

Haslemere to Farnham		
1 st walk check	2 nd walk check	3 rd walk check
25 th February 2017	09 th March 2022	
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Haslemere to Farnham

Start: Haslemere Station

Finish: Farnham Station

Haslemere Station, map reference SU 897 329, is 62 km south west of Charing Cross, 139m above sea level. Farnham Station, map reference SU 844 465, is 15 km north north west of Haslemere and 76m above sea level. Both towns are in **Surrey**.

Length: 23.6 km (14.7 mi), of which 6.1 km (3.8 mi) on tarmac or concrete.

Cumulative ascent/descent: 433/496m.

For a different route up to Gibbet Hill, and options to shorten or to lengthen, *see below* **Walk Options**.

Toughness: 6 out of 10

Time: 5 hours 15 minutes walking time.

For the whole outing, including trains, sights and meals, allow at least 8 ½ hours.

Transport: Haslemere station is on the Portsmouth Direct Line from London Waterloo to Portsmouth Harbour, with up to four trains an hour Mon-Sat (two on Sundays). Journey time is from 50 minutes Mon-Sat (longer on Sundays). Farnham is a stop on the Alton line from Woking via Aldershot, with a half-hourly service (journey time from 54 mins Mon-Sat and from 64 mins Sun, both if changing at Woking). Buy a Haslemere return, you then may have to buy a separate Farnham to Woking single.

Saturday Walkers' Club: Take the train closest to 9.00 hours.

OS Explorer Map: OL33 (Haslemere & Petersfield) and 145 (Guildford & Farnham)

OS Landranger Map: 186 (Aldershot & Guildford)

Walk Notes:

The route leads out of Haslemere in a northerly direction along the quietest and shortest possible route to ascend through Coombswell Copse and along the wooded Invall ridge up to Hurt Hill and the Temple of the Four Winds, the ruin of an early 20th century belvedere, and one of several viewpoints with striking vistas. Turn westerly up to Gibbet Hill (the second highest point in Surrey), with more far reaching views, out to the North Downs and London, as well as back to Black Down and to the South Downs. Skirt around the Devil's Punchbowl along the course of the old A3 and descend into the remote Highcomb Bottom, a stunning sandy heathland valley to re-join the Greensand Way to Thursley. Thursley Common (a NNR) is one of the largest heathlands as well as one of the last lowland peat bogs in southern Britain and an optional extension gives you prolonged exposure to it. Next up is Hankley Common, another large heathland, and mostly MOD terrain, for an exploration of a D-Day training site with a replica section of The Atlantic Wall and assorted other defensive structures. On to the picturesque village of Tilford with its pub and cricket pitch on the green, followed by quiet woodland paths and lanes along the River Wey's North Branch into Farnham, with an optional extension to Waverley Abbey's ruins along the way.

Note: Before embarking on this walk, please read below section on Managed Access on Hankley Common.

Managed Access on Hankley Common

The current status of access rights on the MOD land of Hankley Common should be checked at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/public-access-to-military-areas#contents> [under 'Locations in South East England – Hankley and Elstead Commons']. *At time of writing the relevant rules are as follows:* "The training area is used for logistics and minor infantry manoeuvre exercises."

"Public access is permitted along public rights of way across both Commons at all times. This includes two walks across the open heathland of Elstead and Royal Commons. In addition open access on foot is available in those areas delineated by the managed access symbol on Ordnance Survey Explorer maps. When walking in the training area you are requested not to interrupt military training and to observe the Byelaws." *The walk directions remind you of these rules whenever the route leaves public rights of way.*

Walk Options:

An alternative ascent route to Gibbet Hill via Hindhead Common (with an option for a diversion via the Devil's Punchbowl Café or Hotel for Eleveses) cuts 450m and 104m ascent/descent.

To shorten the walk:

- **Bus 19** (Haslemere to Aldershot, hourly Mon-Sat) **to Hindhead** cuts 4.5 km and 150m ascent;
- The byway on top of the ridge above **Highcomb Bottom** cuts 660m and 36m ascent;
- A shortcut on **Thursley Common** cuts 800m;
- **Bus 46** (Guildford to Farnham, roughly hourly Mon-Sat) **from Waverley Abbey** cuts the last 4 km.

To lengthen the walk:

- A slightly longer route within **Invall (wood)** leads over the (wooded) top of **Hurt Hill**;
- An extension in **Highcomb Bottom** adds 530m and 20m ascent;
- A loop, or just a short out-and-back in **Thursley Common** heathland, add either 750m or 1.7 km;
- An extension within that loop, around **Pudmore Pond** and through **Thursley Bog**, adds 1.5 km;
- An out-and-back to the fascinating **Atlantic Wall** remnants adds 0.8 km;
- An out-and-back to the picturesque **Waverley Abbey ruins** adds 1.5 km.

A Haslemere Circular Walk is possible by following the main walk to Thursley for lunch (or just to Gibbet Hill) and reverse-walking (map-led) the alternative start via Hindhead Common (for a tea stop include the diversion to the Punchbowl Café), or vice versa.

Eleveses/Lunch (details last updated 10/03/2022)

The Devil's Punchbowl Café London Road, Hindhead, Surrey GU26 6AB (01428 681 050, <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/hindhead-commons-and-the-devils-punch-bowl>). The Devil's Punchbowl Café is located 4.5 km (2.8 mi) into the walk, if following the alternative ascent route and the diversion to the café, hotel and viewpoint. Open 10.00-16.00 Nov-Mar and 10.00-17.00 April-Oct.

The Devil's Punchbowl Hotel 52 London Road, Hindhead, Surrey GU26 6AG (01428 606 565, <http://www.devilspunchbowlhotel.co.uk/>). The Devil's Punchbowl Hotel is located 4.5 km (2.8 mi) into the walk, if following the alternative ascent route and the diversion to the café, hotel and viewpoint.

The Three Horseshoes Dyehouse Road, Thursley, Surrey GU8 6QD (01252 703 268, <http://www.threehorseshoesthursley.com/>). The Three Horseshoes is located 10.5 km (6.5 mi) into the walk. Open Wed-Sun 12.00-15.00 and 17.00-23.00. Food served 12.00-14.00 and 18.00-21.00 Wed-Sat (-14.30 Sat) and 12.00-14.30 Sun.

