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## Crondall

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Distance: 8 km=5 miles

easy walking

Region: Hampshire

Date written: 10-sep-2018

Author: Botafuego

Last update: 14-apr-2020

Refreshments: Crondall

Map: Explorer 144 (Basingstoke) *but the map in this guide should be sufficient*

*Problems, changes? We depend on your feedback: [feedback@fancyfreewalks.org](mailto:feedback@fancyfreewalks.org)*

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*Historic village, church and pub, easy field paths, wide views, woodland*

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### In Brief

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This walk is centred on a large village with Anglo-Saxon roots and great character based on its historic buildings, its great Norman church and its 500-year-old pub, situated near Farnham (although it is in Hampshire). The country here is made up of large fields which seem to sweep up to the horizon, giving walkers a feeling of exhilaration.

The *Plume of Feathers* is an old timbered village pub of great character and the food is second to none. (To enquire, ring 01252- 850245).



There are no nettles to speak of on this walk and very little undergrowth.



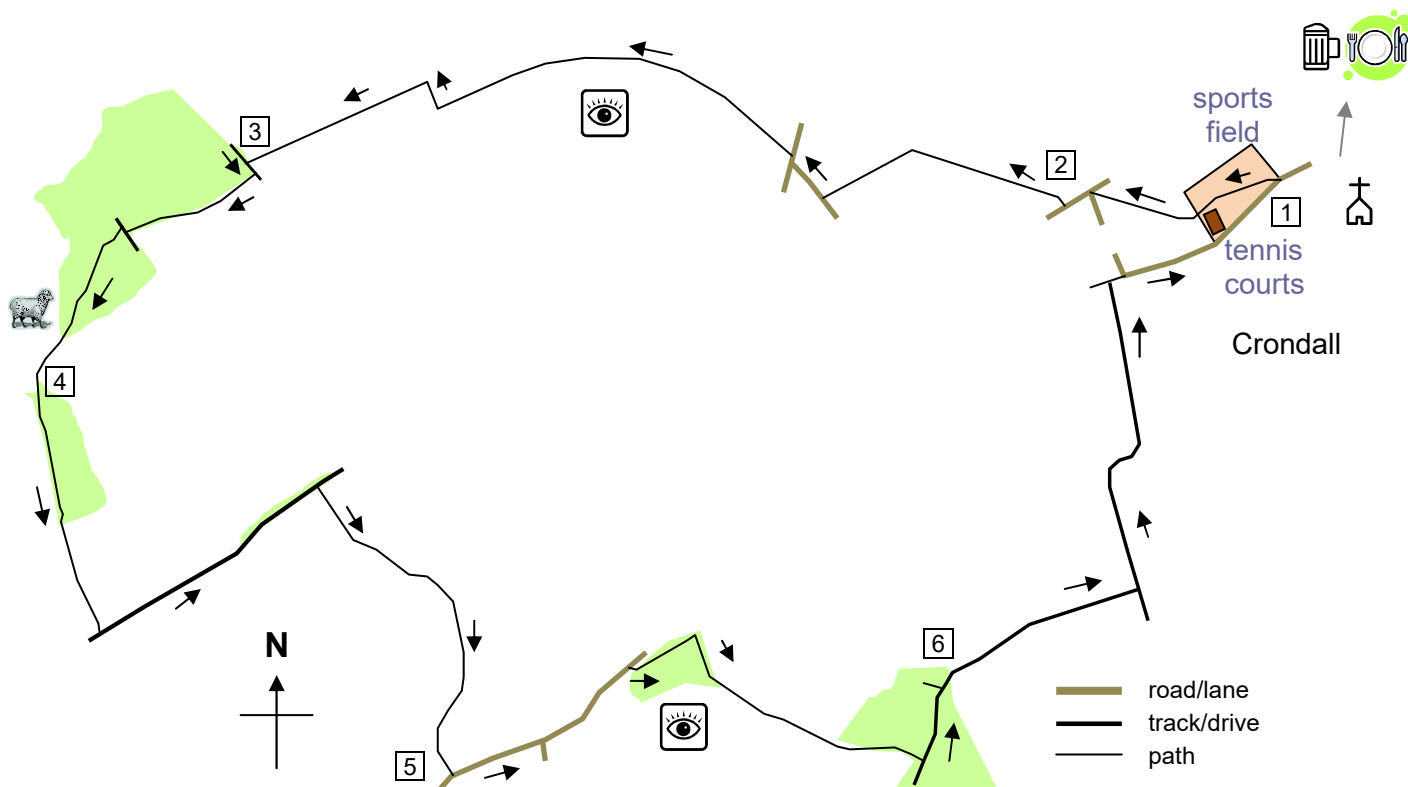
One of the field paths (despite being along the edge) is rather stony and you may be glad to be wearing boots. There are just two stiles, not well



enough built to present any obstacle to your dog. (Your dog is also welcome *outside* the pub.)

