



# Guildford Circular via Albury Park walk

The North Downs ridge, a haunted pool, unusual churches and traces of an industrial era in the Tillingbourne valley

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| <b>Length</b> | <p><b>Main Walk:</b> 25 km (15.5 miles). Six hours 25 minutes walking time. For the whole excursion including trains, sights and meals, allow at least 11 hours.</p> <p><b>Shorter Walk, starting from Shalford:</b> 21½ km (13.4 miles). Five hours 30 minutes walking time.</p> <p><b>Shorter Circular Walk, from Shalford:</b> 20 km (12.4 miles). Five hours 5 minutes walking time.</p> <p><b>Short Walk, starting from Chilworth:</b> 18½ km (11.5 miles). Four hours 50 minutes walking time.</p> <p><b>Short Circular Walk, from Chilworth:</b> 14 km (8.7 miles). Three hours 45 minutes walking time.</p> |
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| <b>OS Map</b> | Explorer 145. Guildford, map reference SU991495, is the county town of Surrey, 45 km <b>SW</b> of London. |
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| <b>Toughness</b> | 7 out of 10 (6 for the Shorter Walks, 5 for the Short Walks). |
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| <b>Features</b> | <p>This fairly long circular walk explores the area to the south-east of Guildford. The landscape is exceptionally varied, with water meadows, valleys, woods, heathland, parkland and fine views from the contrasting chalk hills of the North Downs and the adjacent Greensand.</p> <p>The walk leaves Guildford via <b>Shalford Water Meadows</b> alongside the <b>River Wey Navigation</b>, then heads east from Shalford up the valley of the <b>River Tillingbourne</b>. This was once an important industrial area and the route includes a heritage trail through the extensive ruins of the <b>Chilworth Gunpowder Mills</b>, the national importance of which is reflected in its status as a Scheduled Ancient Monument. An attractive stretch along the quiet valley of <b>Law Brook</b> (one of the river's tributaries) and across the small <b>Albury Heath</b> brings you to a lunchtime stop in the hamlet of Little London.</p> <p>The route now heads north through <b>Albury Park</b>, designed by the English landscape pioneer John Evelyn. In 1819 the estate was acquired by the banker Henry Drummond, who built a new parish church in Albury and closed the old <b>Saxon Church</b>, now isolated in the private parkland but accessible to the public. At the same time he became one of the founder members of a new religious movement and built the neo-gothic <b>Catholic Apostolic Church</b> for it. The route then passes the crystal-clear waters of <b>Silent Pool</b> on its climb up the North Downs, where a stretch along the <b>North Downs Way</b> leads to a mid-afternoon refreshment stop at the <b>Newlands Corner</b> viewpoint.</p> <p>The final section of the walk includes one more climb to another famous church with a long history, <b>St Martha-on-the-Hill</b>, perched on the side of the Greensand hills. A gradual descent through <b>Chantry Wood</b> leads back to the River Wey and Guildford. An alternative return route to Shalford (see below) takes in another historical site on the Tillingbourne, the 18<sup>th</sup>C <b>Shalford Mill</b>, now managed by the National Trust (open Wed &amp; Sun, by guided tour only; last tour 4pm); admission (2018) is £3.</p> |
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| <b>Walk Options</b> | The outward route passes close to two stations on the Guildford–Redhill line, <b>Shalford</b> and <b>Chilworth</b> , and is not too far from them on the return leg to <b>Guildford</b> . With a choice of three starting and finishing stations there are nine possible walks, ranging from 14 to 25 km. |
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There are several other SWC walks in this area and you could combine sections of this walk with parts of the [Gomshall to Guildford Walk](#) (1–14), the [Guildford to Gomshall Walk](#) (2–13), the [Guildford Circular via Chantries Walk](#) (#57) and the [Guildford to Horsley Walk](#) (#131).

