



Blackheath and Shamley Green

Distance: 14 km=9 miles

easy walking with one climb

Region: Surrey

Date written: 27-jun-2009

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Refreshments: Blackheath, Shamley Green

Last update: 30-may-2017

Map: Explorer 145 (Guildford) *but the maps in this guide should be sufficient*

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

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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.

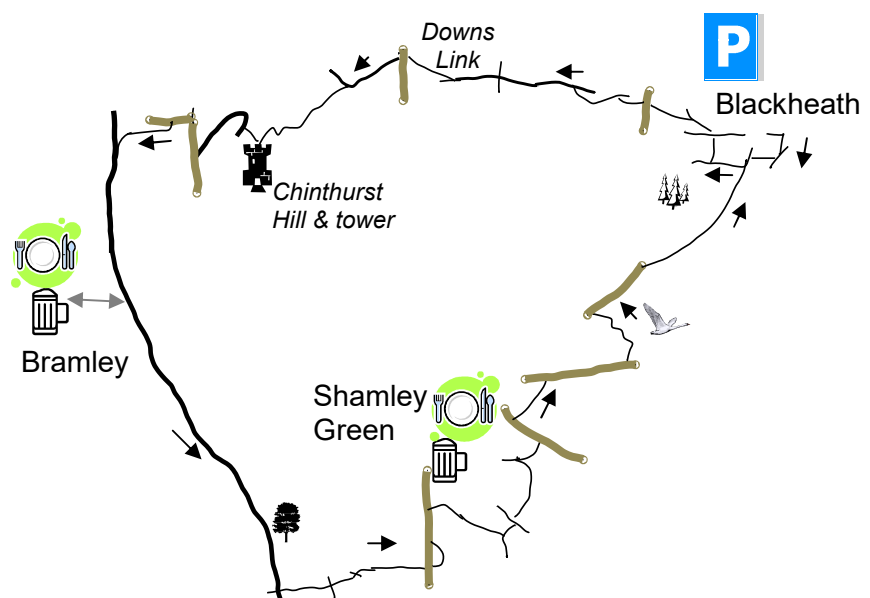


There is very little mud, except of course after a spell of rain, so walking shoes are adequate in dry conditions. In summer there are nettles and brambles along the paths so short trousers are not practical. The walk seems fine for your dog.

