



Blackheath and Shamley Green

Distance 14 km=9 miles, easy walking with one climb

Region: Surrey

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Refreshments: Blackheath, Shamley Green

Map: Explorer 145 (Guildford)

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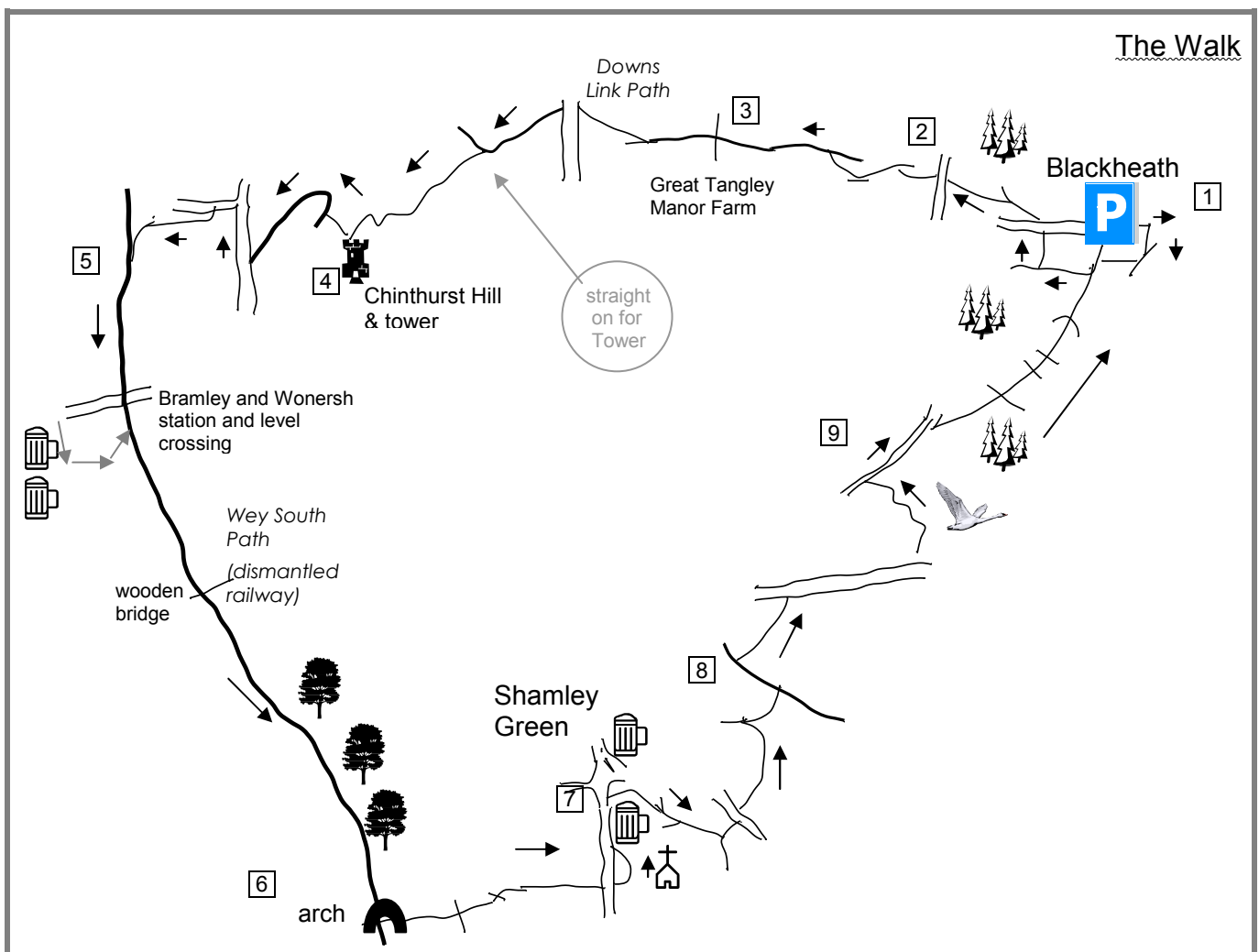
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Villages, heath, woodland, views, disused railway

In Brief

This fine walk in the Surrey Hills takes you from wilderness to the very best of civilisation and back to wilderness. It has many twists that will delight and surprise.





There is very little mud and no unavoidable nettles. The walk seems fine for your dog too.



The walk begins at the Blackheath car park (grid ref TQ034462, postcode GU4 8RB). For more details see at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).



