



Blackheath and Shamley Green

Distance: 14 km=9 miles

easy walking with one climb

Region: Surrey

Date written: 27-jun-2009

Author: Schwebefuss

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Refreshments: Blackheath, Shamley Green

Last update: 23-nov-2020

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, folly tower, nature reserve, old 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.

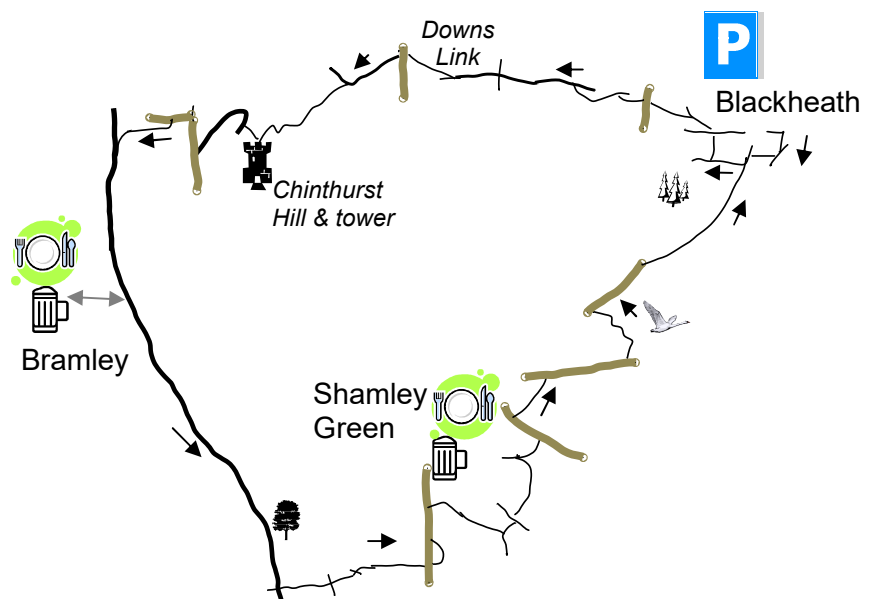


There is very little mud, except of course after a spell of rain, so walking shoes are adequate in dry conditions. In summer there are nettles and brambles along the paths so short trousers are not practical. The walk seems fine for your dog.

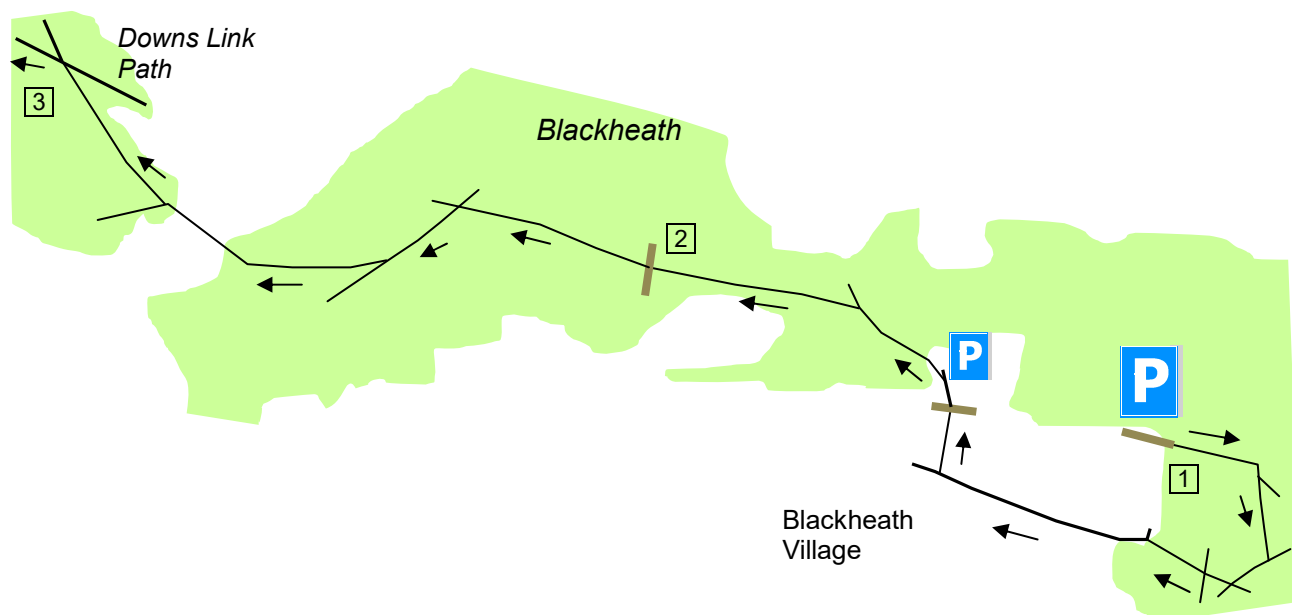


The walk begins at the free **Blackheath car park**, grid ref TQ034462, **postcode GU4 8RB**. For more details see at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).

