

Dartford Council's WONDERFUL WALKS

START

Step 1:
Picnic site next to car park

Step 2-3:
Follow the road to find a variety of fruit in the new orchard

Step 4:

Step 5:
Site of the Southern Rest cemetery, one of two on the site.

Step 6:

Step 7-8:
Keep an eye out for the horse chestnut trees

FINISH

Walk No. 2: Darent Country Park

Distance: **0.7 miles** Time: **Approx 1hr** Difficulty: **Easy**

Special details: Wheel chair accessible. Perfect for dog walking. This route can be walked or cycled. Please take care when using the park as the Arrow Riding Centre for the Disabled also use these paths for riding lessons

Sturdy footwear is recommended

walks@dartford.gov.uk

Step 1: From Darent Country Park car park, go past the new pond dug in 2008 and turn up the long concrete road known as Chapel Path. You will soon pass by the privet hedge of one of two cemeteries on site - Darent Rest. Paths leading off this road can be explored for longer walks leading to higher fields.

Step 2: Continue up the road and you will come across the new orchard. Planted on the site of the former hospital orchard it includes 150 examples of most fruit found in the county. The lower end has examples of plums, cherries and pears.

Step 3: Travel further up the road to find a timeline of apple trees from small modern varieties at the bottom such as Discovery to the old larger varieties at the top of the hill with romantic names like Kentish Filbasket and Golden Pippin. When ripe you may pick fruit for your personal consumption...but not by the bag load please!

Step 4: As you follow the road, a hedge separates you from fields of horses. These horses are used by Arrow Riding Centre for rehabilitation of children and adults.

Step 5: At the top of the road is another cemetery, (Southern Rest). Being the older of the two on this site, it was used until 1918 for the burial of patients and staff. Now managed for conservation, an interesting range of meadow flowers can be found in May and June including the Early Purple Orchid and Lady's Bedstraw.

Step 6: Turn right and continue along the path to find Southern Drive. This road is the old access to the Southern Hospital demolished to make way for the A2 trunk road. For a longer walk, paths at the top of Southern Drive lead into bluebell woods and chalk down land. This area is an SSSI, (Site of Special Scientific Interest) with a range of low growing wild flowers.

Step 7: Follow this road and you will be surrounded by horse chestnut trees (See if you can spot the difference between them; they are alternate white and red flowered varieties).

Step 8: Follow the road to the end - where you will find yourself back at the carpark.

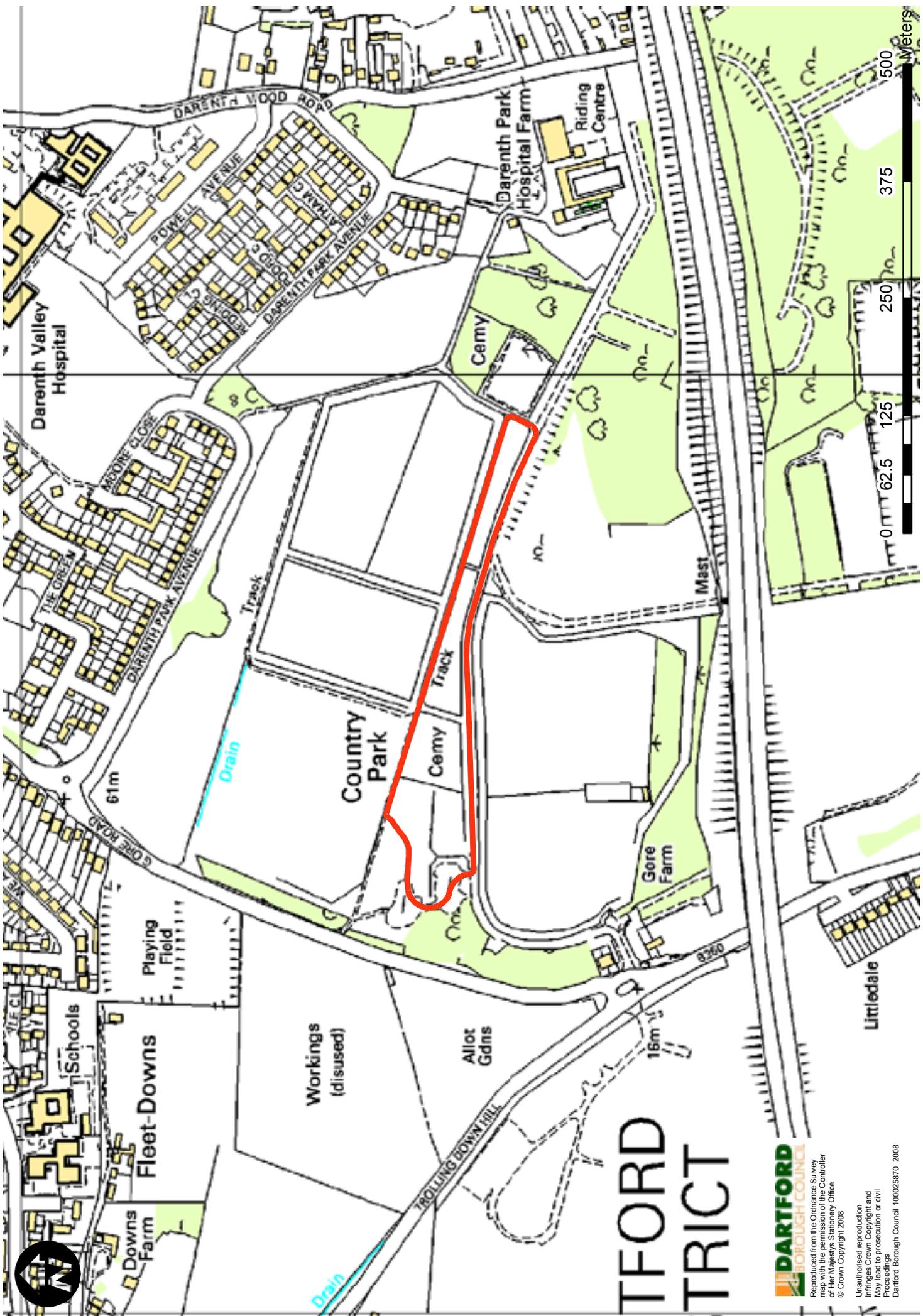
"I met a resident in the town who suggested we produce leaflets showing some of our best walks around the town. I thought it was a grand idea so here they are - the 2nd in a series that I hope you enjoy"



Councillor Jeremy Kite
Leader of the Council

If you're interested in becoming a volunteer for the site, please call the Countryside Team on **01322 285497** for more information.

DARTFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL



DARTFORD DISTRICT



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