



Hindhead, Keffolds Copse and Gibbet Hill

Distance: 6 km=4 miles

moderate walking

Region: Surrey

Date written: 14-apr-2015

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Refreshments: Punch Bowl Café

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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High hills, views, woodland, heath, secret paths

In Brief

This is a high walk over some of the highest points in southwest Surrey with magnificent views in all directions. This route follows some wide easy tracks but also leads you along secret woodland paths with sudden views where you might meet no other walkers. For this last reason, you need to be more alert than usual: you will not get lost, so long as you follow the text and don't get distracted by the wonderful countryside and views! There are *no stiles* and *no tarmac roads*.

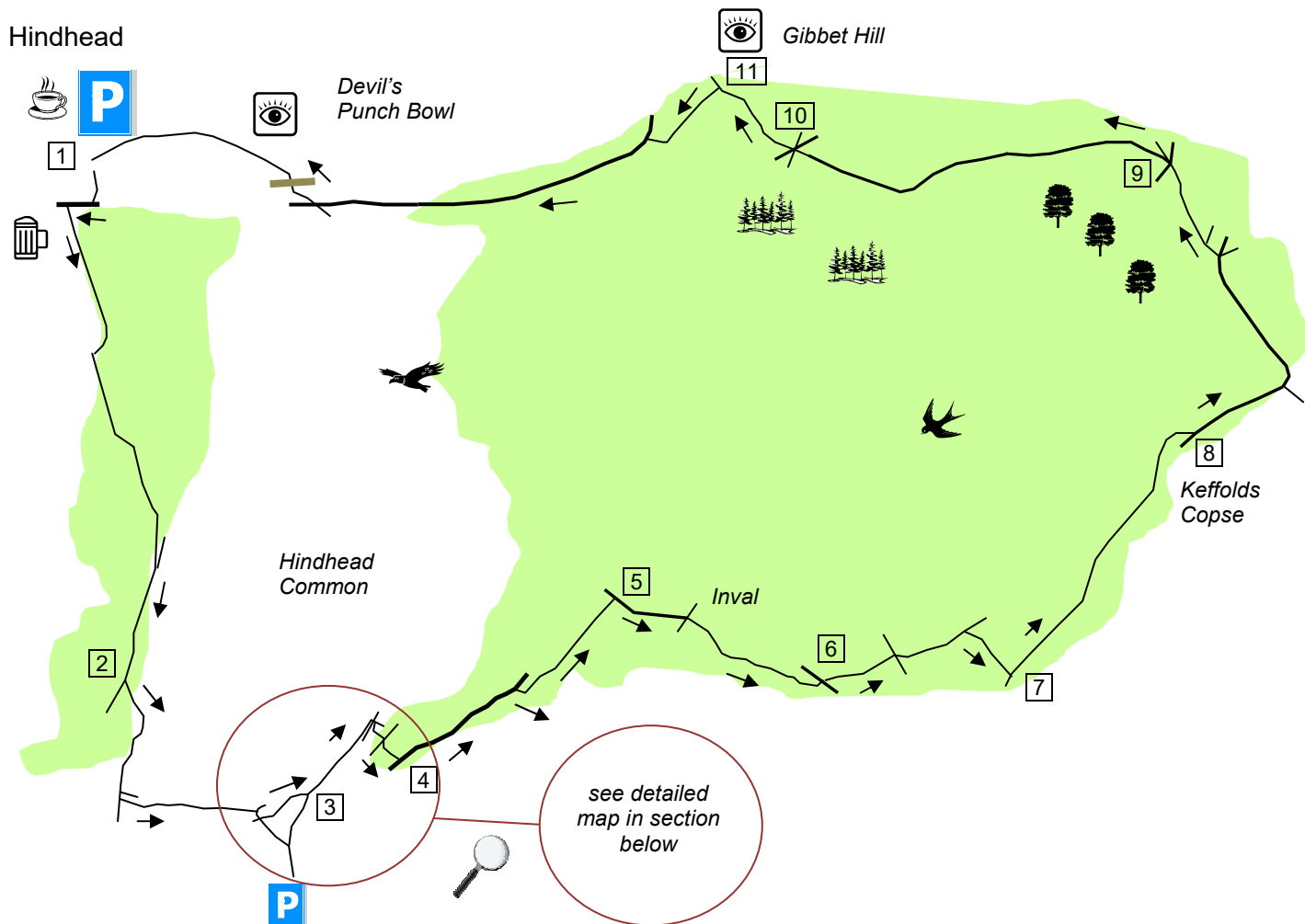


Good walking shoes are sufficient for this walk as the terrain is mostly dry with sandy heath, pine forest and good woodland paths. But of course boots are a benefit, as always. There are no nettles to embarrass bare legs. This walk is also perfect for your dog.

The walk begins at the **Devil's Punch Bowl** car park, **postcode GU26 6AB** (small charge for non-NT members), or the free **Farnham Lane** car park, near Haslemere (postcode **GU27 1HQ**). For more details, see at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).

