

HISTORY OF ST. ANN'S HILL

St. Ann's Hill has become an outstanding landmark to users of the M3 and M25. It rises at its north-western slope from the Thorpe junction of the two motorways.

The Hill takes its name from a chapel dedicated to St. Ann which stood at its northern end which was built around 1334. Its original name was Eldebury (Oldbury) Hill with an old fort and there are traces of old earthen defences on the top.

The most notable resident of the Hill was the radical politician Charles Fox, whose house was opposite the present main entrance.

The Hill was presented to the Local Authority by Baron Camrose of Longcross and opened by the Rt. Hon. Neville Chamberlain MP in June 1928.

General Description

The Nature Trail is approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ mile in length on good paths passing around the crest of St. Ann's Hill. The area is well wooded and contains a wide variety of trees and plants with wild flowers, fungi etc. in season. Many different birds can be seen together with squirrels (and if you are lucky the occasional fox). There are picnic areas and viewpoints. The trail takes $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ hour to complete.

Ancient Monument

St. Ann's Hill Camp and 14th Century Chapel
An area of approximately 5 hectares on top of St. Ann's Hill is scheduled as an Ancient Monument and contains the remains of a Hill Fort of Iron Age date and a later 14th Century Chapel associated with nearby Chertsey Abbey.

RUNNYMEDE AREA

The name Runnymede is known world-wide because of its association with the sealing of the Magna Carta. This treaty, made by King John in 1215, forms the basis of our democracy and is the basis of many of the liberties which we often take for granted.

Within the Borough there are over 120 Public Rights of Way forming an extensive network which encompasses a differing range of environments. Historic towns and bustling shopping centres provide a contrast to the peaceful rural parks and woodlands and the quiet river walks.

Enjoy the diversity of life offered by the area, of which this walk gives you just a taste.

The maintenance of the rights of way network is a never-ending task and Runnymede Borough Council is grateful for the support and assistance given by the Scouts, Ramblers and in particular, the Egham and Staines Conservation Volunteers. This group is affiliated to the BTCV and new members are always welcome.

For further information contact the Secretary, Telephone 01784 432686.

Runnymede Borough Council acknowledges the input of Vince Smith and others in producing this leaflet.

