



Guildford, River Wey, Puttenham, Pilgrims Way

Distance: 17 km=10½ miles

easy walking

Region: Surrey

Date written: 14-dec-2013

Author: Fusszweig

Last update: 16-mar-2017

Refreshments: Compton, Puttenham, St Catherine's Village

Map: Explorer 145 (Guildford) *but the map in this guide should be sufficient*

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

Public rights are restricted to printing, copying or distributing this document exactly as seen here, complete and without any cutting or editing. See *Principles* on main webpage.

Villages, parkland, woodland, meadows, river, views, historic house, pubs

In Brief

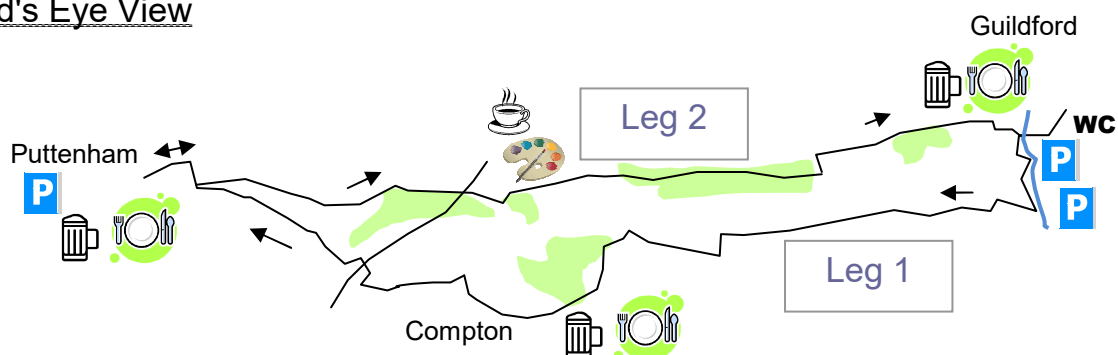
This walk takes you on an adventurous excursion from near the centre of the city of Guildford far out into the country. Puttenham, at the far half-way point is a delightful village with a church, cottages and a good pub. (To book at the *Good Intent*, ring 01483-810387.) There are two other excellent hostelrys along the walk. There are other surprises on the way, including the village of Compton, the *Watts Gallery*, the River Wey near Guildford and the historic *Loseley House* with an option to visit (at a modest charge).



There are some patches of nettles and brambles on this walk but the going is fairly dry, even in the winter months. So long trousers and any reasonable footwear should be fine. Your dog could come too, provided you have a short lead for the crossing of the A3 junction. There is one section across the golf course at Puttenham but it is short and easy.

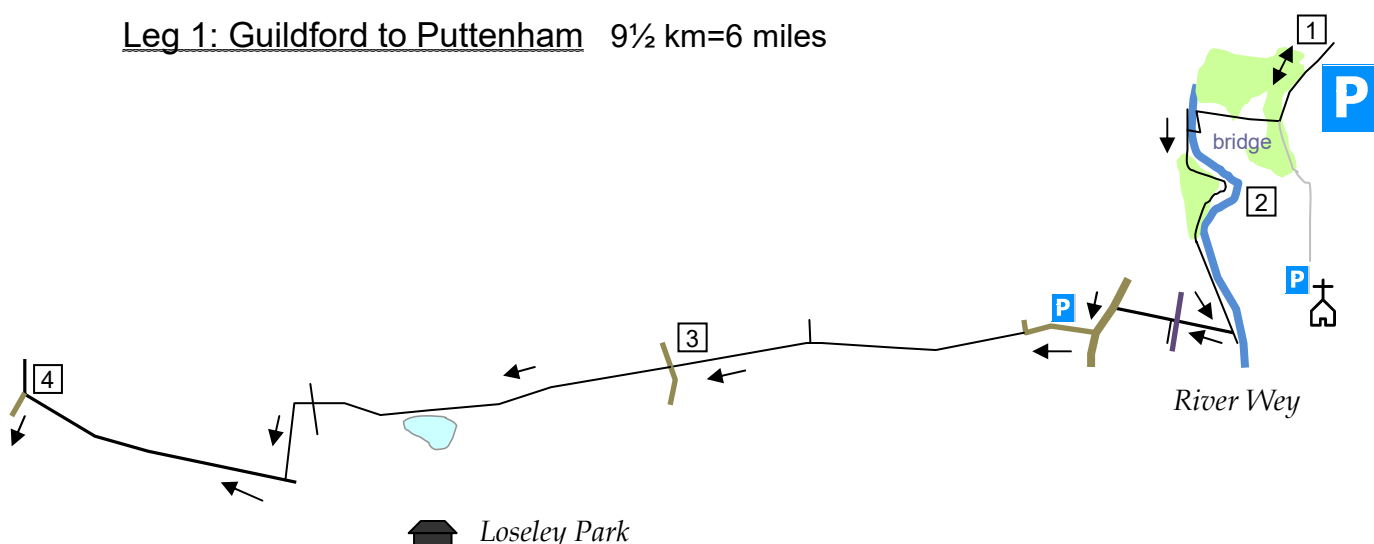
The walk begins near **Guildford**, Surrey, or in **Puttenham**, or in one of a number of alternative places along the way. For a list of possible parking places and for more details, see at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).

