



Witley to Haslemere walk

A gentle walk to Chiddingfold and the Crown Inn

Chiddingfold & the Crown Inn

Length 14.2km (8.8 miles), 4 hours. For the whole outing, including trains and meals, allow 8 hours.

Toughness 3 out of 10.

OS Maps Explorer OL33 (was 133) or Landranger 186. Witley, map reference SU 948 379, is in **Surrey**, 12km south-west of Guildford.

Features This is an easy but interesting walk to a historic pub, the 12thC Crown Inn in Chiddingfold.

From Witley (where walking sticks used to be made - hence the local copses of ash and sweet chestnut), it passes the RSPCA Lockwood Equine Centre and Combe Court manor house and its fifteenth century farmhouse, through the churchyard of St Mary's Church to the medieval village of Chiddingfold, with the Crown Inn as the suggested lunch stop.

After lunch the walk is through Frillinghurst Wood and various National Trust estates, coming out into Haslemere High Street near two tearooms.

The bridleways on this walk, particularly those immediately after the Lockwood Centre, can be very muddy in winter or after periods of heavy rain, so do wear appropriate footwear.

Walk Options You could shorten the walk by catching a bus, approximately once an hour, from outside the lunchtime pub in Chiddingfold to Haslemere.

History Chiddingfold's main splendour is the lunchtime pub, the twelfth century **Crown Inn**. In the late fourteenth century, the publican was convicted of selling ale 'contrary to the assize' (courts tested ale by pouring some on to a wooden bench, then sitting on it - if it had a sticky quality, it was pronounced good). In 1552, Edward VI stayed at this inn, while his 4,000-strong retinue camped on the green.

Chiddingfold was the centre of the stained glass industry between the thirteenth and seventeenth centuries and the village was isolated enough to be able to keep working through the plague years, supplying stained glass for St Stephen's Chapel at Westminster in the 1350s.

In the churchyard of the thirteenth century **St Mary's Church** in Chiddingfold, there is a 1776 epitaph to Arthur Stedman, one shared with many blacksmiths across the country: 'My fire is out, my forge decay'd...'

The town of **Haslemere** is lucky to be surrounded by National Trust land in almost every direction thanks to the campaigns in the early 1900s of Sir Robert Hunter, one of the National Trust's founders, who lived in Haslemere.

In Tudor and Stuart times **Haslemere** was a centre for the iron industry. With the coming of the railway in the mid-nineteenth century it became a popular spot for literary people. The poet Tennyson's house, Aldworth, is on the slopes of Black Down where he loved to walk; and George Eliot wrote *Middlemarch* in Shottermill.

The town has an interesting **Museum** up the High Street, just north of Darnleys tearoom. The museum is open 10.00 am to 5.00 pm Tuesday to Saturday, and has important natural history collections. Other highlights include an Egyptian mummy, Zulu beadwork and Eastern European peasant art, plus a fine explanatory display of local wild flowers in the foyer.

The RSPCA Lockwood Equine Centre (previously The Lockwood Centre for horses and donkeys, and originally the Lockwood Donkey Sanctuary) (tel: 0300 123 0720) in Sandhills, is one of the oldest donkey sanctuaries in the UK, having been established by a Mr and Mrs Lockwood in the 1950s. On Mrs Lockwood's death in 2005, the sanctuary was bequeathed to the RSPCA who now manage the Centre. Following a period of closure (March 2018 to November 2018) the Centre has now reopened with a broader remit than a rehabilitation centre for horses and ponies and a sanctuary for donkeys. Currently (2019) the Centre is only open to the public on special Open Days - please refer to the Centre's website for when they are. A visit to the sanctuary early on in the walk is a delightful added feature to this walk.

Travel Take the train nearest to **10.10am** from **Waterloo** Station to **Witley** . Journey time about 55 minutes. There are four trains an hour back from Haslemere (two on Sundays). Journey time 50-60 minutes. Buy a day return to Haslemere.

Parking at Witley is easier than Haslemere. The station car park is free at weekends. Trains back to Witley are hourly and take 5 minutes.

Lunch The suggested lunchtime stop is the **Crown Inn** (tel [01428 682 255](tel:01428682255)) in Chiddingfold, some 6km into the walk, which serves lunch midday to 2.30pm daily. From Monday to Saturday, groups of more than six people should phone to book, and always book ahead on Sundays. The **Swan** pub and **Treacle's Tea Shop** also both serve food at lunchtime.

