



Hascombe from Afar

Distance: 15 km (9 miles), with 2 optional diversions 1-2km each
easy walking

Region: Surrey

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Refreshments: Hascombe

Map: Explorer 133 (Haslemere)

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Woodland, hills, bluebells in spring, villages

In Brief



This is a gentle circular walk through wooded areas of South West Surrey.

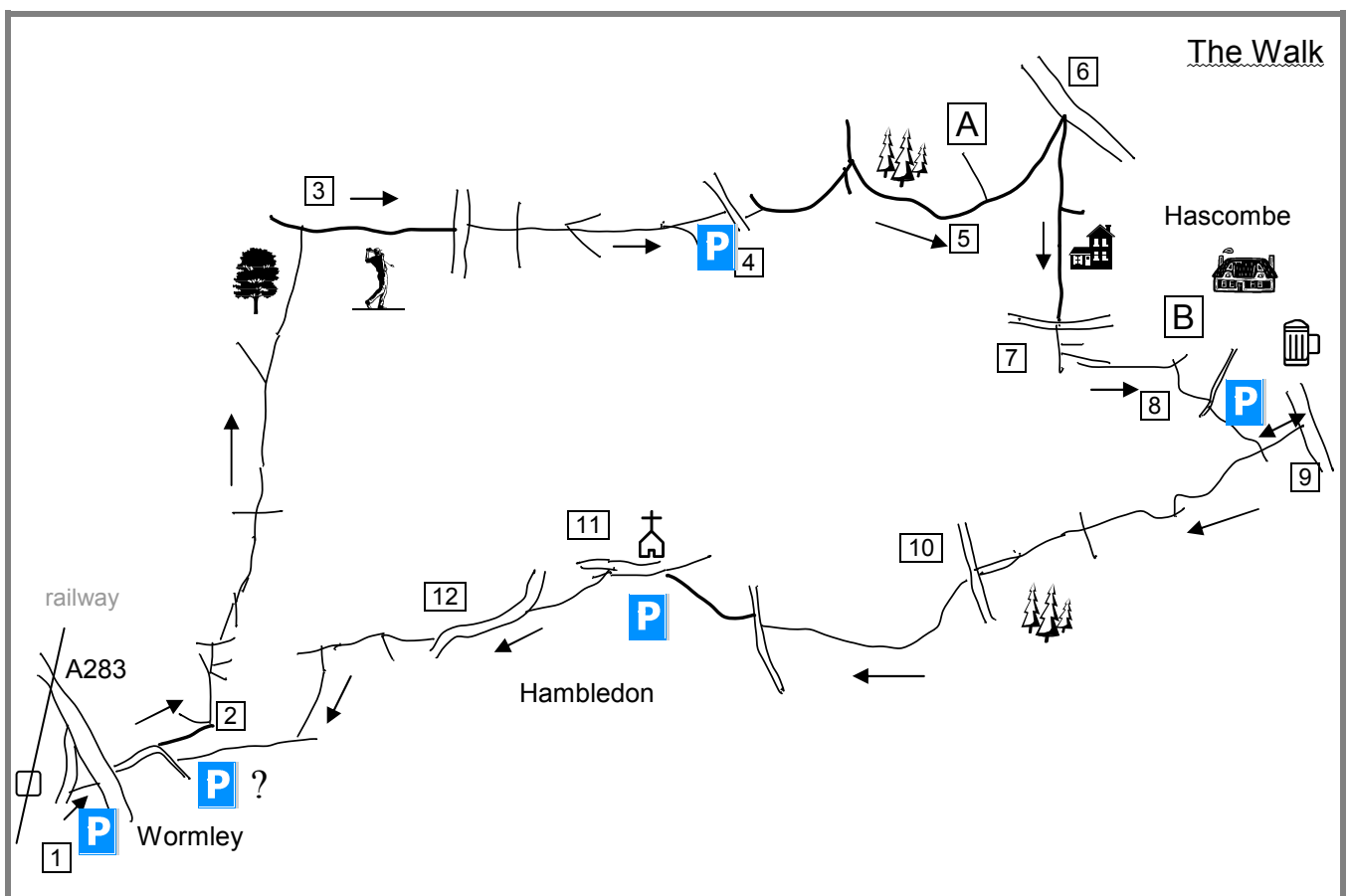


It is particularly fine in late spring when bluebells garland the walk for much of the way. There are no nettles. It seems to be fine for a dog too.



This walk also has some rare optional diversions on unmarked paths.

Start. **by train** from Witley Station; **by car**: see map and guide at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).