Bird's Eye View



The Walk

Leg 1: Guildford to Puttenham 9½ km=6 miles

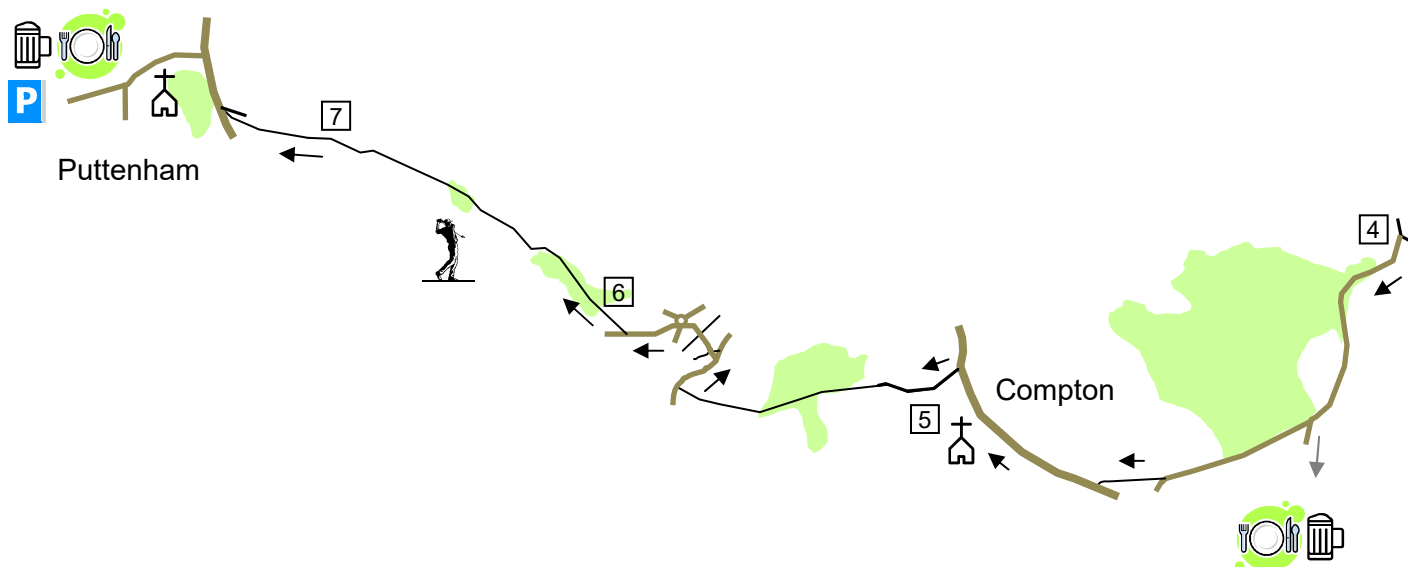


- 1 Starting at the Shalford Park car park, from the far end of the car park, furthest from the road, cross the grass and veer **left** along the edge of the playing fields with woods on your right. In 150m, on your right, there is a gap and a large wooden gate. Turn **right** into the trees here, going through a pair of small wooden gates. Follow this good path for 200m to the river-side by an information tablet, turn **left** along the banks of the River Wey for 40m and cross the river by the wooden footbridge to the opposite bank. Continue in the same direction (upstream) with the river on your left.
- 2 The river bends sharp right and left again. Ignore a footpath and railway tunnel on the right. Soon you reach St Catherine's Lock. Turn **right** here on a cinder path. After an arch under the railway, continue straight ahead, ignoring a footpath on your left, to reach the main road in the village of Artington. Turn **left** on the road and, in 80m, turn **right** on a narrow road, The Ridges, with a signpost for the *Surrey Police HQ*. At the end of the road, keep ahead on a narrow footpath beside the blue gates of the HQ. This path soon gives you some good open views, with the swanky police sports grounds on your right and views left to Chinthurst and other Surrey hills. (See the walk in this series "*Blackheath and Shamley Green*".) At a junction with yellow arrows, keep ahead, ignoring a footpath on your right. Your path joins a track from a house on your left and runs past cottages to Littleton Lane by *Tudor Pillarbox Cottage*. (As a diversion, turning **left** on this lane for 600m, then **right**, would take you to Loseley Park and House in case you wish to make a very worthwhile visit.)
- 3 Cross straight over the lane on a track opposite and keep ahead through a modern kissing-gate across the centre of a large meadow. After a gap by an unneeded kissing-gate, continue as before. At the other side, keep ahead through another kissing-gate and onwards beside a lake on your left. Beyond it is Loseley Park and House.

Loseley Park has been owned by the same More-Molyneux family since Sir William More extended and renovated it to persuade Queen Elizabeth I that it was now "adequate to her needs" for a short visit. Part of the stone came from Waverley Abbey. (See the walk "Puttenham Common, Waverley Abbey & Tilford".) Inside, the wood panelling in the hall is thought to have come from Henry VIII's defunct Nonsuch Palace. Sir William's granddaughter Ann eloped


