

Welcome

Just a few minutes from Colchester's bustling town centre, High Woods Country Park – with its woods, wildflowers, lake and ponds – is a real breath of fresh air. A great place to picnic, walk and cycle, fish, feel close to nature or simply unwind.

High Woods derives from the medieval royal hunting forest of Kingswood. In more recent times farming and forestry has shaped the landscape you see today. Opened in 1987 after Colchester Borough Council acquired the land for people to enjoy, it's rangers and volunteers look after the park for recreation, wildlife and historical interest.



A place to feel good

A walk or cycle in the park with some friends is a great way to relax, exercise and enjoy the company of others. Waymarked paths lead you through bluebell woods with glimpses of the lake and wildflower meadows with great views of Colchester.

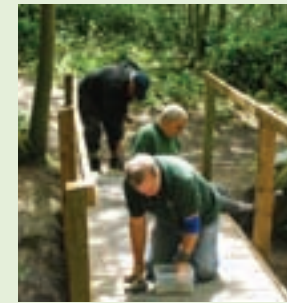


Relax and play



There are many ways to enjoy your time at High Woods. Relax in one of the many peaceful glades while the kids let off steam in the adventure play areas. Enjoy a hot drink at the visitor centre. Anglers can enjoy a days fishing (permits apply). If you want something more organised join our Health Walks on Fridays and Sundays, an ideal way to improve fitness in a sociable atmosphere. If you like vegetable gardening come along to the BIG Garden on alternate Saturdays.

We welcome responsible dog owners. All we ask is that you aid the enjoyment of other visitors by keeping your dog under close control at all times and on a lead in some areas, you 'scoop the poop' and use the dog bins at the entrances.



Good for you – Good for wildlife

The park is run by its team of country park specialists who follow a site plan to conserve and enhance this beautiful place.

Volunteers give tremendous help. All are committed to caring for High Woods and the animals and plants that share it. Management is carried out in a traditional way for wildlife and for future generations to enjoy. If you are looking for a social activity, work experience, to get fit, or simply have a passion for the park why not volunteer? Don't worry if you are not an expert – training is provided.



Walking Trails

There are three circular trails around the park; just follow the coloured waymarkers.

Blue route (30 minutes) is the shortest and takes you along the woodland edge with glimpses of the Lake. It's a level route except for a steep dip and gradual slope near Fiveways Junction.

Red route (90 minutes) takes you through bluebell woods and fields to the park's northern end. Some gradual slopes.

Yellow route (120 minutes) takes you through wildflower fields with great views and by the Lake. Steep slopes on Woodcock Down and around the Lake.

Woodland paths are made of compacted clay and stone. Elsewhere the paths are mostly natural, and some sections can be wet and muddy in winter. All routes have regular resting points.

Education

High Woods provides a rich educational resource and offers a wide range of activities specifically designed to support national curriculum subjects. Programmes include Forest Schools, stream studies, pond life and sensory walks full of hands on experiences. Information can be found on our website.

Events and group activities

We organise many events and activities through the year. For details see information boards, events leaflet and website. Organised groups and events organisers are welcome – please call in advance to arrange. We will make your visit as successful as possible. Charges may apply to events and hiring.

Opening Times

Country Park open daily for pedestrians and cyclists. Car parks open April – Sept 7.30am – 10.00pm and Oct – Mar 7.30am – 7.00pm.

Visitor Centre open daily April – Sept 10.00am – 4.30pm weekdays and 10.30am – 5.00pm weekends. Oct – Mar open weekends only 10.00am – 4.00pm.



Visitor Centre and refreshments

The visitor centre is staffed and fully accessible. As well as information about the park, it serves light refreshments, ice creams and gifts. There's an exhibition space, children's corner and plenty of seating. Toilets are behind the visitor centre and include a fully accessible toilet and baby changing facilities.

How to find us

Bus: No. 8, 8a or 65 towards Highwoods from town.

Walk: 20 mins from town centre via Castle Park.

Cycle: Less than 10 mins from town centre.

Train: 10 minute walk from North Station towards the hospital.

Car: Main car park off Turner Road. Alternative parking at Chanterelle, off Eastwood Drive.

Enquiries

Park Visitor Centre: 01206 853588

BIG Garden: 01206 855287

Email: countryside@colchester.gov.uk

Website: www.colchester.gov.uk/countrypark

Address: High Woods Country Park Visitor Centre, Turner Road, Colchester, CO4 5JR.

Escape to High Woods Country Park

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