



Well: *The Chequers* (Pub Walk)

Distance: 11 km=6½ miles

easy walking

Region: Hampshire

Date written: 6-may-2012

Author: Botafuego

Date revised: 11-sep-2018

Refreshments: Well

Last update: 23-oct-2019

Map: Explorer 144 (Basingstoke, Alton)

Problems, changes? *We depend on your feedback: feedback@fancyfreewalks.org*

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Villages, views, woodland, pub, historic houses and cottages

In Brief

The village of Well in Hampshire has several historic and charming cottages and the friendly *Chequers Inn* is made from a pair of them, with a front patio under a spreading vine that gives this very English corner a slightly continental feel. Beer is H&W and there are both à la carte and brasserie type menus with an emphasis on seafood, including lobster and dressed crab. The pub is open daily for food and drink and all day at weekends. Lunchtime food service ends at around 2.30/3pm on weekdays. To reserve, ring 01256-862605.

The walk takes you on easy paths over hills with great views and also shows you the best of another village, Lower Froyle, from an corner not normally seen by passing visitors.

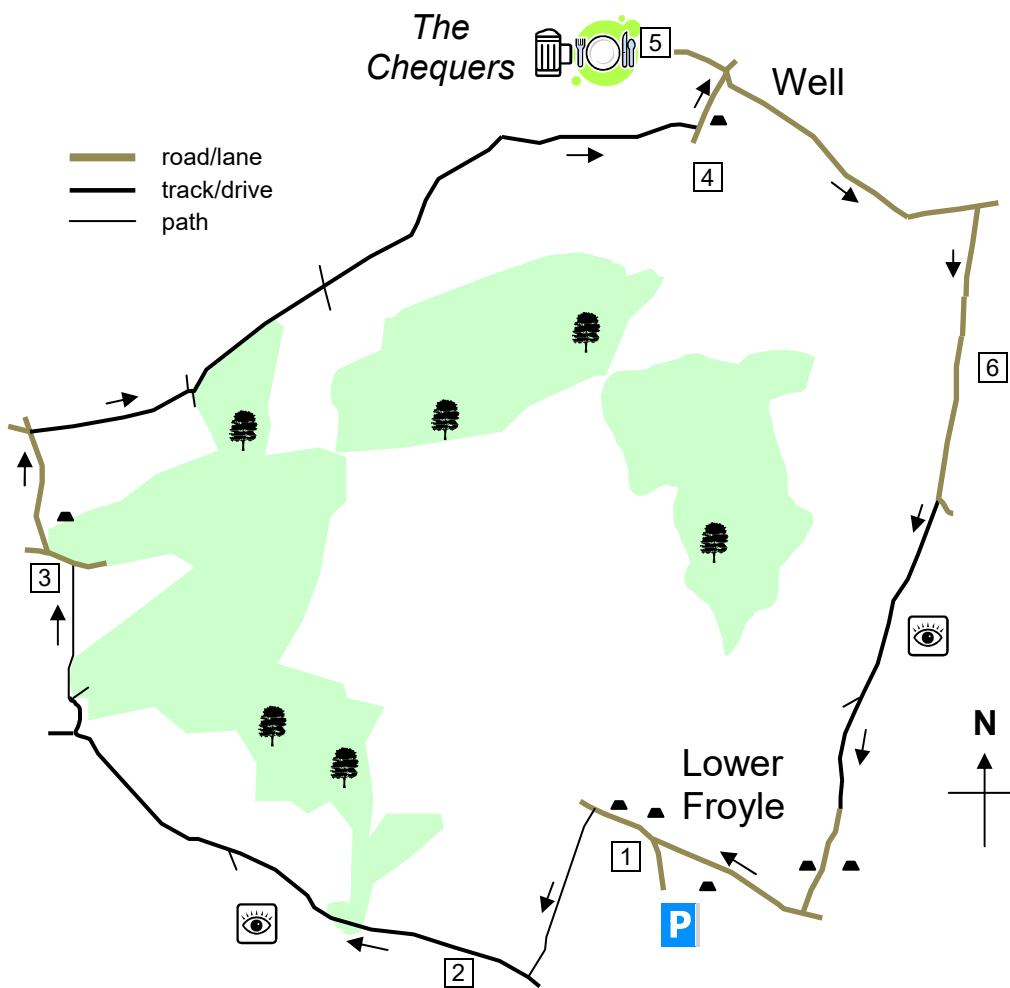


There is at least one overgrown path on this walk, so bare legs are not advisable, but any other kind of attire should be fine. After a long wet spell, you will find that boots are a must as the byway in section 3 can be muddy in parts. Your dog is very welcome on this walk.

The walk begins in **Lower Froyle**, Hampshire, **postcode GU34 4LJ**, near the A31 Farnham-Winchester road, one mile west and north of Bentley. Park considerably in the centre of the village, preferably in Ryebriidge Lane, near the village hall. This is the road that branches away at a little signpost near the village noticeboard in the direction of *Upper Froyle*. You can of course park at the pub, preferably off-road opposite it rather than in the pub car park. For more details, see at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).