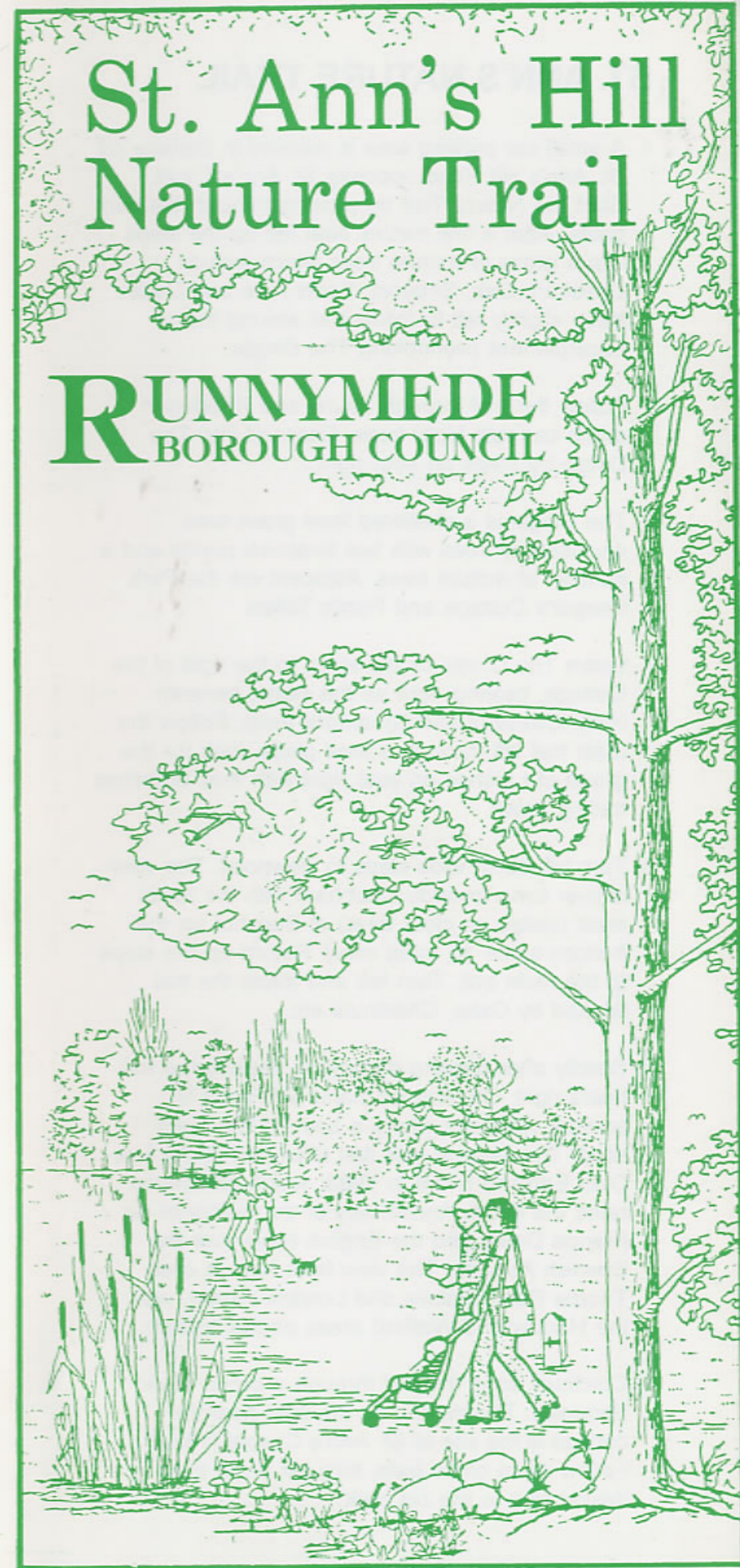
If you have enjoyed this walk and would like to extend your walking activities further, please contact Vince Smith, the Local Footpath Secretary for the Ramblers Association in Runnymede. His telephone number is 01932 563291.

Wherever your walking might take you
-take care and enjoy yourself.

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St. Ann's Hill Nature Trail

RUNNYMEDE
BOROUGH COUNCIL



ST. ANN'S NATURE TRAIL

1. A small car parking area is situated in the lane off St. Ann's Hill Road opposite St. Ann's Court. Start the Nature Trail by passing through the park gates. After a few metres bear left up the steps into a grove of mature trees which include Chestnut, Oak, Sequoia, Scots Pine and Cedar. Keep slightly left to follow trail around top of escarpment overlooking The Dingle.
2. Follow the trail through Laurel and Rhododendrons beneath Holly trees. Descend into The Dingle by steps on your right.
3. The Dingle is a sheltered level grass area enclosed by trees with two seasonal ponds and a number of mature trees. Adjacent are the Park Keeper's Cottage and Public Toilets.
4. Leave The Dingle by the steps to the right of the Cottage, bearing right up the slope, beneath Holly, Chestnut and Sycamore trees. Follow the main trail left through a level glade, look for the group of Larches on your right with their branches trailing down.
5. Turn left down wide steps to viewpoint. The view is over Lyne towards Chobham with the radio mast (visible on clear days) at Bagshot on the horizon some 15 miles away. Return up the steps to the main trail. Turn left and follow the trail flanked by Oaks, Chestnuts etc.
6. Shortly after passing through a clearing the trail bears right. On your left hand side there is another viewpoint where a beacon has been sited. This beacon was first lit as part of the Fire Over England Event in 1988, which commemorated the 400th Anniversary of the victory of Sir Francis Drake and the English Navy over the Spanish Armada. The view from here is over Thorpe Park, Staines and London Airport, with the Harrow and Watford areas on the horizon.
7. Continue along the trail through a group of old Sequoias. The mound on the right near the cottage is the site of St. Ann's Chapel (1334). Follow on to cross trails, turn left on to trail descending to the car park.