The Duke of Cambridge Tilford Road, Tilford Common, Farnham, Surrey GU10 2DD (01252 792 236, <http://www.dukeofcambridgetilford.co.uk/>). The Duke of Cambridge is located 15.5 km (9.6 mi) into the walk. Open all day every day. Food served 12.00-15.00 and 17.30-21.00 Mon-Thu, 12.00-21.00 Fri-Sat and 12.00-20.30 Sun.

The Barley Mow Tilford Green, Tilford, Farnham, Surrey GU10 2BU (01252 792 205, <http://www.thebarleymowtilford.com/>). The Barley Mow is located 17.1 km (10.7 mi) into the walk. Open 11.00-22.00 daily. Food served 12.00-15.00 Tue-Sun and 18.00-20.15 Wed-Sat. Pizza available Wed-Sat 12.00-19.00 (-17.00 Sun). A quintessential English Country Pub with a large riverside garden with views.

Tea (details last updated 17/09/2018)

Tilford Village Shop & Café Tilford Street, Tilford, Farnham, Surrey GU10 2BL (01252 792 258, <https://tilfordvillagecafe.com/>). The Village Shop & Café is located 6.3 km (3.9 mi) from the end of the walk. Open 08.00-17.00 daily, it serves hot and cold drinks, cakes, sandwiches and snacks.

The Mulberry Station Hill, Farnham, Surrey GU9 8AD (01252 726 673, <http://www.mulberryfarnham.co.uk/>). Open all day every day.

The Lamb Abbey Street, Farnham, Surrey GU9 7RJ (01252 714 133, <http://www.lambfarnham.co.uk/>). Open all day every day. A Shepherd Neame pub.

The William Cobbet Bridge Square, Farnham, Surrey GU9 7QR (01252 726 281). Open all day every day.

Notes:

Haslemere

Haslemere is a town first mentioned in 1221 (as a Godalming tithing) and named after Hazel trees standing beside a mere (lake) which no longer exists. The most southerly town in Surrey, it sits at the tripoint with West Sussex and Hampshire. The south branch of the River Wey rises just to the south, on Black Down.

Greensand Way

The Greensand Way is a 174 km (108 mi) waymarked Long Distance Path through Surrey and Kent, from Haslemere to Ham Street, running broadly parallel to and south of the North Downs ridge. It follows the ridge of greensand rock, to the edges of Romney Marsh and almost to the Kent coast. The Greensand Way takes its name from layers of sandstone, in each of which is found the green coloured mineral glauconite.

Hindhead Common/The Devil's Punchbowl

Hindhead Common (incl. the Devil's Punchbowl) was one of the first areas acquired by the National Trust, covers 650 ha (ca. 1600 acres) of heath and woodland and is an exceptional site for heathland restoration. Rare lowland heath and semi-natural woodland cover most of the property together with a small area of wetland and fields of acid grassland. These habitats support many forms of wildlife. A sandstone ridge at the centre of the property runs from Hindhead village in the West to Gibbet Hill in the east.

To the north of the ridge lies the steep-sided Devil's Punchbowl, a large natural amphitheatre, the result of erosion caused by spring water beneath the upper layer of sandstone, causing the upper level to collapse. It is the largest spring-formed feature in Britain, and parts of it are gradually being restored to lowland heath. The name dates from at least 1768, the year that John Rocque's map of the area was published.

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/hindhead-commons-and-the-devils-punch-bowl>

ROAM639

The trail name ROAM 639 is derived from the initials of Richard Overall, a local young man who died from muscular dystrophy and the shared initials of his friend's two sons, Alfie and Arthur Marchant, whose lives are also affected by this condition. The number 639 represents the number of muscles that comprise the human body and also indicates the distance of the loop (6.39 mi, 10.28 km).

The route follows established trails in and around the Devil's Punchbowl and Hindhead Common.

The Temple of the Four Winds

On a remote hill top at Hurt Hill are the remains of a grand old hunting lodge or belvedere, built around 1910 by Viscount Pirrie, a leading Irish shipbuilder and businessman. The lodge gradually fell into disrepair and was vandalised in 1959. By 1966 it had become a hazard and had to be dismantled. Now only the stone base remains.

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/hindhead-commons-and-the-devils-punch-bowl/features/temple-of-the-four-winds-at-hindhead-commons>

Gibbet Hill/Celtic Cross

Gibbet Hill, is the apex of the scarp surrounding the Devil's Punchbowl, stands 272 metres above sea level and is the second highest point in Surrey after Leith Hill. It commands a panoramic view, especially to the north and east (on a clear day it is possible to see the tallest buildings in London). The view to the north overlooks the Devil's Punchbowl, Thursley, Hankley Common, Crooksbury Hill, and the Hog's Back towards Godalming and Guildford. To the east lies the Sussex Weald. To the south, the hills of Haslemere and Black Down can be seen, with some sections of the South Downs.

The area was one of disrepute due to the activities of highwaymen and robbers, the corpses of three of whom were formerly displayed there on a gibbet as punishment for their crimes. In 1851 Sir William Erle paid for the erection of a granite Celtic Cross on Gibbet Hill on the site of the scaffold. He did this to dispel the fears and superstitions of local people and to raise their spirits. The four Latin inscriptions around its base translate to "Light after darkness. Peace in passing away. Hope in light. Salvation after death."

Thursley/Thursley National Nature Reserve

The village dates back to Anglo Saxon times, and its name (from Old English) means Thor's field (Thor being the Norse god, and lea meaning field). Sir Edwin Lutyens, architect, grew up in the village where some of his earliest work is to be found, as did the children's novelist Monica Edwards, who wrote the Punch Bowl Farm series at the eponymous farm (just off-route).