Bird's Eye View



The Walk



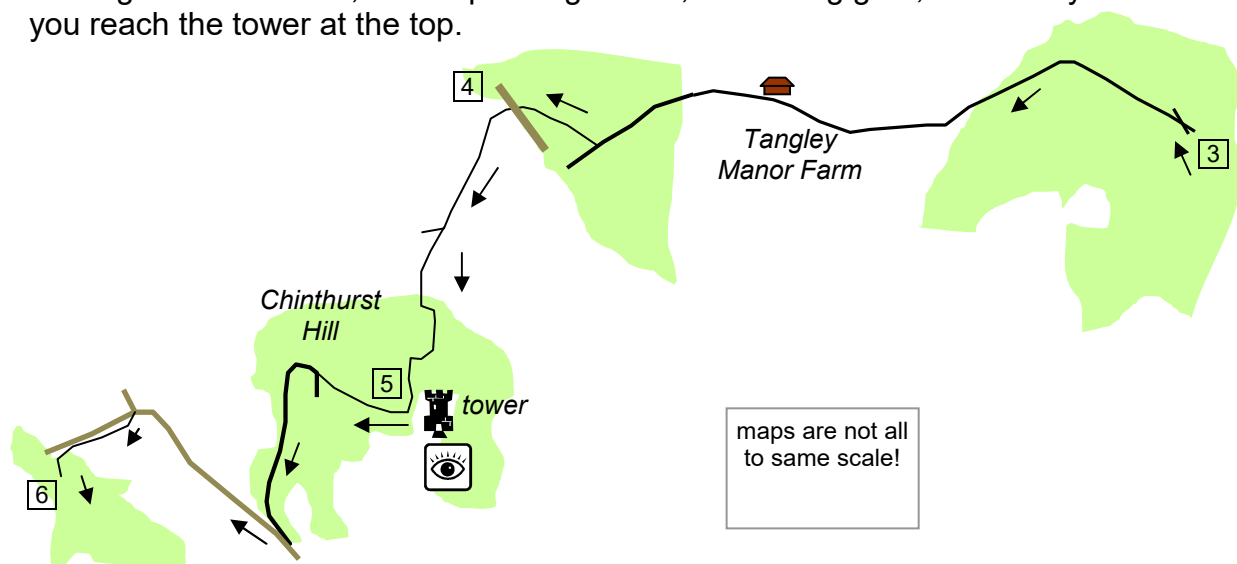
1 This walk starts with a quick view of the village and a short cut, avoiding the main paths, so as to give you an idea of the delicate beauty of Blackheath. Go to the far end of the car park where there is a noticeboard and turn full **right** through a gap in the car park fence on a narrow path through the dark pines. In about 40m at an oblique T-junction veer **right**. In about 15m, when you meet a broader track, turn **right** on a narrow path by a blank post, heading towards some houses. Continue to another 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. After *Cricket Cottage* and its safety nets (in season) 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 just 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 path with a 3-way fingerpost, turn **left** on a bridleway. 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 Tangley Manor (2018: now tastefully converted for homes). 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 busy road visible ahead, turn **right** on a narrow path through the undergrowth. [There used to be a fingerpost here with a sign