The Walk

- 1 With your back to the main station building, turn left for 100m along the station approach, *Robin Way*, to a T-junction and take a marked enclosed footpath directly ahead. *The width and residual surface of this path and the old iron gates leading into properties attest to this path having been a road many years past.* On reaching a main road, turn **left** and shortly **right** to a minor road, *Wormley Lane*. When the road reaches a junction of tracks and bends right, take a broad signposted track ahead, beside a driveway. *At many points on this walk the route follows part of the Greensand Way, marked by a "GW" arrow. The Greensand Way is a long-distance path that runs from Haslemere to East Kent.* The track reaches a junction by a little triangular green in front of a fine timbered house.
 - 2 Turn **left** to a post with two blue arrows and take the **rightmost** of the two paths. In 250m, beside a shed on the left, ignore the driveway that forks left and keep straight on, ignoring two lesser paths that branch sharply right. In about 50m, at a T-junction, turn **right** and then almost immediately **left** on a footpath marked with a yellow arrow. The path shortly merges with a forestry track and runs with it for a few paces before forking **right**, as indicated by the yellow arrow. The path leads across Buss's Common. Go straight on over the next wide crossing path, then through a gate and into a meadow. Enton Hall is visible up on the left and soon you pass a lake on the right. At the corner of the meadow, take the **right** fork down into trees and to the right of a house. The path leads over a footbridge and rises through woods with a valley and stream down on the left. In springtime, bluebells are abundant. The path emerges onto an open hillside. Stay on the left side of the meadow, avoiding golf balls from the links up on your right. At the bottom of the valley, on meeting a broad path, turn sharp **right**.
 - 3 The track crosses another fairway and passes in front of a barn and a few houses. Continue to a road. Cross the road to a track on the other side and continue between fields. Soon there are coppices on each side and the path crosses a marked footpath and enters open woodland. Shortly after, you come to a junction marked by blue arrows with a choice of three paths. Take the **middle** path. When the path bends right, continue straight ahead on a narrower path with a fine white house visible on the left. You reach a road and a NT sign for Hydon's Ball, near a car park.
 - 4 Turn **right** along the road for 20m and go **left** between posts and **right** onto a broad surfaced path. This splendid grassy path leads down a valley and at the bottom comes to a junction of tracks. Ignore a track on the right just before the bottom and, where the path wheels left turn sharp **right** on a marked bridleway. In 50m ignore a small path forking right and stay on the main path. The path rises and levels out. *In late spring the path is lined with bluebells.*
- A** *If you would like to visit Winkworth Arboretum, there is an unusual diversion from this point, described near the end of this text →.*
- 5 The path descends into another delightful valley and eventually joins a driveway coming from the right from a house *High Barn*, shortly reaching a main road.