with the poet John Donne. (See the pub walk “The Anchor, Pyrford Lock”.) The house contains some really eye-opening fixtures and furniture, whilst the garden is divided between walls into “rooms” each of which has flowers of one colour, spectacular in late May and June. The House is open from May to August and the gardens one month longer.

At the other side of the lake, keep ahead through a kissing-gate and along the left-hand side of a meadow. At the far side, go over a stile, over a track and ahead on an enclosed path. The path bends left and leads to a tree-lined drive coming from Loseley House. Turn **right** on the drive and continue, passing *Polstead Lodge*. On your left the tip of *Charterhouse School* is just visible. At a junction by *Little Polsted*, turn **left** on the tarmac of *Polsted Lane* passing *Polsted Manor*.



- 4** In 600m, at a road junction, keep straight ahead. *By turning left however, you would arrive in 250m at one of the iconic pubs of this area, the **Withies Inn** (see the pub walk in this series).* Stay on the lane, ignoring a footpath on your right, until you approach the village of Compton at a left bend. Take a diagonal path here by a fingerpost across the green to join the main road at a corner opposite the elegant gates to *Field Place*. You soon pass the *Lemon Grass* Thai restaurant (the old *Harrow* pub). Avoid a footpath beside the restaurant, passing the timbered *White Hart Cottage*. On your left soon is the truly unique Church of St Nicholas, definitely worth a visit (*also described in the Compton pub walk*). Continue a short distance further along the road and turn **left** on Eastbury Lane.
- 5** Follow the lane beside the wall of *Eastbury Manor* and stay on the lane as it veers right in front of the gates into *Westbury Manor*. Follow the grassy track as it curves left to a fingerpost. Take the **right** fork, uphill towards some pines. The path leads you up to the top of the slope where there is a field on your right. Veer **right** here over a stile close to the right-hand side of the field. Your path diverges a fraction away from the fence to go through a gap by an unnecessary stile and across a rough meadow. At the other side, go over a stile and down steps to a road. Turn **right** on the road, crossing to the pavement on the other side, to reach a roundabout. **Care!** The roads at these junctions are busy and can be dangerous. Keep **left**, crossing over the slip road for *Portsmouth*, across the main A3 road, go over another slip road and turn **left** on Puttenham Heath Road. Cross carefully to the other side and, just after a contractor's work shed, fork **right** through a wooden barrier on a signposted footpath.