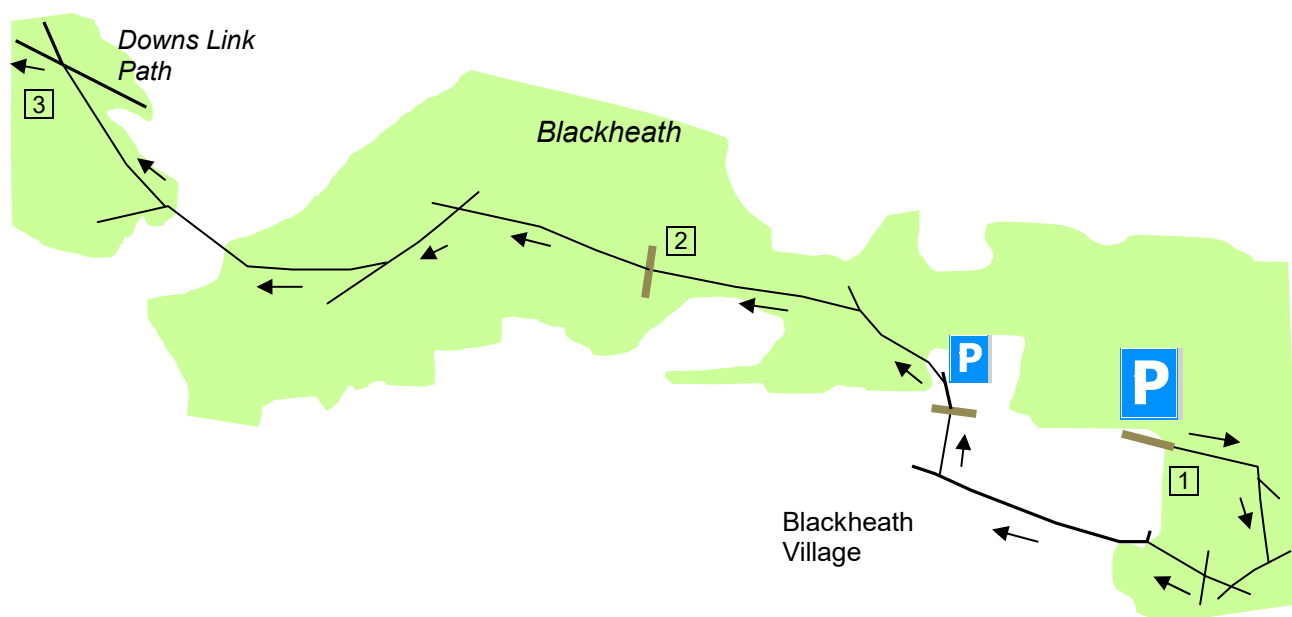


The walk begins at the **Blackheath car park**, grid ref TQ034462, **postcode GU4 8RB**. For more details see at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).

