



Charlwood: The *Half Moon* (Pub Walk)

Distance: 6½ km=4 miles

easy walking with some gradients

Region: Surrey

Date written: 11-apr-2012

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Refreshments: Charlwood

Map: Explorer 146 (Dorking) *but the map in this guide should be sufficient*

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

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Village, woodland, bluebells, meadows

In Brief

This pub is a famous gem in a quaint lane of a picturesque village close to the Norman church of St Nicholas (see below). Hard to believe, this pub is a favourite “local” for Gatwick Airport and, looking at Google Earth, the village seems to sit just to one side of the main runway – although you *definitely* would never normally guess that: the village and this walk are among the most *quiet and peaceful* you will find anywhere. The *Half Moon* was recently refurbished with a traditional look and a long informal dining area. According to the reviews, prices are not outlandish. Three real ales are on tap, usually Black Sheep, Doombar and Tribute, and fish is a star menu item. There are also snacks. The terrace is small but cosy and there is a pleasant garden. It gets quite busy Sunday lunchtimes. (To enquire, ring 01293-863414.)



Part of this circular walk goes through Glover’s Wood, famous for its bluebells. So late spring is a good time. (There is also a special *Bluebell Walk* in this series.) There are no nettles so any footwear and clothing should be fine. Your dog is also welcome everywhere and will manage the stiles.

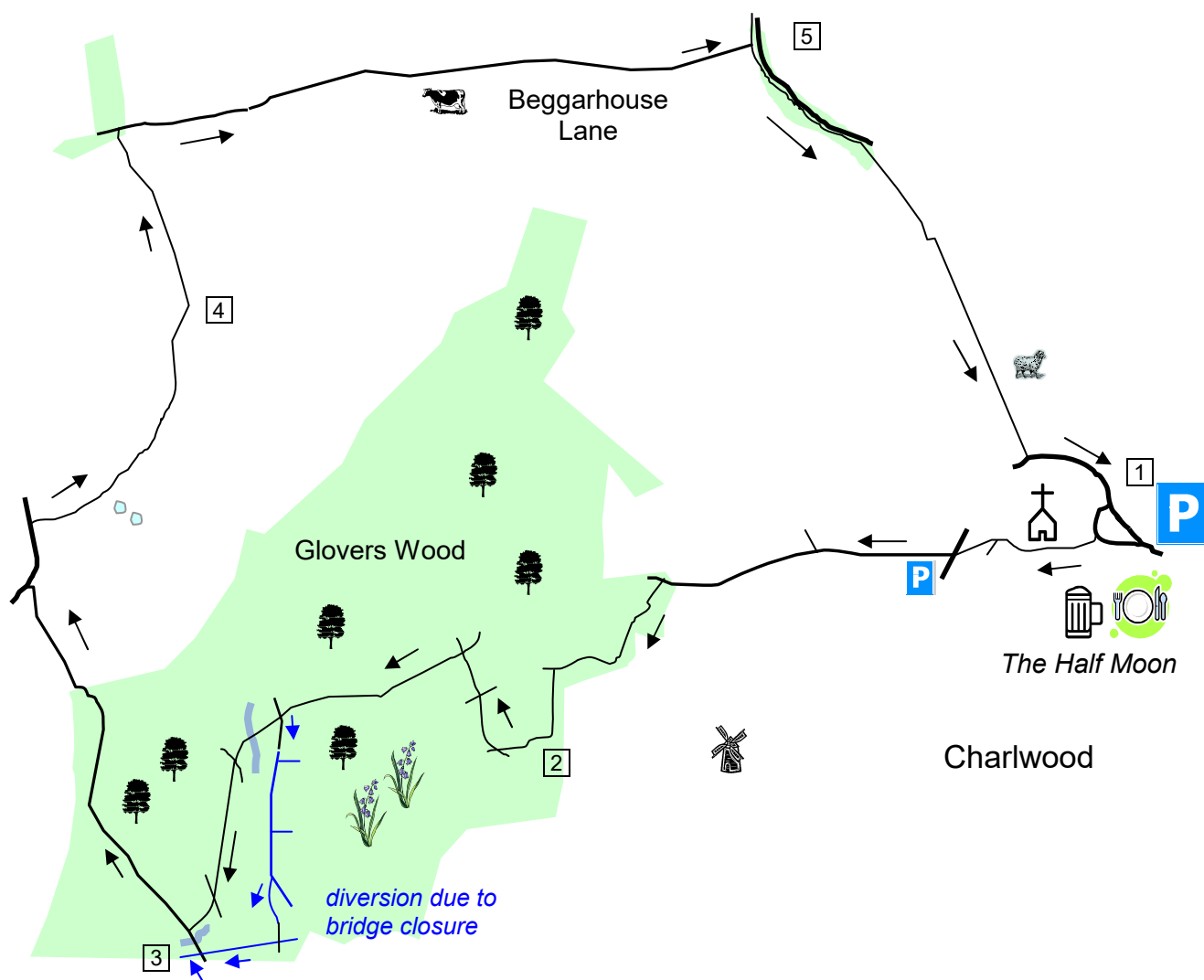
Feb-May 2017: [There is a diversion on this walk caused by a bridge closure. The diversion uses an excellent alternative bridge. Please see the coloured part in section \[2\]\(#\). Any further feedback will be welcome.](#)

