



## Guildford-to-Haslemere Monster

Distance: 32 km=20 miles

moderate but long walking

Region: Surrey

Date written: 5-apr-2018

Author: Schwebefuss & Co.

Refreshments: Guildford, Hascombe, Chiddingfold

Maps: Explorer 145 (Guildford) & 133 (Haslemere)

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*River, disused railway, woodland, green meadows, villages*

### In Brief



This is a monster linear walk from **Guildford** to **Haslemere** with access at each end by British Rail. It takes you through some typical Surrey countryside, such as you find on some of the favourite country walks in this region. Along the way, you visit two especially picturesque villages, Hascombe and Chiddingfold. You also make a circuit of Hascombe Hill with some great views. This walk goes through some wild terrain with few roads and there is very little road walking.

This walk can be combined with the Haslemere-Guildford Monster, which makes the reverse journey through totally different country, to make a Double Monster of a bone-shattering 41 miles.

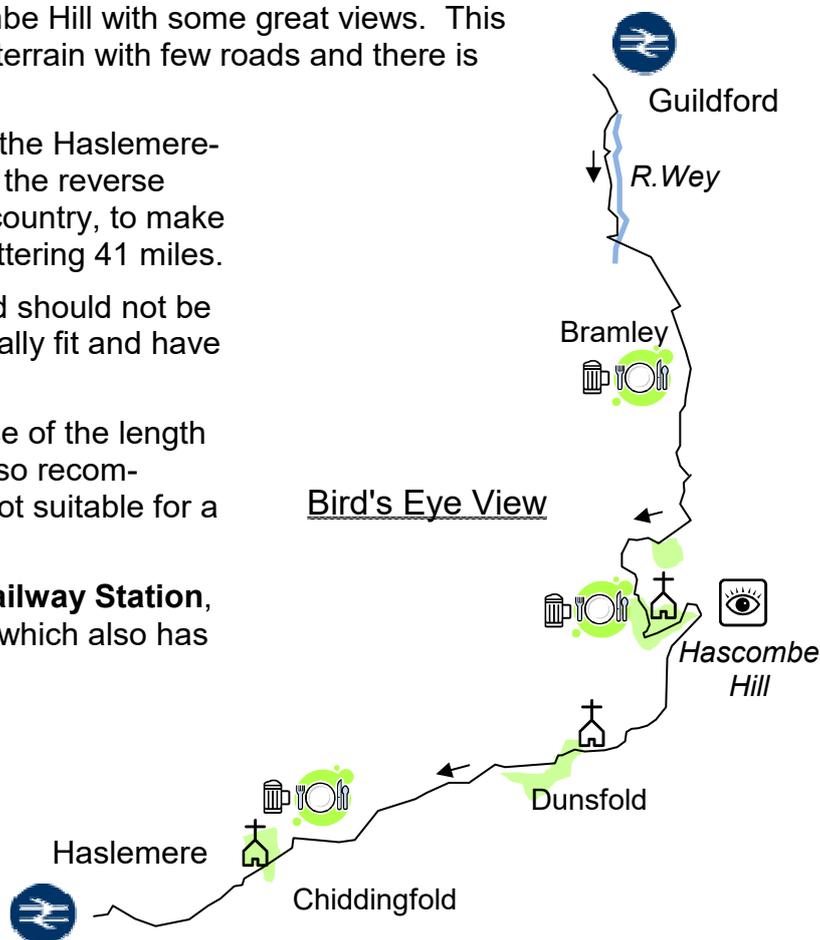


**Warning!** This is a long walk and should not be attempted unless you are physically fit and have back-up support.



Boots are recommended because of the length of this walk. A walking pole is also recommended. This monster walk is not suitable for a dog. Cover your legs!

The walk begins at **Guildford Railway Station**, Surrey, and ends at **Haslemere** which also has its Railway Station.