The Walk

If you are beginning the walk at the **Farnham Lane car park**, leave the car park through a wooden swing-gate onto Hindhead Common near a notice-board, in 20m take the **right** fork, follow this path over bumps and roots and out into the open where a grassy path joins you from the left. Now start the walk from section **3** below.

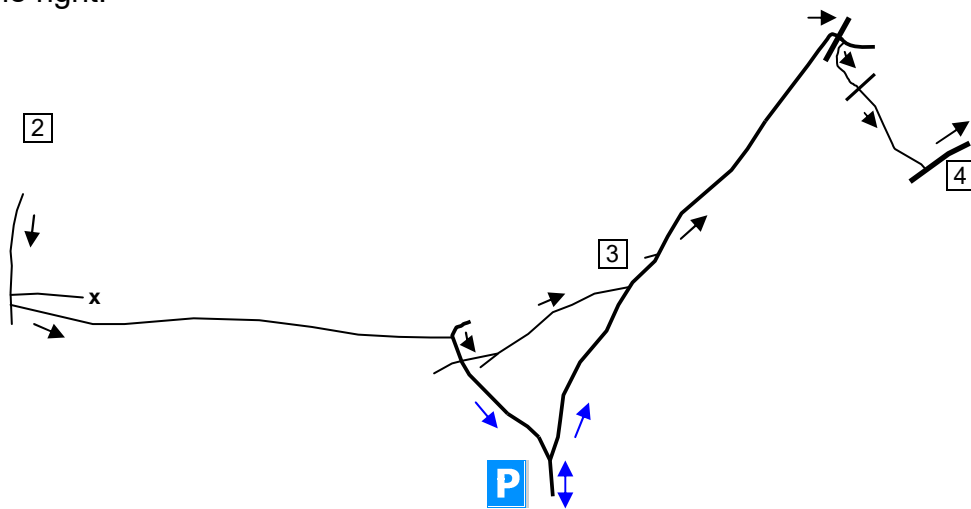


- 1** Go out of the car park by the exit for cars (the way you came in if you parked here). Turn **right** on the approach road for 20m, **ignore** the bridleway sharp left, but take the next signposted path on the **left** into the woods. (The fingerpost is *immediately* next to the large *Devil's Punchbowl* hotel/pub/restaurant.) Keep to the right across the grass and follow the path beside a fence on your right. At the corner of the fence, your path veers slightly left into the woods. Keep to the main path at all times, never very far from houses you can see on your right. You pass a couple of garden gates on your right and a junction on your left, after which your path begins to descend, going through a small wooden gate. *Note that you are on the Greensand Way (GW) a long-distance path running from Haslemere to east Kent.* You come out of the dark wood onto the open heath where a path joins you from the left by a post with blue arrows. In another 250m, you meet a gate on your right in the valley bottom.


- 2 Keep straight on, avoiding the gate and a footpath, now going uphill. Ignore all side paths until, after 150m, you come to a hillcrest crowned with tall pines. **Care! the next move is tricky (see mini-map).** There are two narrow paths leading away on your left between pines. **Ignore the first** of these paths, go a little further (under 10m) and turn **left** on the **second** path, thus leaving the GW. **As a guide, your path is directly opposite a National Trust waymarker post with white, black and yellow arrows.** Follow this very pleasant path amid holly, birch and bilberries, up over the heath for 200m or so. You arrive at a complex T-junction by another waymarker post. Turn **right** here on a wide path. Almost at once (under **10m**), you meet a junction with smaller paths on your left and your right.

If you began the walk at the **Farnham Lane** car park, continue ahead on the main path, soon reaching the car park where the walk began.

Turn **left** on the side path. Your path is quickly joined by another path from the right and becomes grassy. Shortly after, it joins a stony path coming in from the right.



- 3 Follow this high sandy path, soon with extensive views over Hindhead Common on your left. After 150m, you will notice, through a wide gap on your right, a sunken horse path running in the same direction. **Care! the next move is very tricky (see mini-map) and you need to concentrate.** Immediately after the gap, your main path suddenly wheels **right** to cross the horse path. Cross the horse path but do **not** go any further uphill on the main path. Instead, **immediately** after crossing the horse path turn **right**, almost doubling back, on a very narrow path, going up a shallow bank. Take this path, at first walking just above the horse path, before veering off left. In 20m, you meet a wider diagonal crossing path. Cross straight over onto a narrow grassy path. This path quickly leads you through a wooden swing gate. Turn **left** on a rough residential lane.
- 4 You pass several houses and their driveways on your right before passing the last house, aptly named *Roughwood*, as the lane begins to descend. **Care! the next move is tricky.** **Immediately** after this house, turn **right** towards a large private wooden gate belonging to the garden of the house. Just **before** the gate, turn **left** on a very narrow path downhill [Nov 2017: a tree has fallen across this path obscuring the way ahead; you can climb over it but don't miss this path!]. This path descends past laurel, under lanky beeches and through dense holly and, in about 250m, arrives at a T-junction by a marker stump with the hamlet of Combe Head visible to your left. Turn **right** on a wide path.