By car: the walk begins next to the pub in Charlwood village, **postcode RH6 0DS**. For more details, see at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).

The Walk

Charlwood is known for its proximity to Gatwick Airport but you would hardly guess that while walking through this tranquil medieval village. One noble resident was John de Gatwyck who went on a crusade in 1311 and paid for an extension to the church. Charlwood parish has over 80 listed buildings and features, including 28 medieval open hall cottages (originally built without chimneys) and many crown post timber-framed houses.

The church of St Nicholas dates from 1080 but the Norman structure has many later alterations. Near the entrance are two medieval wall paintings. One, dating from 1290, tells the story of St. Margaret. The other narrates the miraculous resurrection of three scholars who had been 'cut up and salted as pork'. They are reproduced in a modern painting on the west wall. The wooden screen is also medieval and is unique in the country for its size.



- 1 Go through the churchyard with the church on your right. Ignore a signed footpath on the left. Cross a road and continue up Grovers Road. Ignore a footpath right and continue by the black wrought iron gate of *The Glovers* with its intriguing scrapyard of old planes, then through a wooden swing-gate. The path goes through another swing-gate, between fences and meadows and enters Glover's Wood. (Don't worry about a Surrey C.C. sign about an "unsafe bridge": *this walk provides an attractive diversion across a different bridge.*)

Glover's Wood is a site of special scientific interest and one of the largest areas of woodland in the Surrey Weald, situated on Paludina limestone overlying Weald Clay. It covers 96 hectares, of which 28 hectares were acquired by the Woodland Trust in 1983.

Turn immediately **left** on the woodland trail, indicated by a white arrow with a two-leaf symbol, going along a little walkway. The path skirts a small pond with a bench seat, going over a small bridge. The path has wooden slats to assist you. In late spring you will get your first sight of the extensive bluebells for which this wood is so famous. Stay on the main path, close to the edge of the wood. At a junction near the corner of a meadow, turn **left** with the main path. Clearly visible on your left now is Lowfield Heath Windmill.

Lowfield Heath Windmill is a grade-II-listed post mill but its origin is a mystery. It goes back at least to 1741 and was probably moved to this site (windmills were sometimes relocated) but from where? It ceased to operate from wind in 1880 but worked on by steam power. In the 1930s it was revived for aesthetic reasons but within 25 years it was derelict again. After a campaign, it was restored in 1989 and subsequently was put into full working order. The windmill is open on the last Sunday of each month, on National Mills Day and at the Heritage Open Weekend.

2 Keep to the main path as it curves right and where it meets a diagonal crossing path, veer **right** in the direction of the white arrow. At the next junction, go straight over, ignoring the white arrow pointing left. At the next crossing path, turn **left**, thus returning to the waymarked footpath. The footpath runs for 300m or so through the wood and goes straight over a crossing path, about 50m before the path ahead goes down some steps.