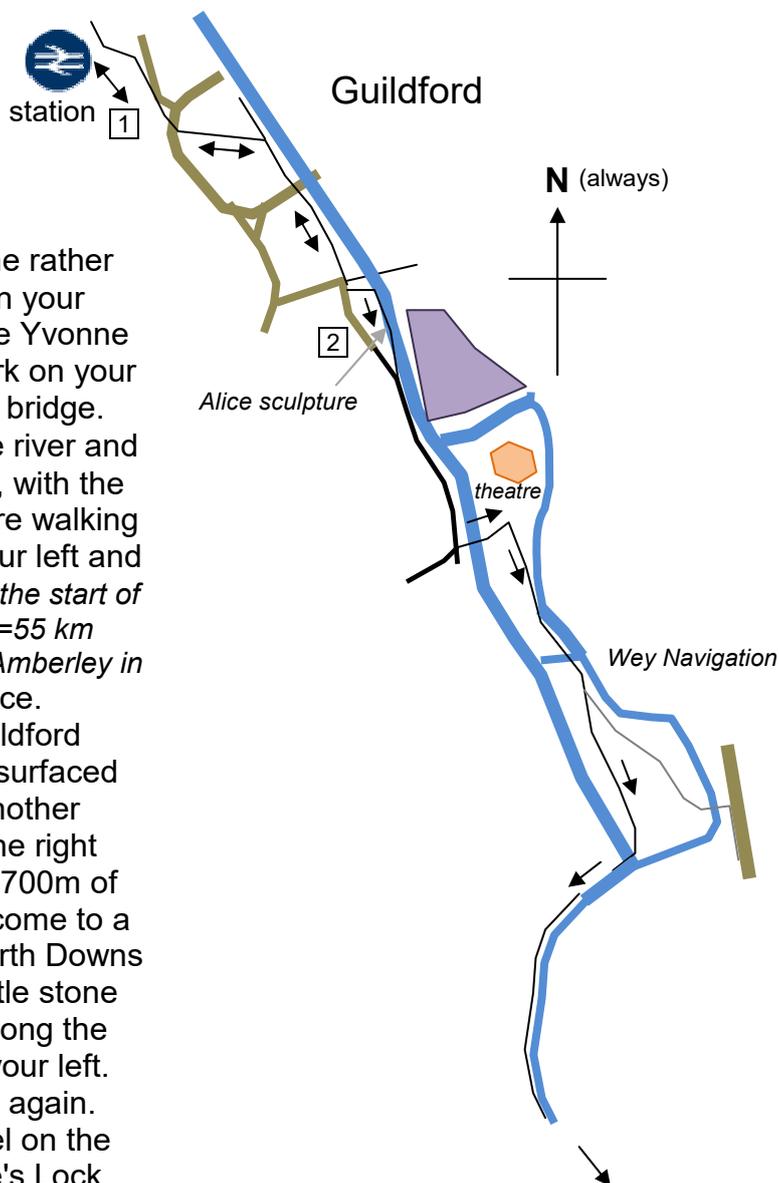
## The Walk

### Trek 1 Guildford to Bramley 6¼ km=4 miles

- 1 Come out from Guildford Railway Station to the taxi rank and turn **right**. Follow the wide footway as it curves left close to the road and go down the underpass straight ahead, going through a tunnel under the road. Turn **left** and go up steps, taking you to the footway on other side of the main road. Keep dead straight on, on a path between two brand new redbrick buildings. The path leads diagonally down more step to the banks of the River Wey. Turn **right** along the riverside path, going under a main road, passing a car park on your right and reaching another road with the pedestrianised Town Bridge on your left. Staying on the same side of the river, cross straight over towards the *White House* pub. Turn **left** immediately before the pub and **right** along the riverside.

*Just to your right, over the grass, is one of the several "Alice" sculptures you will find around Guildford. Lewis Carroll stayed here with his sister out of Oxford term time and he is buried here. This one, "Down the Rabbit Hole", shows the scene from the start of "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland".*