Tea There are two suggested tea places on Haslemere High Street, opposite one another, both with inside and outside seating areas. **Darnleys** tearoom (tel [01428 643 048](tel:01428643048)) serves tea, cakes and meals, seven days a week, until 5.00. **Hemingways** (tel [01428 643 048](tel:01428643048)) serves teas and meals until 5.00 pm Monday to Friday, 5-30 pm Saturday and until 4.00 pm on Sunday.

Alternatives are the **Swan Inn** (a Wetherspoons) or the **White Horse Hotel** (food: midday-3.00pm and 6.00pm-9.30pm Monday to Friday; midday-9.30pm Saturday; midday-9.00 pm Sunday), both in the High Street.

The station is a ten minute walk from the town centre.

Updates No major changes.

Help Us! After the walk, we would love to get your [feedback](#)

You can upload photos to the [SWC Group on Flickr](#), and [videos to Youtube](#). This walk's tags are:



By Car **Start** GU8 5TB **Finish** GU27 2PD

Help National Rail: 03457 48 49 50 • Travelline SE (bus times): 0871 200 2233 (12p/min) • TFL (London) : 0343 222 1234

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Walk Directions

The [numbers] and sketch map they refer to, is only in the book.

1. **[1]** On arrival at **Witley Station**, cross the footbridge to platform 1. At the bottom of the steps keep straight on to the end of the platform where you join a public footpath, your direction 260°, shortly bending right, your direction north. 100 metres from the bend, immediately after passing a house called Inglewood on your right-hand side, at a crosspaths you *turn left*, your direction west, on to a car-wide earth and gravel track.

2. In 340 metres you come to Pinewood Lodge on your right-hand side, and keep ahead through its parking area. In 40 metres go through posts with Greensand Way (GW) markers, on to a path into woodland. In a further 200 metres, with a house called Redlands on your left-hand side, *bear right off the path* to cross a road and go up a sand shingle drive *directly ahead of you*, your direction 300°. In 15 metres, by a post on your left marked with a GW disc, *fork right uphill*, your direction 350°. But, 50 metres up the slope, with a viewing seat and bench over to your right, ignore a GW sign to the right, *to turn left* (slightly downhill), on a narrow path, your direction 260°.
3. In 120 metres your path merges with a driveway and in 30 metres it comes out on to a road, by a red phone box. *Turn right* on this road, your direction 280°.
4. In 60 metres *turn left* down Hatch Lane [2], a worn tarmac lane signposted public bridleway.
5. In 150 metres you pass **The RSPCA Lockwood Equine Centre** on your left (well worth a visit on one of its Open Days) to keep ahead down bridleways that can be very muddy in winter. In 400 metres, keep straight on as you enter a wood, passing by a double metal fieldgate to your left.
6. In 110 metres, by a post offering a public footpath or a public bridleway, follow the public bridleway *straight on down* through the wood (ignoring the planks and steps to your right). In 200 metres *bear right* with the path to cross a wooden footbridge over a stream.
7. 10 metres beyond the bridge, at a path junction, *bear right then left* to follow the direction of a public bridleway sign, gently uphill. In a further 80 metres, at a path junction, with a post with discs on your left, keep ahead, uphill. In 70 metres exit the wood over a ditch on two sleepers to go straight on across a large field, your direction 140°.
8. In 160 metres you cross the railway by stiles either side, then across an earth road and over another stile. *Continue straight on* with the field fence on your left-hand side, and fenced-in horse paddocks to your right.
9. In 130 metres you go over a stile, still straight on, down along the edge of a wood. In a further 230 metres, down in the wood, you cross a stream by a brick bridge to go up the other side. In 30 metres you cross a car-wide earth track with a metal fieldgate on your left to keep straight on, uphill, your direction 120°. In 160 metres cross a stile to leave the wood, going straight on across a field, with a wooden fence on your left, your direction 140°, with **Combe Court** (marked on the OS map) visible ahead to your left.
10. In 120 metres go through a metal swing gate and straight on, your direction 145°, passing Combe Court (behind a fence and hedgerow) on your left-hand side. In 180 metres bear left over a stile in a metal fence, to continue down a grassy path with a fence, hedge and low wall behind on your left-hand side. The path swings left and in 180 metres ignore a pair of metal fieldgates on your right (giving access onto the drive of Coombe Court farm). In 95 metres go through a gate to the left of a car-wide black painted metal gate.
11. In 20 metres at the main road *turn right*, your direction 250°.
12. In 230 metres take the first car road *to the left* [4] called Pook Hill.
13. Follow this road for 300 metres, uphill, ignoring all ways off, to Langhurst Manor (on your right-hand side, just over the crest of the hill). You now head downhill and in 50 metres *turn left* following a public footpath sign up three earth steps and through a metal kissing gate, to go along the left-hand side of a field, your direction 80°.
14. In 240 metres, with a wooden fieldgate ahead of you, your way swings to the right, gently downhill, with a fenceline on your left, and in 80 metres go through a wooden kissing gate to go straight across a driveway (a modern cottage on your left-hand side) then ahead over a grassy island with the fence now on your right-hand side, your direction 145°. In 30 metres you *fork left* with the hedge of a more substantial house on your right-hand side.
15. In 60 metres go through a metal kissing gate. 25 metres further on, go over a stile and straight on across a field, with the field boundary over to your left, your direction 140°. In 200 metres you pass a finger of woodland close by on your left and keep ahead with a treeline now on your left. In 100 metres ignore a stile on your left. In 150 metres bear left to exit the field over a stile, then pass by another, redundant stile, to continue now with fences on both sides. In a further 100 metres, continue on, now on a tarmac lane with houses on both sides. In 230 metres, when this comes to an end, continue straight on through a metal kissing gate, downhill, on a path along the edge of light woodland.
16. In 200 metres you pass a burial ground on your right-hand side to pass a redundant metal kissing gate.
17. Here, *turn right* through a gap where previously there was a wooden swing gate, into the burial ground and straight on, your direction 200°, with some of the paving stones underfoot made of old headstones. In 110 metres you turn left, with a wall on your right-hand side, in 80 metres coming to **Chiddingfold's St Mary's Church** (usually open). Beyond the church, in 30 metres you go through the lychgate and opposite is the **Crown Inn**, the suggested lunch stop. 70 metres to its left is **Treacle's Tea Shop** and **The Swan** pub is around the road bend to the right of the Crown, both serving food at lunchtime.
18. Coming out of the Crown Inn after lunch, *turn left* to then cross the busy A283 with care and *turn left*. In 10 metres, *turn right* up Mill Lane.