2a Year 2017 diversion. The path ahead is temporarily closed (optimistically) "until May" due to an "unsafe bridge". Instead, this attractive alternative was provided by one of our regular walkers, hardly any longer and following an enjoyable route, although it is steep in one part. See the blue route on the map above. If the bridge has been repaired, skip to section **2b** and send us feedback.

Turn **left** on this crossing path with the watercourse over on your right. Continue along this wide path, ignoring paths on the left after about 50m and 200m respectively. About 300m from the start of this path, it takes a distinct left bend. **Leave** the wide path here by taking a much narrower path straight ahead. It leads down quite steeply to a small ditch and up the other side. Shortly after, you come to a crossing path. Turn **right** here between two vertical wooden posts. After 100m on this easy high path, you meet another wide crossing path, an official footpath. Go **right** on it, soon crossing the stream via an excellent bridge. Now continue from section **3**.

2b Your path goes down steps, across a bridge over the stream and up more steps the other side. Continue straight ahead, avoiding a path branching off left and a path right, going through a clutter of silver birches. At a junction, go over a diagonal crossing path, still following the yellow arrows. Eventually you come to a junction with a wide official footpath. Turn sharp **right** on this path.

- 3 Follow this footpath, over some woodland debris, for 300m, where you see a green meadow over on your left. Keep ahead on a wide bridleway here, keeping the meadow on your left. Follow the bridleway for 200m, avoiding all turn-offs, till it reaches a corner of the meadow and zigzags left-right round it. The bridleway now runs for some distance between hedges and comes out to a road. Turn **right** on the road. In 100m, go **right** over a stile by a signpost. Keep ahead across the meadow, not far from the right-hand side, aiming for a stile visible in the hedgerow. Just on your right is a copse with two small ponds. Go over the stile (or squeeze past it) and set a course across the large meadow aiming just to the left of some houses, passing through a gap in the central fence. As you approach the other side, you see three stiles, each with a yellow arrow, two close together and one further over on the left. Aim for the **middle** stile, which is in the corner. As you cross, you find that there are two stiles with a bridge in between.
- 4 Continue along the right-hand side of a meadow, over two more stiles either side of a farm track and along the right-hand side of the next meadow. Just before the corner, your path veers right by a newish wooden fence on a woodland path. Go over a stile in the corner and a little bridge and turn **right** on a wide path. This is Beggarhouse Lane, an ancient byway. You pass Greenings Farm. Ignore a footpath shortly on the right. The wood on your left is Beggar's Gill and, beyond, you have a good view of the North Downs. You reach *Beggars Cottage* and *Eastlands* and the start of some tarmac. Continue all the way to a main road. Turn **right** on the road.
- 5 There is a narrow path through trees running close to the main road. It eventually passes the entrance to Barfield Farm. Fork **right** here on a signposted footpath. Your path runs beside a fence and leads over a stile. It then zigzags left-right by a gate giving you a good view of Gatwick Airport with sheep and horse pastures each side. After a redundant stile, you finally exit via a stile or a gate to a track and thence out to a road. Turn **left** on the road, passing the little gem *Laurel Cottage*. Keep **right** at the road junction, quickly taking you back to the village and the *Half Moon* pub/restaurant where the walk began.



Getting there

By car: One way, out of many, to get to Charlwood, if coming from the north, is via Betchworth. Go south on Station Road, reachable via the A24 and Headley or via Dorking and the A25. Turn left at a T-junction and first right through Betchworth village, continue on the Sowerhill Road to Leigh where you need to turn left at a T-junction. This road leads you to Charlwood village. Turn very sharp right just after a builder's works, opposite a timbered house, signed *The Half Moon*.

Another way is via the M23. Come off at the Gatwick Airport exit. Follow signs for the A23 until you see a left turn at a roundabout for *Charlwood*. Go past the *Greyhound* pub and 400m later veer left on a narrow lane to the *Half Moon*.

In case there are no spaces free near the pub you can:

- Park in **Glovers Road**, postcode **RH6 0EH** (see the map) which is on your route, *but don't miss a visit to the church!*
- Or continue a little further along the main road and park in a side road, **Chapel Road**, on your left.

By bus/train: bus 526/527 from Crawley station . Check the timetables.

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