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| <b>Additional Notes</b> | The walk route was significantly changed at the end of 2015. The revision replaced a couple of uninspiring stretches with better routes through St Martha's Hill and Chantry Wood, and the new anti-clockwise direction makes it possible to get to the lunch pub a little earlier. The afternoon section is longer and tougher – not to everyone's taste – but most of the features can now be viewed at a more leisurely pace and Newlands Corner is well placed as a mid-afternoon refreshment stop. The full Main Walk has become slightly longer but the position of the alternative stations on the route facilitates a greater variety of shorter walk options.   |
| <b>Transport</b>        | <p>For the <b>Main Walk</b> Guildford has frequent fast trains from Waterloo, four an hour during the week and two on Sundays. Avoid the slower services unless you are travelling from an intermediate station.</p> <p>For all the other walk options you will need to change on the outward and/or return journey for a train on the Guildford–Redhill line. The off-peak service is hourly to <b>Shalford</b> and two-hourly to <b>Chilworth</b>. If you realise that you would have a long wait for a return train and decide not to carry on to Guildford you could take a bus: Compass 32 goes past both stations and there are other services from Shalford.</p> <p>If you are doing the full Main Walk a return to Guildford is sufficient, but a <b>return to Chilworth</b> is only slightly more expensive and would let you shorten the walk by diverting to either of the alternative stations. From London, a ticket to Chilworth or Shalford (but <u>not</u> Guildford) is also valid via Redhill or Dorking, although it is usually quicker to go via Guildford.</p>  |
| <b>Suggested Train</b>  | For the Main Walk, take the train nearest to <b>09:30</b> from <b>Waterloo</b> to <b>Guildford</b> . For the walk options starting at Shalford or Chilworth, take a train to these stations (changing at Guildford, Dorking or Redhill) which would allow you to start walking at around 11am.   |
| <b>Lunch</b>            | <p>The only conveniently-placed pub on this walk is the <b>William</b> (01483-202685) in <b>Little London</b>, after 11½ km on the Main Walk (8 km if starting from Shalford; 5 km from Chilworth). In recent years it had very limited food options, but it was taken over by new owners in mid-2018 and has been fully renovated (but call ahead to check if its kitchen has reopened). It is closed mid-afternoon on weekdays.</p> <p>Shortly before reaching the pub there are some pleasant spots on Albury Heath for a picnic lunch. There are later refreshment options at Newlands Corner (see below), but no more pubs until you are quite close to the finish.</p>   |
| <b>Tea</b>              | <p>The second half of this walk is the more strenuous, but a mid-afternoon break at the <b>Newlands Corner</b> viewpoint (5¼ km after Little London) is possible. The <b>Plucky Pheasant</b> (01483-225222) café is open daily; it has a nice garden if you can put up with the traffic noise from the main road. Alternatively, there is a snack bar in the car park.</p> <p>At the end of the Main Walk there are many tea places in <b>Guildford</b>. If you venture up the town's pedestrianised High Street there are two nice places side by side in Angel Gate: <b>Bill's</b> (01483-455187) – a restaurant which also does good afternoon teas – located in the ground floor of the Angel Hotel; and <b>Coffee Culture</b> (01483-564200; open until 5pm Mon–Fri, 6pm Sat) which has less space inside but plenty of outdoor seating. In the High Street itself there are several chain coffee shops, while advertising boards might tempt you down side streets to independent cafés. If instead you take a direct route to the station you could visit the <b>Riverbank Café</b> in the Yvonne Arnaud Theatre (closed Sun) or one of the town's riverside pubs, while there is also a <b>Costa Coffee</b> at the station, usually open until 8pm (7pm Sun).</p> <p>The route to <b>Shalford</b> passes the <b>Seahorse Inn</b> (01483-514351) 1 km from the finish, with the <b>Queen Victoria</b> pub (01483-566959) next to the station. <b>Chilworth</b> also has a conveniently-placed pub opposite the road from the station, the <b>Percy Arms</b> (01483-561765).</p> |
| <b>Help Us!</b>         | After the walk, we would love to get your <a href="#">feedback</a>   |
| <b>Photos</b>           | Upload your photos to the <a href="#">SWC Group</a> on <a href="#">Flickr</a> , and <a href="#">videos</a> to <a href="#">Youtube</a> . This walk's tags are:  |
|                         | <div style="display: flex; gap: 10px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; border-radius: 5px; padding: 2px 5px; display: inline-block;"> swcwalks</div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; border-radius: 5px; padding: 2px 5px; display: inline-block;"> swcwalk185</div> </div>   |
| <b>By Car</b>           | <b>Start</b> GU1 4UT   |
| <b>Help</b>             | National Rail: 03457 48 49 50 • Travelline SE (bus times): 0871 200 2233   |