19. Continue along this road for 900 metres, gently uphill, to pass on your left-hand side a large property which used to be the Ukrainian Home, Sydenhurst (sold in 2015 and being redeveloped in 2016: you passed its new access road some 400 metres back down the road). In a further 230 metres, just beyond the end of Orchard Cottage's garden on your right-hand side [5], *turn right* through a metal kissing gate (with a metal fieldgate to its right-hand side), to follow the direction of a public footpath sign, 310°, initially down the right-hand side of a field. Your way soon veers left and in 150 metres you pass through a gap to the left of a metal fieldgate in a fenceline.
20. Keep ahead, your direction now 300° and in 80 metres *turn right* through a metal kissing gate into a wood, a garden fence to your right for 25 metres; then bending *sharp left* with the path, your direction now 310°.
21. In 220 metres cross a stile to the left of a metal fieldgate, to exit the wood, and keep ahead along the right-hand edge of an open field, your direction west.
22. In 300 metres you pass a house on your right-hand side and in a further 50 metres, where the edge of the field goes sharp right (as you pass under mini-pylon cables) you continue *straight on* across the field towards another part timber-framed house visible ahead.
23. In 120 metres [6] go across a lane via stiles to continue *half left* across a field, your direction 200°, towards a stile visible in the distance. In 200 metres you go over a pair of stiles to *veer half right* across the next field, your direction now 210°.
24. In 320 metres go over a stile hidden in the right-hand corner into a strip of wood; in 30 metres drop down a rough, winding path and *turn right* down a tarmac road, your direction 260°.
25. In 130 metres ignore a left turn over a bridge to continue up towards Frillinghurst Mill, Manor and Farm.
26. In 330 metres, and 40 metres past a large corrugated barn on your right-hand side [7], you go *left over a stile*, your direction 190°, towards a wooden kissing gate visible in a wooden fence (some 50 metres to the right of where the fence comes out of the wood). Once through it, carry on in the same direction for 70 metres to the edge of the wood, where you *turn right* to follow the edge of the wood on your left-hand side.
27. In 90 metres you pass a three-armed footpath sign and a metal kissing gate on your left; in 20 metres go through a metal kissing gate into **Frillinghurst Wood** (marked on the OS map), straight on, your direction 250°.
28. In 35 metres ignore a turn up to the right and keep to the main path. In a further 120 metres, cross a stream by a wooden bridge and head uphill. [!] In a further 120 metres at a path junction, with a two-armed footpath sign on your left, *fork left*, your direction 240°, through the wood along a well defined path marked by footpath posts along the way. In 320 metres [!] you come to an unmarked fork in the path. Take the *left fork* and in 100 metres emerge into the corner of a field to go along its left-hand side towards a cottage on the far side, your direction 230°.
29. In 260 metres, some 60 metres away from the cottage ahead, you *go through a gap* in the hedge on your left and turn right into the next field, to continue on in the same direction as before but now with the field hedge on your right-hand side and your path now a bridleway. In 100 metres at a car-road T-junction [8] *turn left*, your direction 130° and in 20 metres *turn right* on a tarmac road, your direction 220°, with a lake on your right-hand side.
30. In 130 metres *veer right* with the road, the barns of **Imbhams Farm** (marked on the OS map) on your left-hand side.
31. 600 metres beyond these barns, you come out on to a car road [9] which you cross, slightly to the left, to continue on a signposted public footpath, through a wooden swing gate, with Holdfast Cottage on your right, your direction 230°. Your path swings to the right to follow the right-hand edge of a small field.
32. In 220 metres go through a wooden kissing gate and *turn right* along a track, keeping a white painted house on your left-hand side.
33. In 100 metres you enter the National Trust's **Swan Barn Farm** by a wooden swing gate to the right of a wooden fieldgate and keep the field edge on your right-hand side. In 110 metres you go through a wooden swing gate, to head down over a stream on a three plank bridge then up through another wooden swing gate. Keep ahead along the right-hand edge of the next field.
34. In 100 metres go through a wooden swing gate and down over another little bridge over the stream and up earthen steps to go through another wooden swing gate after 35 metres. Keep ahead along the right-hand edge of the next field which curves to the right. In 110 metres go through a wooden swing gate to enter the National Trust's **Witley Copse** and **Mariners Rewe**.
35. [!] In 230 metres veer right at a path junction (with a 1.8 metre high chain link fence on your right-hand side). In 100 metres head down to cross over a stream via a wooden bridge, turn right past a bench seat on your right and then swing left on a clear path up through the Copse in a westerly direction.
36. [!] In 300 metres *fork left downhill* where the main path turns right uphill, for 25 metres to a small wooden bridge which you cross to go through a wooden swing gate to enter a field. *Turn right* along the lower side of the field. In 80 metres at the lower corner of