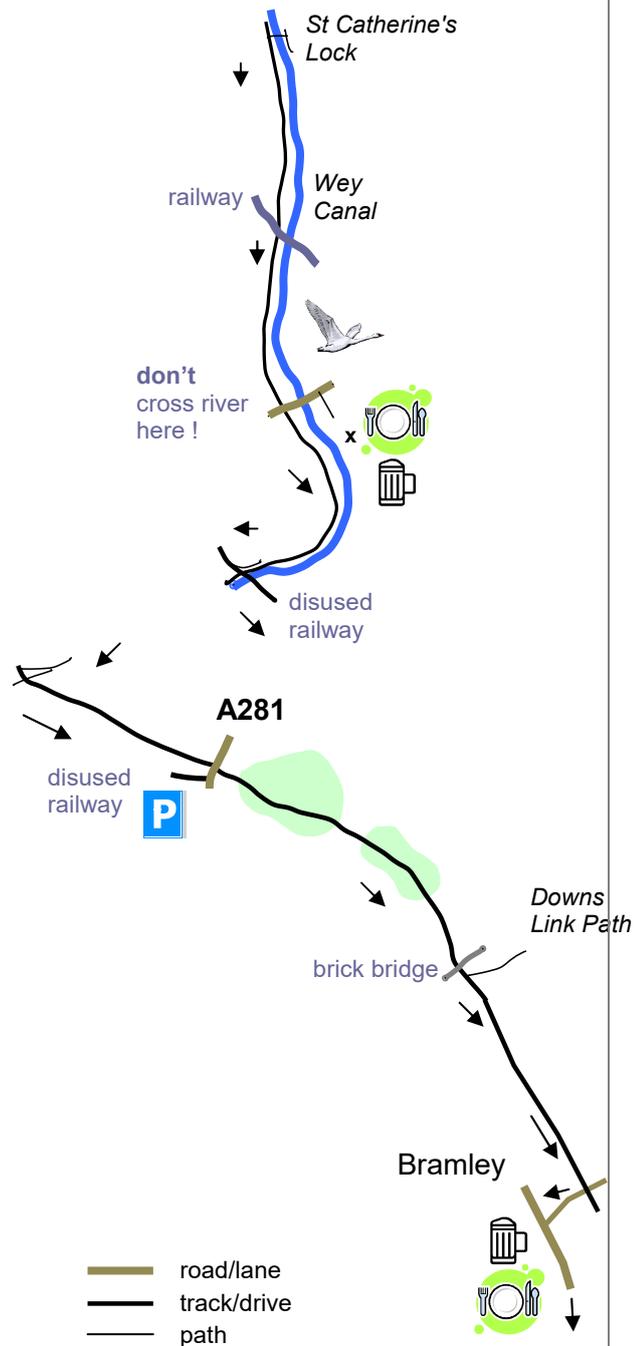
- 2 Continue along the riverside with the rather unedifying edifice of Debenhams on your left, later the rounded exterior of the Yvonne Arnaud Theatre. There is a car park on your right as you approach a small steel bridge. Turn **left** across the bridge over the river and turn **sharp right** along the towpath, with the Millmead Lock on your left. You are walking between the Wey Navigation on your left and the river itself on your right. *This is the start of the Wey South Path (WSP), a 35 mile=55 km walk which follows the river as far as Amberley in West Sussex.* You come over a sluice. Immediately after, opposite the Guildford Boathouse, fork **right** on a narrow surfaced path. Your path turns right, over another sluice, and you are now following the right bank of the main river/canal. After 700m of gentle tree-lined meandering, you come to a junction on your right where the North Downs Way (NDW) joins the route, by a little stone bridge and stone seat. Continue along the riverside, ignoring a footbridge on your left. The river bends sharp left and right again. Ignore a footpath and railway tunnel on the right. Soon you reach St Catherine's Lock.



3 Continue for another km along the towpath, going under a railway bridge, and finally arriving at a narrow road over Broadford Bridge, where you need to take care because of the traffic. Cross the road directly over and continue along the **same** side of the canal. (But, by turning left over the bridge for 150m, you will reach the *Parrot Inn*, a large family pub.) You are now on a National Trust path, part of the *Wey Navigation*. The path gradually bends right with the canal and reaches a large black metal bridge. This is part of the *disused railway* which is now a fine straight walking track. Go through a wooden swing-gate and take the rising path forking right and turn **left** on the track over the bridge.