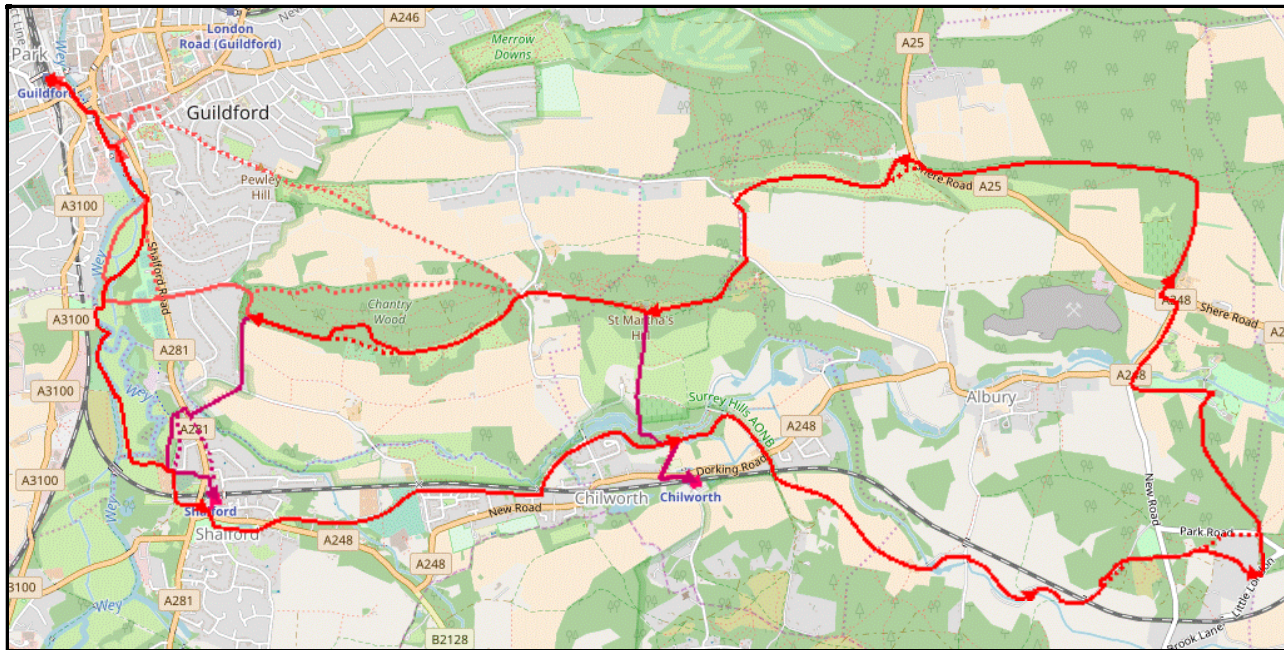


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## Walk Directions

### Walk Map

*All maps © OpenStreetMap contributors*

### Walk Options ( Guil. | Shal. | Chil. )

- M. Main Walk (25 km)
  - i. Main Walk, finishing in Shalford (23½ km)
  - ii. Main Walk, finishing in Chilworth (20½ km)
  - a. Shorter Walk, starting from Shalford (21½ km)
  - ai. Shorter Circular Walk, from Shalford (20 km)
  - a ii. Shorter Walk, finishing in Chilworth (17 km)
  - b. Short Walk, starting from Chilworth (18½ km)
  - bi. Short Walk, finishing in Shalford (17 km)
  - bii. Short Circular Walk, from Chilworth (14 km)

## Walk Directions

*If you are doing the Shorter Walk from Shalford, start at §2.**If you are doing the Short Walk from Chilworth, start at §3.*

### 1. Guildford Station to Shalford (3½ km)

Leave the station and bear right onto its approach road. Go down an underpass and follow the “Town Centre via Riverside Walk” signs (there are two routes out of the underpass: the left-hand one is shorter but has lots of steps). Turn right onto the path beside the **River Wey**, passing the old Town Wharf. Keep ahead past the pedestrianised Town Bridge on a street (Millmead), or the riverside path to its left. The two routes soon merge, and in the patch of grass between them you pass one of the town's **Alice sculptures**<sup>1</sup>.

Go past a small car park and **turn left** to cross the river on a footbridge. In front of Millmead Lock **turn right** onto a path between the river and the **Wey Navigation**<sup>2</sup>. After crossing a weir **keep left** and follow the path past a picnic area and across a footbridge over the Navigation. Go straight across a small parking area for Guildford Rowing Club and through a wooden side gate onto a broad grassy path across **Shalford Water Meadows**<sup>3</sup>.

The path gradually curves away from a cycle path beside the main road and heads towards the ruins of **St Catherine's Chapel**<sup>4</sup> on the small hill ahead. As you approach some trees ignore a gate leading into playing fields and stay on the grassy path as it bends right. Follow it out to a corner of the meadow (crossing a wide ditch along the way) and go through a wooden side gate, joining the riverside path. In 150m ignore a path off to the left – the return route for the Main Walk – and cross the River Wey on a substantial **footbridge**<sup>5</sup>.

Continue on the other bank for 700m, with the last 250m being alongside the Navigation after the main river meanders away to the east. At St Catherine's Lock **turn left** to cross the Navigation again and **turn right** through a metal kissing gate onto the riverside path. In 300m go through a small wooden gate and past some cottages. Follow the path across a weir over the main river and round to the left to go through another part of the water meadows.

After a section along a boardwalk ignore a footpath off to the right and keep ahead up a slope. Go through a gate at the top and turn right onto a track (Dagley Lane), going past allotments and over the railway line, with a road bridge and Shalford station visible off to the left. Follow the track round to the left, towards the A281; keep left across a patch of grass (passing a scout hut) to reach this busy road near some pedestrian lights. Cross the road and bear right across another small patch of grass, passing Station Approach.

## 2. Shalford to Chilworth Gunpowder Mills (3½ km)

- From Shalford Station

If arriving by train from Guildford, cross the footbridge to exit from Platform 2. Go up the short Station Approach road and turn left, joining the route from Guildford station.

Follow a short link road past a parade of shops to the A248. Cross the main road at the pedestrian crossing and turn left, also crossing Chinthurst Lane. Continue along the left-hand side of a common, staying near the main road and later passing a pond on the right. At the end of the pond cross back over the A248 and continue on a signposted footpath alongside a row of cottages, gradually moving away from the main road.

Follow this tarmac path across Station Road and through Shalford Common on a wide strip of grassland between woods. This leads into a driveway where you go past a few houses. Follow the lane round to the left and gently downhill, crossing a stream at the bottom of the dip. In a further 150m the lane turns left but you **veer right** to continue in the same direction on a fenced path between playing fields.

