

# Dorking Circular walk

Out along the North Downs escarpment and back through the Greensand Hills.

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| <b>Length</b> | <p><b>Main Walk, via Wotton &amp; Friday Street:</b> 18½ km<sup>†</sup> (11.5 miles). Four hours 55 minutes walking time. For the whole excursion including trains, sights and meals, allow at least 9½ hours.</p> <p><b>Short Walk, omitting Friday Street:</b> 16 km<sup>†</sup> (9.9 miles). Four hours 5 minutes walking time.</p> <p><b>Long Walk, via Abinger Common:</b> 22¾ km<sup>†</sup> (14.1 miles). Six hours walking time.</p> <p><b>Alternative Walk, starting from Gomshall:</b> 15 km (9.3 miles). Three hours 50 minutes walking time.</p> <p><sup>†</sup> Subtract 1¾ km (1.1 miles; 25 minutes) if starting from Dorking West and finishing at Dorking Deepdene. See Transport below.</p> |
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| <b>OS Map</b> | Explorer 146 & (for the first 1½ km of the Alternative Walk) 145. Dorking, map reference TQ171504, is in Surrey, 11 km <b>W</b> of Redhill. |
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| <b>Toughness</b> | 6 out of 10 (4 for the Short Walk and Alternative Walk, 8 for the Long Walk). |
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| <b>Features</b> | <p>The small market town of <a href="#">Dorking</a> sits on the edge of the Greensand Hills, guarding a gap in the North Downs carved out by the River Mole. Many walks take in the famous Box Hill to the north-east, but this one covers the area on the opposite side of the town.</p> <p>The walk starts with a long stretch along the lower chalk slopes of the National Trust's <a href="#">Denbies Hillside</a>, a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) rich with wildflowers in spring and summer. The Main Walk then heads south into the wooded Greensand Hills, going through the extensive <b>Wotton Estate</b> to the picturesque hamlet of <b>Friday Street</b> with its large Hammer Pond, familiar from the <a href="#">Holmwood to Gomshall walk</a> (1–42). There are two possible lunch pubs on this route, in Wotton and Friday Street.</p> <p>The return leg crosses a number of ridges on open access land managed by the Surrey Wildlife Trust and the Forestry Commission. Several rivers tumble down these hills and the highest of these ridges is a watershed, separating the Tillingbourne and its tributaries which turn westwards to the River Wey at Guildford from those which flow into the River Mole at Dorking. After passing the large ponds of <b>Bury Hill Fisheries</b> a final climb takes you along the top of <a href="#">The Nower</a>, a semi-natural woodland reserve with splendid views. There are plenty of opportunities for refreshment in Dorking before the journey back.</p> <p><i>The many rivers and streams are fed by natural springs in the Greensand Hills and you can expect to encounter muddy or even waterlogged paths at almost any time of the year (some otherwise pleasant routes in the area had to be rejected for this reason). Wet weather will also make the chalk paths on the first part of the walk quite slippery.</i></p> |
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| <b>Walk Options</b> | <p>The <b>Short Walk</b> takes a less hilly return route after the early lunch pub in Wotton, but cuts out the attractive woodland stretches around Friday Street.</p> <p>The <b>Long Walk</b> extends the morning route with a longer loop out to the west through <a href="#">Abinger Roughts</a>, taking a different route through this attractive area from Walk 1–42. There are two more possible lunch pubs on this route (in Sutton Abinger and Abinger Common) before it rejoins the Main Walk at Friday Street.</p> <p>in 2018 directions were added for a short link route from Gomshall, the next station along the Guildford–Redhill line. This <b>Alternative Walk</b> essentially lets you do the second half of the Long Walk with a late start, as the three lunch pubs on the route all now come in the first 6½ km.</p> |
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*Using this link route in the other direction would make an equally nice Dorking–Gomshall walk, but this variation has not been included as it has no convenient refreshment places.*

**Transport** Unless you are doing the Alternative Walk, buy a **return to Dorking Stations**. This is valid to all three of the town's stations, direct or via Redhill. Slightly cheaper “Southern Only” tickets are available from Victoria to Dorking (Main) on the direct route.

Starting from **Dorking West** (on the Guildford–Redhill line) has the advantage of taking you straight onto the North Downs, but its off-peak service is only two-hourly and you need to change at Redhill when travelling from London. All the trains on this line stop at **Dorking Deepdene**, which has two trains an hour.

Deepdene and the town's main station are on the ‘wrong’ side of the town for this walk, but they have much more frequent services and the link route is through a pleasant open space, Meadowbank. **Dorking (Main)** has direct services from both Victoria and Waterloo, both taking around 50 minutes (longer from Victoria on Sundays). The off-peak service on both routes is half-hourly, except on Sundays when the service from Waterloo is hourly.

For the **Alternative Walk**, buy a **return to Gomshall**. The standard ticket is only valid for travel via Dorking, so if you travel out via Guildford you will need a more expensive “Any Permitted Route” ticket.

If you want to abandon the walk, Compass 32 runs along the A25 between Guildford, Wotton, Dorking and Redhill, up to around 6pm (hourly Mon–Sat and two-hourly Sun & BH, when operated by Buses Excetera). There is also a two-hourly service from Abinger Common to Dorking (Mon–Fri only), Metrobus 22.

**Suggested Train** If convenient, take a train via Redhill connecting with a service arriving at **Dorking West** between 10:30 & 11am. Otherwise, take the train nearest to **09:30** from **Victoria** or **Waterloo** direct to **Dorking (Main)**, or the train nearest to **10:00** for the **Short Walk**. For the **Alternative Walk**, aim to start from **Gomshall** at around 11.30am.