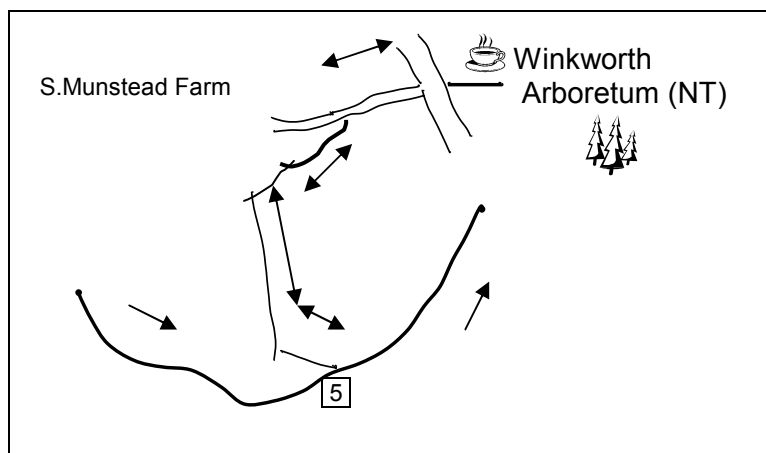
- 6 Do not cross the main road but turn sharp **right** almost looping back. Ignore all turnings off while the road follows a long straight stretch with tall pines and bends a few times. There are fine views right and the good road surface makes the going easy. It leads past *Hascombe Court* and other expensive dwellings, many fenced off from view, and eventually comes down through a gate to a lane.
- 7 Cross the lane to another track. In 20m, ignore a narrow path left between posts but take the next path **left**, about 10 paces further on, through a gap in the bank and follow it gently uphill through woodland which in spring is carpeted by bluebells. It joins another path coming in from the right and continues through beautiful woodland with occasional tall pines. When the broad path turns left, you have a choice:
- B** *If you would like to take a gentle walk around Hascombe village, and in spring time see more bluebells, turn **left** with the main path. The Hascombe Village Loop is described at the end of this text.*
- 8 If you do **not** want to do the extra loop visiting Hascombe village, take the official footpath. This is unmarked and goes **right** downhill into trees. It is easily missed. The path leads down to a stile into a meadow where in a few paces you turn sharp **left** to a gate. *In the springtime the lambs here are very tame.* Stay on the right hand side of the meadow and go down some steps to a drive where you turn **right**. Where the drive curves right towards a house, turn **left** onto a footpath. Ignoring a track on the right soon after, continuing for a short while through trees and then between fields. On reaching a stile with the *White Horse* pub visible, turn **left** up to a sandy car park, the main road and the pub.
- The White Horse serves good food and a selection of real ales and has a garden. Down the lane to its left, the lake at Hascombe with its church and cottages is a sight not to be missed.*
- 9 Take the path leading from the car park away from the pub over a field. Cross a stile, over a crossing path, through a gate and continue on the left hand side of the field, up some steps and through a gate leading into woods. Fork **right** from the gate on a steeply rising path with wooden rails. At the top, turn **right**, on a more level path. It later rises quite steeply and meets a junction at the top. Turn **right** here in the direction of the GW arrow and in a few paces turn **left**, thus regaining your original direction. The Greensand Way now leads over the beautiful Hurtwood on a broad path with birch and pine trees. Stay on the broad path for some distance, ignoring all paths off. Eventually the path descends and splits in two. Both paths lead down to the road. The path on the left runs down a sunken track through a gate but the parallel path on the right is pleasanter.
- 10 Cross the road to a bridleway on the other side, forking immediately **left**. This path follows the left hand edge of two meadows, with terrific views to the left. Where the meadows end, take a narrow path in the very corner forking **left** down through trees. (Don't miss this path – the signpost may be broken.) This path follows the edge of the hill and, after some distance through thick woodland, meets a path coming up from the left, curves up by a field and runs parallel with it. It eventually reaches a sandy stretch of Upper Vann Lane where you turn **right** for a few paces. Before reaching a house, turn **left** on a track. The track leads between fields for some distance, and ends at a small car park by Hambledon Church.

Hambledon Church is worth a visit, if it is not locked. The churchyard contain a large old yew tree and the local legend states that the spirit of an old witch resides in the tree and if you circle the interior three times she is sure to appear.

- 11 Continue down the road with the church on your right and after a short distance meet two footpath signs on your left. Take the **first** footpath on the **left**. This path leads through a small gate over a meadow with good views around. Aim for the furthest corner. *Looking back, Hambledon Church remains in view for most of the time.* The path leads through another small gate, crosses a smaller field in the same direction and eventually goes down steps to the driveway of a house and to a road. Continue in the same direction along the road, passing a footpath and a side road on the left, among the attractive houses of Hambledon village. After passing the Old Malthouse on the left, turn **right** on a marked footpath by St Dominic's School.
- 12 This path leads upwards and reaches a seat. Ignore a small path leading downwards and stay on the level. Soon you reach heathland with stunning extensive views to the west across the Blackdown – a fitting conclusion to the walk. There is a viewpoint with a wooden railing and a bench seat beyond. From the **start** of the railing at the viewpoint, turn **left** down a steeply descending sandy path. Go over a wide track and continue downwards on a stepped path though heather. At the bottom, pass through more railings and at the next path, by a wooden post, turn **right**. Follow this path until you see a brick tower. Zigzag right and left through a gate into a superior residential road. Where the road curves right, keep **left** on the pathway, go through a kissing gate. Turn **right** when you reach the road and **left** where it bends, leading down to the main road. Cross the road to a footpath ahead. This footpath leads back to Witley Station.

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A Diversion to Winkworth Arboretum