6 The footpath runs between garden fences, beside a paling fence and out onto the links of Puttenham Golf Club. **Care: do not stray!** Keep dead straight ahead, just to the right of a line of trees, watching out for golf balls. Head for a marker post visible ahead in a gap. When you reach it, cross straight over the next green to a marker post beside some trees. Continue in exactly the same direction by skirting the copse of trees, either to the left or right, until you come to a large open space with a cricket pitch. Keep ahead just to the left of the cricket pitch, aiming to the left of some picnic benches and go up a small hill ahead, heading for a flagpole at the top. This is Frowsbury Hill, a Bronze Age burial site. *Here Queen Victoria and Albert reviewed the mounted troops in 1858.*

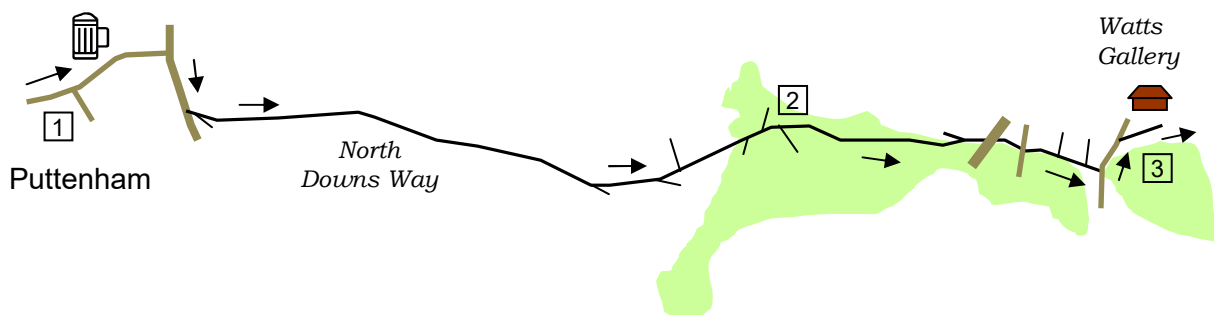
7  Now head for the clubhouse (which welcomes unbooted walkers for drinks and nibbles), passing to the left of it, joining a driveway. *Note on your left a water jet boot cleaner, free for use by golfers, walkers tolerated.* Continue to meet the road again opposite the *Harvester*, an inn which is not highly recommended. Cross the road, turn **right** on it and 100m or so, go **left** on a narrower road into Puttenham Village. The road passes the church, a junction on your left and the *Good Intent* pub.



The "Good Intent" offers six real hand-pulled ales and good honest pub food, ranging from homemade burgers and pies to scampi and lamb. The pub is the centre of village life and hums with atmosphere. The pub sign, by artist G. E. Mackenney, portrays Oliver Cromwell praying for victory of the Roundheads over the Cavalier army of Charles I, and pledging his "good intent" for the people of England. The pub serves meals until 3pm on Sundays. To book or enquire, ring 01483 810 387.

This long narrow village is worth exploring a little further with its mixture of building styles.