Thursley National Nature Reserve (NNR) includes areas of lowland heath, mire and woodland and it is one of the last surviving areas of lowland peat bog in southern Britain, and - at 350 hectares - one of the largest remaining fragments of heathland. It is owned and managed by Natural England. The vegetation of Thursley Common reflects the underlying geology, with large areas of heather-dominated dry heath, along with scrub and pine woodland, to be found on the free draining sandy soils. As the geology changes and drainage is impeded, the dry heath gives way to wet heath and valley mire. This mosaic of wet habitats is considered the finest example of its type in southern England, featuring bog pools, sphagnum lawns and tracts of cross-leaved heath (a type of heather). Thursley Common enjoys the highest levels of statutory protection.

The Atlantic Wall

During World War II, D-Day training sites were created in Britain in order to practise for Operation Overlord, the invasion of northern France by the Allies in 1944.

In 1943, in an area of Hankley Common known as the Lion's Mouth, Canadian troops constructed a replica of a section of the Atlantic Wall from reinforced concrete. It is around 100m long, 3m high, and 3.5m wide. It is divided into two sections, between which there were originally huge steel gates.

Nearby are other obstacles (mostly types of tank traps) such as dragon's teeth, huge reinforced concrete blocks and lengths of railway track set in concrete, and wire entanglements. The main wall has two large breaches caused by a variety of demolition devices. Over the years, the wall has become colonised by alkaline-loving lichens, mosses, ferns and other plants which are found nowhere else locally.

<http://www.shepherd.plus.com/atlanticwall/>

The River Wey

The River Wey is very unusual in that it has several sources feeding two separate rivers that share the same name. The northern branch rises near Alton in Hampshire, while the south branch has two sources: one rises just over the West Sussex border on the western flank of Blackdown near Haslemere, the other at Inval, below Gibbet Hill, Hindhead. Both arms of the river join south of Farnham at Tilford in Surrey. From there the Wey as a single river flows east to Godalming and then northwards towards the Thames.

The name 'Wey' may be derived from the Old English word *Éa* meaning "river".

The main sub-tributary is the Tilling Bourne flowing from the slopes of Leith Hill.

Waverley Abbey

Waverley Abbey in Surrey was the first monastery founded in Britain by the reforming Cistercian religious order. A small group of monks from France settled in this quiet spot by the River Wey in 1128, and Waverley soon became the springboard for Cistercian settlement in southern England. The abbey is situated on a floodplain, surrounded by current and previous channels of the river. It was damaged on more than one occasion by severe flooding, resulting in rebuilding in the 13th century. The impressive remains include the fine vaulted refectory or dining hall for the lay brothers, the Cistercians' labour force. More recently, it has been used as a backdrop to the films 'Elizabeth' (1998) and Disney's 'Into the Woods' (2014).

Waverley Abbey House

The house was built in 1723 in the northern portion of the former abbey precinct by Sir John Aislabie, former Chancellor of the Exchequer, partly from reused stones from the abbey ruins. It, the ruins of the abbey and the surrounding land are all part of a conservation area. It is now separated from the ruins by an artificial lake. The house is a Grade II* listed building and the ruins are a Scheduled Ancient Monument. In 1983 it was purchased (and subsequently restored) by the Christian not-for-profit organisation CWR for use as a training and conference centre. <https://www.waverleyabbeytrust.org/>

Moor Park/Moor Park Heritage Trail

Formerly known as Compton Hall, the house has stood on the site by the River Wey in the hamlet of Compton near Farnham since 1307. It was bought and remodelled by its most notable owner, diplomat and essayist Sir William Temple in the 1680s. He renamed it Moor Park after the Hertfordshire mansion he had previously owned, which also inspired the magnificent five acres of formal gardens he laid out between the house and the river. Temple employed Jonathan Swift as his secretary who wrote there *A Tale of a Tub* and *The Battle of the Books*.

During the 19th century it was leased to Dr Edward Lane and became a very popular hydrotherapy spa, with some distinguished patrons, including Charles Darwin.

In 1897 the then owner closed and chained the gates to the public so as to "not allow any person to enter without written authority". The Moor Park 'battle' on 17 January was therefore an early fight for rights-of-way, when a large crowd of over 100 local men and women armed with sticks and other implements gathered to cheer the council's men as they forced open the gates with crowbars.

The house is now refurbished and converted into luxury flats.

Sailor's Stone

The Sailor's Stone was erected by James Stillwell of nearby Cosford Mill soon after a murder close to this site on 24 September 1786 on what was then the Old Coaching Road from London to Portsmouth. The murdered was an anonymous seafarer, first recorded as visiting the Red Lion Inn at Thursley as he was walking back from London to join his ship at Portsmouth. There he met three other seafarers, James Marshall, Michael Casey and Edward Lonegon. He generously paid for their drinks and food and was last seen leaving for Hindhead Hill with them. The three seafarers murdered him and stripped him of his clothes. They then made their way down the London to Portsmouth road and were arrested a few hours later trying to sell the murdered sailor's clothes at the Sun Inn in Rake. The following year his murderers were hanged in chains (this variant of gibbeting involved the condemned being placed alive in a metal cage and left to die of thirst) on a triple gibbet nearby on what has since been known as Gibbet Hill. The unknown sailor was buried in Thursley churchyard, and the memorial stone is now a Grade I listed structure.

WALK DIRECTIONS

Alight from the train in **Haslemere** on platform 1 and leave through the ticket office or to the left of it, *turn right* and follow the driveway past the South Downs National Park **Tourist Information Office** down to a main road 60m away, where you *turn right* along its pavement. In 180m walk under the railway line and immediately afterwards **Weydown Road** turns right off the main road.

Here you have a choice:

For the alternative start up to Hindhead Common and to the Devil's Punchbowl, *cross the road and continue in the same direction* along a signposted tarmac footpath through a grassy strip with a brook on your left and a large car park to the right. Pick up the directions at the end of this text under **Alternative Start via Hindhead Common**.

For the main walk you *turn right* up **Weydown Road's** pavement. In 900m the **Greensand Way** crosses the road right-to-left and views open up into the **Coombswell Valley**. In another 200m *turn left* along **Inval Hill** at a four-way junction (Pine View Close ahead, High Lane on the right), with a pavement on the left-hand side. In 30m **[!]** *turn left* into a wood (**Weydown Common**) along a signposted footpath, which in 40m starts a steep descent (ignore a faint right fork). In 120m go through some horse barriers at the bottom of the wood and *turn right* along **Bunch Lane**. In 150m, where Inval Hill (road) joins down from the hill on the right, you *turn left* along a tarmac driveway with a footpath signpost on the left and a large pond on the right. You walk gently uphill initially, but in 125m, after clearing some houses, the gradient gets steeper. In 200m, by the very last house on the left, the path levels out and continues an earthen path past a high footpath marker post.