At the far end bear right onto a footpath in front of the railway line. Go past a level crossing and continue along a narrow path between the railway and high garden fences for 750m, a rather uninspiring stretch. Eventually you go up a few steps on the left to cross over the tracks. Ignore a footpath off to the right and go through an old metal gate onto a well-maintained path through a patch of woodland, with the **River Tillingbourne**<sup>6</sup> below on your left.

The path continues across some rough grassland and past an isolated house. Follow it through another small wood, then past the back of a new housing estate and out onto its access road. At the end of this short road go straight across Blacksmith Lane and past a high metal gate into the site of **Chilworth Gunpowder Mills**<sup>7</sup>.

*There is an excellent information panel "A Damnable Invention" about these industrial ruins. The large site extended to the other side of Blacksmith Lane, now a housing estate.*

After passing a large fishing pond on the left the path curves right and then left, passing a row of old millstones and some ruined buildings. 600m from Blacksmith Lane, where you can see some picnic tables ahead in a clearing, the route from Chilworth Station joins from the right.

## 3. The Gunpowder Mills (or Chilworth Station) to Ford Farm (2¾ or 3¼ km)

- From Chilworth Station (+½ km)

If arriving by train from Guildford, leave the platform from an exit near the back of the train and bear right towards a main road, with the **Percy Arms** on the other side. Turn left onto the A248 and cross over at some point. In 150m, just after passing an infant school, **turn right** onto the signposted "Vera's Path". After going alongside the school grounds this public footpath becomes an enclosed tree-lined path between meadows.

As you go into a wooded area, follow the path across a backwater on a footbridge to enter the site of the **Chilworth Gunpowder Mills**<sup>7</sup>. Bear right towards some picnic tables in a clearing and **turn right** onto the broad main path through the site, joining the other routes.

Follow the broad path through the eastern part of the site. In 200m keep right where the path forks and then follow it round to the left, passing the massive ruins of the **Incorporating Mills**<sup>8</sup>. At the end of the path go out past wooden barriers and **turn right** onto a track, crossing a bridge over a backwater. Ignore a footpath off to the left and follow the track for 400m to the A248.

Cross the main road carefully and continue on the lane opposite, soon crossing over the railway. After passing a cottage on the left the path splits, with a private drive ahead and footpaths to both sides. Take the **left-hand footpath**, a broad grassy path with a wooden fence on the right. After crossing a dip in the ground go over a stile and continue in the same direction across a field, climbing gently towards the left-hand edge of a wood (with Albury's parish church tower coming into view, 1¼ km ahead on your left).

On the far side of the field go through a metal kissing gate and a belt of trees to continue on a broad grassy path between fences. Later the path curves left and becomes a sandy track with a long line of trees on your left, eventually coming to Postford Farm Cottages. Go over a stile and follow the track down between the house and its stables, ignoring a footpath off to the right. Follow the farm track down to the left, across **Law Brook**<sup>9</sup> and past a large reed-filled pond, then uphill and round to the right past more stables.

At the end of the farm track **turn right** briefly onto a minor road (Blackheath Lane), then in 25m **go over a stile on the left**. Follow a broad grassy path along a pretty valley, with Law Brook (and its old watercress beds) off to your right. In 500m you come to Ford Farm, passing its attractive farmhouse on the left. Go through a wooden kissing gate at the left-hand end of the fence ahead and turn left onto the farm drive.

## 4. Ford Farm to Little London (1¾ km)



Follow the drive round to the right, past outbuildings. In 250m you come to a T-junction where you **turn left** onto a track (Sandy Lane), ignoring a bridleway signpost pointing right. In 150m the lane curves left and goes under the railway line, then in a similar distance becomes a cutting with a wooded area on both sides.

*You could simply continue on this sunken lane for a further 250m, eventually passing a large sandy pit on the left. If you do this, fork right onto a narrow path and continue the directions at [•] below.*

For a less gloomy route **fork left** at the start of the cutting onto a path which climbs into the wood. In about 40m **turn right** at a crosspaths onto a clear path which makes its way back towards Sandy Lane and continues on a higher route parallel to it. In 150m you go under power cables and then have to veer around a large sandy pit on your right. On the far side follow the path back down to Sandy Lane. Do not rejoin the lane but **go straight across it** onto a narrow path through the trees.

[•] This potentially muddy little path soon comes out onto a broad track which you continue along in the same direction. You pass a sports field on the left and a wooden **sculpture**<sup>10</sup> off to the right, a possible picnic spot with fine views over **Albury Heath**. At the end of the track cross a lane (New Road) with great care – traffic can be quite fast – and continue on the broad path opposite. Where this comes out onto an open part of the heath, ignore a path ahead and follow the main path as it curves round to the left and then back to the right.

*If you are not visiting the lunchtime pub you could fork left onto a path through the trees. At the end turn left onto Heath Lane, then right at its T-junction with Park Road. Go along this road for 225m and then turn left onto the footpath into Albury Park. If you take this short cut, continue the directions at [•] in the next section.*

For the main route, stay on the broad sandy path to the far side of the heath. Go straight across Heath Lane onto an unsurfaced track, Warners Lane. Near the end of this track (having passed the entrance to “Warners” halfway along) **go over a stile on the right** into a field, divided into smallholdings. Follow a grassy path down and across this field, crossing a stile along the way. In the bottom corner go through a gap into the car park of the **William** pub, the suggested lunchtime stop.