Bird's Eye View

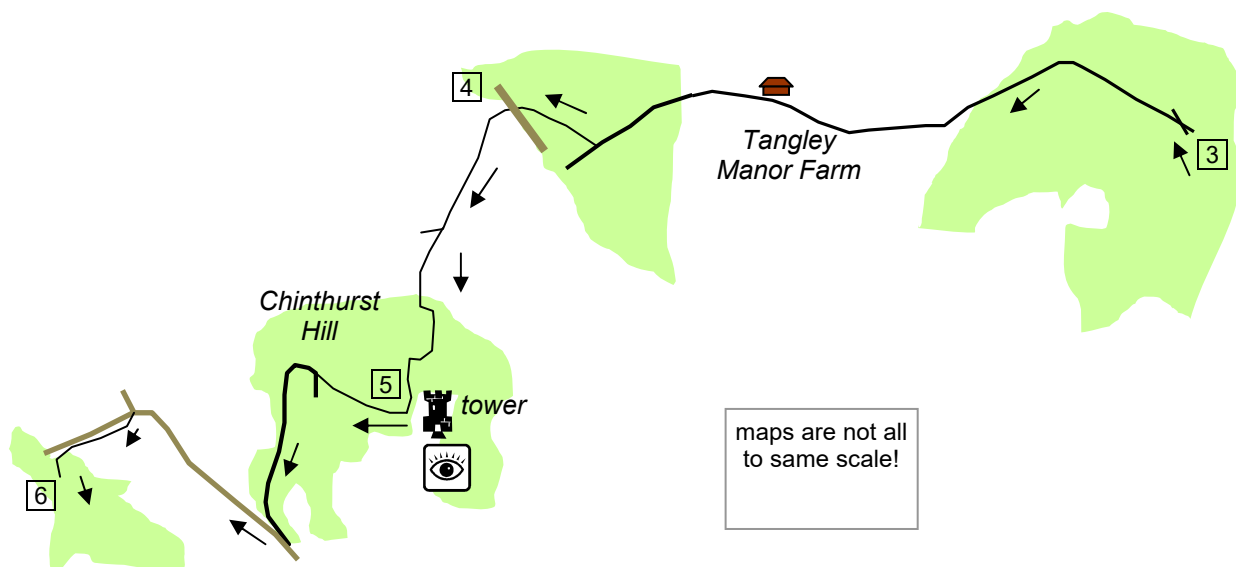


The Walk



- 1 This walk starts with a quick view of the village and a short cut, avoiding the main paths, so as to give you an idea of the delicate beauty of Blackheath. Go 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 the dark pines. In about 40m at a T-junction turn **right**. In about 15m, when you meet a broader track, turn **right** on a narrow path by a blank post. Continue over a crossing path at a blue-topped post and join a wide track coming from the right that runs between houses on the right and a cricket pitch on the left. After *Cricket Cottage* and its safety nets and after passing the end of the cricket pitch, go another 40m and, just after a small red tile-hung house, take a narrow path **right** between fences, reaching a road.
- 2 Cross the road to the old *Villagers* pub, now bleak and derelict (2014), into its car park. In 10m, take a bridleway on the **left** marked by a fingerpost. In about 50m, fork **left** at a blue post, staying on the main path. You pass a house on the left and eventually reach a road. Cross the road, a fraction right, to a signposted bridleway opposite leading out onto the open heath. In 150m, at a crossing track with blue-topped posts, turn **left**. In 40m, you come to a fork marked by blue-topped posts on two sides. Take the **right** fork, staying in the open terrain and avoiding the woods on the left. After a short trek through bracken, you reach a junction with more blue-topped posts and a metal gate. Take the narrow path to the **right** of the gate. The path meets the broad Downs Link Path (DLP).
- 3 **See map overleaf.** Fork **left** by a wire fence 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, keep straight ahead, avoiding all side tracks. 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 path at a 3-way fingerpost sign marking it as the DLP. The path leads down to a main road, the A248.
- 4 Cross the main road between two wooden posts to continue on the DLP on a broad path. In 300m you meet a junction with a 2-way fingerpost indicating right for the DLP. Continue **straight on** here, thus leaving the

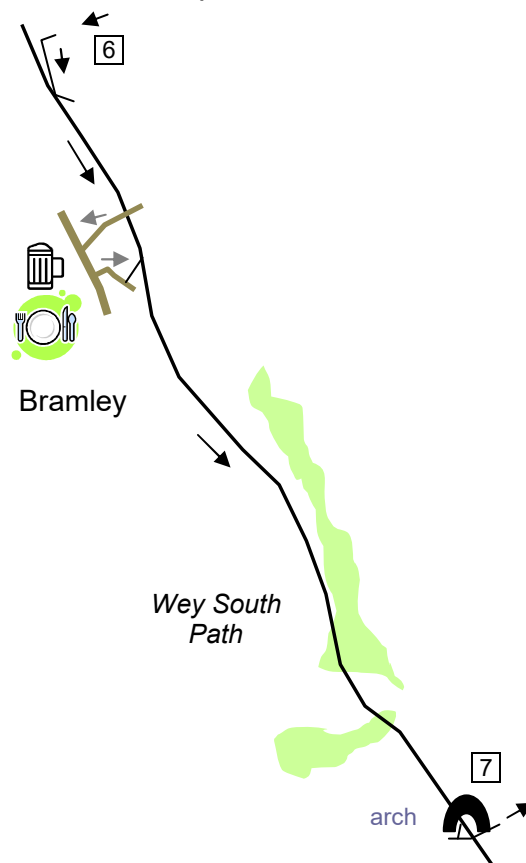
DLP, passing a sign for *The Tower*. This path will lead you to the top of Chinthurst Hill. Keep going upwards wherever you see steps or a sign for the Tower, until finally you reach the tower at the top.