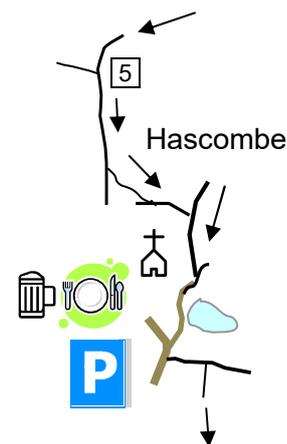
4 Follow the wide straight track all the way to a main road, the A281, close to Trunley Heath Road and a car park. Cross the main road and continue on the track at the other side. The track follows its straight course over an arm of the canal, through woodland. *On your right soon is a memorial pier with picnic tables.* In 700m you reach a brick bridge. Go under the bridge to a 3-way fingerpost where the *Downs Link Path (DLP)* joins you from the left. *The DLP is a 37 mile=60 km path linking the North Downs Way with the South Downs Way.* Keep straight on, now following both the WSP and the DLP. In about 3½ km=2 miles, you pass Bramley and Wonersh station and come to a (disused) level crossing. Turn **right** at the level crossing, thus leaving those long-distance footpaths, and turn **left** at the main road into Bramley village, a good place to stop for refreshments.





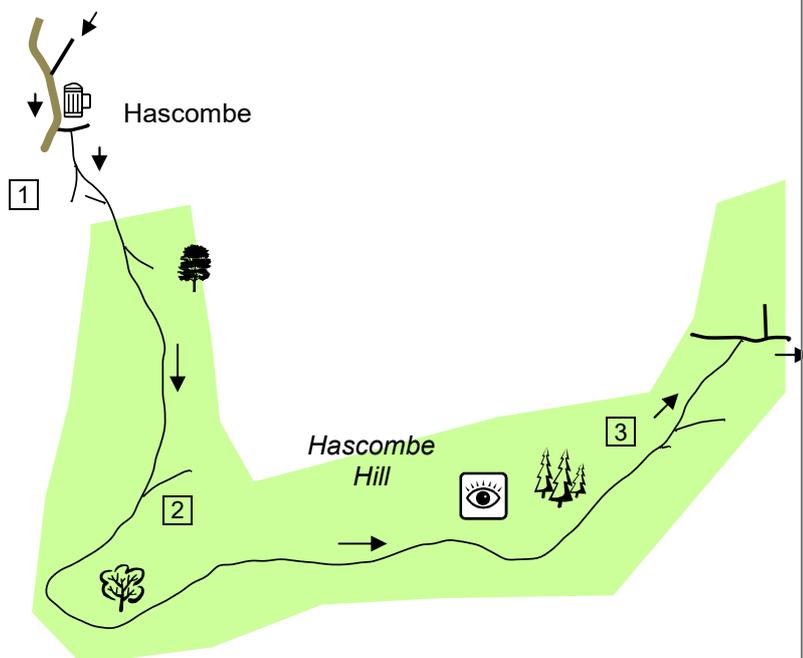
4 In 30m, leave the lane by forking **left** on a signposted bridleway. The path runs under trees and bends **right** on a deep sunken path with pines on the left. As it levels out, you come to a post with arrows where the GW bends away to the left. Leave the GW here by veering **right**, ignoring a small wooden gate. The path bends immediately left down into woods and gradually descends, reaches the corner of a pleasing patchwork of horse meadows and runs along the right-hand side of them. The path runs past *Langhurst Farm* on your right with its beautiful converted barn. Eventually, after a long meadowside walk, you arrive at a 3-way junction by a multitude of metal gates and old shacks under a junction of overhead wires near the village of Winkworth.

5 Turn **left** at the 3-way junction on a wide path. The path passes more shacks and *Forge Cottage*. At a large multiple fingerpost, 50m after the cottage, ignore a track on the right signed *Mill Lane* and continue straight ahead on a narrower path. In 75m, go **left** through a modern kissing-gate into a sloping meadow. Veer **right** to go over a stile in a fence and keep the same direction to a kissing-gate on the far side. Join a wide track coming from the right, quickly leading to Upper House Farm. Turn **right** here at a fingerpost on a tarmac drive, thus re-joining the GW for a short stretch. Veer **right**, shortly passing the duckpond in the village of Hascombe. *St Peters church, dating back to 1220, rebuilt in the mid-1800s is on your right*. Continue on the drive to reach the main road by the *White Horse pub*, a perfect stop-off for drinks and refreshments.