The Walk

- 1 With the Froyle village hall on your **right**, walk to the end of the road and turn **left**. In 200m, on your left, you will come to *Aldersley House*. Turn **left** on a signposted footpath just after it [Sep 2019: completely hidden by a shrub that had grown over it], opposite the redbrick *Old Stable Barn*. Your path goes through a kissing-gate and a fraction left across a field on a well-marked route through the crops. At the top of the field, go through a kissing-gate, over a 3-plank bridge, through another kissing-gate and along the right-hand side of a meadow. You have great views here east into Sussex and north to the big copses behind the village which you will soon see from the other side. Go over a stile by a metal gate and turn **right** on a tarmac drive.



- 2 Continue straight ahead past a metal gate and past the farm on Saintbury Hill, onto a wide track, soon with views all around. You will be following this wide more-or-less straight track for over 1 km. Along the way, you pass a wood on your right followed by a long field, Nearly 1 km along this track you may notice an irrelevant dilapidated signpost at a junction on your left. Your track winds its way through more woodland and, in another 150m, it comes out into a large green field where it curves away left. This is where you **leave** the track. (As a guide, there is a partly hidden fingerpost on your right.) Fork **right** here across the grass with the green field on your left and fine woods on view straight ahead. At the next corner, your path winds **right** down into a wooded area and then wheels **left** through a beautiful area of varied trees and grass until you reach a large sloping field. Keep

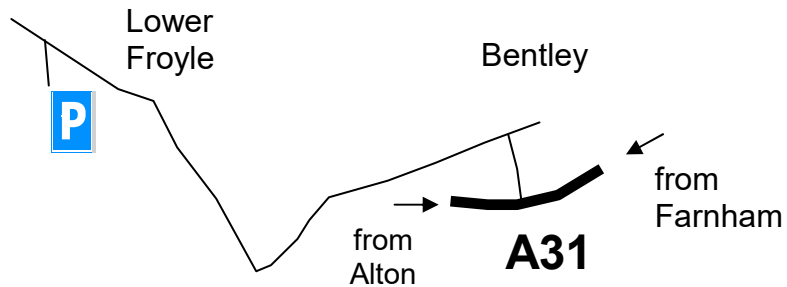


right along the edge of the field (a popular area for skylarks), passing a fingerpost, At the top, keep straight across the field on a path as highlighted by a post with a yellow arrow. At the bottom, keep straight ahead to pass through the hedging [Sep 2019: the path was unclear and the gap in the hedge is hard to spot; as you progress; in Oct 2019 it was cropped, look for a blue road sign and aim about 30m to the right of it, where there is a footpath sign] to reach a road. Turn **left** here.

- 3** In 50m, at a road junction, turn **right** uphill, signed *Long Sutton*. *The first house, curiously named "Bumpers", is home to some friendly dogs of different sizes who may well come out to greet you.* In 300m or so, where a road joins you from the left, turn **right** on a track signposted as a byway. In 500m, your track enters the edge of some woods. Ignore footpaths left and right here. *The buildings over on your left are part of Lord Wandsworth College, a co-ed independent school.* Soon you are walking between fields with a hedge on your left. Again, ignore footpaths left and right. The wood looming up on your right is Sheephouse Copse. Now your path becomes sunken with hedgerow plants and shrubs on each side. *There are blackberries galore in late summer.* Now it is stony and winding, gently descending. Finally, after well over 2 km on this byway, you reach a lane. Turn **left** on the lane.
- 4** The lane takes you past the stately *Manor Farm* and into the sleepy village of Well. *The well that gives its name to this place is at the crossroads, but the current structure is relatively new so it must have existed in earlier forms.* Among the few houses here are several gems, such as the *Old Cottage*, dated 1686. For the *Chequers Inn*, turn **left** on the road for 100m or so. You need to retrace your steps to the crossroads to resume the walk.
- 5** After refreshment, continue straight on at the crossroads (or turn **right** if you did not visit the *Chequers*), in the direction of *Dippenhall*. Follow this quiet lane under grid wires. After $\frac{2}{3}$ km you later pass *No Mans Land Cottage* on your right. *The various hedgerow trees on your left have grown to a magnificent height giving the lane a deep atmosphere.* In another 250m, turn **right** onto a narrow lane, *Husseys Lane*, noting a blue *unsuitable for heavy goods vehicles* sign. In 250m, where the tarmac lane suddenly bends sharp left, **leave** it by continuing straight ahead on an earthy track.
- 6** Your track runs between fields, then down through woodland, only to rise again where it is rather stony underfoot. At the top of the gradient, in the field on your left, there is a rustic bench seat where you can rest and take in the great views to the east as far as the North Downs into West Sussex. You pass more woodland on the right as Lower Froyle comes into view. Avoid a footpath on the right here. The lane becomes tarmac as you pass the first few charming cottages of Lower Froyle, including a group of converted oasts on your right. *Oast houses are usually associated with Kent but can be found in many southern counties.* You pass other contrasting properties of immense character, a sight usually missed by visitors who come by the main road. Finally a pond is on your right, usually with a brace of resident white ducks, as you come to a T-junction. Turn **right** on the main road. In 500m, you reach a junction on your left where the walk began.

Getting there

By car: Lower Froyle is near the A31 Farnham-Alton Road. Leave the road at Bentley which is signed. Go west through Bentley on a road that bends north and takes you in less than a mile, passing the renowned *Anchor Inn*, into the centre of Lower Froyle. At the little signpost in the village centre, turn left in the direction of Upper Froyle but park immediately near the village hall.



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