Leg 2: Puttenham to Guildford 7½ km=4½ miles

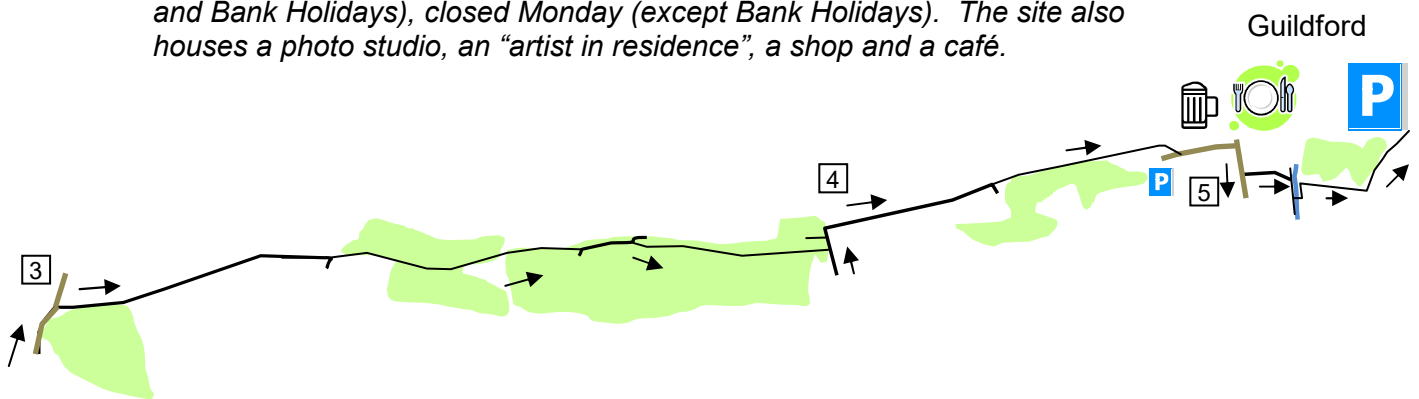


1 After refreshment, go back the way you came, along the road, past the church, to the main road, turn **right** on it and go **left** opposite the *Harvester*. Take a track signposted as the North Downs Way (NDW), avoiding the tarmac lane that forks right towards the golf club. *This is also part of the Pilgrims Way, that historic route used by pilgrims from Winchester to the shrine of Thomas Becket at Canterbury.* Your track goes between the clubhouse and the practice links. Just after Rare Breeds farm avoid a private right fork; at a junction avoid a track left and a footpath right, always staying on the main track. After the last golf tee, your track goes past cottages: here ignore a bridleway on the right, a footpath on the left and a track that forks right. Soon your track enters woodland. As before, stay on the NDW straight through the woods, avoiding three bridleways leading off.

- 2 You are now in a woodland of mainly red oaks with, on your right, a nature reserve belonging to Loseley Park which you saw (or will see) on the other leg. Your track joins a tarmac drive, takes you under the A3 road and under an arch below a slip road. *The crosses mark the Pilgrims Way running underneath.* Finally the track passes more junctions and leads out to Down Lane on the outskirts of Compton. *As a diversion, 250m on the right you will find the remarkable Watts Chapel. This and the Watts Gallery, plus some local surprises, are visited in the "Withies Inn" pub walk.* Turn **left** on Down Lane, in 50m reaching the Watts Gallery with its photo studio, resident artist(s), shop, loo and café.



George Frederic Watts was a Victorian painter, famous now for his allegorical works (such as "Hope" and "Fata Morgana") but also hugely successful in his time for his radiant portraits of the rich and famous and their families. He moved to Compton later in his life and built the gallery to house his paintings and sculpture. The Gallery was refurbished thanks to the Lottery Fund and the BBC "Restoration" programme. It is open 11am - 5pm (from 1pm on Sunday and Bank Holidays), closed Monday (except Bank Holidays). The site also houses a photo studio, an "artist in residence", a shop and a café.



- 3 Fork **right** on a wide sandy track that runs to the right of the gallery. There are fields and meadows on each side and you pass a farm as you go up into woodland. At a fingerpost, keep straight ahead through West Warren, dominated by oak and beech. Your path descends and, in 700m, joins a track from the right. Where the track curves left after 60m, leave it to continue straight ahead through the woods of East Warren, thus temporarily leaving the NDW. In about 700m, you descend to a lane near a junction. Turn **left** on the lane, going past a sign for Piccards Farm and ignoring a bridleway on your left, thus re-joining the NDW. Before a metal gate, your route bends smartly right and becomes tarmac again.
- 4 You pass farm buildings and workshops. Where the track bends right after about 500m, keep straight ahead on a narrower path. You now have steep woods on your right and small meadows on your left. Finally your path runs between fences and meets a road, Sandy Lane. Turn **left** on the road, descending to the main Portsmouth Road (A3100) in front of *Ye Olde Ship Inn* in St Catherine's near Guildford.



