



Brook: The Dog and Pheasant

Distance: 6½ km=4 miles

easy walking with one short steep ascent

Region: Surrey

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Refreshments: Brook

Map: Explorer 133 (Haslemere) *but the maps in this guide should be sufficient*

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

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Village, pub, hills, woodland, green meadows

In Brief

You'll find the *Dog and Pheasant* immediately opposite the *second* most important place in Brook: the Cricket Pitch. The pub was purchased in 2008 by four local businessmen one of whom lived at the pub as a boy. The pub really is the centre of the community with every day a special day. Every Wednesday the chef comes out of the kitchen and will grill your T-bone steak in the inglenook. Bring together more than five people and you can have a suckling pig. Beers are Ringwood, TEA and a rotating range of other guests. For bookings, call 01428 682763.

You may arrive in time for the Brook Fête on May Bank Holiday when the pub plays host to the Brookfest with live bands. The other notable building is the *Pirrie Hall*, given in 1923 by Lord Pirrie, owner of Witley Park (see below), looking a bit like a cricket pavilion. You will see the Pirrie name in metal gates all over the area as a "P" inside a star below a crown. (He was not a modest man.)



There are no nettles on this walk so any sensible clothing should be fine. It is fairly dry underfoot, although boots will make you more comfortable.

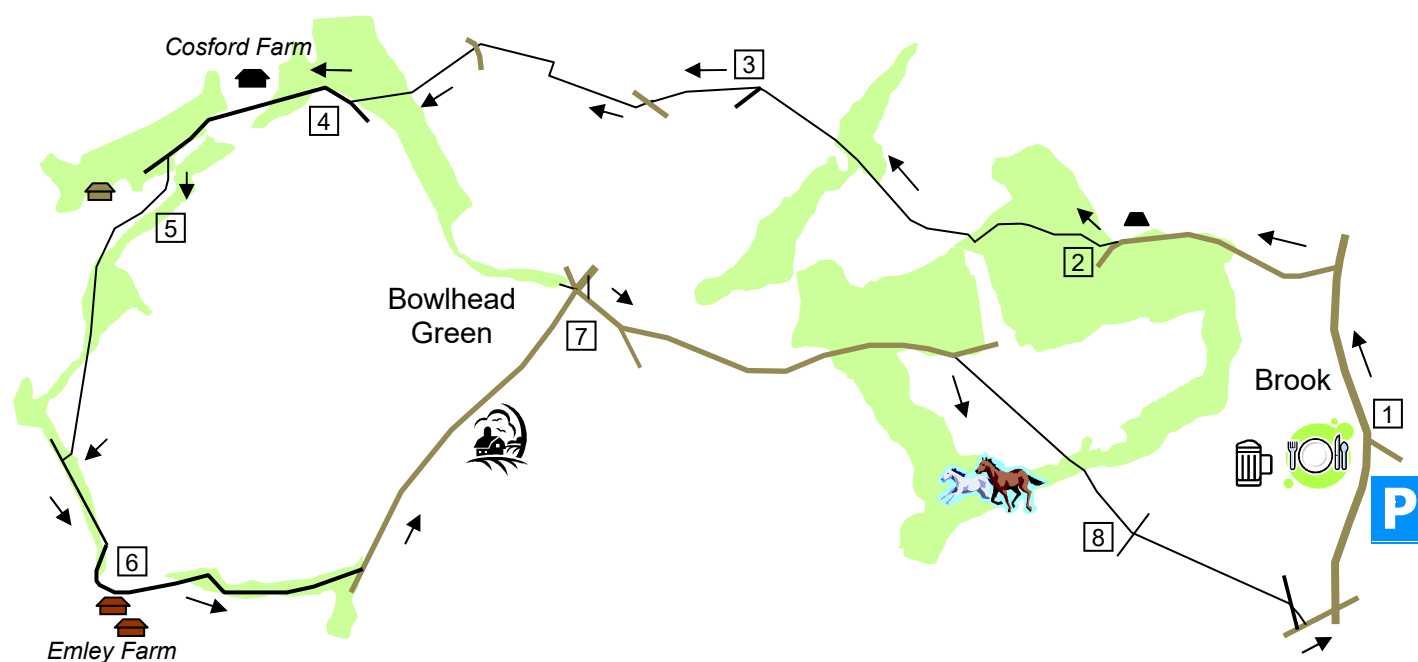


Most of the stiles have a big gap for your dog to get through but if he is large he may have some difficulty.



The walk begins in the village of **Brook, near Haslemere, Surrey, postcode GU8 5UJ**. Park opposite the *Dog and Pheasant* pub in a side road alongside the green. For more details, see at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).