**Lunch** Except on Mondays when it is closed, the suggested lunch stop on the **Main Walk** (requiring a short detour) is the **Stephan Langton** (01306-730775) at Friday Street, after 9¾ km<sup>‡</sup>. It serves food until 3pm (4pm Sun, but often fully booked) and has an interesting selection of local beers from the Tillingbourne Brewery, in Shere.

An earlier option (and the only lunch stop on the **Short Walk**) is **The Wotton Hatch** (01306-887694) on the A25 at Wotton, after 7½ km<sup>‡</sup>. It serves food all day and has a large beer garden with views of the North Downs, but inevitably has some traffic noise from the main road.

The suggested lunch stop on the **Long Walk** is **The Abinger Hatch** (01306-730737) in Abinger Common, after 12¼ km<sup>‡</sup>. It serves freshly-cooked food all day and has a large beer garden and picnic tables. The alternatives both require short detours. An earlier place is **The Volunteer** (01306-730985) in Sutton Abinger, after 11½ km<sup>‡</sup>. It serves food until 2.30pm (3pm Sun, all day Sat) and has a small patio and garden. The other is the **Stephan Langton**, after 14 km<sup>‡</sup> (details as above).

All three lunch places on the Long Walk are also options on the **Alternative Walk**, with the **Stephan Langton** (after 6½ km) being closest to its halfway point.

*All of these establishments are relatively up-market country pub/restaurants, with prices to match. Large groups should call ahead and might do better to share their custom among more than one place.*

‡ Subtract 1½ km if starting from Dorking West.

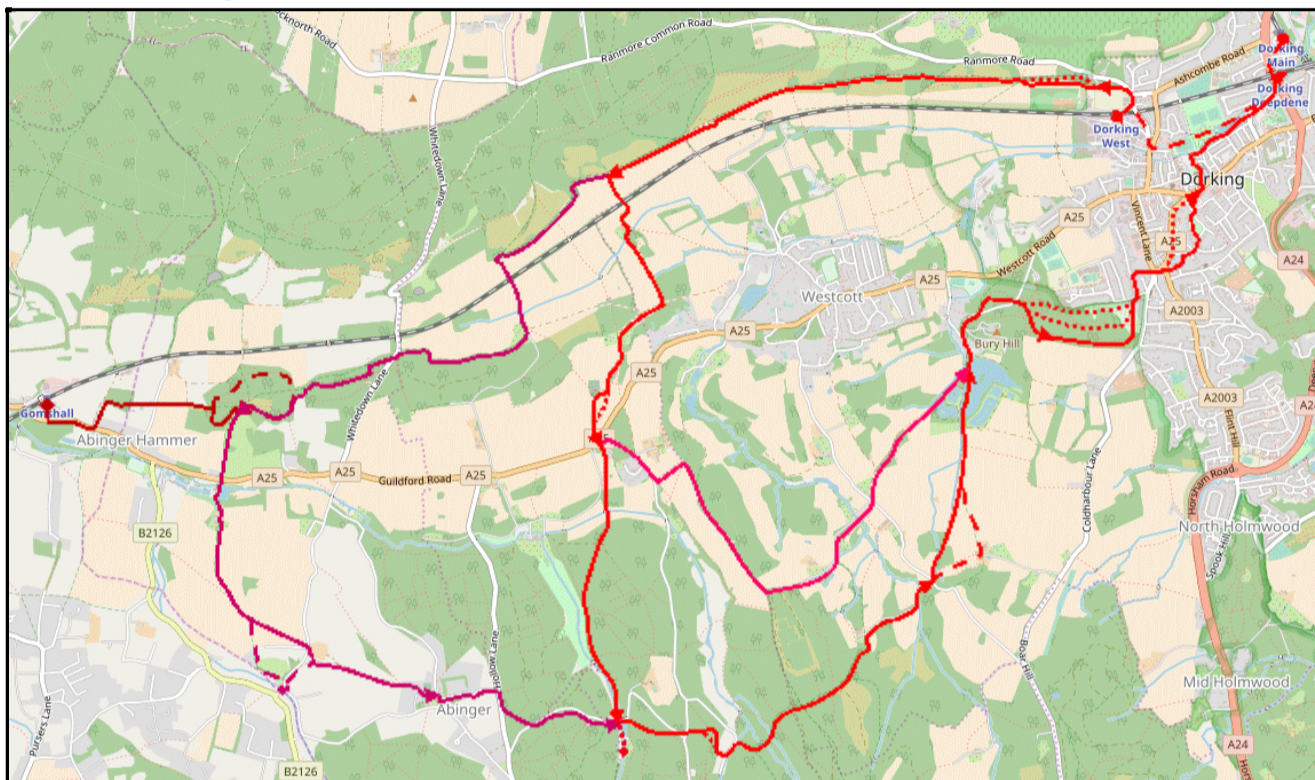
**Tea** There are lots of refreshment places in **Dorking** town centre. As well as the selection of independent tea rooms and cafés listed below, the town has most of the usual suspects (Costa Coffee, etc) and plenty of pubs scattered around South Street, West Street and High Street; on a Sunday you will probably have to opt for one of these as those independents which are open tend to close early.