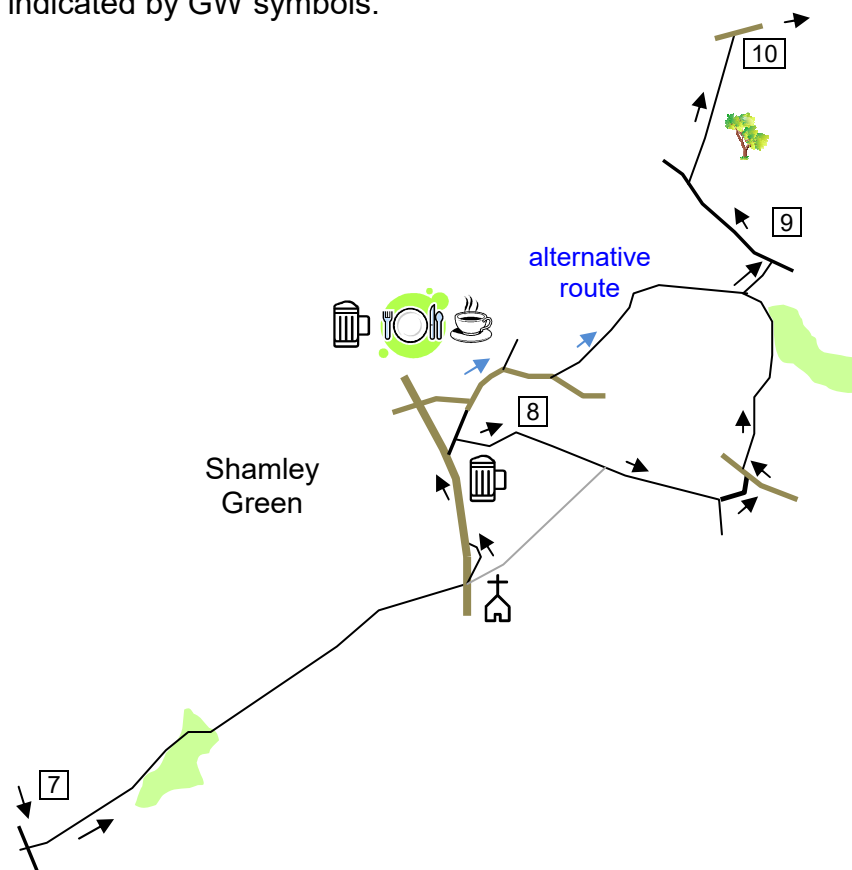
Chinthurst hill is a peaceful spot. The tower is a stone folly built in the 1930s, now a Grade II listed building. There are great views from the summit north (where the foliage permits) to Guildford, St Martha's Hill and the North Downs and south to Blackheath and Hascombe Hill.

- 5 After taking in the views southerly from the tower, **turn about** and take a downward path into the woodland behind the tower, bearing left. Go over a crossing path, bearing right, and keep going downhill, being joined by several paths as you go. Finally, your path takes you through a wooden swing gate and down steps to a hairpin in a tarmac drive, which is private but with pedestrian access. Follow the drive downhill as far as the gatehouse and turn sharp **right** on Chinthurst Lane. Follow the lane past Chinthurst Hill Farm, *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, ignoring a side road. Before a bridge over the dismantled railway, fork **left** and turn **left** again following the course of the dismantled railway. *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.*

- 6 When you are joined by a tarmac track, keep right on the track, avoiding a footpath and yellow arrow on the left. You will be following the WSP for about 3½ km=2 miles. On the way, you pass Bramley and Wonersh 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 Windrush Close (note the little sculpture



garden), veer right with the road and turn **left** on a tarmac path past some modern houses, then 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 another 800m=½ mile or so, 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.



- 7 The track immediately passes the little *Fanesbridge Cottage* and narrows, later passing over a stream via a concrete bridge and later a wooden gate and then over a tarmac driveway. It then runs between fields and crosses a driveway to a farm, finally reaching a small car park and 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 a 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.