The Walk

- 1 Walk to the end of the car park where there is a noticeboard at the start of heath and turn full **right** on a narrow path through pines. In about 40m turn half **right**. In about 15m, when you meet a broader track, turn **right** on a narrow path marked by a blue post. Continue over a crossing path and join a wide track coming from the right that runs between houses on the right and a cricket pitch on the left. Pass a white house *High Hazard* and a red tile-hung house and immediately after the latter take a narrow path **right** between fences. Cross the road to the *Villagers* pub (now sadly closed, perhaps temporarily) into the pub's car park. On the left side of the car park, in only about 10m, take a path half **left** marked by a blue post. In about 50m, fork **left** at a blue post. The path passes a house on the left and eventually reaches a road.
- 2 Cross the road to a signposted bridleway opposite leading out onto the open heath. In about 100m at a crossing track with blue posts turn **left**. In about 50m at a fork, go slightly **right** avoiding the left fork which goes straight on between blue posts and into a wood. On reaching a metal gate, take the narrow path to the **right** of the gate. The path meets the broad Downs Link Path (DLP). Fork **left** here to join the DLP. After an easy stretch that gradually descends between meadows and woodland, with fine views ahead to St Martha's Hill and its church, you pass the historic Great Tangle Manor Farm. Here, ignore a track right and a path left.
- 3 The track becomes tarmac, passes a low house *The Lodge* on the left and runs through Wonersh Common. Only about 50m before a road junction visible ahead, turn **right** on a wide track at a sign marked as the DLP. The track leads down to a main road, the A248. Cross it to continue on the DLP on a broad track. After some distance you meet a junction with a sign indicating right for the DLP and straight on for *The Tower*. Continue **straight on** here, thus leaving the DLP. The path leads to the top of Chinthurst Hill. Keep going upwards wherever you see steps and a sign for the tower, until finally you reach the tower at the top.

Chinthurst hill is a peaceful spot. The tower is a stone folly built in the 1930s, now a Grade II listed building. There are great views from the summit north to Guildford, St Martha's Hill and the North Downs and south to Blackheath and Hascombe Hill.
- 4 After taking in the views southerly from the tower, **turn about** and take a downward path into the woodland behind the tower. Go over a crossing path and keep going downhill, being joined by several paths as you go. Finally, the path goes down steps to a tarmac drive at a hairpin. Follow the drive downhill as far as the gatehouse and turn sharp **right** on *Chinthurst Lane*. Follow the lane past *Hill Cottage* and other residences. At a junction opposite *Southlands*, take a road on the **left**, thus rejoining the DLP. Almost immediately take a footpath **left** running parallel to the road past houses and a phonebox. Before the bridge over the dismantled railway, fork **left** and turn **left** again following the course of the dismantled railway which is soon reinforced by a splendid tarmac track. *This*

is a popular walking route occupying much of the Wey South Path (WSP) which runs along the River Wey and then down to the Arun River, a lost link to the sea.