The walk route comes out on South Street where the two nearest places are **Two Many Cooks** (01306-882200) at #32, open to 5pm (4.30pm Sat, 3.30pm Sun) and **The Courtyard Café Bar** (01306-888849) just off High Street in Old Kings Head Court, open to 5pm (closed Sun). A short exploration of West Street will reveal **Gorgeous Gerties** (01306-640202) at #61, a “modern day vintage department store with an elegant tea room”, open to 4.30pm (5pm Sat, 4pm Sun); **Mullins Coffee Shop** (01306-889967) at #58, open to 4.30pm (3pm Sun); the **Fig Tree Coffee Lounge and Tea Room** (01306-883849) at #9/11 (in Christique Antique Centre), open to 5pm (closed Sun) and **The Dorking Deli** (01306-743203) at #37, open to 5pm (3pm Sun).

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## Walk Directions

### Walk Map



All maps © [OpenStreetMap contributors](#)

### Walk Options

- M. [Main Walk, via Wotton & Friday Street](#) (18½ or 16¾ km)
  - a. [Short Walk, omitting Friday Street](#) (16 or 14¼ km)
  - b. [Long Walk, via Abinger Common](#) (22¾ or 21 km)
  - c. [Alternative Walk, starting from Gomshall](#) (15 km)

### Walk Directions

If you are doing the [Alternative Walk](#) from Gomshall station, start at [S7](#).

#### 1. [Dorking Stations to Denbies Hillside](#) (2 or 1¾ or ½ km)

##### a. [Starting from Dorking \(Main\)](#) (2 km)

Leave the station through the booking hall. Go out along Station Approach and turn left onto the A24. In 125m you go under the Guildford–Redhill railway line by the exit from Dorking Deepdene station.

##### b. [Starting from Dorking Deepdene](#) (1¾ km)

Go down steps at the Guildford end of the platform to the A24, joining the route from Dorking (Main).

Cross the main road at the pedestrian lights, turn left on the far side and then **turn right** at the junction into London Road. In 200m do not be tempted by a public footpath sign ahead (this is the return route), but shortly before reaching this **turn right** into the driveway to [Pippbrook Mill](#)<sup>1</sup>. Pass to the left of the old building, crossing over Pipp Brook. At the end turn left onto a residential street (Fairfield Drive) and then immediately bear left onto a tarmac path.

Follow the path alongside the stream and into Meadowbank Recreation Ground, now with a lake (the old mill pond) on your left. At the end of the lake ignore a path to the left and continue on either of two tarmac paths ahead, which skirt around a narrow play area. After these paths rejoin keep ahead on an alleyway, signposted to Chalkpit Lane and Dorking West station.

In 250m go straight across the A2003 (Chalkpit Lane) and keep ahead past a small parade of shops. At the far end **turn right** onto Ranmore Road, crossing over to the left-hand side after passing Station Road. The road climbs gently, crosses over the Guildford–Redhill line and passes another exit from Dorking West station.

##### c. [Starting from Dorking West](#) (½ km)

If arriving by train from Redhill, go through the underpass to exit from Platform 1. Bear right onto either of the two lanes and turn left at the top onto Ranmore Road, joining the route from the other Dorking stations.

Follow the road past a primary school and round to the left. The pavement leads onto an unsurfaced path, with the school's chain-link fence on the left and trees on the right. In 200m, shortly after a driveway has appeared on the right, **fork left** onto a permissive path (with a yellow NT waymarker), entering the National Trust's **Denbies Hillside**.

## 2. Denbies Hillside to White Down Lease (3¼ km)

In 75m there is another yellow NT waymarker on the left. You could ignore it and follow the main path round to the right, turning left when you reach a broad chalky track (the **Old Carriage Road**<sup>2</sup>), but the suggested route is to **fork left** past this waymarker, staying in the belt of trees. After 400m this attractive woodland path finally swings right and you can now get onto the Old Carriage Road directly by scrambling up a small bank, or via a gentle slope up to the right followed by a sharp left turn (but avoid the track down to the left, leading out to a meadow).

*The rest of this section follows the NT's "Walk the Chalk" from Dorking to Gomshall, with its green waymarkers.*

From the Old Carriage Road you soon have increasingly fine views of the wooded Greensand Hills away to the left as the track climbs steadily across the side of the downs. After going into a copse keep ahead at an oblique crossing with a public bridleway. In a further 400m the track swings right and comes to a three-way junction where you **fork left** onto the other branch of the Old Carriage Road, descending towards Westcott.

The track now descends steadily for over 1 km, partly through copses but mostly with open downland on your left (with **Leith Hill Tower** visible in a gap in the trees on the horizon, 7 km away). Eventually the track swings left and comes to a T-junction where you **turn right** onto another permissive bridleway (with a blue NT waymarker). This goes back uphill for a short distance, through a wooden gate and then along the hillside.

In 200m keep ahead at a junction of tracks, now on a public bridleway through a wooded area. Ignore a fork up to the right and continue on a level path through the trees, then out into the open again. After 350m along the open hillside of the National Trust's **White Down Lease** you come to a signpost indicating that the public bridleway turns left while the "Walk the Chalk" route continues on the permissive bridleway ahead.

*If you are doing the Long Walk, go to §6.*

## 3. White Down Lease to Wotton (2¼ km)

**Turn left** through a wooden gate and follow the public bridleway down the right-hand side of a field. After going under the railway line the track turns right, left and right again, passing the buildings of Stockmans Coomb Farm. Bear left onto its long driveway and follow this all the way out to a T-junction.

At the junction **turn right** onto another driveway, with a long fenced paddock on your left. At a fork in 150m keep left, staying alongside the paddock. In 250m bear left past a cluster of houses and go over a stile to the right of a wooden fieldgate onto a grassy track. Follow this as it curves round to the right into an attractive open valley.