## 5. Little London to Silent Pool (2¾ km)

Turn left out of the pub onto the road, then immediately **fork left** up an unsurfaced track, alongside a row of houses. In 250m this comes out onto a road (Park Road) with two footpaths opposite, slightly to the left.

[•] Take the **left-hand footpath** (to the Saxon Church), going past a fieldgate onto a broad track past a lodge. Another fieldgate takes you into **Albury Park**, at the start of an avenue of magnificent old sweet chestnuts. The avenue ahead is soon fenced off and you **turn half-left** as directed, staying on the waymarked path through these private woods.

Continue in this direction for 500m, gently uphill. The footpath then curves right and descends for about 250m. As you approach the bottom of the wood the path bends left and you keep ahead at a path crossing, but then need to **fork right** (where there is a “Private” sign in the trees ahead).

Leave the wood through a wooden kissing gate and continue in the same direction down to a footpath signpost on a driveway. You will be leaving the estate off to the left, but first **bear right** across the grass to find the interesting old church of **Ss Peter and Paul**<sup>11</sup>.

After visiting the church, go straight ahead across the grass from the churchyard gate to come to another driveway at a bend. Continue in the same direction along this drive, which merges with the one you crossed after leaving the wood. At the end of the estate go through a side gate and turn right onto New Road, passing another lodge. Keep right at the road junction with the A248 and continue along its pavement, soon crossing the **River Tillingbourne**<sup>6</sup>.

In 250m you pass a tree-lined driveway on the right leading to the neo-gothic **Catholic Apostolic Church**<sup>12</sup> (not open to the public). Continue alongside the road to its T-junction with the A25. Turn left and carefully cross over the A248 via the traffic islands onto a tarmac path alongside the dual carriageway.

In 100m you need to **cross the A25 with great care** and go up a track to the right of the car park for Silent Pool. Ignore a track on the right leading to a new distillery. The main track then curves left into **Albury Organic Vineyard** and you will shortly be joining the footpath going straight ahead, but first **fork right** onto a broad path running alongside **Sherbourne Pond**. At the far end you come to a dam separating it from its higher neighbour, **Silent Pool**<sup>13</sup>.

*A perimeter path around this attractive pond was closed in 2015. According to a Surrey Wildlife Trust notice the path is going to be removed as there are no funds for its maintenance.*

## 6. Silent Pool to Newlands Corner (2½ km)

Unless the perimeter path has been restored (there used to be another exit to the footpath at the far end), you will need to go through a gap in the trees and turn right onto the footpath going uphill alongside the vineyard. You have a steady climb of 500m to the top of the North Downs. Eventually the path levels out and comes to a signposted path crossing where you **turn left**, joining the **North Downs Way**<sup>14</sup> (NDW).

You will be following this bridleway along the ridge for 1¾ km to the A25, but after about 150m be sure to look over the new wire fence on your left for the curious sight of two large old beech trees joined together by a very long branch just above the ground, an example of **inosculation**<sup>15</sup>.

When you reach the A25 you could cross the road here and continue on the NDW (which runs below the large car park), but the suggested route is to stay on this side of the road and turn right to come to the **Plucky Pheasant** café, a possible refreshment stop. Afterwards, or for an alternative, **cross the A25 with great care** and go across the grass to the car park at **Newlands Corner**<sup>16</sup>, where there is a snack bar and **Visitor Centre** (run by Surrey Wildlife Trust).

## 7. Newlands Corner to St Martha's Church (2¼ km)

From the Visitor Centre go straight across the car park, where there are fine views past **Albury**<sup>17</sup> in the Tillingbourne valley below to Blackheath Forest and beyond. Go down the grassy slope, bearing right to pick up a clear chalky path. This merges with the NDW coming in from the left and curves around the wood on your right to head **W** along the side of **Albury Downs**.

Where the path emerges onto a large open area the simplest route is to keep ahead on a broad grassy path, but you could also take a higher route by the trees. On the far side the routes rejoin at a potentially muddy patch and you **fork left** as indicated to stay on the NDW (the path straight ahead leads to a car park). In 250m the NDW drops down to cross a minor road (White Lane).

Go up steps on the other side and follow the path downhill alongside the lane for 400m. At the bottom veer left onto the lane at a sharp bend and then immediately **turn right** up a broad track alongside a house, Keeper's Cottage. After passing the house follow the main path (slightly to the right) as it climbs gently up the wooded **St Martha's Hill**. In 300m **turn half-right** at a major path crossing onto a broad sandy track, still on the NDW and heading **W**.

Soon after this turning ignore a bridleway off to the left (unless you want to take an easier route passing below the church). Follow the main track – or some parallel paths on its right if you prefer – uphill for 350m to come to the churchyard of **St Martha-on-the-Hill**<sup>18</sup>. Go through a gate and pass to the left of the church for a fine view to the south.