the field, go through a car wide gap and *veer left* up across the next field. In 110 metres you pass by a wooden swing gate on your left-hand side to veer round and *up to the right*.

37. In 65 metres you cross a plank bridge (with no handrails) and keep ahead, uphill, now with a fence on your left. In 95 metres you enter the National Trust's **Swan Barn Walk** by its sign and a wooden kissing gate and *turn right* along a gravel path, your direction 30°, with fine views across the meadows to wooded slopes. In 80 metres *turn left* between buildings to reach **Haslemere High Street**. *Turn left* in the High Street for 50 metres to your suggested tea stops: **Hemingways** on your side of the road and **Darnleys** directly opposite. (Or you could go to the **White Horse** further down the High Street on the left-hand side.)
38. Coming out of Darnleys tearoom, *turn right* and in 25 metres, *turn right again* down West Street, signposted to the police station. In 120 metres, where the main street curves to the right past the police station (which is on your right-hand side), take the street *straight on* to the fire station but then not the tempting path straight on; instead, *turn left* in front of the fire station and take the footpath that goes *down the left-hand side* of the building (signposted 'Footpath to the station'), your direction 315°. Follow this path, with a stream to your right and later a playground to your left, till you come out on to a tarmac road with Redwood Manor opposite. *Turn left* and in 40 metres, *turn right* on to the B2131, leading in 260 metres to **Haslemere Station** on your right-hand side. The London platforms (2 and 3) are over the footbridge.

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