At a path junction in 150m **fork right** onto the higher route, passing to the right of a line of trees (and a concealed pond). Up ahead you might be able to see an old church and as you come level with it after 200m the suggested route is to **fork right** up a faint grassy path leading to the churchyard of **St John the Evangelist**<sup>3</sup> (although the church itself is usually only open on Sundays in summer).

*You could simply continue along the main grassy path near the bottom of the valley, which comes out onto Church Road further along.*

Bear left in front of the church and go out through its main gate onto Church Road. In 200m the footpath you were on earlier joins from the left and in a further 100m the lane comes out onto the A25, with the **Wotton Hatch** opposite. Use the traffic island just off to the left to **cross this busy main road with great care**. This pub is the first of two possible lunchtime stops on the Main Walk (but the only one on the Short Walk).

*If you are doing the Short Walk, go to §5.*

## 4. Wotton to Friday Street (2 km)

*This section follows the route of Walk 1–42 (in reverse).*

For the Main Walk make your way to the pub's car park, either directly from its beer garden or along the driveway to the left of the pub, signposted to Wotton Village Hall. At the back of the car park go through a metal kissing gate to the left of the village hall and follow a faint grassy path across a large field. Towards the end ignore a gate on the right leading out to a lane and carry on to the far right-hand corner of the field.

In the corner go through "Gordon's Gate" and follow a path down through the trees, across the **River Tillingbourne**<sup>4</sup> in a meadow and up the other side of the valley. Go over a stile and continue on the woodland path for 500m, over the shoulder of Oldpark Hill. At the bottom of a long slope bear left onto a broad track running along the edge of the wood, with another river valley on the right.

In 500m go through a wooden fieldgate and keep ahead at a footpath crossing (with a nice view of the valley from the bridge on the right). In a further 150m go past Yew Tree Cottage and fork right onto an unsurfaced driveway. Follow this past several more houses and up a short slope to a road junction by the north-west corner of a large man-made pond.

*The walk continues on the road to the left (Noons Corner Road), but follow the directions below if you want to visit the alternative lunchtime pub.*

- **Detour to the Stephan Langton (+400m)**

At the junction take the narrow lane heading **S**, signposted to the inn and passing the pond on your left. The **Stephan Langton**<sup>5</sup> is on the left-hand side in 200m.

Return the same way and turn right onto Noons Corner Road to resume the walk.

*Continue the directions at §10.*

## 5. Wotton to Bury Hill Fisheries direct (4 km)

For the Short Walk take the minor road (Damphurst/Sheephouse Lane) to the left of the pub, which in 250m comes to the entrance to a business park. The suggested continuation is to veer left onto a signposted footpath which runs parallel to the lane behind a belt of trees, although you could stay on the lane if the path is overgrown. Just before the path returns to the lane **turn left** onto a fenced footpath running alongside a track (Wolvens Lane); the track is a public byway so again you can take this if the footpath is overgrown.

In 200m the track and footpath come to a major path junction where you **turn right** onto a broad tree-lined track heading **SE**, the continuation of Wolvens Lane. You will be following this byway for 1 km with a wood on the left and fields on the right, the latter sloping down into a valley as you climb gently along this ridge. The main track becomes sunken and can be waterlogged in places but there is a good alternative path up on the right-hand bank.

Shortly after the end of the wood on the left (and before the start of a wood on the right) **turn left** off the byway onto a narrow fenced path, a public bridleway with views of the North Downs ahead on the left. Follow this downhill for 300m and out through a wooden gate into a small clearing with a sign for Logmore Farm. Join its long driveway and follow it past fields and cottages for 700m to its T-junction with Logmore Lane.

Go across the lane (slightly to the left) onto another driveway, with a sign for Surrey Hills Yurts. Where the drive forks after 200m **keep ahead** through a wooden gate onto a fenced footpath alongside a field. Follow this downhill for 300m (with a potentially muddy stretch through trees in the middle) and out into a meadow.

Continue across the meadow on a grassy path. In the far corner go through a metal kissing gate and across a footbridge onto a path between hedges, with the ponds of **Bury Hill Fisheries** on the right. At the end go over another footbridge and turn left, joining the longer routes.

*Continue the directions at §12.*

## 6. White Down Lease to Abinger Roughs (4 km)

For the Long Walk continue on the permissive path. In 200m go through a gate and follow the track as it turns left and right through a copse, then back through another gate onto the open hillside again. In 600m the track bends right and meets a public bridleway where you finally leave the "Walk the Chalk" route: ignore the green waymarker pointing sharply right uphill and **turn left** onto the bridleway, which swings all the way round to the left in a tight curve as it descends.

*You could also take an unmarked path down through the trees on the left just before this junction; this simply cuts off a corner and joins the bridleway lower down.*

Either way, follow the bridleway out through a wooden gate onto farmland. Continue on a farm track down the left-hand edge of the field and then over the railway line on a wide bridge, towards the buildings of Park Farm. Alongside the large farmhouse the track comes to a major path junction where you **turn half-right** onto a bridleway going past some old barns towards a wood, now on Cycle Route 22 (CR 22).

*The next 1 km follows the route of Walk 1–42.*

At the edge of **Deerleap Wood** keep left to continue on a narrow fenced path between the trees and a large field for nearly 1 km, heading **W**. After turning right and then left the path comes out onto a road (White Down Lane) where you turn left.

Almost immediately **veer right** at a CR 22 signpost onto a track into **Abinger Roughs**<sup>6</sup>.