**Trek 3 Hascombe to Chiddingfold** 11 km=6½ miles

1 Stay on this side of the road and turn **left** on a driveway beside the pub on the other side. In about 100m, turn **right** beside a garage built in the centre of a wide footpath. (If this path is very muddy, you can delay the right turn by going another 5m, scrambling up a bank and taking a high path above the main path.) There is a yellow arrow pointing this way and you will be following them for most of the first part. After a gentle ascent in a sunken path, veer **left** uphill. You join a track coming in from the right. *In spring, bluebells are in evidence*. In about another 200m, at a fork, take the more level path **right**, ignoring the wider track left. *The slope below was cleared of brushwood recently, giving you good views across to the Loxhill valley and the Hurtwood*. At a T-junction by some tall beeches turn **right** through rhododendrons.



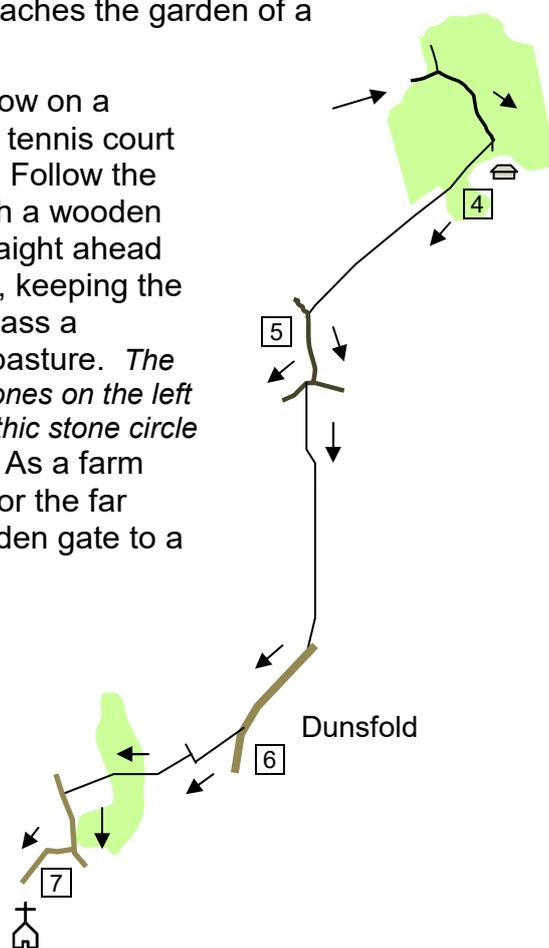
2 This fine path curves round the hill and occasionally you have good views on your right. *On your left, beyond the steep banks, are the remains of a Celtic hill fortress.* You eventually pass, on the left, a large sandy bank with a large log serving as a seat and opposite, on the right, an opening in the trees with fine views to Dunsfold Aerodrome and the South Downs. 350m further, you suddenly enter a forest of thin silver birches. You meet a junction with a rough wide path on your left. Shortly after, you will see two perfectly conical conifers on your left – the second slightly thinner than the first. Just 30m after them, fork **left** on a clear but narrower rising path, leaving the main descending track. *Don't miss this turning!*

3 This pleasant path rises into a high area with holly and beech and passes by an old metal fence. A smaller path joins it from the left and the path begins to descend into a valley with open fields on the other side. After a wooden barrier, it meets a junction near the field. Turn **right** here on a sunken path for a short distance. At the top of a rise, you meet a crossing path. Keep straight ahead on a wide woodland path which becomes sunken. It gradually descends and, after 350m, reaches the garden of a house.