In 30m you *turn right* with a footpath signpost between trees (**Coombswell Copse** on the OS map). In 140m ignore a stile on the right into a field corner (with a 'No Public Right of Way'-sign) and have remnants of a long **metal fence line** a little on the left. In 350m pass a fence corner on the left by a footpath marker post and a private path coming down from the right, just before your path starts a gentle descent (now with a barbed wire fence on the left). In 200m (now in **Inval Wood**), at a four-way junction by a signpost on the left and with markers on a tree stump ahead, **[!]** *turn right* steeply up a bridleway (110°). The path levels out in about 200m, where it *turns left* (15m before a high wire fence corner). In 15m you cross a car wide bridleway by a marker post and continue in the same direction along a narrower permissive bridleway (80°).

In 140m, at a crosspaths with a marker post, you:

- **either** *turn left* with a public bridleway and walk uphill with it (10°) and continue with the next paragraph;
- **or** – for a slightly more ambitious route – continue in the same direction (60°) with a permissive bridleway, in 70m *fork left* along a narrow path and in 520m (having ignored all paths off) reach the wooded top of **Hurt Hill**, with a bench off to the right and some grand views to the south east. In 80m continue in the same direction along a permissive bridleway at a four-way junction. Pick up the directions halfway down the next paragraph: "In 140m continue...".

In 125m the path briefly levels out at another crosspaths, as you continue in the same direction along a the flank of a clear ridge gently descending, with occasional views on the left into **Coombeswell Valley** and across it to the opposing ridge: **Hindhead**.

In 500m you reach a four-way junction with a marker post, with the path on the right being the more ambitious route over the top of **Hurt Hill**, and another path continuing in the same direction. **[!]** *Fork left* along a permissive bridleway with a National Trust marker. In 140m continue in the same direction where a track descends left by an info

panel, with permissive bridleway, **Hidden Hindhead Trail** and **ROAM639** markers. In 60m you reach an octagonal concrete base on a ridge, which looks like an elaborate viewpoint, but is in fact what's left of **The Temple of the Four Winds**: its plinth.

The views ahead are to the North Downs and London (on a clear day) and to the Weald. *Turn left* along a bridleway along a ridge, in 100m with fine views on the left into the valley walked up along (ignore a left turning permissive footpath to continue along the ridge). In 60m ignore a car wide track downhill on the left. In 200m you continue in the same direction along a bridleway joining from below on the right. In 160m you walk to the left of a green metal barrier and emerge at a six-way junction (**Six Ways**) by a byway marker post on the left (at first sight this is just a five-way junction, but the path on the left splits into two just 10m away).

There are now **two ways to the top of Gibbet Hill**:

- **steep and direct** – take the left forking permissive footpath (NT) opposite (295°) and in 160m emerge on the plateaued top by a bench and a trigpoint;
- **not so steep but longer** – take the right forking path opposite (330°), signed as a permissive bridleway (NT), in 240m *turn left* uphill at a four-way junction of paths (with a tarmac track visible 40m ahead through trees) and in 50m emerge from the trees with a Celtic Cross on the right and *turn left* towards the trigpoint.

*) From **Gibbet Hill**'s trigpoint (with its toposcope) you have splendid views north to the **North Downs** and **London** (on a clear day) and to the **Weald** and **Leith Hill**, and from a sculpted bench 30m away to the left (see surreyhills.org/artworks/ for details), also good views of **Black Down** and of the **South Downs**. Walk from the trigpoint to the **Celtic Cross** 50m away (an info panel explains the history of it and of Gibbet Hill), but continue the walk by *veering right before* the Celtic Cross along a clear path past the info panel with a **Greensand Way** marker post. In 80m *turn left* at a four-way junction, ignoring the yellow-marked NT-path ahead. You walk past some concrete barriers and in 40m past a green metal barrier and through a metal gate to then cross a tarmac lane byway and descend steeply along a clear path (**not a marked right-of-way**, but this is **Access Land**) from the top of the **Devil's Punchbowl** to join the **old course of the A3** at a lower level in 70m, and *turn right* along it to skirt around the bowl. In 600m you reach a T-junction with a track with a new fence cutting across the junction, and a metal gate in the fence. Go through the metal gate.

Here you have a choice:

For the shortest and least strenuous onward route (cuts 660m and 36m ascent) *veer up right* to in 30m join the tarmac track crossed just a while ago and pick up the directions at the end of this text under **Highcomb Bottom Shortcut**.

For the main walk, *turn left* and in 150m ignore a metal gate and wooden field gate on the left to *turn left* just afterwards at a T-junction with a tarmac lane (a byway). In 110m the lane turns right and in 135m a footpath joins from the left. In 60m ignore a drive to **Highcombe Farm** on the left and continue in the same direction. In 100m *turn down to the right* at a three-way junction of tarmac tracks and in 80m pass the very scenic (in its remoteness) **Gnome Cottage** on the right. You continue along gravel and in 70m ignore the drive-way turning right to the cottage and walk straight through a wooden gate to the left of a cattle grid into an open area: **Highcomb Bottom**, a very pretty and quiet heathland valley, with a stream running along its bottom, and also **Access Land**. In 15m a permissive footpath turns up to the right.

Here you have a choice:

For an extended route through the valley, looping down to the valley bottom and then curving round to the right up to the hill ahead (adds 530m and 20m ascent), continue in the same direction along the car wide sandy track byway past a bench on the right (these tracks were cobbled in WWII for bike and tank manoeuvres), and pick up the directions at the end of this text under **Highcomb Bottom Extension**.