At the start of a patch of grassland ignore a path forking up to the left, but in a further 75m **turn left** by a large granite cross, the **Wilberforce Memorial**<sup>7</sup>. At the top of the slope **turn right** at a path crossing onto another broad grassy track and follow this for 400m. Shortly before it comes to a T-junction with the track you were on earlier there is an information panel on the left about a veteran beech known as the **Witch's Broom Tree**<sup>8</sup>.

At the T-junction turn left briefly onto the track. In 20m ignore one path going back up to the left but 20m later **turn left** onto a second path (both with yellow NT waymarkers), heading **S**. In 50m **turn right** at a path crossing and go across a potentially boggy area by an old well (and past another unusual tree: many years ago an American ash was grafted onto the trunk of an English ash, just above ground level). Continue up a short slope and round to the left, merging with a path from the right.

After going through a more open area and curving right, keep ahead at a footpath crossing. Follow the path for a further 200m to an open glade and continue along its left-hand edge. In the next corner **fork left** at a major path junction onto a public bridleway sloping down to a wooden fieldgate, leaving the Roughs.

*Continue the directions at §8.*

## 7. Gomshall Station to Abinger Roughs (1¾ or 2¾ km)

Do not leave the station via its approach road but take a footpath from the Redhill end of Platform 2 (if arriving on a train from Guildford, cross over the new footbridge to come directly to this exit). At the bottom of this fenced path turn left and go alongside the busy A25 for 350m, **crossing over carefully** to the pavement on the other side at the end of the houses on your left. Opposite the entrance to a Trout Farm cross back over the main road and **turn left** into Beggars Lane, signposted as a byway.

In 200m, at the start of a wood on your right, **turn right** up a narrow path into **Piney Copse**<sup>9</sup>, passing a National Trust information panel at its entrance. Follow the public footpath through this small open-access wood and continue along a fenced path at the top of a field, heading **E**. Cross over a lane (slightly to the right) and go through a wooden gate to maintain direction on a bridleway along the edge of another field.

On the far side go through a wooden side gate into **Abinger Roughs**<sup>6</sup> and continue along the main bridleway. In 150m you come to a path crossing at the start of a more wooded area, where there is the option of a longer route through this area of mixed woodland and grassland.

a. Main route

**Turn right** at the path crossing, heading **S**. Follow the path as it curves gradually round to the left, and keep left where the NT's 'Snowdrop Path' joins from the right. Later you might be able to see the continuation of your route off to the right: a public bridleway almost doubling back from your current direction. The two paths gradually come closer together and if you spot a wooden fieldgate on the bridleway directly below you can nip down the bank and turn right to go through it, leaving the Roughs.

*If you miss this little short cut you will come to a major path junction in a further 50m, where a sharp right turn onto the public bridleway would get you back to the fieldgate exit.*

b. Longer route (+1 km)

**Turn left** at the path crossing, heading **N** and now on the **Abinger Roughs Nature Trail**. Follow its green waymarkers as the trail winds its way along the edge of the wood, gradually curving round to the right and with a meadow down to your left. The trail eventually crosses a public bridleway and continues on a long straight path between rhododendrons and azaleas, heading **E**.

At the end follow the path round to the right, now heading **S**. Keep ahead at another bridleway crossing (leaving the Nature Trail, which turns left to loop around the eastern half of the Roughs). You soon merge with another path coming up from a wooded depression on the left, the Long Walk route from Dorking.

After going through a more open area and curving right, keep ahead at a footpath crossing. Follow the path for a further 200m to an open glade and continue along its left-hand edge. In the next corner **fork left** at a major path junction onto a public bridleway sloping down to a wooden fieldgate, leaving the Roughs.

## 8. Abinger Roughs to Abinger Common (3 km)

Follow a grassy path near the right-hand edge of a large meadow, curving gently round to the left. At the far end go through a wooden gate and down a gloomy sunken path. In 250m this comes out onto a busy main road, the A25.

**Cross the A25 with great care** and continue on the tarmac lane opposite, a public bridleway. Follow this past a new house (Paddington Mill), a fishing pond and then some farm buildings. After going up a short slope **veer left** in front of Paddington Farmhouse, then immediately **turn right** onto a track, the continuation of the bridleway.

This potentially muddy track climbs gently between tall hedges, then levels out with views across farm fields. In 600m keep ahead where a footpath joins from the right. In a further 125m you come to another three-way path junction in front of a line of trees, with the bridleway turning right and a footpath going through a gap in the trees.

*If you want to detour to the first of the possible lunchtime pubs (in Sutton Abinger), follow the directions in §8b.*

a. Main route

Take the footpath through the trees and bear right to cross a large field; if there is no clear path, aim for a double wooden fieldgate in the far corner, 400m away. Continue on a narrow path to the right of this fieldgate to come to a minor road (Raikes Lane).

Turn right briefly onto the lane, then before it drops downhill **veer left** onto a signposted footpath. Go through a wooden kissing gate towards a cluster of farm buildings and turn right as indicated. Continue on a short track to the left of Raikes Farmhouse and **turn left** at a T-junction.

b. Route via The Volunteer (+350m)

For the alternative route **turn right** in front of the trees onto the narrow bridleway, heading **S**. In 300m this swings left and joins a long driveway. At the end turn right onto a minor road (Raikes Lane), coming to the **The Volunteer** pub on the right in 50m.

