

# Peper Harow Cricket Club Willow Walk

## History

Our cricket club is based in the ancient hamlet of Peper Harow, settled since Saxon times, near Godalming in south west Surrey. Records show that cricket was first played at Peper Harow in 1727. The owner of Peper Harow, Mr Brodrick, agreed to play two games against the Duke of Richmond's team. The rules for these games formed the basis of the modern rules used today by Peper Harow's three Saturday league teams playing in the l'Anson league. This league, based around Grayshott, is believed to be the oldest continuously-operating village cricket league in England, and possibly the world!

## Views

The cricket club is sheltered to the north by the 'Hogs Back' and commands distant views of the South Downs. In 1712 the park was acquired by the Brodrick family. Fifty years later Sir Lancelot 'Capability' Brown landscaped the park. Many trees from the original planting remain, of which two giant plane trees stand guard over our small wooden pavilion and bench commemorating the fallen of WWII.



Giant plane trees beside the Peper Harow CC pavilion viewed from the south west corner of the ground

The Brodrick family were fond of trees and it's the trees of Peper Harow that form many of the spectacular views from the ground. Thirty years before 'Capability' Brown landscaped the park Cedar of Lebanon saplings were planted in the grounds. One of these stands in front of the mansion constructed by Sir William Chambers in 1765. In June 2000 Owen Johnson of

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the Tree Register surveyed the trees of Peper Harow and reported examples as ‘...exceptional...’ and ‘...fine example of a scarce but magnificent species.’.



Cedar of Lebanon tree with Peper Harow House behind

The ground to the left of the mansion house slopes southward to the River Wey and the original entrance to the park. At the river crossing are an extravagant group of buildings, Oxenford farm, designed by Augustus Pugin. To the right of the mansion can be seen the tiny church of St. Nicholas and its unusual lych-gate with coffin rest. Owen Johnson states ‘The Churchyard Yew is one of the country’s oldest trees, and likely to be a little over 1000 years old.’. On 24 December 2007 the church was damaged by fire including works by Pugin.

## Walk

The park and the cricket club resides in a Conservation Area and is classified as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It must be remembered Peper Harow is a Private residential estate, and is not open to the public, the residents request that their privacy is respected. However a public bridleway does run through the estate and forms part of the walk.

Leave the pavilion and walk towards the mansion. At the tarmac surface turn right, after a short distance the mansion will become visible on your left. Slightly further up the road, turn right into the field behind the cricket club. This is the public bridleway. On the left is a no longer used octagonal water tower. Water was pumped to here from the River Wey and then gravity fed the water

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to tanks in the mansion. Follow the path up the hill where you will get a good view from behind the bowlers arm but above the sight screen!  
Continue on the track up 'Mount Sion' to the wood. Climb over the stile and go diagonally north east across the field to Norney.



View of Peper Harow House from start of walk

Pass Norney Farm and turn left on to Shackleford Road. At the crossroads stands the large Grade II listed church St. Mary's, affectionately known as the Church in the Woods. It was designed by the renowned architect Sir George Gilbert Scott in 1865 and considered to be among the best designed churches in Surrey. Go straight over the crossroads and after approx. ½ mile you will enter Shackleford village centre!

Turn left up Peper Harow Lane and stop of at the newly re-furbished pub 'The Cyder House'. After refreshments, continue up Peper Harow Lane, passing Shackleford Cricket Club on your left, Peper Harow's 3<sup>rd</sup> XI home pitch. About 20 yards from the junction of Peper Harow Lane and Elstead Road, there are the remains of a lime kiln, long since disused.

Turn right into Elstead Road and then left into the Peper Harow Estate. Where the track joins from the right is the Millennium 2000 commemorative stone seat. Ideal for the spectacular view over the Wey Valley to Hindhead and the Devil's Punchbowl. Continue East on the tarmac drive passing the decorative Tulip Gates and the farmyard with a circa 16<sup>th</sup> Century granary on 10 foot high stilts. Shortly before returning to the pavilion, you will pass the duck pond and the Pugin re-designed Church.