

Getting Here

Westbrook Hay is situated on the hills to the south of the Box Moor Trust Centre on London Road, Hemel Hempstead (A4251). Westbrook Hay can be reached from the A4251 (London Road), running between Hemel Hempstead and Berkhamsted. Close to the Box Moor Trust Centre on London Road, turn into Westbrook Hay drive (signposted for the Box Moor Trust Old Barn). Follow the drive all the way to the top of the hill, then take the first track on the left (just before Westbrook Hay School entrance). This will lead you into the car park next to the Old Barn Education Centre.

Car Parking

The car park by the Old Barn is usually open during daylight hours. An alternative car park can be found at the base of the hill, at the start of Westbrook Hay drive. Park here and walk up through the meadows to the Old Barn and the starting point for this walk.

Users of Wheelchairs, Pushchairs or Mobility Scooters

The boardwalk is the main section of this walk suitable for wheelchair and pram users. The visitor will have to assess the suitability of the rest of the walk but this will depend on weather conditions as some of the ground is uneven with puddles and mud after rain. If the section between points (3) and (4) on the map seems unsuitable, please try continuing along to the end of the boardwalk, through the gate and into the large field. At the pond, bear right to a large gate leading back into the wood to re-join the walk at point (4). Please contact us for more advice on alternative routes. Benches are situated at several points around the route. A mobility scooter is available on loan from the Box Moor Trust Centre for use on this walk. Please ring in advance to arrange. Tel: 01442 253300.

Safety

When carrying out the activities suggested in this leaflet, please take great care. In particular, do not enter our pond dipping areas. It should be possible to observe the ponds from outside these areas. The Box Moor Trust cannot accept responsibility for the children under your care.

Care of the Box Moor Trust Estate

Where livestock are grazing, please keep dogs on a short lead or at heel. If your dog fouls, please bag and bin it or take it away with you. More information can be found in our leaflet 'Dogs and the Box Moor Trust'.

Please also:

- Close all gates.
- Do not leave litter or light fires.
- Do not pick plants, flowers or fungi.

Email: education@boxmoortrust.org.uk

Sense-sational Stroll

A short, easy walk for families around the woods and meadows of Westbrook Hay, including sensory activities to heighten awareness of the natural world.

These activities are designed to appeal to as wide an audience as possible. Take on as many or as few as you wish or just enjoy the walk!
For full enjoyment, take a pencil and snack on the walk with you.

If you have enjoyed this walk, why not explore further on our Orange, Blue, Green or Red walk routes? We produce seasonal 'I-Spy' inserts for children to accompany the Orange walk.

**Please visit our website:
www.boxmoortrust.org.uk**



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No. 206142**



Your sense of SMELL.... Herby Smells

A

At the Old Barn, go through the archway and turn left to find our collection of herbs. All these plants have strongly scented leaves and humans use them for cooking, medicines and cosmetics. Gently pinch the leaf of a plant (no need to pick it) and then sniff your fingers. Can you find the herb that reminds you of sherbet (Lemon Balm), toothpaste (Mint) or pizza (Oregano)? Which is your favourite? Plants have nice smelling leaves to attract the insects that they need for pollination.



Your sense of SIGHT.... Hand Telescopes

B

Step off the boardwalk and use your hands to really zoom in on nature's beauty. Pick an area in the wood where it is safe to kneel down and curl your hand into a fist 'telescope'. Look at objects through the cylindrical shape made by your fingers. Really appreciate the shape, texture, colour and tiny detail of what you are looking at. Can you see a miniature tree or a tiny garden?