Ye Olde Ship is the best loved traditional pub in the Guildford area, dating from the time of the Pilgrims in 1556. It has had various names in past years and in the 1920s was also a garage and a piano workshop. The nearby St Catherine's Hill (subject of a painting by Turner) has held an annual fair since the 1300s and the Ship in past times was allowed to sell unlicensed beer there. Nowadays, several real ales still flow. The lunch menu is famous for homemade pizzas and the luxury fish pie. The pub sometimes fields a cricket team and plays the nearby College of Law. (By the way, the word "ye" in the name is pronounced as "the": it's just an old spelling.)

- 5 Turn **right** on the main road and, in 50m, turn **left** on Ferry Lane. Avoid the track uphill (which would take you to St Catherine's Hill and the ruined chapel) and keep left on the tarmac lane. Follow the drive over a railway bridge and keep ahead on a tarmac drive, marked as a footpath, passing *Ferry Cottage*. At the bottom of Ferry Lane, you meet the wide River Wey. *Note the spewing stream here, the little rock bridge and seat and the poem.* Turn **right** along the bank. **If you did not begin the walk at Shalford Park, now simply continue along the bank and resume the walk from section 2.** In 50m, cross the river by the footbridge. Keep **left** along the opposite bank with the river on your left. In 40m, by an information tablet, turn **right** on the main path, away from the river. In 200m your path goes through two small wooden gates. Keep left now beside the playing fields to reach the Shalford Park car park where the walk began.

Getting there

By car: (1) On **weekdays**, the walk can begin at the **Shalford Park** car park, nearest **postcode GU4 8BL**, grid ref SU 997 485, next to a low redbrick sports pavilion. This car park is about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile south of Guildford city centre on the Shalford Road (see map). The parking charge is £3.20 (as 2017). It also has a loo. This car park is **closed** to the public **at weekends** because of matches (although there are some free spaces before the gate).

WC

(2) by **Shalford Church**, **postcode GU4 8BP**, either on Church Close or by the water works (start the walk by going north on a tarmac path and keeping left round the playing fields);

(3) in **Sandy Lane** opposite the *Olde Ship* Inn, just after the *Zone Ends* sign, **postcode GU3 1HQ**;

(4) in **The Ridges** near the Surrey Police Headquarters, **postcode GU3 1LH**;

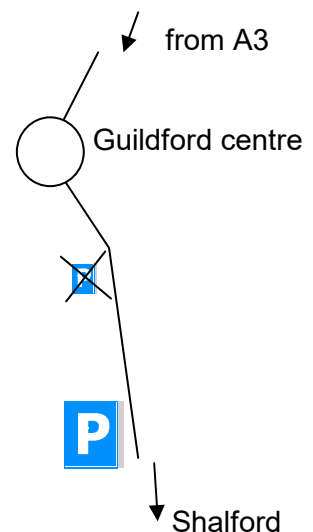
(5) **Artington park-and-ride**, usable if someone in your party prefers to go shopping, closed on Sunday and not open till 10 am;

(6) **Puttenham village**, **postcode GU3 1AU**. Parking here is always possible but you may not find a clear spot for some way up The Street. Note that the big car park opposite the *Harvester* is **locked** outside licensing hours;

(7) **Chantry Wood car park**, **postcode GU4 8AD**. $\frac{1}{2}$ km off the route and rather small, but free. Walk down the road "Pilgrims Way";

(8) **Watts Gallery (or overflow) car park**, **postcode GU3 1DQ**.

By bus/train: from Guildford station, many buses run along the Shalford Road, e.g. no. 24. Check the timetables. On foot from Guildford Station, the distance is just under a mile.



fancy more free walks? www.fancyfreewalks.org