

# The Fineshades & Rockingham Forest Trail

**Distance:** 11.52 km

**Difficulty:** Easy

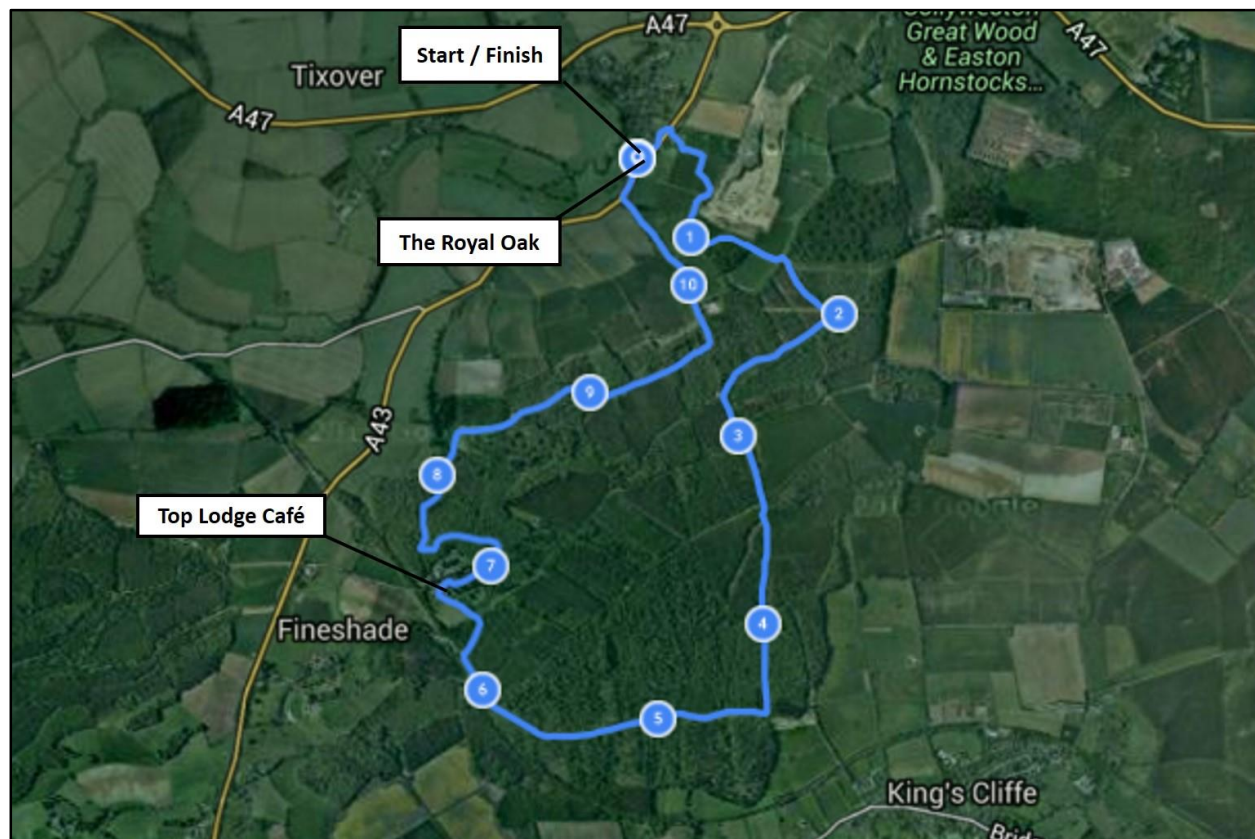
**Dog Friendly:** Yes

**Ascent/Descent:** Easy (+/- 253 metres)

**Toilets:** At the Royal Oak and Top Lodge café

**Wildlife:** Dormice, red kite, nuthatch

**Endomondo GPS track:** [View/Download here](#)



*The Rockingham Forest & Royal Oak circular walking route (Google Maps)*

**Starting location:** at The Royal Oak car park, if you are intending to visit (satnav: PE9 3QE) or there is plenty of on-street parking available in the village of Duddington.

1. Take the signposted byway that leads around the back of the Royal Oak pub, as indicated in the image on the right. Ahead, climb the gate and enter the field (this may not be marked as a footpath, but be assured it is). Cross the field, going off diagonally-right, aiming for the hedge. There will be a gap, leading down some steps. Cross over the A43 carefully and climb up the steps on the other side.



© Ales and Trails UK

Contact: [alesandtrailsuk@gmail.com](mailto:alesandtrailsuk@gmail.com)

Website: [www.alesandtrailsuk.co.uk](http://www.alesandtrailsuk.co.uk)



2. The paths at this point have not been signposted at all. Cross the field, in a diagonally-right direction until you reach the hedgerow; look for a gap with a barely-visible stile (pictured left). Cross over to the far side of the next field also, aiming for the diagonally-right corner. At the corner of the field, join the track and follow it ahead. As the track reaches a small wood, it will turn left, and then right. After approximately 150 metres, you



will come to a bridge (pictured right).

3. Cross over the bridge. After crossing the bridge, the path bears off to the right into a wooded area; follow the worn path until you come to a pink way-marker for the Mill Wood Trail (pictured left) going off to the left. The path almost immediately then turns sharply right onto a surfaced track. Walk the track for 800



metres; you will come to a sign for the entrance into Westhay Wood (pictured right).

4. At this point, continue to walk ahead and another marker for the Mill Wood Trail will be visible, directing you straight ahead onto the surfaced track. Follow the pink-marked Mill Wood Trail for several kilometres. You will join The Smelter's Trail and walk alongside the former railway line. Keep following the Mill Wood Trail until you reach the Top Lodge Visitor Centre and Café. Pass through the car park at Top Lodge, keeping to the Mill Wood Trail.

4. Follow the Mill Wood Trail for about another 3km as it twists and winds its way through Rockingham Forest. You will come to a junction of paths; turn left onto the Jurassic Way. This can be identified by a small, circular disc identifying the path. This path will return you to the A43 after about 800 metres. Turn right and return to your start location at the Royal Oak.



### **Pub: The Royal Oak**

The Royal Oak a traditional, family-run, country hotel and pub run by Anne and John Wheeler and their team. The stunning building has preserved the historical integrity of the site, which is a source



© Ales and Trails UK

Contact: [alesandtrailsuk@gmail.com](mailto:alesandtrailsuk@gmail.com)

Website: [www.alesandtrailsuk.co.uk](http://www.alesandtrailsuk.co.uk)



of pride to the local community. The result boasts an atmosphere only present in a building with true history, combining an easy-going sense of luxury that takes the very best traditional elements and blends them with a contemporary style. The menu has an excellent and varied selection of sandwiches, as well as more substantial meals, and a great selection of real ales, all worth a try! We recommend the Little Squirt ale; a nice, mild flavour and ideal at a refreshing ABV of 3.9%. You can view their website [here](#). We highly recommend this pub!



### **Tips**

The Top Lodge café does a delicious hot chocolate if you're out on this route on a cold day. Do you need any more convincing?

