



Well: *The Chequers* (Pub Walk)

Distance: 11 km=6½ miles

easy walking

Region: Hampshire

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Author: Botafuego

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Refreshments: Well

Map: Explorer 144 (Basingstoke, Alton)

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

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Villages, views, woodland, pub

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 K&B of all types and food varies from pub classics to more sophisticated dishes. The pub is open all day at week-ends. 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.



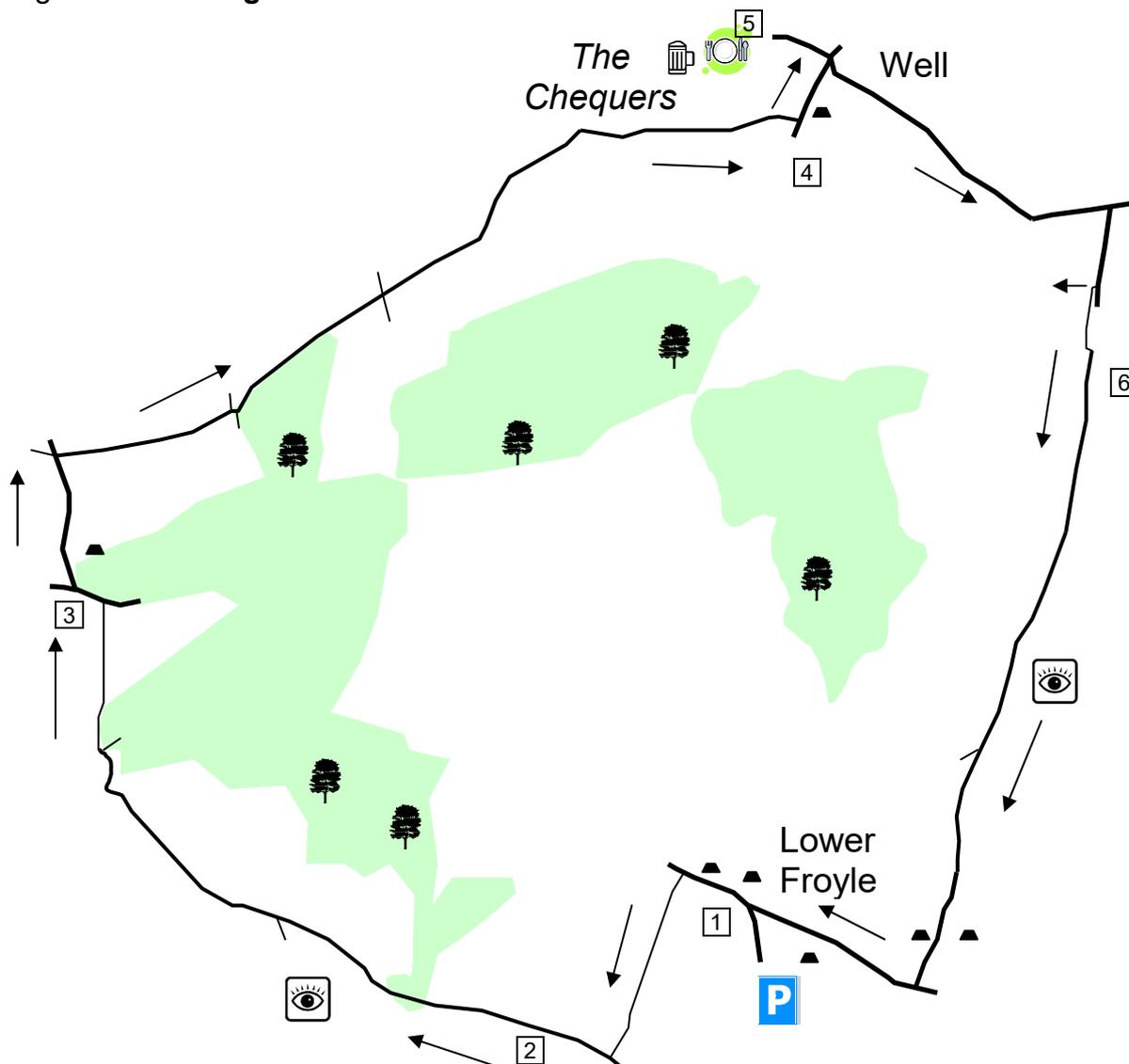
There is at least one overgrown path on this walk, so bare legs are not advisable, but any other kind of attire should be fine. After a long wet spell, you will find that boots are a must as the byway in section 3 can be muddy in parts. Your dog is very welcome on this walk.

The walk begins in **Lower Froyle**, Hampshire, **postcode GU34 4LJ**, near the A31 Farnham-Winchester road, one mile west and north of Bentley. Park considerately in the centre of the village, preferably in Ryebridge 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** **See map overleaf.** Starting with the Froyle village hall behind you, turn **right** to the end of the road then turn **left**. Shortly, on your left, you will come to *Aldersley House*. Turn **left** just after it, at a signpost onto a footpath. Your path goes through a kissing-gate and, a fraction left, across a field on a well-defined route through the crops. (If the path is obscured, aim for the right-hand side of a very tall square hedge, in a garden, at the top of the field.) 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. Stay on this track for another ½ km or so to reach a 2-way fingerpost on your right. **Leave** the track here (as it veers off sharp left), go past the fingerpost and then turn a fraction **right**, along the right-hand side of a field, with fine woods on view straight ahead. At the next corner, your path winds **right** into a wooded area and then turns **left** through a beautiful area of varied trees and sloping grass until you reach a partly hidden fingerpost on your right. Turn **right** here with the field on your left - a popular area for skylarks. At the top, keep straight across the field on a clear path as highlighted by a post with a yellow arrow. At the bottom, pass through the hedging to reach a road. Turn **left** here.
- 3** In 50m, at a road junction, turn **right**, 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. When a road joins you from the left, turn **right** on a track signposted as a byway. After a while, 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 Sheepphouse Copse. Now your path becomes sunken with hedgerow plants and shrubs on each side. Now it is stony and winding, gently ascending. Finally you reach a lane. Turn **left** on the lane.

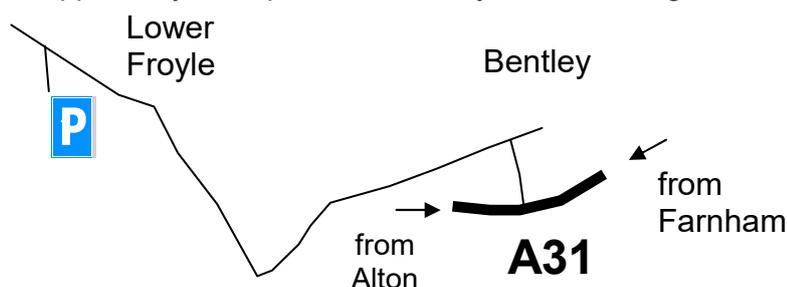
 4 The lane takes you past the stately *Manor Farm* and into the sleepy village of Well. *The well that gives its name to this place is at the crossroads, but the current structure is relatively new so it must have existed in earlier forms. Among the few houses here are several gems, such as the Old Cottage, 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, later passing *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.* Turn **right** at the next junction on a narrow lane, *Husseys Lane*, noting a blue *unsuitable for heavy goods vehicles* sign to your right. Views south soon appear. Leave the lane at the bottom (as it bends sharp left) and continue 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, if you hop over the low barrier, there is a carved bench seat from which to take in the views to the east. 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 the duck pond is on your right as you come to a T-junction. Turn **right** on the main road, leading you back into the village centre 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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