

## Book 2, Walk 13 : Guildford to Gomshall

### A completely new afternoon route, and several new options

The afternoon of this walk was designed specifically to have the Ramblers Rest as a tea stop, but alas this farmhouse tea room has now closed. As a result, I have decided to create a new afternoon for this walk, which takes in more of the North Downs, is a bit longer (the current afternoon is very short) and brings the walk down to a tea room in Abinger Hammer.

This new ending also incorporates the very pretty Shere Shortcut which is described in the current book, and makes it possible to have lunch in Gomshall as well as Shere, if wished.

There are two options for this ending, a **standard** and a **longer version**. Since it follows the North Downs way, it is still possible to combine this route with the Boxhill ending proposed in the book.

Last but not least, this new ending opens up the possibility of **starting in Gomshall**, and either doing a circular walk, or carrying on to Boxhill. These options are particularly recommended in bluebell season (late April or early May).

### Standard version of new ending

This route makes the whole walk 17.1km (10.7 miles) as opposed to 13.7km (8.6 miles) at present.

1. **From the White Horse, the recommended lunch pub in Shere**, *go straight ahead*, your direction due east, across the square towards the Church of St James. *Take the road to the right of the churchyard* - Church Lane.
2. At the end, *take the signposted path half right through a wooden gate*, your direction 130 degrees, ignoring a drive straight ahead to High House, and a road - Church Hill - to the right.
3. In 120 metres, *go through a wooden gate and turn left to walk along the left hand edge of an open field*. In 200 metres, at the end of the field, pass through a gap and onto a wide path between fences, your direction 120 degrees.
4. In 250 metres by a red bin, ignore an opening to the left leading to garages, and carry straight on a further 90 metres *to emerge onto a gravel drive, and turn left*, your direction 40 degrees, by houses named The Old Barn and Highlands.
5. In 60 metres, stay on the track, ignoring a turning to the left to *curve right with the track to a road*. *Turn left* on this road, and follow it, ignoring all ways off, to a *T-junction with a main road*, the A25, in 400 metres. **[6]**
6. (At this point, **The Compasses Inn**, a possible lunch stop, is on the right in 170 metres)
7. **To carry on with the main walk**, however, cross this busy road with care. [!] Do **NOT** go up the tarmac driveway ahead (Netley Close), but *turn left, and in 10 metres, go right up four steps*, on a signposted footpath. In 10 metres you pass a National Trust sign for Netley Park.
8. Continue up this footpath, with a hedge and an open field to your left. In 100 metres, you enter a wood. The path is a bit indistinct here, but keep straight on, uphill. In 200 metres the wood thins a bit and the path becomes steeper and more distinct.
9. In 300 metres, *fork right following a yellow arrow* on a post, your direction 30 degrees. In another 45 metres, *curve right at another footpath post*, merging with a

path that joins from the left, your direction 60 degrees. In 20 metres, merge with a wider path from the left, and keep straight on, downhill, your direction 100 degrees, ignoring a signed footpath to the right in 10 metres.