Afterwards retrace your steps up Raikes Lane and carry on past the driveway. In a further 75m **turn right** up a flight of steps in the bank, signposted as a footpath. Continue on a narrow fenced path at the top of the bank, later bearing right away from the lane. Before reaching some farm buildings **turn right** at a Y-junction.

Head **E** along a narrow path between hedges for 200m, then in much the same direction on a farm track for a further 450m. Shortly after another footpath joins from the left go through a kissing gate and follow an enclosed path as it skirts around the

buildings of **Abinger Manor**<sup>10</sup>.

Continue through an old gate into a churchyard and up to **St James'** church<sup>11</sup>, which is worth a quick visit. Leave through its lychgate and go along a tarmac path to a road (Abinger Lane), passing some old stocks off to the left. The route continues along the road to the right, but if you are stopping for lunch here the **Abinger Hatch** is directly opposite.

## 9. Abinger Common to Friday Street (1½ km)

Turn left out of the pub to head **S** briefly on Abinger Lane. At the end of the pub's beer garden **turn left** into a narrow road (Donkey Lane). This dips downhill and goes round a couple of sharp bends, passing the entrance gates to some houses. After climbing back up it comes to a T-junction with a sunken road (the aptly-named Hollow Lane). Turn right and go along this road **with great care** as there is no pavement and more traffic than you might expect.

In 100m **veer left** off the road onto a signposted bridleway, a muddy sunken path which climbs up through the wood. At the top of the slope it splits into two adjacent paths with the slightly raised left-hand path being preferable; as well as being less muddy it veers left at the bottom to run alongside a lane for 100m before joining it.

Ignore a driveway and a signposted footpath on the left to continue briefly along the lane (the oddly-named Friday Street Road), then move up onto a path running along its right-hand bank. This gradually climbs above the level of the road on the edge of the wooded Abinger Common.

*There are plenty of tempting little paths meandering through this open-access woodland but for simplicity the walk route follows a fairly straightforward course alongside lanes or on defined rights of way.*

In 250m you come to a large car park on the right. Either continue along the roadside path (ducking under a few trees along the way) or detour through the car park and rejoin it on the other side. Continue alongside a wooden fence as the path follows the road downhill. At the bottom go down a few steps to join the road, which in 60m comes to a road junction by the north-west corner of a large man-made pond in the hamlet of **Friday Street**<sup>12</sup>.

*The walk continues along the road ahead (now Noons Corner Road), but follow the directions below if you want to visit the last of the possible lunchtime pubs.*

- **Detour to the Stephan Langton (+400m)**

At the junction take the narrow lane heading **S**, signposted to the inn and passing the pond on your left. The **Stephan Langton**<sup>5</sup> is on the left-hand side in 200m. Return the same way and turn right onto Noons Corner Road to resume the walk.

## 10. Friday Street to Logmore Lane (3 km)

Head **E** along Noons Corner Road, passing the **Hammer Pond**<sup>13</sup> on your right. At the end of the pond **fork right** off the road onto a signposted footpath into a wooded area. The path veers away from the pond, climbs steadily and then levels off, passing a National Trust sign for **Severell's Copse** on the right. Eventually you come to a lane (Noons Corner Road again) and go across it, slightly to the right, to continue on the footpath. You soon cross another lane and then in a further 100m the path forks.

The suggested route is to **fork left** (the other route is slightly shorter but involves a more awkward descent). The left-hand path goes downhill and then swings round to the right, merging with another footpath. Follow this broader path gently downhill along the wooded hillside. Shortly after the direct route joins from the right you come to a footpath junction in a small clearing where you **turn left**. Go down a broad gap between houses and turn left onto a lane in the hamlet of **Broadmoor**.

Go past a few cottages and then **turn right** onto a private road to a number of houses, which is also a public bridleway. In 100m **turn left** at a bridleway junction onto a track leading to two cottages. Go across a potentially muddy area at the bottom of a dip and past their entrances onto a broad path going uphill, initially between fences. After climbing steadily through a wood for 200m the path bends right and at the top of the hill you pass a large cleared area on the right.

At the end of this clearing you may have to negotiate a broad forest track churned up by machinery. Keep ahead to cross a sandy track (a public byway) flanked by a pair of metal vehicle barriers onto the bridleway opposite. In 175m keep right at a path junction to continue on this rough track, going gently downhill. This soon comes to a major junction of forest tracks. Ignore all the obvious tracks and take a narrow path into the trees ahead, now descending more steeply.

In 150m **keep left** at a three-way signpost. In 200m ignore a footpath branching off to the left through a new metal gate to continue on the bridleway. This skirts around a large house off to the left (Squire's Farm), turning left at the edge of the wood and going up to its entrance. **Turn right** onto its long driveway (still on a public bridleway) and follow it for 600m between fields and through copses to its T-junction with Logmore Lane.

## 11. Logmore Lane to Bury Hill Fisheries (1½ or 1¾ km)

*The main route for this section goes past one of the sources of Milton Brook. If this area proves too boggy you could return and switch to the alternative route in §11b.*

- Main route (1½ km)**

Go through the gate into the field opposite and take the **left-hand** of two footpaths, a grassy path which goes up to and along the left-hand side of some trees. At the bottom of the field make your way across a boggy area and through a metal kissing gate into a wood. Follow the path down through the wood and out through another kissing gate into a long narrow field. Go all the way along its left-hand edge to a metal fieldgate at the end.

- Alternative route (1¾ km)**

Go through the gate into the field opposite and take the **right-hand** of two footpaths, a grassy path which goes down to a metal fieldgate in a dip. Go through a side gate and continue along the left-hand edge of a farm field sloping up to the right. At the end of the trees on your left go past a redundant gate and keep ahead down through another field, aiming for the centre of a barn if there is no clear path.