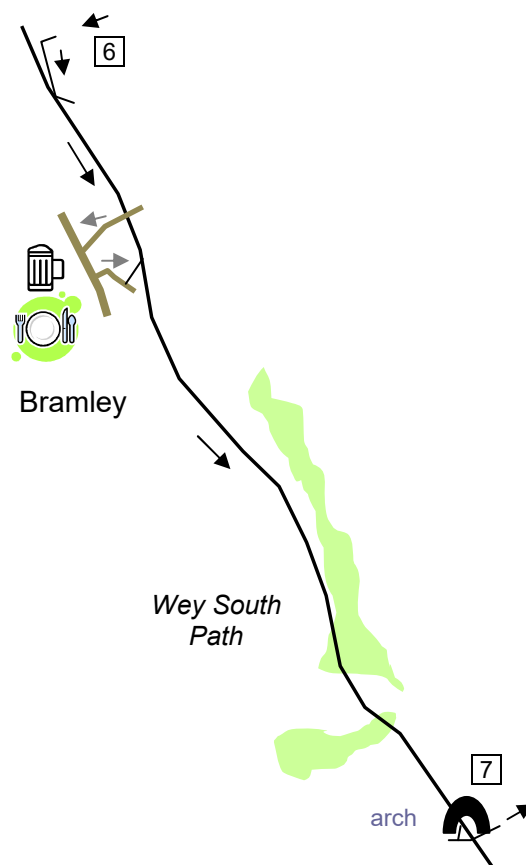
for the DLP, all now vanished; the path is quite obvious but easily missed.] The path leads down to a main road, the A248.

- 4** Cross the main road between two wooden posts to continue on the DLP on a broad path. **P** On your left you can glimpse the Chinthurst Hill car park. 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 signs for the *Chinthurst Hill Nature Reserve* and *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, or an upward gradient, or a swing gate, until finally you reach the tower at the top.

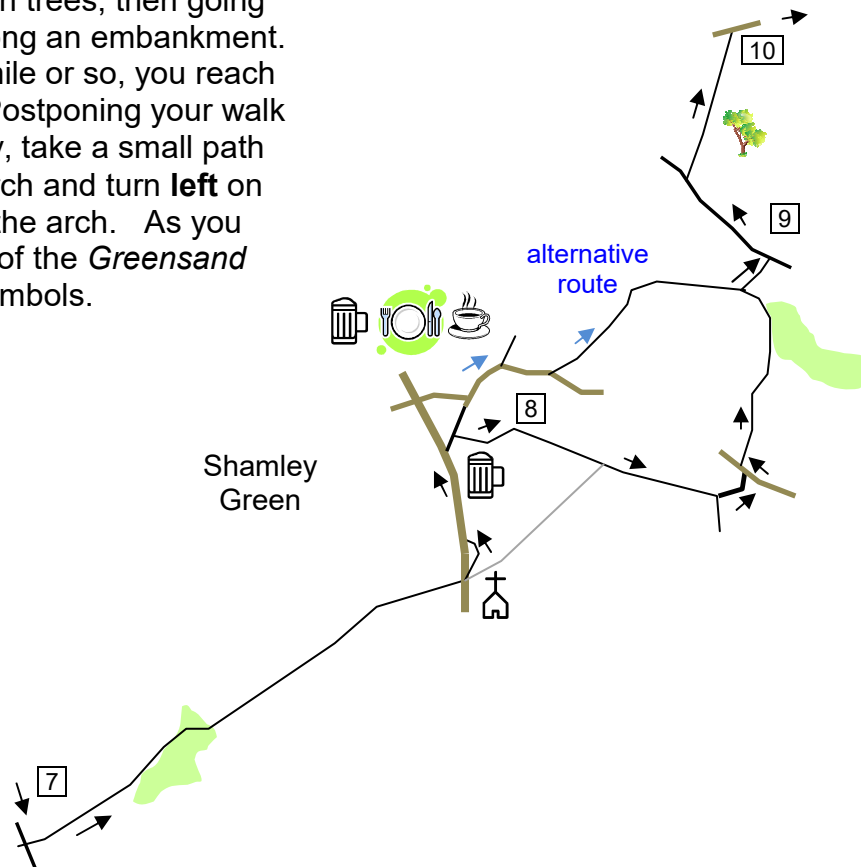


Chinthurst hill is a peaceful spot. The tower is a stone folly built in the 1930s, now a Grade II listed building. There are great views from the summit north (where the foliage permits) to Guildford, St Martha's Hill and the North Downs and south to Blackheath and Hascombe Hill (all visited on other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

- 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. Before a bridge over the dismantled railway, fork **left** and keep **right** to cross the smaller "turnover bridge" (which allowed the horse to switch banks without the need to unfasten the rope) over the old dry canal 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 meet a loop in the river by an info tablet, 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 traverse 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. (At a fork you can take the fenced-in left fork or the parallel right fork in the meadow, because they promptly re-join.) Soon you go over a stream via a concrete bridge later through a wooden gate and, a fraction to the right, over a tarmac driveway. Your path runs between fields* and crosses a driveway to a farm, finally reaching a small car park and the road at Plonks Hill. [Nov 2020: walkers found the fields to be flooded; they found a detour by looking at Google maps which took them onto the main road and linked in with the wooden bridge described in 6 above. They then took that crossing path over the canal and found their way into Shamley Green, where they picked up the walk.] Go straight over the road into the churchyard of Christ Church, Ignoring a footpath straight ahead, 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.