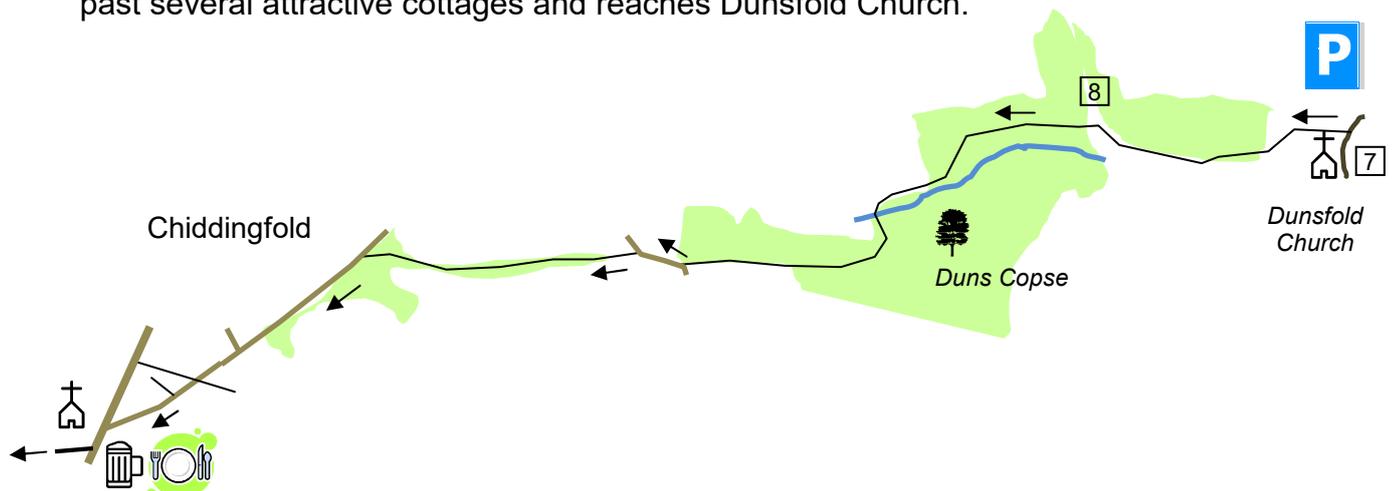
4 Immediately turn sharp **right** following a yellow arrow on a footpath which runs past gardens on the left and a tennis court on the right, up six steps, and then into woodland. Follow the clear woodland path for 200m, finally going through a wooden gate into an open grassy meadow. Keep dead straight ahead across the centre, slightly uphill with fine views left, keeping the young birches, then redwoods, on your left. You pass a redundant stile into a second, even larger, sheep pasture. *The long flat profile of Black Down is visible ahead. The stones on the left are the Dragonstones, looking very much like a megalithic stone circle but in reality built in 1995-7 by an order of neo-Druids.* As a farm building comes into view, veer slightly **left** aiming for the far corner and, on reaching it, go through a large wooden gate to a tarmac farm track.

5 Keep ahead on the track downhill. Where it reaches a T-junction, bear **right** but, in just 40m, go **left** over a stile. Go across the centre of a meadow, passing to the right of a large old water feature. *(The author passed a herd of cute bullocks and noticed some walkers keeping to the other bank.)* It ends with a decorative flint bridge and pine trees. Keep straight ahead to a stile in the hedgerow, almost opposite the flint bridge, and carefully cross the road, Godalming Road, via two stiles. Keep the same direction across the next hayfield passing the corner of a paddock fence and then following a line of young trees. Cross a farm drive via two wooden gates and, keeping the same direction, go **left** through a gate half way along the hedgerow, then over a stile. Turn **right** on the main road into the village of Dunsfold.

*The name Dunsfold comes from the Saxon words "dun" (hill) and "fold" (enclosure).*



- 6 In about 300m, you reach the village green. Stay next to the houses on the right, following a track, grass and tarmac. Soon you pass a small pond, then a larger duckpond where the drive becomes shingly. Turn **right** after *Eden Cottage* on a marked footpath over a stile. Veer **left** on the bridleway, avoiding a footpath right, and follow a narrow path beside a field on the right. Go through a metal gate into woodland, down, ignoring a footpath right, over a stream, up again, and through another metal gate. Go along the right-hand side of a small meadow. (Or, if you don't want to disturb some very pretty heifers, along the left-hand side of the adjoining meadow.) On the other side, go through a metal gate to a lane. Turn **left** on the lane. In 180m, turn **right** on another lane, Church Lane. This lane takes you past several attractive cottages and reaches Dunsfold Church.