For the main walk, including a splendid viewpoint overlooking the valley, *turn right* uphill along a permissive footpath, in 90m ignore a right turning track, in 80m *fork either way*, as in another 250m the two paths re-join just before a four-way junction of paths near the top of the rise, 30m before a fence corner ahead. *Turn left* with the valley on your left and in 80m you reach a splendid viewpoint on the left, on a promontory atop the valley. You *fork right* from the previous direction through bracken and gorse to gently descend to a crosspaths in 300m (with markers on a tree stump on the right). The track opposite is the Highcomb Bottom Extension. *Turn right*.

****)** In 160m you pass some pretty, open glades on both sides of the tree-lined track and ignore a left forking car wide track just after. In 60m **[!]** *turn left* at a byway crosspaths (signposted 'Thursley via GSW 1¾m'). The track from the right (the Greensand Way again) is the Highcomb Bottom Shortcut.

*****)** In 90m walk through a wooden gate to the left of a cattle grid and in 30m ignore a byway joining from the right (by a 'Devil's Punchbowl National Trust'-sign) to continue in the same direction along a sunken track between earth banks and trees. In 600m you pass **Upper Highfield Farmhouse** on your right and in 30m pass a four-way signpost at a junction to continue in the same direction with the GW along tarmac. In 300m, where the lane turns right, ignore a signposted left turning footpath, but 30m further on, **[!]** *turn left* with the **Greensand Way** along another signposted footpath by **Hedge Farm**, initially along their gravel driveway. In 20m continue in the same direction to the right of the driveway and follow a path between a hedge and a fence left and right around a field boundary (with splendid North Downs views), then in 350m left and right again, to in another 80m continue along a tarmac lane by **Haybarn** (house) on the left. In another 130m by **Smallbrook Barn** on the left, ignore the right turning Greensand Way (up along a concrete ramp) to continue in the same direction along the tarmac lane, soon with a stream below on the left (**Small Brook**) in a lightly wooded valley.

In 300m ignore a signposted footpath turning left through a fence gap (a missing stile), then in 50m notice the **cascading waterfall on the left in the grounds of Dye House**, and in 60m *turn right* uphill at a T-junction with a tarmac lane (Dyehouse Road). In 80m *continue in the same direction* off the tarmac lane where it turns up to the left, and **[!]** *turn right* immediately along a signposted footpath (140°), ignoring the unmarked path up ahead. The path ascends initially (ignore a left turn in 45m where it levels out), then drops before contouring left around a hillock, with a wooded valley below on the right. In 200m continue in the same direction along a tarmac lane (**The Lane**) up into **Thursley** village to in 130m pass a couple of buildings on each side, both listed '**Buildings of Special Interest**', as evidenced by plaques on their walls (near the door on the left, on the rear side wall in the case of The Olde Hall on the right). In another 50m you reach the village green at a T-junction with **The Street**, running along this side of the green. **Dyehouse Road** – on the left – continues further up into the village. 180m along it is the recommended early lunch stop **The Three Horseshoes**.

Here you have a choice:

For a shorter route (cuts 800m, but **misses out on** a beautiful stretch through the **Thursley Common National Nature Reserve**), *turn left* along **The Street** and pick up the directions at the end of this text under **Thursley Common Shortcut**.

For the recommended route (through the core of **Thursley Common National Nature Reserve**), cross The Street and the triangular green behind it diagonally to continue up along **Dyehouse Road's** left hand pavement. In 40m, by **Veian Cottage**, *turn left* along a car wide driveway (a signposted bridleway). In 60m you pass an info panel and enter **Thursley Common National Nature Reserve**. In 65m ignore a wooden gate on the right into a field and in 60m continue in the same direction at a bridleway crosspaths up into open heathland. The path levels out in 60m with fine views again of the North Downs ahead. Ignore paths to the left and right and in 150m ignore a bridleway joining from the right. In another 150m the path curves to the right and starts a gentle descent and in 140m, by a fenced field corner on the right, you ignore a right turning bridleway to continue in the same direction along a broad sandy track.

In 370m, at a four-way junction of car wide sandy tracks, you have a choice:

For a thoroughly recommended extension, either just a **short out-and-back to a viewpoint**, or a **longer loop**, continue in the same direction and pick up the directions at the end of this text under **Thursley Common Extension**.

****) **For the main walk** *turn left* along a bridleway and in 450m continue in the same direction at a crosstracks. In 70m another bridleway joins from the right, in 50m you **leave Thursley Common National Nature Reserve** by a panel on the right and in 20m walk to the side of a metal field gate to continue along a car wide track (curving right in 30m). In 80m you reach **Thursley Road** at a T-junction in a bend. The shortcut joins just before it from the left behind.

*****) Cross **Thursley Road** and *turn left* along its opposite side and in 80m where the road turns left, you *continue in the same direction* along a tarmac lane (a sign-posted bridleway, with **Truxford Cottage** on the right), soon passing a selection of **MOD Warning/Danger!-signs**. In 350m continue in the same direction at a crossing with another bridleway (**Houndown Bottom/Woolfords Lane** on the OS map). [You can avoid the next 600m of tarmac by using parallel sandy paths through the heath on the right, but *they are on MOD Managed Access Land, and you have to check that they are good to use on the day and follow any orders if encountering soldiers.*]

In 300m, by a large car park on the left, pass a car barrier to continue in the same direction along the lane, which gently descends while curving left and in 280m, where a broad track joins from the right and the tarmac lane turns left, you continue in the same direction (a little to the left) with a marker post along a car wide sandy track. The track ascends a rise and in 270m you continue in the same direction at a crosspaths to pass a bridleway marker post in 20m and in another 30m, where the track levels out, you come to a staggered six-way junction (**Lion's Mouth**, so called because that's what it looks like from the air). SWC Walk 184 Bentley to Farnham crosses left-to-right.

For a short out-and-back exploration of The Atlantic Wall and associated defensive structures, continue in the same direction across the junction along a car wide sandy track bridleway [*this is MOD Managed Access Land, and you have to check that the tracks are good to use on the day and follow any orders if encountering soldiers*] and in 40m *fork left* off it to reach the corner of the wall in 20m. Continue along it (identifiable on the OS map as an interrupted linear structure) past a few breaches (there is a short explanatory plaque on the wall) to the end of the wall and veer *left* a little to pass some cubic steel structure in 20m and in 25m (by a dead tree with some beautiful bracket fungi) *bear left* to in 35m reach a line of concrete stumps on the right ('Dragon's Teeth'). There are many more scattered concrete structures amongst the trees (squares, cubes and blocks), all are types of tank traps, but eventually return to the wall and walk back along it to the other end (there are more concrete structures

about 50m on the right here) to *turn left* at the end of the wall and re-gain the sandy track and *turn right* back to the Lion's Mouth junction.