*If you are finishing the walk at Chilworth station, go to §12.*

## 8. St Martha's Church to Chantry Wood (sw corner) (2¾ km)

Leave the churchyard through a gate in its north-western corner and bear left onto a broad sandy track heading **W**, gently downhill and still on the NDW. In 250m a bridleway merges from the left (the easier route mentioned above) and eventually levels out in front of a narrow open area. Keep left and follow the track past a few houses and down to a minor road (Halfpenny Lane). Turn left briefly onto this lane, then in 25m (where it bends left) **veer right** up a broad track. Almost immediately **fork left** into **Chantry Wood**, leaving the NDW.

*There are many possible routes through this wood, as you can see from a useful information panel at the entrance. The suggested route is similar to Walk #57 (in reverse), with fine views to the south. For a more direct route into Guildford you could fork right instead of entering Chantry Wood. Where the path splits after 75m you can either fork left and follow the NDW near the northern part of the wood for 1¾ km, rejoining the main route near the start of the next section; or fork right on the route of Walk 2–13 (also in reverse) across Pewley Down into Guildford's town centre.*

For the suggested route, take the main track down into the wood, then in 40m **fork left** onto a side path. Follow this through the trees for 150m to come out into the corner of a field used as a camp site. **Bear right** onto a well-trodden sandy path along its right-hand side, passing some huts on the edge of the wood.

*Alternatively, you could go diagonally across the camp site to a metal kissing gate and follow a parallel route closer to the edge of the escarpment (the Walk #57 route).*

Continue alongside the wood for 700m, going through gates at three field boundaries and passing a viewpoint off to the left in the third field. The last 150m is in a fourth field (where the Walk #57 route rejoins from the left) and you finally **veer right** with the main path, going back into the wood through a metal kissing gate.

*For a more direct route you could continue on a path outside the wood, but this would involve crossing a valley with a steep little climb into the wood on the other side.*

Inside the wood keep left, then follow the path as it gradually curves round to the right in front of the wooded valley. At a T-junction **turn left** onto a broad track, soon with a clearing on your right (where near the end a gap in the trees gives you a **view of Guildford Cathedral**, 3 km away). At the end of this open area the path splits; the Walk #57 route continues ahead but the suggested route is to **turn left**.

This path soon swings round to the right (where the direct route across the valley joins from the left) and begins a long steady descent, parallel to the southern edge of the wood 50m away on your left. In 500m the main path curves round to the right and there is a faint path branching off to the south-western corner of the wood on the left.

*If you are finishing the walk at Shalford station, go to §11.*

## 9. Chantry Wood to Millmead Lock (2¼ km)

Stay on the main path as it curves round to the right. It soon drops down into an open area where you keep left, passing a memorial redwood planted in 1991. Leave the wood and bear right towards a car park in the corner of a triangular green. In front of the car park **fork left** onto a track, rejoining the NDW. At the far end of the green cross over a residential street (Pilgrims Way) onto a tarmac path running alongside it. Follow Pilgrims Way all the way downhill and carefully cross over the A281 at the bottom.

*For a short cut into Guildford (saving about 600m) you could turn right onto Cycle Route 22 (CR 22), a tarmac path running parallel with the main road. If you do this, continue the directions at [•] below.*



For the suggested route, keep ahead across a playing field. On the far side go through a gap in the trees and continue on a clear path across part of **Shalford Water Meadows**, eventually reaching the **River Wey**. Turn right onto the riverside path, leaving the NDW and briefly retracing your outward route if you started from Guildford. In 150m go through a wooden side gate into the corner of an open part of the meadows.

Instead of retracing your route across the meadows, continue along the riverbank. Shortly before the path returns to the A281 it has to nip behind Guildford Rowing Club's boathouse. On the far side turn left and go up to its small parking area, briefly joining both CR 22 and the outward route again.

[•] Go across the parking area onto a short path beside the main road. Cross the footbridge over the **Wey Navigation** and follow the path past picnic tables and over a weir to Millmead Lock. At the end of the lock there is a footbridge over the Navigation on your right, and another bridge over the main river on your left.

## 10. Millmead Lock to Guildford Station (1 or ¾ km)

*The main route goes via the town's High Street for a wide choice of refreshment places, but if you want to head directly to the station and its coffee shop (passing some riverside pubs along the way), you can continue along the outward route of the Main Walk; brief directions for this are in §10b.*

### a. Main route (1 km)

**Turn right** and cross over the Navigation. Follow the alley as it curves round to the left alongside the Yvonne Arnaud Theatre. If you decide to visit its **Riverbank Café** (use the main theatre entrance), either return along the alley and follow the direct route, or simply go along the main road and cross over the Town Bridge.



For the High Street, go out to the A281 and cross over at the pedestrian lights. On the other side turn left briefly onto the main road, then bear right to go up Mill Lane, passing **St Mary's** church. At the top turn left onto Quarry Street, then turn right to go up the broad pedestrianised High Street.

As well as several chain coffee shops you will find **Ottino's** in the first passageway on your right (The Shambles), and **Bill's** and **Coffee Culture** in Angel Gate, another passageway further up on the left.

