves right and skirt the edge of a former bowling green. Before you reach the end of the bowling green there is an un-signed road leading off to your right - although not obvious this is the start of Bluebell Lane. Walk down Bluebell Lane and on the left-hand side you will pass **Bluebell Cottage**, another fine Lovelace building from 1865, although the large hedge rather limits the public view of this attractive cottage.

Continuing to the end of Bluebell Lane we reach Ockham Road South once again. On the right-hand corner sits **Ye Old Shoppe**, an elaborate Lovelace building from 1862 made specifically as a large shop, replacing former cottages that functioned as butchers, grocers and a dairy.

On the left-hand corner is **St Martin's Hall (HH22)**, built in 1860 as St Martin's School. For a hundred years this building served as the main primary school for East Horsley - currently it is a business centre with multiple tenants.

### **d) Horsley Towers**

Take the pelican crossing over Ockham Road South to reach Bishopsgate Lodge again. Originally the two circular towers on either side of this road were joined by an arch, as still remains at Guildford Lodge. Here, however, the arch was removed in the 1920's to allow passage for larger motor vehicles. Walk beside this house and follow the access road into the De Vere Horsley Estate.



There is now a leisurely stroll of 600 metres from Bishopsgate Lodge through the De Vere Horsley Estate before we reach Horsley Towers (*see left*). Public access is permitted along the main driveway which runs through the estate to Horsley Towers, although not into the gardens and land on either side. Our route passes decorative flint walls on the left, then a modern hotel and conference centre before reaching the Horsley Towers lawn. On the right is a scene of elegant trees and open pasture, sometimes with polo ponies, with views of the North Downs in the distance.

Construction of **Horsley Towers (HH10)** began in the 1820's for wealthy banker, William Currie. His architect was Charles Barry, who later designed the Houses of Parliament. After Currie's death in 1829, the East Horsley Park estate, as it was then known, was acquired by Lord Lovelace, who set about making substantial changes. He was married to Ada Lovelace, a mathematician and the only legitimate child of Lord Byron; her inheritance helped provide funds for his ambitious works in East Horsley. At Horsley Towers this included adding a third level to the main building plus two distinctive Italianate towers, which immediately gave the building the name it still bears today. He also encircled the main building with a complex of walls, tunnels, arches, bastions and a decorative cloister.



Today Horsley Towers functions as a luxury hotel and wedding venue. The adjacent lily pond offers an ideal photo opportunity. It is also the point in our walk to turn around and head back towards Bishopsmead Parade.

Retrace your route along the estate road until you pass the De Vere conference centre. As the road bends right, leave the pavement and walk across the second car park area through the lane marked OUT. By the back verge is a rectangular white sign for St Martin's Church. Pass this and go through the tall wooden gate to enter the lower part of the churchyard. Follow the earth footpath towards the church, then turn right a few metres before the main church building and take the narrow track. Follow this path to discover the **Lovelace mausoleum**, (*see right*).



Built during Lord Lovelace's lifetime in his typical style of flint and polychrome brick, the mausoleum became his final resting place after his death in 1893. Given Lord Lovelace's pivotal role in creating so many of the buildings within the Conservation Area, this seems an appropriate place to conclude our heritage walk. (*NB: Those with impaired mobility may prefer to omit the uneven path through the churchyard and continue along the estate road instead.*)

#### ***e) Optional route via Lynx Hill***

For those wanting a longer walk back to Bishopsmead Parade, there is an alternative route taking in several of East Horsley's private residential roads developed in the 1930's by Frank Chown in his distinctive 'arts & crafts' style.

From the lily pond beside Horsley Towers, continue further along the estate road to reach a rear gateway into Pine Walk. Follow this tree-lined road to its end at a crossroads. On your right is **Pennymead Lodge** built in 1851 in the Lovelace style. It was originally called Laundry Cottage being the place where all of Horsley Towers laundry was previously done.

Take a left turn at these crossroads and enter Lynx Hill. Follow its full length to reach Ockham Road South once again. On the left corner there is Conisbee Butchers - the Conisbee family have been selling meat in East Horsley since 1780. This property is named **Park Corner (HH15)** and is another substantial Lovelace building dating from 1861.

Turn left at Park Corner and follow Ockham Road South until you arrive back at Bishopsmead Parade. This alternative return route adds another half a mile to this walk.

#### ***Further information***

More detailed information about all the heritage buildings mentioned here may be found in the 72-page book by Pam Bowley ***East Horsley: the Lovelace Village*** available in the Horsley library. If you wish to buy this book, copies are available from the Post Office in Bishopsmead Parade in East Horsley.