



Into The Punch Bowl

Distance: 3¾ km=2¼ miles

moderate walking

Region: Surrey

Date written: 19-jun-2011

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Refreshments: Devil's Punchbowl pub or café

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

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

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Views, woodland, hills, heath



In Brief

This walk takes you down into the bottom of the Punch Bowl to find stunning beechwoods, a rushing stream and nature at its best. As you can imagine, there is a descent and an ascent, but there are steps to help you at the end – and *no stiles*. This walk is perfect at all times of the year, including winter.

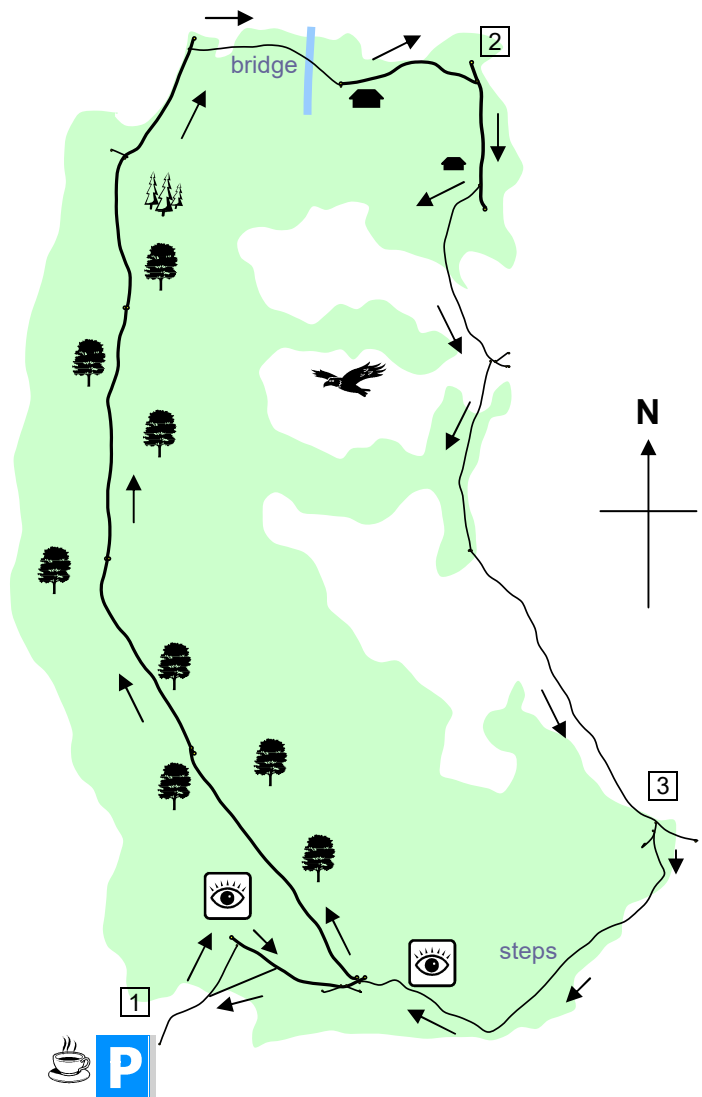


Any strong shoes and any sensible clothing are fine. There are no nettles, so shorts should be ok. If you bring your dog, please always have a lead handy because of the Highland cattle that roam almost anywhere in the Punch Bowl.



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The walk begins at the **National Trust Punch Bowl** car park, postcode **GU26 6AB**. There is a small charge to non-NT members (as 2016: £4 or £2 if you spend £10 or more in the shop/café). The small *free* car park at Highcombe Edge (postcode **GU26 6SJ**) requires an extension to the walk. For travel details, see at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).



The Walk

- 1 Go forward from the car park, past the noticeboard and the Surrey Hills pole, to the famous viewpoint over the Punch Bowl. Turn **right** on a wide path along the rim of the Punch Bowl into woods and, at a junction, veer **left** through a small wooden gate beside a larger one. Immediately after the gate, turn sharp **left** onto a stony descending track. Follow the track down through spectacular beechwoods, avoiding several yellow arrows pointing left and right. After a pleasant 1 km, you go through another small wooden gate beside a larger one and pass a cleared area on your right. Keep to the main path which curves right and then left again. About 100m after a straight stretch, turn **right** at a small fingerpost through a swing-gate onto a sunken downhill path. This path takes you over a long bridge across a stream, then up steps to meet a junction. *The house over the grass ahead used to be Hindhead Youth Hostel.* Keep **left** on the track uphill and, in 150 or so, at a semi-tarmac drive, veer **right** uphill.
- 2 The drive passes a house on the right and joins the drive coming from the house. About 50m after this, look out for a marker post on your right. Fork **right** at the post on a path marked as a National Trust permissive path. Go through a wooden swing-gate and continue on this pleasant level path. By a marker post, a vehicle track joins you from the right. 50m later, your path wheels right in front of a broad green steep slope ahead. Nearly 200m further, at a marker post, ignore the yellow-arrowed right fork and keep **left** in the direction of *Roam 639*. Keep following this sandy path, avoiding all lesser turnings off. The path rises a little with a bracken-clad slope on the left and a grassy moor on the right, taking you repeatedly down a dip and up again. Finally the path ends at a steep green slope ahead by two rowan trees with paths leading uphill.
- 3 Fork **right** and immediately fork **left** on the steeper of two stony paths, marked *Roam 639*. The path goes up over the moor, over some tree roots, and enters an area of thinned-out pine trees. Your climb out of the Punch Bowl is now made much easier by a long flight of steps, over 100 in all. Finally, at the top, the path bends sharp right. You come out into the open with terrific views across to Thursley Common and beyond, with two benches to relax on. You go through a wooden swing-gate, the one you came through on the outward journey. Immediately, at a junction, ignore a path very sharp left but take any other path on the **left**. You are quickly straight back at the car park where the walk began.

Getting there

By car: Take the A3 and turn off, just south of the tunnel, at a sign for Hindhead. At the traffic lights in Hindhead, keep straight ahead into a cul-de-sac. The car park is on the left. Refreshments are available at the Punch Bowl (or Punchbowl) Café.

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

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