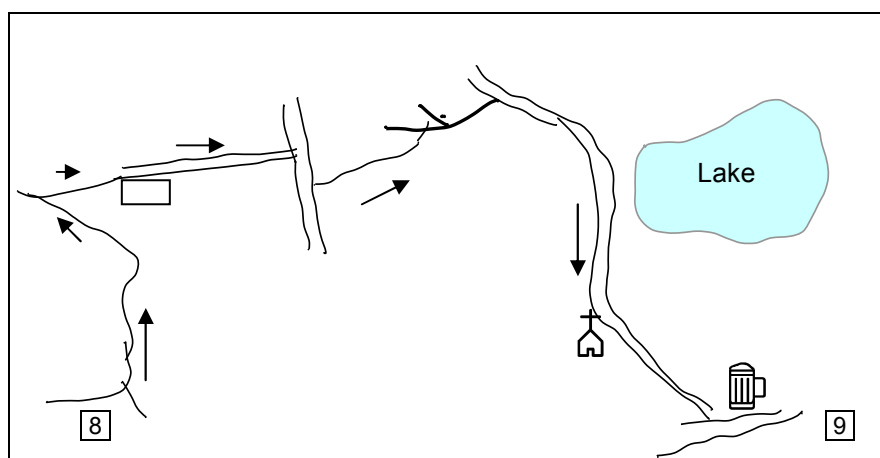


About half way along the level section of the path, on the left, is a short section of wooden railings. At the start of the railings, turn sharp **left** on a pleasant unmarked grassy path. In about 200m, you reach a T-junction where you turn **right**. (Make a note of the route as you need to retrace your steps.) This path leads for some distance down and meets a wide track at a T-junction. Turn **right** on the track, soon becoming a rough driveway by South Munstead Farm, until you reach a road where you turn **right**. The road leads to the main road with Winkworth Arboretum directly opposite.

Winkworth Arboretum is an extensive area of rare trees and plants belonging to the National Trust. After an initial level section, it occupies a steep hillside with lakes at the bottom and a waterfowl reserve. It has a spectacular spread of bluebells in late spring. There is an entry charge for non-members, although the café and, in spring, some of the bluebells can be enjoyed without a fee.

Because of the slightly awkward arrangement of footpaths, you need to retrace your steps to get back to the walk, unless you use the Explorer map to get by various routes to Hascombe village, albeit with a little road walking.

B Hascombe Village Loop



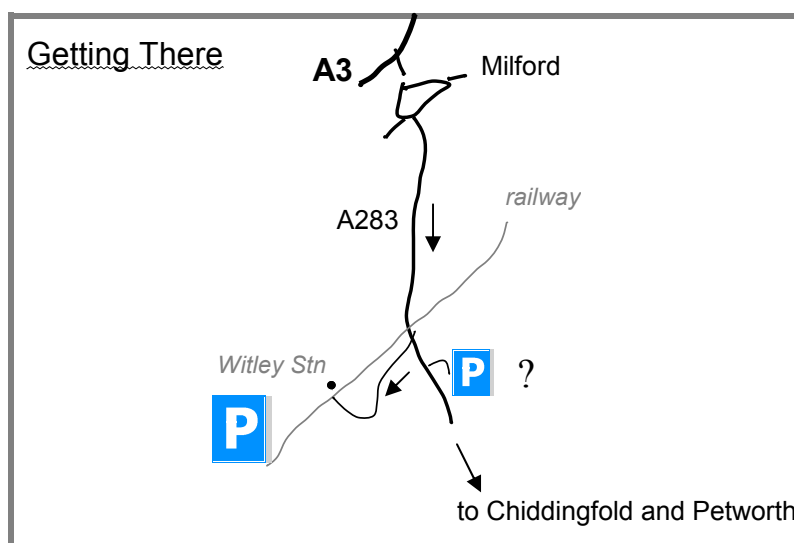
Having turned **left** with the main path, you soon reach a steep section zigzagging downwards through the trees. Follow this path at all times as it levels out and winds onwards, wheels left and becomes a sunken path

between banks. The path descends towards a field where it meets a narrow path coming from the right. Just before the field, turn very sharp **right**. The narrow path leads towards a little gravel parking area for the village hall and you exit **left** under a bar to a road. Turn **right** on the road past playing fields and some modern houses.

You reach the village centre at a main road where you turn **right**. In a few paces, opposite a drinking fountain, turn **left** on a marked footpath. The path goes over a stream and runs alongside a meadow on the right with views across to the village. At a T-junction, turn **right** on a track. The track soon joins a wider track coming in from the left. At a T-junction, turn **right** on a quiet road coming from *Upper House Farm*. Follow the road until you reach the peaceful village lake. *Hascombe goes back more than 2000 years and was well established even before the Norman invasion. Its church was completely rebuilt in Victorian times. Hascombe has its own website: www.hascombe.com*. Continue on the road past the church and houses on the right until you emerge by the *White Horse* on the left. Resume from paragraph 9 above.

Getting there

By car: the walk starts in the car park of Witley station.



Take the A3 to Milford and take the Petworth Road. Witley station is marked on the right on entering the village of Wormley, after passing King Edward's School. There is a charge for parking on weekdays, in which case an alternative location can usually be found on the roadside verge in Wormley Lane further down the main A283 on the left or, failing that, at Hambledon church, or opposite the *White Horse* in Hascombe, or at Hydon's Ball.

By train: from Witley Station.

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