Else, *turn right* briefly towards a steep sandy path up a hillock and in 20m *turn left* (310°) with the Greensand Way and a bridleway marker on the left on a numbered post ('101') (**recommended**: first walk up the steep path through some bollards to a plateaued ridge for (near-) **surround views over the heathland** [*this is MOD Managed Access Land, and you have to check that the path is good to use on the day and follow any orders if encountering soldiers*]). In 50m you get views on the left of **The Atlantic Wall** and in 140m leave the MOD territory (marked by an 'OUT OF BOUNDS TO TROOPS'-sign) by a four-way junction of paths and continue in the same direction through **Hankley Common Golf Club** (still through heathland, so quite scenic).

In 400m continue in the same direction at a bridleway crosspaths by a corner of a wood on the left and in 100m *continue in the same direction* with a marker post where the car wide track veers right. You cross a track and a fairway (! played from the left, with the tee off to the left, so watch out for golf balls!) and soon have views of the club-house on the half right. You eventually enter trees, and in 130m continue along a car wide drive joining from the left. In 140m you emerge at a tarmac lane cross with the car park and clubhouse of the golf club on the right and a holiday park on the left. The second left tarmac lane takes you in 90m to one of the recommended late lunch stops, **The Duke of Cambridge**. Else *turn right* through the car park to the left of the clubhouse, and to the right of some other buildings and in 80m continue in the same direction along a gravel car wide track past a bridleway marker post, with a tall hedge on the left.

You soon have trees on the left and a fairway on the right and in 500m – by a tee on the left behind (watch out for golf balls), a green on the right, and with **Stockbridge Pond** on the left – you *veer left* with a marker post by a redundant metal gate, while the car wide track turns right around the green. In 100m you *turn left* at a T-junction with a car wide gravel byway. You have the pond on the left, and then a wood, and fields on the right and in 550m reach **Stockbridge car park**, just before a T-junction with the busy **Tilford Road**. *Turn right* past a metal field gate along a permissive footpath *this side of the roadside hedge* (there is also a tarmac pavement along the busy road) with a barbed wire fence on the right. In 200m you have a war memorial and **All Saints' Church** on the opposite road side and in another 110m you emerge from the enclosed path at the corner of the very picturesque triangular village green in **Tilford**. Cross the nearside road onto the green and *veer right* past the **Tilford Oak**.

The recommended late lunch stop, **The Barley Mow** on the opposite side of the green. *Turn right* (i.e.: *turn left* if coming out of the pub) and cross the road bridge over **The River Wey** (the confluence of North and South branch of the river is to the left, just around a corner). In 20m from the bridge, *turn left* along a signposted bridleway with a fence on the left and a hedge on the right (the **Tilford Village Shop & Café**, serving hot and cold drinks, with outside seating, is just 20m ahead and open until 17.00 most days). You pass a couple of pillboxes on the left, after the second of which you can now see the confluence of the river arms across a field on the left. In 250m ignore a path joining from the right down some steps and in 200m *turn left* at a T- junction with a Byway Open to All Traffic. In 120m you pass **Tilhill House** on your right and in 50m its **hexagonal dovecote** on the left, then a byway signpost. In 110m **[!]** *fork right* with the byway ignoring a bridleway in the same direction. In 150m cross a farm track and continue gently uphill (the path levels out in another 50m) and in 140m you pass **Sheephatch Farm** on your right (on the OS map) and *veer right*, where a driveway joins from the left. In 40m you cross a lane (**Sheephatch Lane**) and *veer left* along a car wide gravel byway with a signpost on the left.

In 400m (the last bit of which is in a deep sunken lane with mature trees high above on the banks) by a metal field gate leading into a fenced part of the wood, *turn left* with the byway (the path from the right is a public footpath). After about 75m you have the **Wey River (North Branch)** below on the left (but it isn't always visible) with a grassy field behind and (foliage permitting) can glimpse some of the ruins of **Waverley Abbey** as well as **Waverley Abbey House** through the trees across the meadow. In 375m you *turn left* at a T-junction with a tarmac lane along a left hand earthen margin and in 220m, get to a three-way junction of roads.

Here you have a choice:

For a recommended out-and-back to the ruins of Waverley Abbey (adds 1.5 km), as well as for a **bus stop for services to Farnham**, *turn left* along **Waverley Lane** and pick up the directions at the end of this text under **Waverley Abbey Extension**.

For the main walk *turn right* along **Camp Hill** (signed Guildford) and in 20m *turn left* along a signposted footpath along a gravel driveway belonging to the house on the right (**Stella Lodge**), soon with a brick wall on your left. You go through a metal kissing gate in 65m and follow a wide clear path through a hanging wood (the **Moor Park Heritage Trail**). In 80m pass **Mother Ludlam's Cave** on the right, formed by the spring feeding the streamlet running out of it. You pass more pillboxes and yet more info panels on Moor Park's role in WWII, the park and the house itself and eventually (in 1.4 km) go through a metal kissing gate to the right of the main gate into **Moor Park** to emerge on a road (the **North Downs Way** has joined down from the right). *Turn left* along the road and in 110m cross **The River Wey** for a last time. In 100m *turn right* at a T-junction with **Moor Park Way** and in 130m *fork right* off the road through a wooden kissing gate along a fenced path by a two-way North Downs Way-signpost.

In 350m you have an elaborate wooden bench on the right, marking what was the start proper of the North Downs Way, just before a wooden kissing gate after which you *turn left* at a T-junction with a footpath. In 70m *turn right* with the North Downs Way. In 250m a footpath turns up left into the hanging wood. [This path **avoids** the coming stretch along **the noisy A 31 Farnham-bypass**, but is mostly tarmac: in 120m the path levels out and in 20m you *turn right* along a residential road. In 900m *turn right* along **Waverley Lane** to the station 100m away. **The Mulberry** is beyond the tracks.]