At the bottom of the field veer left as indicated to pass to the left of the barn. Go through a gap in the hedge and **turn left** onto a farm track, which in 300m leads into a long narrow field. Follow a faint grassy path all the way along it to a metal fieldgate at the end.

Go through a metal kissing gate to the right of the fieldgate and continue in the same direction on a tree-lined path, alongside Milton Brook on your left. In 150m go straight across a link road between the ponds of **Bury Hill Fisheries**, then in a further 400m cross another link road. On the far side of the second road a footpath joins from a footbridge on the left, the route of the Short Walk.

## 12. Bury Hill Fisheries to The Nower (Temple) (1 km)

Head **N** along the path, with Milton Brook on the left and the private road for the Fisheries behind trees on the right. At the end go through an old iron gate and continue on a tarmac lane curving gently left. 50m after passing a house called "The Hedgerow" on the right, **bear right** onto a signposted bridleway into the trees.

The path climbs gently and curves round to the right. On the right you pass a high brick wall and then a curious brick and stone structure, looking like a modern ice house. After passing under a footbridge the path goes past a house and joins the tarmac driveway from Old Bury Hill House. Continue briefly along this drive to a signposted path crossing.

You could simply continue along the driveway (or indeed take the path climbing steeply back up on the right), but for the suggested route **veer left** down a slope on the signposted bridleway. In 75m **turn right** onto a narrow path through the ferns, soon bending slightly left to run parallel to the driveway, a little way off to the right. In 300m go past a vehicle barrier and straight across the drive (which has curved left) to a small clearing with an information panel for "Milton Heath & The Nower".

*For a shorter and easier route through this wood you can take any of the paths going straight ahead, heading roughly east. Sooner or later you will come out onto a large open space and can aim for the exit in its far left-hand corner. If you do this, continue the directions at [•] in the next section.*

The suggested route through **The Nower**<sup>14</sup> follows the waymarked **Greensand Way**<sup>15</sup> (GW). Continue on the path to the right of the panel, then **fork right** at the next two path junctions as indicated by the GW waymarkers. This takes you up a fairly steep slope, with a couple of short flights of steps along the way. The path eventually curves left, passes a vehicle barrier and goes up to an ornamental **Temple** at the top of the ridge.

*As you might expect several other paths lead up to this viewpoint, including the steep path off to the right shortly after you joined the driveway. Through gaps in the trees there are views of the Greensand Hills to the south and Denbies Hillside (and its vineyard) to the north. The tall spire of Dorking's parish church is 1½ km to the north-east, with Box Hill 2 km beyond it.*

## 13. The Nower to Dorking High Street (2 km)

Continue on the broad grassy path along the top of the ridge for 600m. The best way down from the ridge is to **turn left** at a partly-concealed GW waymarker in the ferns on the right, just before a memorial bench to Noel & Ilse Wightman. Follow a narrow path down through the trees to a large open area and keep ahead on a grassy path heading **N** to the far corner.

[•] In the corner follow a short path past a metal fieldgate to a residential street (Hampstead Lane). Cross over and go along Nower Road, following a brown GW sign. In 150m **turn right** onto a branch of Nower Road. At the end continue on a tarmac footpath which drops down to the A25, taking westbound traffic through Dorking's one-way system. Bear right, cross over Falkland Road and go along the right-hand side of the A25.

*For a direct route to the town centre you could simply stay on the A25 as it curves round to the left, but the route via Rose Hill is more interesting and takes you away from the worst of the traffic noise.*

For the suggested route, cross over Horsham Road and take the tarmac footpath to the right of the **Queens Head**, signposted to Rose Hill & St Paul's and going uphill. At the top turn left onto an alleyway (Peacock Walk), which leads to a street (Rose Hill). Turn right and follow this gently uphill and round a long curve to the left, later with low flint walls on both sides.

In 200m the road forks in front of a large sloping green, with a chain-link fence protecting its grazing sheep. Go round either side of this green (surrounded by 19<sup>th</sup>C villas) to the bottom and continue on a one-way street leading back to the main road, passing under the picturesque **Rose Hill Arch**<sup>16</sup> along the way. At the bottom you come out onto the A25 (South Street) by an old coaching inn, the **Bulls Head**.

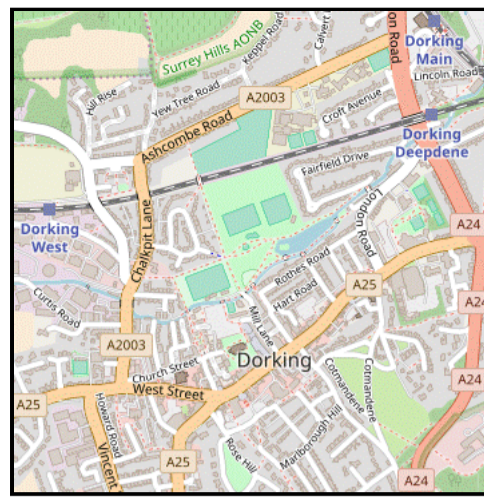
There are many other refreshment places nearby. **Two Many Cooks** is on the other side of the main road, just off to the left. For other places, turn right and go up to the junction with West Street, North Street and High Street. **The Courtyard Cafe Bar** is in Old Kings Head Court opposite; **Gorgeous Gerties**, the historically interesting **Mullins Coffee Shop**<sup>17</sup> and several other places can be found in West Street, a conservation area. There are more pubs and coffee shops all the way along High Street.