The walk begins in the village of **Crondall**, Hampshire, near Farnham. Park near the church (postcode **GU10 5QF**) where there is plenty of roadside parking. You may prefer to park near the *Plume of Feathers* pub (postcode **GU10 5NT**) from which a short walk up Church Street leads to the start of the walk. For more details, see at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).

## The Walk



*The name of the village comes from an Anglosaxon word meaning “chalk” and “valley” or “pit” and present-day golfers sometimes lose their balls in one of them. The village lies right on the boundary of the sedimentary London basin and the chalky uplands (where this walk is sited). The name is remembered by archaeologists as the place where in 1828 the teenage Charles Lefroy was out shooting when he noticed a heap of metal pieces. They turned out to be a hundred Anglo-Saxon gold coins (possibly shillings, each being what you had to pay for taking a man's life). They are now in the Ashmolean in Oxford and are known as the Crondall Hoard. Crondall was also a “hundred” in another sense, namely an administrative division in medieval times. The Crondall Hundred included Farnborough and Aldershot. So crucial was the village that Oliver Cromwell stayed at the “Plume of Feathers” inn when planning the Siege of Basing House.*



*Crondall Church of All Saints is one of the greatest in Hampshire, Norman in origin, cathedral-like in size, towering over this large village, a triumphant survivor of Victorian restoration. Inside, you can see the wonderful bright chancel, the Paulet tomb and the Giffard Tomb of 1563 and the Norman arches dating from the 1100s.*

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With the church and churchyard on your left, walk along the tarmac lane, passing the village hall, to reach Crondall's main recreation ground / playing field. Turn **right** into the ground and go **left** along the edge. (Strictly, the official footpath is a little further along the road on the right going behind the tennis court but no one seems to use it.) Now veer diagonally right (keeping to the edge if there is cricket in progress!) to pass the tennis courts on your left and continue a little further to a gap in the tree hedge. (See map above.) Go through the gap and veer **right** to come out into a crop field. Take a path diagonally across the field to reach a junction of tarmac roads.

- 2 Avoid the side road sharp left, veer **left** on the major road and, in 30m, at a fingerpost, go **right** over a wooden bridge into a crop field. Turn **left** along the edge. The edge elbows left and leads you to a tarmac lane. Turn **right** on the lane. Where, in 100m, the lane bends right, go **right** for 20m and then **left** at a fingerpost onto a path along the right-hand side of a large field. [Aug 2019: the fingerpost is hidden, buried deep in the hedgerow; as a guide, there's a thick tree trunk at the turning.] This path goes under power lines and, shortly after, the boundary hedge on your right ends. Keep ahead here, curving slightly left, in a wide arc, on a path between fields. The crop here is usually tall wheat but it will be only stubble after reaping. Your path suddenly ends at a marker post. Turn squarely **right** here, heading for some trees, and when you reach the trees, turn **left** at another marker post, close to the trees on your right. Looking back, you can see the tower of Crondall church.
- 3 Your path ends at an oak wood. Turn **left** alongside the wood and, in 25m, go **right** at a fingerpost on a pleasant path just inside the wood. After 300m, you reach a farm track with a metal gate on your left. Go **right** for 15m and **left** over a stile into woods. Your path goes immediately left, wheels right and meanders through this strangely thin oak wood in a more-or-less straight direction. On your right soon you can see the twin peaks of Horsedown Common (550 feet) with a trig pillar on top (but on private land so not reachable). Keep straight on for the length of this sheep pasture, past scattered thorn bushes, with the dividing fence close by on your left. You come through a marshy patch caused by underground springs but a boardwalk keeps you dry shod. Immediately after the boardwalk, go **left** to a small wooden gate with a yellow arrow. Go over the stile beside the gate (which is wired up). The stile is wobbly and can easily break, so tread gently!
- 4 The path curves right through a woodland of hawthorn and young beech. After 250m or so, you come out to the corner of a large field. Keep straight ahead along the right-hand edge and, at the far side, veer **right** and immediately **left** to meet a wide gravel track. Turn **left** on the track which soon becomes quite dark as it enters trees and turns stony. After 500m on this track, just as you see it curving right ahead, look to your right for some steps and a fingerpost. Go **right** up the steps and take a path straight across a crop field on a faint path. (In case the field is recently ploughed, aim for the centre of a large rounded tree.) At the far side, by a marker post, turn **left** along the edge of the field. Stay on the edge of the field, curving right and left, all the way (about 600m) to reach a tarmac lane with farm building opposite.
- 5 Turn **left** on this quiet lane, passing an irrelevant junction on your right, until you reach the start of some woodland, immediately after passing under power lines. Turn **right** here at a fingerpost on a path into the wood. The path runs parallel to the lane you were on. At the end of the wood, turn **right** along the right-hand side of a field with great views. When you reach another wood after 400m, take a path straight ahead into the wood, as indicated by a yellow arrow. Follow a path just inside the wood for 200m to a T-junction by a marker post. Turn **left** here on a wide dusty track. In 200m, as you approach a field, ignore a narrow footpath on your left and take a farm track straight ahead between fields.
- 6 The track curves right and, after a total of 450m, reaches a T-junction with direction arrows. Turn **left** on this wide track, with your final destination in sight. This easy track zigzags and, after a total of 700m, brings you to a