10. In 70 metres you can glimpse an open field and valley over the bank to the right. In another 200 metres, you pass a house to the left, and 50 metres further on, you come to a tarmac drive. Cross this, but in five metres, turn left, downhill, on a tarmac lane, signposted to Colekitchen Farm **[7]**
11. In 150 metres, as the lane bottoms out, you emerge into a charming upland valley, with farm buildings ahead to the left (this was the **Ramblers Rest** tearoom, now alas closed). The road turns into a track. In 140 metres, just past the farm buildings, the track veers left, but your route is straight on, uphill, through three cream posts, following a blue arrow on a post.
12. Keep on uphill on this increasingly steep path. In 550 metres *it finally flattens out completely at the top of the hill*. In another 40 metres, you come to a five way track junction with a large concrete circular structure ahead. Here, *turn right onto the car wide North Downs Way*, your direction 120 degrees.
13. *You now stay on the North Downs Way until point [8] below*. But in more detail:
14. In 300 metres, you pass an open space with a bench to the right. In a further 200 metres, *at a three-armed footpath, fork right off the main track*, following the North Downs Way signpost, your direction 140 degrees.
15. In 60 metres, *turn right through a kissing gate*, still following the North Down Way sign, your direction 200 degrees. Follow the path downhill, picking up a wire fence to the right in 40 metres. *In 70 metres, do not go through the kissing gate ahead, but veer left with the North Downs Way*, still with the wire fence to your right.
16. In 200 metres, ignore another kissing gate to the right. 100 metres further on, cross a *car-wide byway* at a four armed footpath post to keep straight on along the North Downs Way.
17. Follow this path as it meanders through gorse scrub. In 170 metres, *you come to a kissing gate. Beyond it, turn right onto a car-wide track*, still on the North Downs Way, your direction east. In 200 metres, *ignore a path downhill to the right, and instead veer left on the main track* to pass through a kissing gate to the left of a fieldgate in 10 metres to emerge onto **Blatchford Down**.
18. Follow the path across this open space, with fine views. In 320 metres, *pass through a kissing gate on to a bridleway*. **[8]**. (At this point you can take option c) the **Longer Walk to Boxhill, Dorking or Gomshall**: see directions below: See also **Bluebell Diversion** at the very end of this document for a side trip to a bluebell wood here that can be done at the end of April or in early May).
19. **To carry on with the main walk**, however, *turn right downhill on the bridleway*, your direction 200 degrees. In 450 metres, ignore a track to the left marked by a blue arrow, and 150 metres on, ignore a signposted bridleway uphill to the right. In another 550 metres, by which time you have reached the valley floor, *cross the railway line, and carry straight on uphill past farm buildings*.
20. Beyond the farm buildings, carry straight on up a tarmac lane. In 200 metres, at the top of the hill, ignore a signposted bridleway to the left **[9]**. Carry straight on downhill on the lane. In 260 metres *you come to a T-junction with the main A25*.

21. *(Turn left here for the **Abinger Hammer Tea Rooms** which are 100 metres along on the left, just before the post office: After tea, you can either retrace your steps to this point after tea to continue the walk, or take the bus from the opposite side of the road to the tea rooms back to Guildford.)*
22. *Otherwise, to go direct Gomshall station, turn right along the A25. Carrying on along this road for 800 metres brings you to the railway bridge and Gomshall station: there is a signposted path up to the station on the right hand side of the road 100 metres before the bridge, or if you miss this, pass under the railway bridge and turn right up the station approach. 250 metres beyond the railway bridge on the A25 is the Compasses Inn, another possible tea stop.*
23. **But the recommended route** is from the T-Junction to cross the A25 with care and walk up its left hand side. In 60 metres, a pond starts on your left. In 100 metres, *20 metres after the end of the pond, turn left, down a car wide track on a signposted bridleway.*
24. In 100 metres, you pass houses to the right. 100 metres beyond this, the track crosses a stream and curves right. 40 metres further on, at a sign for Brook Cottage, *take the right hand of two paths that fork off the track, going half left uphill.*
25. In 120 metres, you come out alongside an open space to the left, and 70 metres later, another path merges from the left in front of a house. In 20 metres, *your path merges with an earth driveway from another house.* In a further 30 metres, *turn right downhill at a T-junction with a car wide track, which curves left almost immediately.*
26. *In 250 metres, follow this track as it curves right, ignoring a path straight on, and in another 260 metres, you come back to the main road, the A25. Go left, under the railway bridge.* The approach road to Gomshall station is to the right immediately after the railway bridge. Continuing on the main road for 250 metres, brings you to the **Compasses Inn**, a possible tea stop.

### Longer walk to Gomshall, Boxhill or Dorking

From point [8] in the new afternoon walk directions above, you can carry on a bit further along the North Downs Way, and then loop back through Abinger Roughts, boosting the main walk by 1.7 miles to 19.8km (12.4 miles). This woods behind this extra section of North Downs Way are particularly worth exploring in bluebell season (late April to early May).

From point [8] it is also 9.2km (5.5 miles) to Boxhill and Westhumble station: see option 13c in the book for more details about this option.