*If you have time to spare before catching a train you could continue up the High Street to the Guildhall (the building with the projecting clock), or wander around the Castle Grounds. There are plenty of signposts to guide you and no specific alternative route is given here.*

To head for the station, make your way down to the bottom of the High Street. Cross over the main road and keep ahead across the Town Bridge. On the far side turn right onto the riverside path.

### b. Direct route (¾ km)

**Turn left** onto a path and cross the River Wey on a footbridge. Turn right onto a street (Millmead), with the **Britannia** pub off to your left. Continue on a riverside path leading to the **White House** pub. Go past the Town Bridge and continue alongside the river.

To complete the walk go past the old Town Wharf on the far bank and under a road. Follow signs to the station: up steps on the left and alongside the road as it swings round to the right, then through an underpass. The station is up ahead on the left, with a **Costa Coffee** and other shops inside the concourse. Fast trains to London normally leave from Platform 5.

## 11. Chantry Wood to Shalford Station (1¾ km)

To head for Shalford station **fork left** off the main path, to the corner of the wood. A short flight of steps cut into the bank takes you down to a footpath where you turn left to head **S**. In 125m keep ahead on a residential street (Clifford Manor Road) for 25m, where there are two footpaths on the left: ignore one going across a field and either take the (possibly overgrown) grassy path parallel to the road, or simply continue on the road.

In 200m the footpath leads into Shepherds Way which takes you to a T-junction with East Shalford Lane. Go straight across this (slightly to the right) and up a few steps into a field. Follow a grassy path heading **SW**, alongside a (possibly temporary) wire fence. On the far side go through a metal gate onto an enclosed path. In 75m you cross a footbridge over the **River Tillingbourne**, with the attractive tile-hung **Shalford Mill**<sup>19</sup> on your right. Continue down its driveway to the A281, with the **Seahorse Inn** opposite.

*For a short cut into Shalford (saving about 400m) you could turn left onto the main road. In 375m bear left into Station Row, passing the Queen Victoria pub on the way to the station.*

For the suggested route **turn right** (heading away from Shalford for 75m) and cross the road at the pedestrian lights. Take the bridleway here up a short slope into a wooded area. Where it meets a track (Dagley Lane) there is a wooden fieldgate opposite above **Shalford Water Meadows**.

*If the water meadows look flooded then simply turn left onto a path running through the belt of trees to the right of Dagley Lane (or simply go along the track itself). The path and track merge in 350m, where the main route returns from the meadow. If you take this alternative route, continue the directions at [•] below.*

For the suggested route go through a wooden side gate and down the slope towards a loop of the **River Wey**. In front of the river **turn left** and follow a grassy path through the water meadows for 325m, parallel to Dagley Lane in the belt of trees on

your left. Eventually you meet another path coming up from the right (the outward route from Guildford) and veer left onto it. At the top of the slope go out through a gap in the hedge and turn right, briefly rejoining Dagley Lane.

[•] Immediately after the exit from the meadow **turn left** off the track onto a fenced path, signposted as a footpath. At the end of this short path keep ahead on a cul-de-sac (Dagden Road). Where this turns sharply left **turn right** onto a signposted footpath. Follow this enclosed path between houses, later with Shalford Cemetery on your right. At the end go down steps to come back out onto the A281.

**Cross this busy road with great care** and turn right into Station Row. You come to the **Queen Victoria** pub on your left, a refreshment stop if you have time before the next train. At the end of this short road turn left onto a tarmac path sloping down to Platform 1 of Shalford station. For trains to Guildford, cross the footbridge to Platform 2.

## 12. St Martha's Church to Chilworth Station (1½ km)

From the church go straight downhill, leaving the churchyard through a gate at the bottom between two shaped yew trees. Follow a broad sandy path down past a covered reservoir and keep ahead at a crossing with a bridleway (the easier route mentioned earlier). The path continues steeply downhill through woodland before coming out into a more open area where you can see **Chilworth Manor**<sup>20</sup> and its gardens down to your right.

After passing the house you come to a crosspaths in front of a fenced field (sometimes containing a few alpacas), with **Chilworth Manor Vineyard** ahead on the left. Keep ahead on a permissive footpath signposted to Chilworth Village and the Gunpowder Mills. At the end of the field go down a few steps and follow the path through the site as it zig-zags around waterways, heading roughly **SE**. The path narrows and becomes slightly awkward before going up a short incline where you **turn left** onto the main path through the site.

*For the next 150m you retrace your outward route if you started from Guildford or Shalford. The final 500m is the reverse of the outward route from Chilworth station.*

Where you can see a few picnic tables up ahead in a clearing, **turn right** off the main path and go over a backwater on a footbridge (the small swing bridge with iron rails on the left is a relic of the site's tramway). Leave the site on an enclosed tree-lined footpath heading **SW**, initially between meadows and later passing an infant school.

The path comes out onto the A248 where you turn left, passing the school entrance. In 150m you come to the **Percy Arms** on your left, a refreshment stop if you have time before the next train. The station is just across the main road but for trains to Guildford you will need to go over the level crossing as there is no footbridge between the platforms: the barrier may come down for a train in either direction so **be sure to leave enough time** before the train is due.