In 80m you go under an arched bridge carrying the railway line. *Turn left* on the other side along a gravel driveway (Snailslynch), now with **The Wey** on the right and in 600m cross a footpath at a signposted four-way junction. In 100m there is a service station on the right (with a café and food store) and in another 100m you *turn right* with the drive towards the long audible **A31 Farnham-Bypass**. In 20m *turn left* with the North Downs Way along **Darvills Lane**, *before* reaching the main road. In 180m this curves up right to join the pedestrian path beside the A road. In 130m you pass a new sculpture marking the official start of the North Downs Way ('Dover 153 miles') at a main four-way road junction and *turn left* up to **Farnham Station**.

[For two of the recommended pubs though, cross the road in the same direction then *turn right* to cross the A31 and *bear left* along a path, soon continuing as **Abbey Street**, to find **The Lamb** and **The William Cobbet** along it.]

In 50m you pass **The Mulberry** on the right and in another 60m reach the station. London bound trains depart from the near platform.

Alternative Start via Hindhead Common (cuts 450m and 104m ascent but adds 600m tarmac)

In 150m cross the brook on a concrete two-railed bridge, ignore paths left and right to continue between wooden fences and emerge in another 150m on **Bunch Lane** at a T-junction. *Turn right* along the lane's right-hand pavement, initially with houses on both sides, then with the wooded stream valley on the right and only occasional large houses on the left (the pavement has run out). In 900m (just before crossing the stream again, this time on the lane) *turn left* with a signposted Public Byway with a **Greensand Way** (GW) marker along the tarmac **Stoatley Hollow** to *fork left* in 50m (the right fork leads into a farmyard). In 300m the tarmac discontinues by a last house on the left and you ascend more steeply along this holloway with a byway marker post. In 250m you emerge on **Farnham Lane** and *turn right* along it, gently ascending. In 270m ignore a signposted bridleway into a wood on the left and in 100m ignore the Greensand Way signposted footpath forking down to the left into the wood.

In 300m, at a four-way junction of tarmac lanes and car wide tracks, walk through a metal gate to the left of a wooden field gate into **Hindhead Common**, ignoring the tarmac drive to a school on the right as well as the signposted bridleway forking right and a signposted byway to the right of the wooden field gate. Ignore a left turning NT Permissive Footpath and pass an info panel and map. In 20m *fork right* and in 100m *curve right* where a path joins from the left. In 150m you cross a byway and in 20m join a car wide track and *bear left* with it. In 400m, at a multi-path junction by a bench on the right and an info panel on the left, ignore the bridleway on the right and the continuation ahead and *turn left* with **Hidden Hindhead Trail** and **ROAM639** markers gently downhill (345°). In 40m you cross a track and continue in the same direction with those two markers, in 150m ignore a permissive bridleway turning left downhill and in 15m come to a crossing with the **Greensand Way**.

[**For a diversion via the Devil's Punchbowl hotel**, National Trust **café or viewpoint** (adds 1.2 km), you *veer left* (305°) along a sunken path between trees and in 100m cross another path to continue in the same direction along gravel with the two markers and in 160m walk through a wooden gate to the left of a wooden field gate to leave the signed Hindhead Common area. In 40m you cross a car wide tarmac lane and continue in the same direction through bollards with **Sailor's Stroll** and **Hidden Hindhead** markers (the ROAM639 trail turns right). In 50m you cross a car wide track (the **old course of the A3**, before it got diverted through a new tunnel in 2011) by an info panel on the road restoration project. Continue in the same direction to *bend left* with the path, in 120m ignore a right turning footpath, *fork right* to reach in 75m the viewpoint (with a bronze 3D-model of the area) and *turn left* for the **Devil's Punchbowl Café** 100m away and the **Devil's Punchbowl Hotel** to the left of it across the car park.

Re-trace your steps to the crossing with a tarmac lane (the **Old Portsmouth Road**) and **[!]** *turn left* along it towards Gibbet Hill. In 300m you pass an info panel by the **Sailor's Stone** on the left and in 90m *fork right* off it to in 35m emerge into an open area (after walking through a wooden field gate) on **Gibbet Hill**. Pick up the directions three paragraphs below: "Continue in the same direction..."]

For the immediate continuation of the walk, *turn right* along a permissive bridleway with the Greensand Way, in 140m continue in the same direction at a staggered crosspaths and in 40m cross a byway to continue along a narrow path in the same direction, in 30m *turn left* and in another 30m reach a bench at a viewpoint with fine views into the wooded **Coombeswell Valley** [the main walk route ascends along the opposite wooded ridge], back to **Haslemere** with **Black Down** behind it, and to the **South Downs** in the far distance.

From the viewpoint *turn left* from the previous direction (15°) then in 20m ignore a left fork and in 30m go through a metal gate and fork either way along one of two narrow paths through trees. In 30m the paths reunite as you reach a five-way junction with some four byways by a three-way signpost on the right. *Turn right* (but not hard right) and in 60m leave the byway to the right to in 20m walk past a green metal barrier. In 25m a path joins from the left (the diversion via the Devil's Punchbowl Café, Hotel and viewpoint) and you walk past a wooden field gate by a Gibbet Hill National Trust-sign into an open area (an old car park) on the plateaued top of **Gibbet Hill**. Continue in the same direction for another 100m to the far end of the open area (with splendid back views on the hard right to **Black Down** [170°]) to a trigpoint.

The main walk joins from the right up along a narrow path. Pick up the directions in the main text at the asterisk *).

Highcomb Bottom Shortcut (cut 660m and 36m ascent)

Turn left along the tarmac lane and continue in the same direction in 150m where a tarmac bridleway joins from the left below. In 40m the **Greensand Way** joins from the right along a gravel car wide track. In 15m **[!]** *fork left* (due N) with the continuation of the Greensand Way along a signposted byway off the tarmac car wide bridleway (which gently descends down to the right). In 60m go over a cattle grid with a wooden field gate to the left of it and **[!]** *turn left immediately [!]*, away from the Greensand Way, through low wooden bollards to then *veer right* uphill along a narrow path on a 330° bearing. Eventually you walk steeply up along a stepped stretch to in 90m emerge on a plateaued promontory on **Sugarloaf Hill**, overlooking **Highcomb Bottom** to the north and the **North Downs** in the distance beyond it.