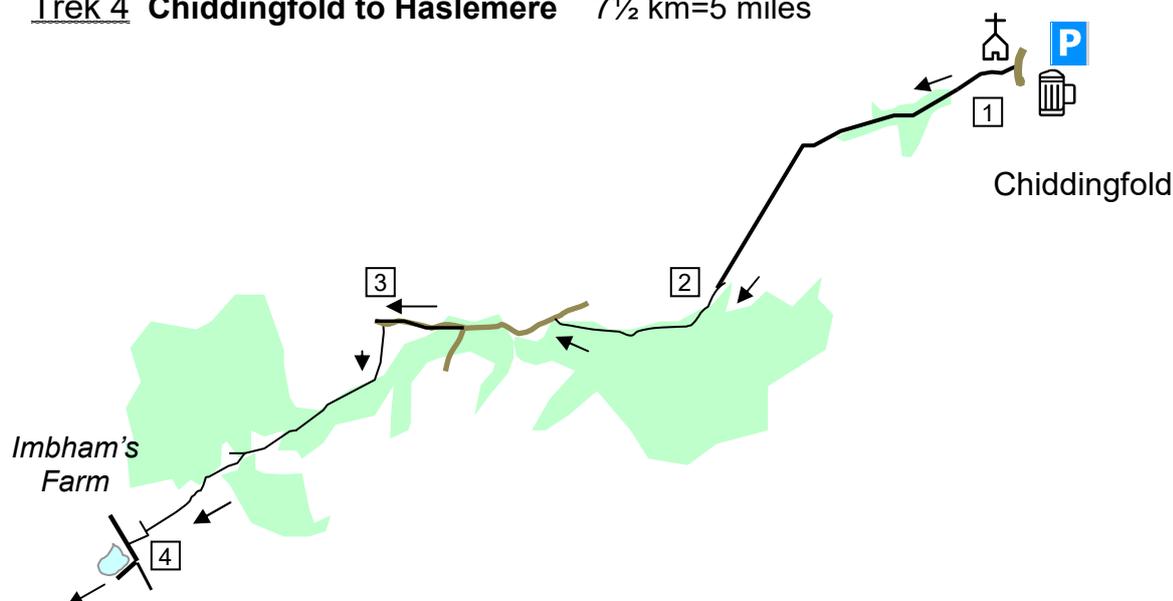
- 7 Take the track on the **right** of the church, marked as a bridleway, with a converted barn on its right, and continue on a grassy path beside the churchyard, avoiding a footpath right after 50m. At the end, go through a metal gate into woodland. The path bends right and runs alongside a large meadow on the left. Where the path ends, go through a small wooden gate and weave left-right into the meadow. Continue along the length of the meadow on the **right**-hand side for about 200m to a narrower part and here switch to the **left**-hand side for another 100m to a large wooden gate on the **left**. Go through the gate and over a sturdy bridge onto a woodland path.

- 8 The path winds through forest, at first near the meandering stream on the left and later touching it again. Finally the path ends at a gate and becomes fenced with a meadow on the right. The path bends left over the stream, up into the woods and then right on a high path, finally running beside a meadow and two houses on the left, the first of which is a converted barn, and out to a lane. Turn **right** on the lane, ignoring a footpath sign directly opposite. In 60m, fork **left** on a bridleway. The path runs for nearly 700m along its own narrow strip of woodland and finally reaches a road. Turn **left** on the road. Follow the road Vann Lane for 400m, as far as some houses and a road junction. Ignore the junction and continue on the road (Pockford Road) for another 800m into the village of Chiddingfold with its big green, two pubs, a church and many attractive buildings. Turn **left** alongside the green on your right, heading towards the church.



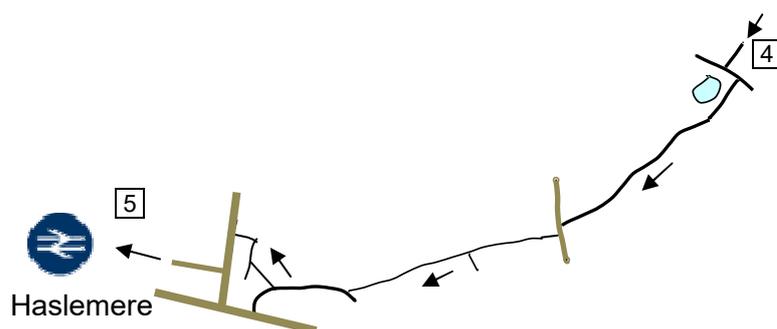
*There are shops in Chiddingfold, including "Treacles Tea Shop" who serve good coffee too. The "Crown Inn" dates at least from 1365, making it the oldest licensed inn in England. The "Swan Inn", a stone's throw away, is another good local.*