1. From point **[8]** in the new afternoon walk directions, *continue along the North Downs Way*, ignoring ways off and keeping to the clearly defined path. The route passes through a series of delightful clearings with fine views (good spots for a **picnic**).
2. *In 1.2km, the main track passes through a kissing gate to the left of a fieldgate.* Beyond this, you have a choice: For **Boxhill and Dorking**, remain on the clearly signposted North Downs Way
3. **However, for the circular route back to Gomshall**, *10 metres beyond the kissing gate, and five metres before a four way footpath sign, fork right, steeply downhill, on a signposted footpath sign, with a barbed wire fence to the right (possibly invisible in summer), your direction 140 degrees.*
4. In 160 metres, *the path curves left to a road, where you turn right downhill, your direction 220 degrees.* (Be careful on this minor road, as cars sometimes come too

fast down it). Follow the road around the hairpin bend, and down onto the valley floor. In 400 metres, *you cross over a railway bridge*.

5. 75 metres beyond the bridge, ignore a signposted bridleway to the left, and a footpath to the left just beyond it, but 30 metres further on, *fork right off the road onto a signposted bridleway*, passing in 20 metres a National Trust sign for Abinger Roughs.
6. *Stay on this broad pleasant path along the valley bottom, ignoring ways off*. More details of this route can be found in the first Time Out Country Walks in walk 42, Holmwood to Gomshall from point [10] onwards.
7. Briefly, however, for 600 metres the path follows the edge of a wood, before going uphill into the middle of a wider wooded area. In 400 metres, you cross a substantial clearing. In 80 metres, at the far end of the clearing, ignore a fork to the left marked by a footpath post, and keep straight on along the main path, slightly uphill. In 200 metres, at the top of the hill, *you leave the wood, and descend down the right hand side of an open space*, with a fence to your right. In 150 metres, cross a farm track, and carry on through a gate to the right of a wooden fieldgate. Keep straight on, with a hedge to the left and a fence to the right.
8. In 200 metres, pass through a wooden gate, and in 20 metres, *turn left onto a tarmac lane*. You can now rejoin the new afternoon walk directions at point [9].

### Walks starting at Gomshall

Using the new afternoon route, it is possible to do a **circular walk from Gomshall** of either 6.2km (3.9 miles) using the main walk directions, or 8.9km (5.7 miles) using the longer walk directions above: You could also walk from **Gomshall to Boxhill**, a walk of 14km (8.7 miles).

1. Walk off platform 1 at Gomshall station (the platform you arrive at if coming from Guildford), and walk straight ahead through the station car park. In 30 metres, turn left down the approach road.
2. In 140 metres, *you come to the main road, the A25, and turn right*. In 250 metres, you pass the Compasses Inn on your left. 70 metres beyond this, *turn right up Colekitchen Lane*.
3. Carry on up this hill for 700 metres, as it climbs increasingly steeply. At the very top of the hill, a private driveway forks left to Kings Holt and Northanger, but your onward route is to stay on the lane, the right fork, signposted Colekitchen Farm. You can now follow the new afternoon walk directions from point [7].

### Bluebell diversion

There is a spectacular bluebell wood just off the junction in para 18 of the **Standard Version** directions above: to visit it, in late April and early May when the bluebells are out:

1. Turn left at the junction, into the woods.
2. In 100 metres, at a crosspaths marked by a four-armed footpath sign, turn right up a car-wide track. The wood is soon to your left.
3. After exploring it, you can either retrace your steps to the junction in para 18, or, if doing the Longer walk to Gomshall, or the Boxhill/Dorking ending, stay on the track.
4. In 400 metres, another track joins from the left, and 200 metres beyond this, there is a track fork, where you keep right (to go left here takes you into more bluebell woods, but too far away from the walk route).

5. In another 100 metres fork right again, this time onto a smaller path that goes directly downhill. In 70 metres this turns left along a fence, and in 100 metres follows the fence right, directly downhill.
6. In 100 metres you emerge onto the North Downs Way. For **Boxhill** go left. To rejoin the **Longer Circular route back to Gomshall** go right for 10 metres towards a gate, and then hard left (that is doubling back on yourself) to follow a path steeply downhill. Resume the **Longer Walk** directions above in para 4.

*Note that the above route is only worth it in bluebell season: otherwise, the main route is better, with fine escarpment views*