junction of tracks by farm buildings. Turn **right** and, after a metal gate, keep straight ahead on a tarmac lane. Within 200m, you are back in the village of Crondall where the walk began.

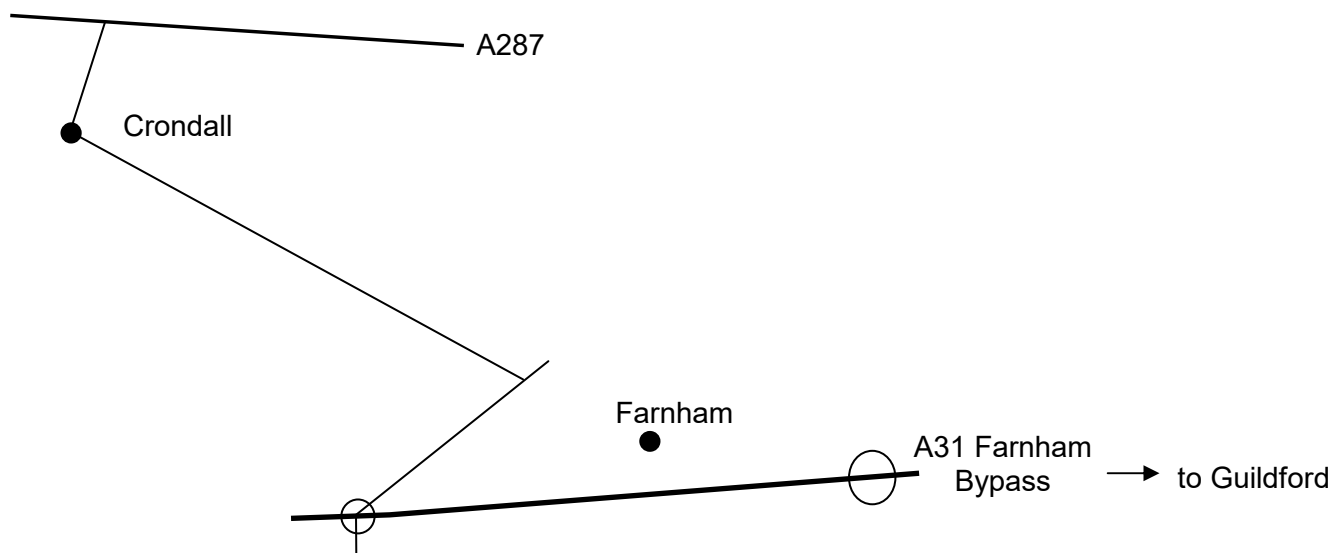


*For final refreshments, the historic inn the “Plume of Feathers” is close by, down Church Street. The inn only serves three well-known brews but its restaurant has a well-thought-out menu and a wine list to match. Crondall has another pub, the “Hampshire Arms”, also a typical country pub.*

## Getting there

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By car: Crondall is just off the A287 Farnham Road but there are various ways to get there. Here is one possibility for walkers coming from the London/Guildford area. Take the A31 (Hog’s Back), going straight on at the big roundabout on the main Farnham Bypass. Go through the traffic lights and stay on the A31 till you reach the roundabout out in open country. Turn sharp **right** at this roundabout signposted *Farnham*, as though you’d changed your mind and decided to visit Farnham. But, in ½ mile, just after a mini-roundabout, turn **left** at a small sign for *Dippenhall, Crondall, Odiham*. This is the Crondall Road, a nice cross-country route, not the quickest but straightforward.



By bus/train: bus 70 goes from Farnham Station to Crondall, not Sunday. Check the timetables.

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