## Trek 4 Chiddingfold to Haslemere 7½ km=5 miles



- 1 Cross the road to the church. *Chiddingfold church of St Mary* dates back to around 1190. The church and its churchyard with its notable brick-vaulted graves are worth visiting. Turn **left** on the main road, passing the entrance to the church, and turn **right** on Mill Lane. Follow this cul-de-sac lane for 900m, eventually passing the imposing entrance to *Little Sydenhurst* on the right and a controversial new millionaire's mansion opposite it. 150m further, you pass the venerable Sydenhurst Farm, ignoring a tarmac lane on the right marked as a footpath. 50m further on, after a modern cottage, ignore another footpath sign and a modern kissing gate on your right, continuing on the lane for another 350m.
- 2 Just before a large wooden gate at the entrance to *Hollyhurst*, keep **left** on a bridleway into woodland. *In late spring, the mud here is compensated by a great show of bluebells.* The path runs beside a wire fence on your right and in 250m runs past some corrugated farm sheds on your right. In 150m, ignore a footpath on your left. In 250m you reach a tarmac lane in the hamlet of Frillinghurst. Turn **left** on the lane, passing a red tile-hung house *Furzfield* on your left with its sculpted hedge. Stay on the lane, passing the delectable *Dell Farm House*, till it bends left 50m further on. **Leave** the lane here by continuing straight ahead on a tarmac/concrete track, by a sign for *Frillinghurst*, passing more houses of the hamlet. In 350m, just after some concrete barns and as the concrete track starts to go uphill, look for a stile on your left.
- 3 Turn **left** over the stile (or through a metal gate) and cross a meadow, heading for a swing-gate in the fence. After the swing-gate, continue to the edge of the meadow and veer **right**. **Ignore** a kissing-gate on your left but go through a kissing-gate in the corner into woods. In 50m, at a marker post, ignore a path on your right and continue ahead. Your path soon goes downhill and leads you over a long bridge across a stream. *The mud here is the worst part but it will improve!* After the bridge, the ascending path curves right and, at a junction by a 2-way fingerpost, turns diagonally **left**. (*Don't miss this turn!*) Your path goes deeper into the wood, through a clearing with bracken and back into the depths of Frillinghurst Wood. After a section of birch and bracken, your path runs along the left-hand side of a large field. Near the far side, go **left** and **right** through a gap to switch to the adjoining

field. You meet a large pond by a T-junction with a tarmac drive. Your route is **left** on the drive but it is worth having a peek at the 500-year-old section of Imbhams Farm with its ancient barns and sometimes donkeys, just on your right.



- 4** In only 20m, turn **right** with the tarmac, staying next to the pond. The drive zigzags between farm buildings and continues for 700m, reaching a road, Holdfast Lane. Cross the road, slightly left, and go through a small wooden gate by a house. The path curves right in a meadow and soon goes through a gate to join a track serving several houses. Your route is now straight on through woodland and a charming series of meadows, bridges, woods and gates (never stiles!). Most of the area here belongs to the National Trust and you pass signs for *Swan Barn Farm*, *Witley Copse* and *Mariners Rewe*, and later *Hunter Basecamp*. At a signpost in woodland, fork **left** and, at the next signpost, keep straight on. You eventually arrive at a farm via a gate onto a track. Turn quickly **right** and **left** and follow the track ahead. About 200m after the farm, go **right** through a wooden gate marked with the *Serpent Trail* symbol. Go up a grassy path by a fence to a swing gate and noticeboard for Swan Barn Farm. Turn **right** on the path with views right across the meadow, passing several seats. At a wall that conceals the Haslemere Town Well, turn **left** to reach the High Street in the country town of Haslemere.



If you are doing the **Guildford-Haslemere Double Monster** and returning to Guildford, your route is **right** on the High Street. If you would like an over-night stay, there are good hotels in Haslemere, such as the *Georgian House* and the *Station House* in the town. There are also B&Bs en route.

- 5** To conclude this walk, turn **left** down the High Street and **right** in 50m or so on West Street. Follow West Street for 400m to a T-junction with Tanners Lane. Turn **left** and, at the main road, turn **right**, leading to Haslemere Railway Station.



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