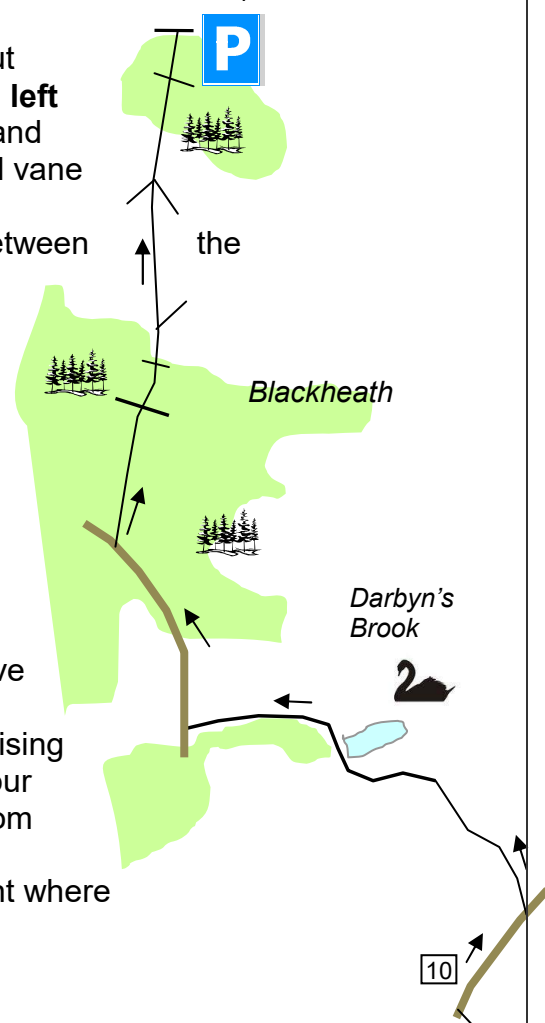


Shamley Green delights the visitor with its many old listed timber framed buildings surrounding the large village green. There is a village store in the centre. The “Red Lion” gastro-pub, a little further along on the right, has a promising menu and is a good vantage point to watch a cricket match. The neighbouring “Speckledy Hen” café / deli sells sandwiches and homemade cakes. The entrepreneur Sir Richard Branson was born in this village and spent his childhood here.

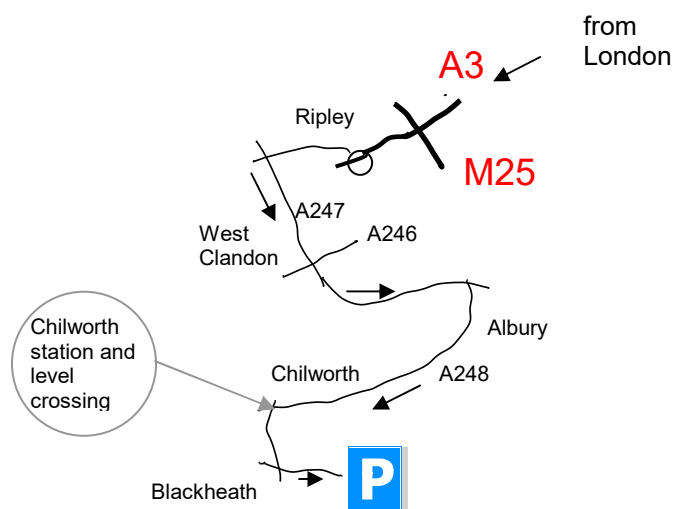
8 After the *Bricklayers Arms*, turn **right** along the gravel drive on the south side of the Green past houses and take a narrow footpath between *Summer Meadow* and *Mellow House*. (This narrow path had become waterlogged and neglected although (July 2014) it has been cleared. The following is an **alternative route**: Continue to the corner of the Green and take Woodhill Lane, passing *Barn Cottage*. As the lane bends right, ignore a narrow footpath on the left. At the next bend, leave the lane by forking **left** on a concrete drive marked *Shamley Wood Estate*. Just before the iron gates, go **right** over a stile and follow a parallel path. Turn **right** with the fence and take the path over a stile and into a holly wood (ducking under a fallen tree). On leaving the wood, continue through bracken and brambles, ignoring a metal gate on the right, to meet a wider path at a T-junction. Turn **left** here uphill. Resume at “(*)” below.) 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, past a swing gate and continues with another field on the right. Keep **ahead** now on a lovely horse chestnut avenue (unsigned but it is the footpath!). 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*.

9 Continue on the sandy path for 200m, passing the entrance to an untidy farm on your left, until it bends round to the left. Look out for two metal gates on the right. Take the straight footpath here **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 the tarmacked Green 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 wind vane with a figure of a swan, which is thematic of this neighbourhood known as *Darbyn's Brook*. Soon you pass between lakes. The upper lake usually has resident black swans. Later you pass a colourful sculpted “cow”. Where the drive finally reaches the tarmacked Littleford Lane, turn **right** on it.

10 Uphill, about 150m after *Hallams Farmhouse*, just as you begin to go underneath overhead wires, look out for a gap in the bank on the right. **This is very easy to miss!** Turn **right** here on an unmarked path running between banks taking back onto the translucently beautiful *Blackheath*. Your finishing point is dead straight on from here. Your path goes over a gravel drive and a crossing path with a wooden barrier and clearing on your right. Keep straight on ignoring all side paths, rising up through dense gorse and heather past *Jo's seat*. Your path is now joined at a junction by two tracks coming from the right and the left. It then crosses several paths and continues dead straight ahead through pines to the point where you finally see the car park where the walk began.



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

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