Continue in the same direction down the other side and in 55m the path *curves left* and further descends to in 65m re-join the Greensand Way car wide byway by a '**Pedestrian Path – No Horses, No Cycles**'-sign (text on the reverse) to *turn left* along it. In 160m (10m past a green metal barrier on the right and just after a tree stump on the left, covered by an overhanging tree branch but with four well-weathered markers on its top) a narrow, easy-to-miss path on the left leads through the growth to a bench in 15m with **more fine views into Highcomb Bottom**. In 420m you continue in the same direction at a byway crosspaths (signposted 'Thursley via GSW 1 ¾ m'). The track from the left is the main walk.

Pick up the directions in the main walk text at the triple asterisk ***).

Highcomb Bottom Extension (add 530m and 20m ascent)

In 430m you *turn left* along a permissive bridleway along a narrower track by a bench and a two-way signpost on the right. The track descends through bracken and heather down into the valley and at the bottom you *turn right* at a three-way junction along a permissive footpath (a bridleway joins from the left through a wooden gate). Gently ascending, in 400m the path curves right and back on itself, if at a higher level, at the top of a wooded area, with a field some 20m away to the left. In 300m you reach a crosspaths (there are four markers on a tree stump on the other side). The path coming down opposite is the main walk.

Turn left and pick up the directions in the main walk text at the double asterisk **).

Thursley Common Shortcut (cut 800m)

You cross **Dyehouse Road** to continue along a signposted bridleway. In 25m [!] *fork left* off the gravel driveway with a marker post along a narrow path initially through bracken and bramble, then trees. In 40m you continue in the same direction at a crosspaths, ignoring a right turning bridleway to then [!] *veer left* (320°) in 160m at another crosspaths along a broader track joining from behind on the right, away from the heathland on the right towards a field corner on the left in 80m.

Continue *veering right* by a bridleway marker post to stay close to the field fence on the left. In 430m at the end of the field you pass a bridleway marker post and *turn left* with a path around the field corner. In 120m you continue in the same direction along a car wide track joining from the left out of the field and in 200m you reach **Thursley Road** at a T-junction in a bend, where a bridleway (the main walk) joins from the right. Pick up the directions in the main text at the quintuple asterisk *****).

Thursley Common Extension (add 750m or 1.7 km)

Follow a **Natural England Heath Trail**-marker and in 45m *turn right*, where the Heath Trail turns left, along a car wide track through the heath (40°). You gently ascend **Shrike Hill** and in 300m reach an angled bench at a viewpoint with 360°-views over the Nature Reserve. Now either re-trace your steps or continue in the same direction (ignore a right-turning path) down from the hummock and in 130m *turn left* at a T-junction of tracks (310°). In 240m, just after passing a bench on the left, a boardwalk turns right for a possible **Extension-within-the-extension around Pudmore Pond and through Thursley Bog** (see directions immediately below).

Continue past the boardwalk with a **Natural England Dragonfly Trail**-marker. The path turns left (240°) and in 260m, by a bench, you pass a **metal Dragonfly sculpture** on the left. Ignore the right forking Dragonfly Trail along a boardwalk (the Extension-within-the-Extension joins from there).

*) *Curve left* with the track. In 80m the track curves further left by some mires on the right and in 350m you *curve right* with the path to continue along a boardwalk across a boggy area and in 10m from the end of the boardwalk *turn left* at a T-junction of paths (95°), soon passing a **Heath Trail**-marker post. In 90m *turn right* at a T-junction and in 45m reach the four-way junction of sandy tracks that was the start of the extension.

Pick up the directions in the main text at the quadruple asterisk ****), but *turn right* along a bridleway, not *left*.

Pudmore Pond and Thursley Bog Extension-within-the-Extension (add 1.5 km)

Turn right along the boardwalk which in 30m *bears right* with some mires on the right. In 70m at a fork in the boardwalk, the right turn leads to a 'seating and relaxation area' in the middle of the bog. In 70m you continue along an earthen path through a small pine plantation and in 40m *curve left* with the path. In another 40m you continue along another boardwalk and in 55m reach a T-junction of boardwalks at an info panel. [The path to the left through Thursley Bog cuts out 500m, arguably the best 500m though.] *Turn right* along the boardwalk which in 100m *curves left* and in another 40m *turns left*. In 200m the boardwalk ends at a T-junction with a broad sandy track by a **Thursley**

Common National Nature Reserve info panel on the left (30m to the right a bridleway turns right towards Ockley Common). *Turn left* along the track (a bridleway).

In 120m you cross a boggy stream and in 300m *fork right* with a bridleway marker post. In 110m *turn left* (210°) at a four-way bridleway junction by an electricity line. In 130m you pass another info panel where a boardwalk joins from the left (the shortcut within the extension) and continue in the same direction along a sandy path. In 250m **[!]** *turn left* at a four-way junction of paths (the Natural England Heath- and Dragon-Trails turn right). In 30m you continue along a boardwalk and in 210m *turn right* to a T-junction with a sandy track by a **metal Dragonfly-sculpture**.

Turn right along the track and pick up the directions above in the Thursley Common Extension at the asterisk *).

Waverley Abbey Extension (add 1.5 km)

In 70m cross the river and *turn left* by the drive to **Waverley Abbey House** (and by a **bus stop for services to Farnham**) to follow a sign for Waverley Abbey in 10m to the left and in 40m walk through a wooden kissing gate to the left of a metal field gate past a ruined pillbox and then along an artificial pond with **Waverley Abbey House** on the other side to reach the **Waverley Abbey** ruins in 400m. A tour around all the buildings and past all info panels is recommended. You will find **Dragon's Teeth** tank defenses in the far left corner, either side of a (now disappeared) bridge over the Wey.

Re-trace your steps to the three-way junction of roads and continue in the same direction uphill along **Camp Hill** (signed Guildford) to pick up the directions where you left them in the main text.