## 14. Dorking High Street to the Stations (1¼ or 1½ km)



For a relatively traffic-free route to one of the stations, take the broad passageway 100m along High Street from the junction, to the left of Barclays Bank. This comes out onto a small green in front of the imposing **St Martin's** church<sup>18</sup>, which is worth visiting if you are not in a hurry. Head for the exit beyond the east end of the church and follow a path between Marks & Spencer and a large car park down to Mill Lane.

Take the tarmac path at the left-hand end of the block of flats opposite, signposted to Meadowbank. After crossing Pipp Brook the path turns right and you now simply follow it alongside the stream for 600m, with the recreation ground and then a lake on the left. Continue along London Road to its junction with the A24, turn left and cross over the dual carriageway at the pedestrian lights.



**a. Finishing at Dorking Deepdene (1¼ km)**

One of the station entrances is opposite, but for trains to Redhill (where you change for London) go under the railway bridge for a ramp leading up to Platform 1. There is no footbridge between the two platforms.

**b. Finishing at Dorking (Main) (1½ km)**

For direct trains to London go under the railway bridge and continue along the A24. In 125m **fork right** into Station Approach, passing the **Lincoln Arms Hotel**. The station is at the far end. Trains to London can depart from any of the three platforms, so you might have to go under the subway to Platform 2 or 3.

## Walk Notes

- Pippbrook Mill** was one of six grain mills on this short river, which rises in the Greensand Hills to the south-west of Dorking and flows into the River Mole at Pixham.
- The **Old Carriage Road** was built in the 1890s as the access road to Denbies House on the North Downs ridge, with one branch from Dorking and the other from Westcott.
- St John the Evangelist, Wotton** dates from the 11<sup>th</sup>C, one of the oldest churches in south-east England. It contains many Elizabethan and Jacobean monuments to the Evelyn family, owners of the Wotton estate.
- The **River Tillingbourne** (shown as Tilling Bourne on the OS map) only runs for 18 km from its source at Leith Hill to the River Wey, but its strong and steady flow enabled it to power a good number of gunpowder, paper and flour mills.
- The **Stephan Langton** inn is named after the Archbishop of Canterbury in the reign of King John. He was a member of the baron's council which forced the king to sign the Magna Carta in 1215. A 19<sup>th</sup>C biography claimed (without supporting evidence) that he was born in the hamlet of Friday Street.
- Abinger Roughs** takes its name from an area of poor sandy soil between medieval fields and rough pasture. It used to be part of the Abinger Hall estate and is now owned by the National Trust.
- The **Wilberforce Memorial** marks the spot where this Victorian bishop (a son of William Wilberforce) was killed when he fell from his horse in 1873. Known as 'Soapy Sam', he vigorously opposed Darwin's theory of evolution, most notably in a famous debate at Oxford in 1860. Hearing of his death, his opponent Thomas Huxley is said to have waspishly remarked that "his brains had at last come into contact with reality, and the result had been fatal".
- The unusual shape of the **Witch's Broom Tree** is thought to be the result of 'bundle planting': a bunch of seeds are planted together and the resulting saplings eventually coalesce into one large tree.
- Piney Copse** was acquired by the National Trust from the estate of E.M. Forster after his death in 1970. In *My Wood* the distinguished novelist revealed his feelings about ramblers having access to his property: "it is intersected, blast it, by a public footpath".
- Abinger Manor** was built in the 17<sup>th</sup>C by the writer and diarist John Evelyn, although much of the house was rebuilt in 1872. The grounds contain the motte of the 12<sup>th</sup>C **Abinger Castle**.
- St James, Abinger** was badly damaged by a flying bomb in 1944 and again by a lightning strike 20 years later, so there is little evidence of the original 12<sup>th</sup>C church. The second misfortune is reflected in the design of its modern stained-glass window, "the Cross depicted as a living tree, riven by lightning".
- There are several English settlements called **Friday Street**. The precise reason for this hamlet's name is unknown but the day of the week is named after the Anglo-Saxon god *Frige* and 'Street' in a place name implies that it pre-dates the Norman Conquest.
- The large **Hammer Pond** at Friday Street was one of many in the south-east, providing water power for bellows to smelt iron ore and for hammers to beat the hot metal into shape. The industry declined in the 18<sup>th</sup>C when coke from the northern coalfields became the preferred fuel, supplanting charcoal from the local trees.
- The Nower** (an obsolete word meaning "at the slope or bank") was once part of the 18<sup>th</sup>C Bury Hill estate. It was presented to 'the people of Dorking' in 1931; the remainder of the estate was broken up and sold in 1952.
- The **Greensand Way** follows the course of a sandstone ridge just to the south of the North Downs. It runs for 175 km from Haslemere in Surrey to Hamstreet in Kent.
- The picturesque archway known as **Rose Hill Arch** originally led to the rear of a larger property. The large villas on Rose Hill were built around what was a paddock when the estate was broken up in the 19<sup>th</sup>C.
- Mullins Coffee Shop** is in the 16<sup>th</sup>C house of one of the Pilgrim Fathers who sailed on the Mayflower in 1620. William Mullins died soon after arriving in America (as did his wife and son) but many Americans are his descendants as his surviving daughter Priscilla had ten children.
- St Martin, Dorking** was substantially rebuilt in the 19<sup>th</sup>C, with the last of these renovations in 1877 adding a new tower and 64m spire. Since 1973 this Anglican parish church has been shared with the Methodists.

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