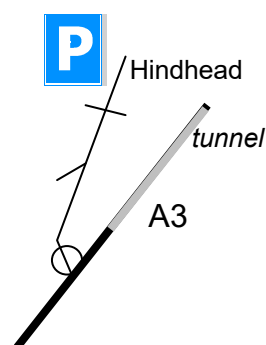
- 5 The path immediately bends left in front of a gate, with a garden on the other side of a fence. In 150m, you come to a crosspaths with a fingerpost [2015: previously 4-way but with two lost "fingers"]. There is a NT sign for *Inval* on a tree above you. Cross straight over on a path which runs rather steeply uphill. After 150m it thankfully flattens and bends **left** to meet a wide crossing sunken track by a marker post.
- 6 **Care! you need to follow the directions in this section carefully as some walkers go wrong here.** Cross straight over the track onto a level path opposite and follow this pleasant level path for 150m where you meet a wide descending crossing path by a marker post. There is a also tree stump with arrows here [2015: but **lying on the ground**]. Go **straight over** this crossing path and continue on your level path. In 60m, you come to a fork by another stump with arrows. Take the **right-hand** path, the **more level** option. In another 80m, you come to a 3-way junction with another stump with waymarkers on top. Turn **left** here, going through a wood of young birch trees.
- 7 Your path goes over a crossing path as it descends gently. This is another pleasant level section with a slope on your right and, where trees permit, good views. After nearly ½ km total, your path passes a house down on your right. This is *Keffolds Copse*. Your path comes down to meet a wide path with the house on your right, together with the rest of this rather untidy settlement of pond, sheds, hutches and farmstock. Turn **left** here on the main path, leading away from Keffolds.
- 8 Follow this broad path past a 1-bar barrier and continue, with great views right. After about 150m, **ignore** a wide path on your right at a marker post. 400m since you left the farm, as your path curves right, you reach a junction of several paths with waymarkers. Avoid a narrow grassy path and a post with a yellow arrow on your right and keep straight ahead on the main wide path into trees. In only 20m, you come to a fork by a marker post. Take the **left** fork, the steeper option, following the blue arrow. This path leads rather sharply up through a coppice. After what seems like much more than 100m, you arrive at the top by a junction of wide paths.
- 9 At the junction, go straight over, slightly uphill, just to the **left** of a bank of beeches, and follow this wide path. In 80m, your path passes a junction and, on your right, a great view and the octagonal foundation of the lost *Temple of Four Winds*, built by Viscount Pirrie, designer of the Titanic, in 1910. Continue on the path, passing two more junctions on your left, where the trees have been harvested, giving you some good clear views. The path rises and finally comes down past a steel barrier to a junction of six paths with waymarkers.
-  10 Go straight over, past a little wooden stump, on the steepest path, a narrow one that leads uphill through pines. In nearly 150m you emerge onto the top of the notorious Gibbet Hill with its direction finder and fabulous views east to the other Greensand Hills. *A little further up (not on your route) is the Celtic Cross, erected in 1851 to "banish fears and raise local spirits".*
- 11 After admiring the view, turn **left** opposite the concrete trig pillar, away from the hillside and follow a wide path. As you near some trees, veer **right** past a large wooden gate, near a National Trust sign for Gibbet Hill and turn **left** on a panoramic tarmac trail, possibly joining families of ramblers. You have great views right here across the Punch Bowl. On your right soon is the Sailor's Stone. *It commemorates the notorious murder of a sailor returning to his*

ship in Portsmouth. It was on Gibbet Hill that three men were hanged in 1786 for the crime. Charles Dickens even used this story in *Nicholas Nickleby*. After nearly 700m on this path, you come to a marker post emblazoned with the signs for the various nature trails and a diagonal crossing path. Fork **right** here between posts, zigzagging across a wide track which is the old Portsmouth Road. This track takes you to the famous viewpoint over the Punch Bowl and quickly back to the parking area where the walk began.

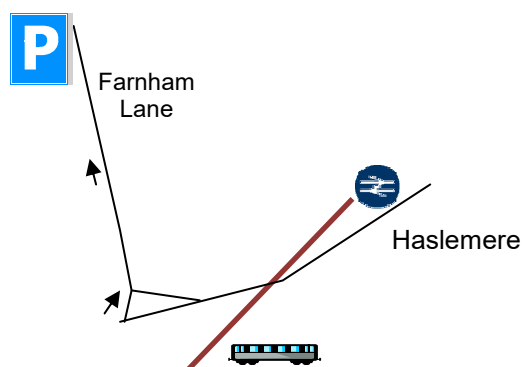
Getting there

By car:

Take the A3 and turn off, just south of the tunnel, into **Hindhead**. At the cross roads in Hindhead, keep straight ahead into a cul-de-sac. The car park is on the left. Refreshments are available at the Punch Bowl Café.



If you want to start from the **Farnham Lane** car park: coming from Haslemere, go past the railway station and turn **right** at the far end of a triangular green on your right, just before shops. Bear left on Farnham Lane, marked as a cul-de-sac. Follow the lane for 2 km=1¼ miles to its end, opposite the entrance to the Royal School, and park in the small car park on your left.



By bus and train: Several bus services from Haslemere station. Check the timetables.

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