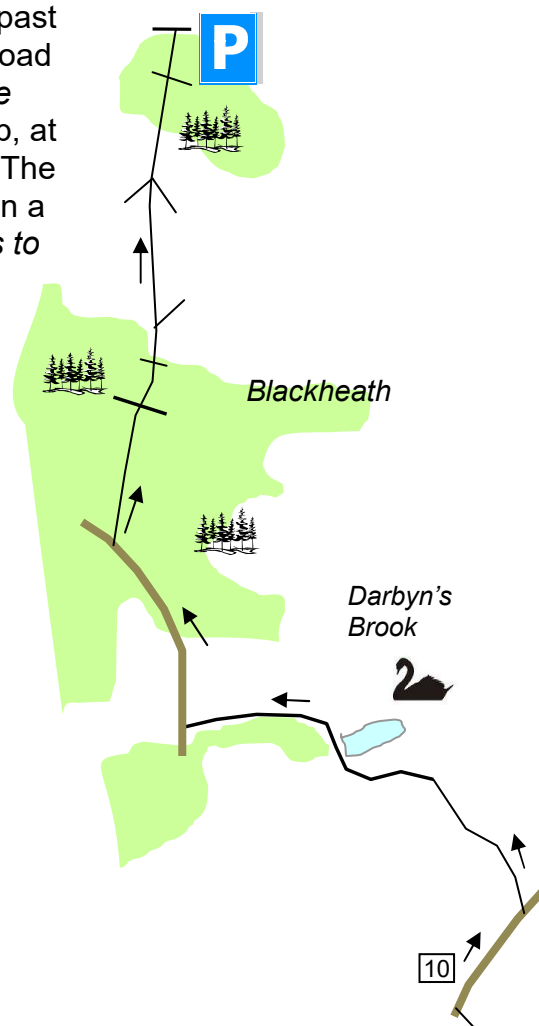


Shamley Green delights the visitor with its many old listed timber framed buildings surrounding the large village green. There is a village store in the centre. The “Bricklayers” specialises in budget Sunday roasts. The “Red Lion” gastro-pub, a little further along on the right, described by walkers as “friendly” with “good service”, 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 Virgin boss 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 neglected, although (2014-2020) it was cleared. But it may have waterlogged middle sections. 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* with a seasonal show of bluebells. Near the top, at a 3-way 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*.

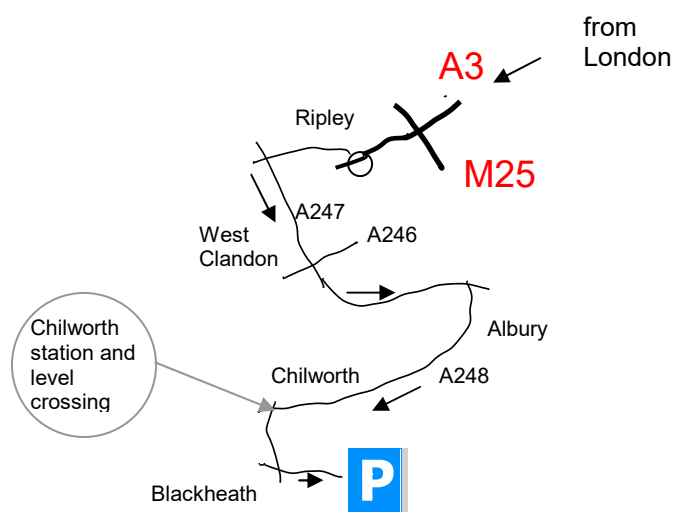


- 9 Continue on the sandy path for 200m, passing the entrance to a spruced-up farm on your left, until the path bends round to the left. Look for two metal gates on the right. Take the straight footpath here on the **right**, marked with a yellow arrow, downhill between the two gates. It is especially 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 the 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 **See map on previous page.** Uphill, about 150m after *Hallams Farmhouse*, just as you begin to cross diagonally under a triple overhead wire, look 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 you 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 by the famous three-choice fingerpost and go to the end of the road where there is a free car park.

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

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