Your sense of TOUCHTexture Hunt and Land Art

C

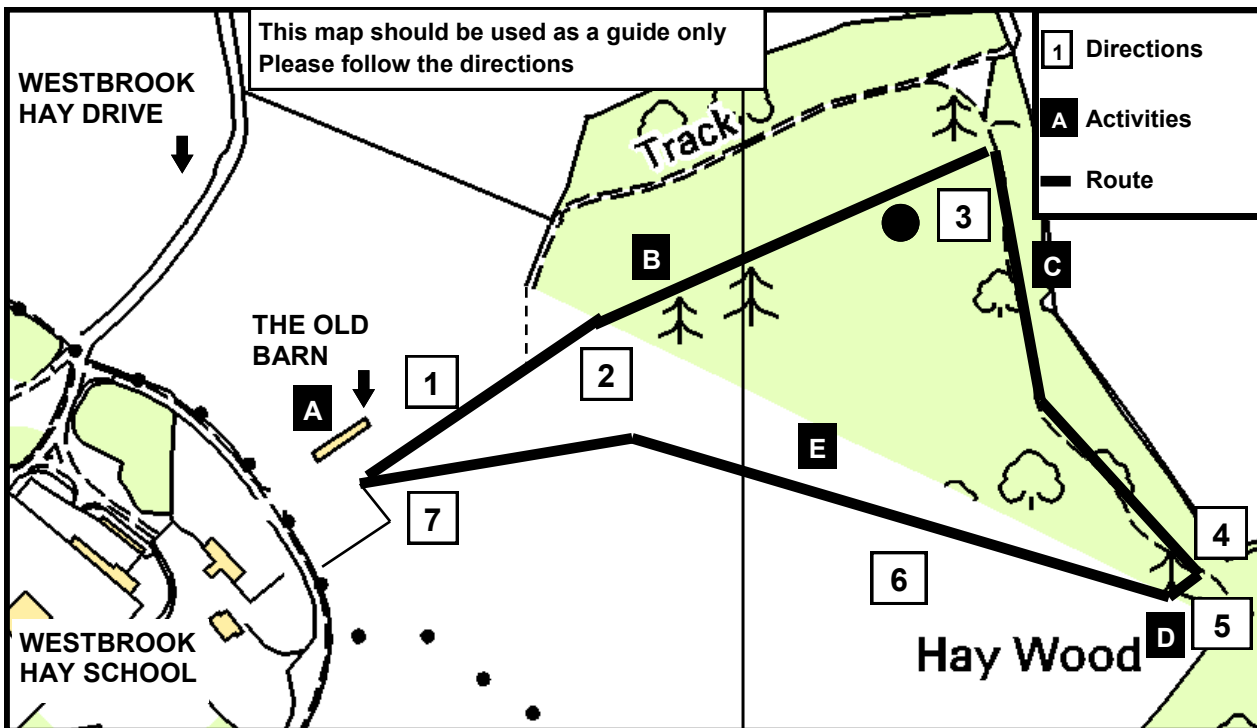
There are lots of different textures (what objects feel like) in nature. As you go along the woodland path, collect some small things with different textures and properties. How about opposites: hard/soft, rough/smooth, prickly/tickly, shiny/dull, stiff/bendy, heavy/light? When you have collected them, why not find somewhere by the path to make them into 'land art' - arrange them into a pattern or make a picture? Leave your art work here for other walkers to admire and eventually it will be blown away or used by animals and go 'back to nature' again.



Your sense of TASTE Snack Break!

D

Humans can eat lots of wild foods found in the woods and meadows here (e.g. elderflowers, crab apples, blackberries, fungi) but there are many poisonous things too! Look out for wild foods but, instead of tasting these, why not stop for a well-earned snack on this bench? (Give your hands a wipe first.) Close your eyes and really think about what you can taste - did you know that the 10,000 taste buds on your tongue detect four different tastes - salty, sweet, sour and bitter? You also smell the food with your nose as you eat. Eat with your nose pinched - can you tell the difference?



Directions

From the Old Barn (1), proceed along the boardwalk and follow it into the wood (2). Enter the wood and continue along the boardwalk as it wends its way through the trees. To the right, you will pass a bird feeding station and, a little further along, a woodland pond. Shortly afterwards, turn right onto the bridleway that crosses the boardwalk (3). *From this point on, the terrain may be subject to changing weather conditions and a flat, stable surface cannot be guaranteed. Please see the back page of this leaflet for an alternative route avoiding this bridleway.* Follow the bridleway through the woods until it crosses a second path at right angles (4). Turn right and pass through the gate into the meadow beyond (5). Bearing right, walk uphill, keeping to the edge of the wood (6). After a time, you will see the Old Barn. Go through the black metal gate into the car park (7).



Your sense of HEARINGNature's Orchestra

E

In the meadow, find a comfortable place to sit very still - then close your eyes and listen carefully. What natural sounds can you hear? What man-made sounds can you hear? If you have a pencil (use the box below), you can try to 'draw' these sounds - a grasshopper buzz might be a line of short zig-zags, a complicated bird song might be a twirly, up and down line and a woodpecker drill might be a long line of dots. What do you think?