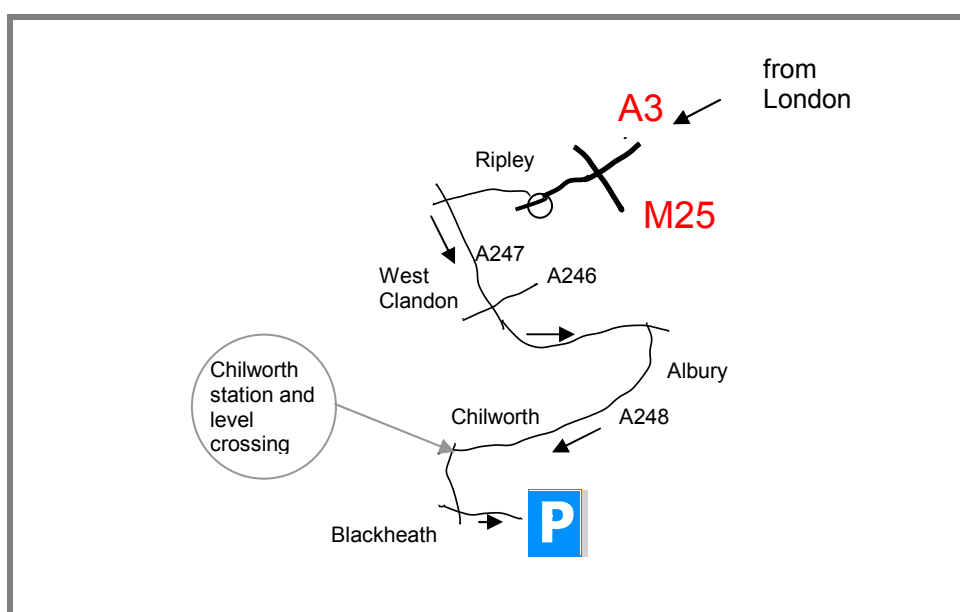
- 5 You will be following the WSP for about 3½ km=2 miles. On the way, you pass Bramley and Womersley station and a level crossing. (*If you would like a refreshment break now, both the “Jolly Farmer” and the “Wheatsheaf”, and shops and restaurants in Bramley are right at the level crossing and left at the main road. Afterwards, you can turn left again into Hall Road, left on a tarmac path past the modern houses and up steps back to the WSP.*) You then go past more houses and gardens. The WSP runs close to a road, soon after which you go over a wooden bridge over a crossing path. The next stretch is especially attractive, being lined at first with tall birch and ash trees, then going through a cutting and along an embankment. After about 800m=½ mile, you reach an overhead archway. Postponing your walk to the sea to another day, take a small path on the right before the arch and turn **left** on the track that goes over the arch. As you will see later, this is part of the *Greensand Way* indicated by GW symbols.
- 6 The track immediately passes the little *Fanesbridge Cottage* and narrows, later passing over a stream via a bridge and wooden gate and then over a tarmac driveway. It then runs between fields and crosses a driveway to a farm, finally reaching the road at Plonks Hill. Go straight over the road into the churchyard of Christ Church. Turn **left** through the churchyard and take the path past the little Church Room and out through the small metal gate, then **right** on the road into the village of Shamley Green. The *Bricklayers Arms* pub is on the right. You need to come back to this south side of the Green after visiting the village.
- Shamley Green delights the visitor with its many old listed timber framed buildings surrounding the large village green. There is a village store in the centre. The “Red Lion” gastro-pub, a little further along on the right, has a promising menu and is a good vantage point to watch a cricket match. The entrepreneur Sir Richard Branson was born in this village and spent his childhood here.*
- 7 After the *Bricklayers Arms*, turn **right** along the gravel drive on the south side of the Green past houses and take a narrow footpath between *Summer Meadow* and *Mellow House*. (In the wetter seasons, you may find this path completely waterlogged. If this is the case, retrace your steps back to the church and turn **left** on the *Greensand Way* to rejoin the walk.) *Note the sculpture in front of the house on the left.* The path runs between fences and through a gate up the left side of a field. You now follow a lovely horse chestnut avenue. You are back on the *Greensand Way* but only for a brief stretch. At the end of the avenue, leave the GW by bearing **left** downhill past more half-timbered farm buildings and past the house and garden of *Reel Hall*. Turn **left** at the road and in 20m turn **right** up a sunken bridleway *Dibdene Lane*. Near the top, at a junction, take the path uphill to the **right**. The path reaches a T-junction at a farm. Turn **left** here on a wide sandy track. *Soon there are great views across to Blackheath.*
- 8 At the corner of a wire fence, look out for two metal gates on the right. Take the straight footpath **right** downhill between the two gates. This path is easy to miss being marked only with a hidden yellow arrow. It is especially pleasant because of the birches and tall slender sessile oaks (rarer than common oaks) and the views in all directions. On meeting a lane, turn **right**. In about 400m=¼ mile, at the top of a rise, by a metal gate, turn **left** on a marked footpath. The path meets a tarmac drive and zigzags past several properties one of which has a windvane with a figure of a swan, which is thematic of this neighbourhood known as *Darbyn’s Brook*. Soon you pass between the lakes. *The upper lake usually*

has a resident black swan. Later you pass a colourful sculpted “cow”. When the drive finally reaches a road, turn **right**.

- 9 Uphill, about 150m after *Hallams Farmhouse*, just underneath overhead wires, look out for a gap in the bank on the right. **This is very easy to miss!** Turn half **right** here on an unmarked sunken path. Your finishing point is straight on from here. Go over a gravel drive, over a crossing path, past a barrier and clearing on the right, straight on by a paling fence, ignoring a wider path branching off right, over a crossing path and up through dense gorse and heather past *Jo’s seat*. The path is then joined at a junction by two tracks coming from the right and the left. It then crosses several paths and continues through pines to the point where the car park is straight ahead, where the walk began.

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Getting there



By car: Park in the **Blackheath** car park. To get there from the London area, take the A3 and, after crossing the M25, exit at a sign for Ripley. Take the B2215, signposted Woking, through Ripley and, 2 miles (3 km) after the village, turn **left** at a roundabout on the A247 signposted West Clandon. After 2 miles (3 km), pass West Clandon Church and the entrance to Clandon Park and cross straight over the A246 dual carriageway, signposted Dorking. Pass the car park for Newlands Corner. There are terrific views on the right. After the road (Shere Road) becomes a dual carriageway, slip into the right lane and take the A248 right, signposted Godalming and Albury. Follow the winding road through Victorian Albury village and through the more 20th-century Chilworth. Look out for the British Rail symbol on the left marking Chilworth Station and turn left here into a narrow road over a level crossing, signposted Blackheath. Follow the narrow road for just over ½ mile (1 km) down to a crossroads. Turn **left** here and go to the end of the road where there is a car park.

By train: begin at Bramley and Wonersh station.

By bus: nos. 503 or 523 from Guildford or Godalming. Check the timetables.

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