The Walk



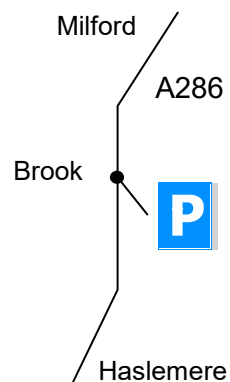
- 1 With the pub on your left, walk along the main road for about 300m. Just after the *50 mph* sign, turn **left** on a narrow lane, Bowlhead Green Road. You pass houses on your left whilst on your right is the long stone wall enclosing Witley Park. (For its remarkable story, see the walk in this series "*Witley, Hambledon, Chiddingfold*".) After 400m along the lane, you reach a small gatehouse on the right, *Pine Lodge*. Fork **right** immediately after the lodge and go through a tall metal kissing-gate in the wall ahead.
- 2 The path veers right and leads uphill rather steeply under ever-darkening laurel trees. Thankfully, the path soon levels out and on your left is a beautiful green field dotted with mature oaks. The path darkens again under hollies and takes you through a very old kissing-gate as it veers left with the oak field on view again. At the end of the narrow path, turn **right** onto a wide path running between open meadows and wire fences. This grassy path veers right and runs under oaks as it descends into the valley and rises again on the other side. At the top, your path takes you through a tall kissing-gate in front of *Lower House*. Avoid a driveway on your left and cross straight over to go past a disused kissing-gate into a small narrow meadow.
- 3 Keep left in the meadow and go through a modern kissing-gate at the far side. Keep ahead along the right-hand side of another small meadow and go through a large metal gate onto a tarmac drive. Cross the drive, up steps opposite, through a small wooden gate and immediately **right** along the right-hand side of a large field. As you wheel **right** round the first corner, go over a stile and turn **left** on a path running under trees. At the end, you reach a tarmac lane. Cross the lane to go through a small modern kissing-gate. Continue across the centre of the pasture heading for a wood ahead. As you reach the other side, go over a stile and through another modern kissing-gate, then steeply down through woodland. In about 100m keep straight on by a marker post, thus joining a bridleway coming in from the left.

- 4 Take the first path on your left by a marker post and descend a short steep path with some stone steps passing a large pond on your left. You are now walking in front of *Cosford Farm House* on a wide grassy route between old brick walls. You pass a spectacular piece of topiary and join a tarmac drive coming from the house. Where the tarmac drive immediately bends right uphill, leave it to keep left along a dirt track, indicated by a yellow arrow. Follow the track gently downhill between banks for just over 100m until your track goes through an open metal gate. Turn **left** here through a kissing-gate by a post with yellow arrows. *Don't miss this turning!*
- 5 Your path goes over a stream and bends right under wires along the top of a sloping meadow with the timbered cottage and its barn forming a comely picture below. Aim for the top left corner and when you reach it go through an old metal swing-gate. *Note the round steel shield with a star, crown and letter "P". You will see one on many of the old metal gates in these parts, a reminder that this was once part of the Lea Park estate of Lord Pirrie.* Continue along a narrow path through a dense holly wood. Your path emerges through a metal kissing-gate into a meadow. Keep the same direction across it diagonally, cutting the right-hand corner of the meadow. At the top corner, your path leads you through a kissing-gate and veers **left** onto a wide enclosed path. In 150m, go over a sturdy stile and turn **right** on a track.
- 6 Shortly you reach the ancient buildings of Emley Farm. *Dating from the 1600s, this is a grade-II listed timber-framed farmhouse with its barns and outbuildings all unchanged from the 1800s. If it seems familiar, this is because it a favourite location for film and TV productions that need a pure unspoilt historic rural setting.* Keep straight ahead through the farm ignoring a footpath to your right. The track zigzags right-left and finally leads through a 1-bar barrier to a lane. Turn **left** on this quiet narrow lane between high hedgerows. You pass a Bowlhead Green Farm with its converted barns and arrive at a crossroads in the centre of the village of Bowlhead Green.
- 7 Turn **right** at the crossroads on a lane signposted *Brook, Witley*, immediately keeping **left** at a fork. This narrow shady lane passes several entrances to properties and soon runs alongside the wall of Witley Park on the left. After a total of 600m on the lane, look for a triangular road sign warning of 16'-0" headroom ahead (in fact a bridge on the Witley Estate). Immediately opposite the sign, at a fingerpost, go **right** up (very overgrown) steps and through a very old kissing-gate into a large grassy meadow. Go straight across the centre, aiming just to the left of a narrow gap in the trees ahead. *This is superior stud country and you should not be surprised if you suddenly see a herd of thoroughbreds galloping full pelt (and harmlessly of course) towards you.* As you go over the crest of the slight slope, you see a modern kissing-gate ahead.
- 8 Go through the kissing-gate, descending through an old metal gate, down steps on another overgrown path to another ornate metal gate (*with another of those round shields*) and down to a track beside another old metal gate. Go over the track to a modern kissing-gate and cross the pasture to go through a pair of similar gates either side of a ditch. Bear a fraction left, going past an oak on your left. As you proceed you will see another kissing-gate at the far end of a wooden fence. After going through this gate, cross a drive to an old metal swing-gate. Turn **left** on a road and immediately **left** again on the main road leading back to the *Dog and Pheasant* where the walk began.



Getting there

By car: Brook is on the A286 road between Milford (near Guildford) and Haslemere, Surrey.



By bus/train: bus 70 from Haslemere or Guildford station, not Sunday. Check the timetables.

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