## Walk Notes

1. Edwin Russell's **sculpture** at Millmead shows Alice (with her sister) being distracted by the White Rabbit rushing past at the start of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. The author **Lewis Carroll** (real name Charles Lutwidge Dodgson) leased a house in Guildford for his six unmarried sisters after their father's death in 1868, and wrote the second of his *Alice* stories while staying there. This is one of several sculptures commemorating his links with the town.
2. The **River Wey Navigation** runs for 32 km from the River Thames at Weybridge to Godalming, linking with the Basingstoke Canal and the Wey & Arun Canal. It was one of the first rivers in England to be made navigable, with the first sections being completed in the mid-17<sup>th</sup>C.
3. **Shalford Water Meadows** (and Shalford Park) were part of a large estate which became neglected after the owner went bankrupt in 1898. Shalford House was later demolished to make way for a water treatment works. The water meadows began to revert to woodland after farming ceased, but are now being sensitively managed to restore a rich environment of reedbeds and wildflower meadows.
4. **St Catherine's Chapel** was built in the early 14<sup>th</sup>C as a 'chapel of ease' for parishioners living some distance away from Guildford's main parish church. It was abandoned at the end of the Middle Ages.
5. The **footbridge** (on the route of the **North Downs Way** and **Pilgrims' Way**) was built in 1983 to replace a ferry crossing, near the site of an ancient ford. The colour of the sand spilling down from St Catherine's Hill at this 'golden ford' may be the origin of the name 'Guildford'.
6. 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.
7. The **Chilworth Gunpowder Mills** were established in 1626 and manufactured this "damnable invention" (according to William Cobbett in 1822) for nearly three hundred years. This extensive site was one of the most important production centres in Britain during this time, employing 600 people at its peak.
8. Saltpetre, charcoal and sulphur were mixed together in the **Incorporating Mills**, a highly dangerous procedure. There were several fatal explosions over the years, with a huge one in 1760 killing several workers and severely weakening the old St Martha's church on the hill above.
9. **Law Brook** is a tributary of the River Tillingbourne. Some of its old watercress beds around Ford Farm are now used for fish farming.
10. The oak wood **sculpture** *An Image of Albury* by Friedel Buecking celebrates "sixty consecutive years of the Albury Show".
11. The 'old' **Ss Peter and Paul, Albury** dates from Saxon times but has been considerably altered; the tower was extended in the 12<sup>th</sup>C and the chancel, transept and south aisle added later. There is a 15<sup>th</sup>C wall painting of St Christopher. After Henry Drummond acquired the estate its spire was replaced by a cupola and the south transept converted into a mortuary chapel, designed by Pugin. The church was closed for 80 years but reopened in 1921 for occasional services; it is now maintained by the Churches Conservation Trust.



12. The **Catholic Apostolic Church** was the name given to a new religious movement inspired by the teachings of a charismatic Scottish preacher, Edward Irving. Henry Drummond had been one of its founder members and in 1839 built a neo-gothic church for it on his Albury Park estate. He also wrote numerous publications in support of its doctrines which were rather uncharitably described as “clear and vigorous, if seldom convincing”.
13. **Silent Pool** is fed by underground springs nearby, making its still waters exceptionally clear. The place is said to be haunted by the ghost of a woodcutter's daughter, the legend being that she drowned while trying to escape the ungallant attentions of the future King John.
14. The **North Downs Way** runs for 246 km along the length of the North Downs (with two sections at its eastern end), from Farnham in Surrey to Dover in Kent.
15. **Inosculation** is a natural phenomenon similar to grafting. Where branches or trunks with a thin layer of bark touch, the outer layer may be gradually abraded away and the trees end up growing together. This occurrence – two mature trees more than 10 metres apart – is highly unusual and may have been aided by landscape gardeners many years ago.
16. **Newlands Corner** was the scene of a mystery in 1926 when **Agatha Christie's** car was found abandoned in a pit near the viewpoint. After a nationwide search the crime novelist was discovered eleven days later, staying incognito in a Harrogate hotel. She never explained her action but may have been trying to sabotage her husband's affair with a mistress.
17. The village of **Albury** was originally a mile further east, but from the late 18<sup>th</sup>C the owners of Albury Park began harassing the villagers into moving to the neighbouring hamlet of Weston Street. The old church was closed and a ‘new’ **Ss Peter and Paul** built for the parishioners.
18. **St Martha-on-the-Hill** dates from 1850, an earlier church having eventually collapsed as a result of explosions in the Gunpowder Mills below. Its prominent position on the **Pilgrims' Way** suggests that it may have been sited as a beacon for travellers, although it is not an authentic pilgrimage route.
19. The 18<sup>th</sup>C **Shalford Mill** was one of several flour mills on the Tillingbourne. It closed in 1914 but was saved from demolition and is now managed by the National Trust. Much of its machinery survives but is not in working order.
20. **Chilworth Manor** was built on the site of a former monastery, with the current house dating from the late 17<sup>th</sup>C. In 1725 it was acquired by Sarah, widow of the Duke of Marlborough, who developed the tiered “Duchess's Garden” cut into the hillside. The garden is open to the public on a few days each year.

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