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## Shere Heath and the Hurtwood

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Distance 14 km (9 miles), easy walking

Region: Surrey

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Refreshments: Little London

Map: Explorer 145 (Guildford)

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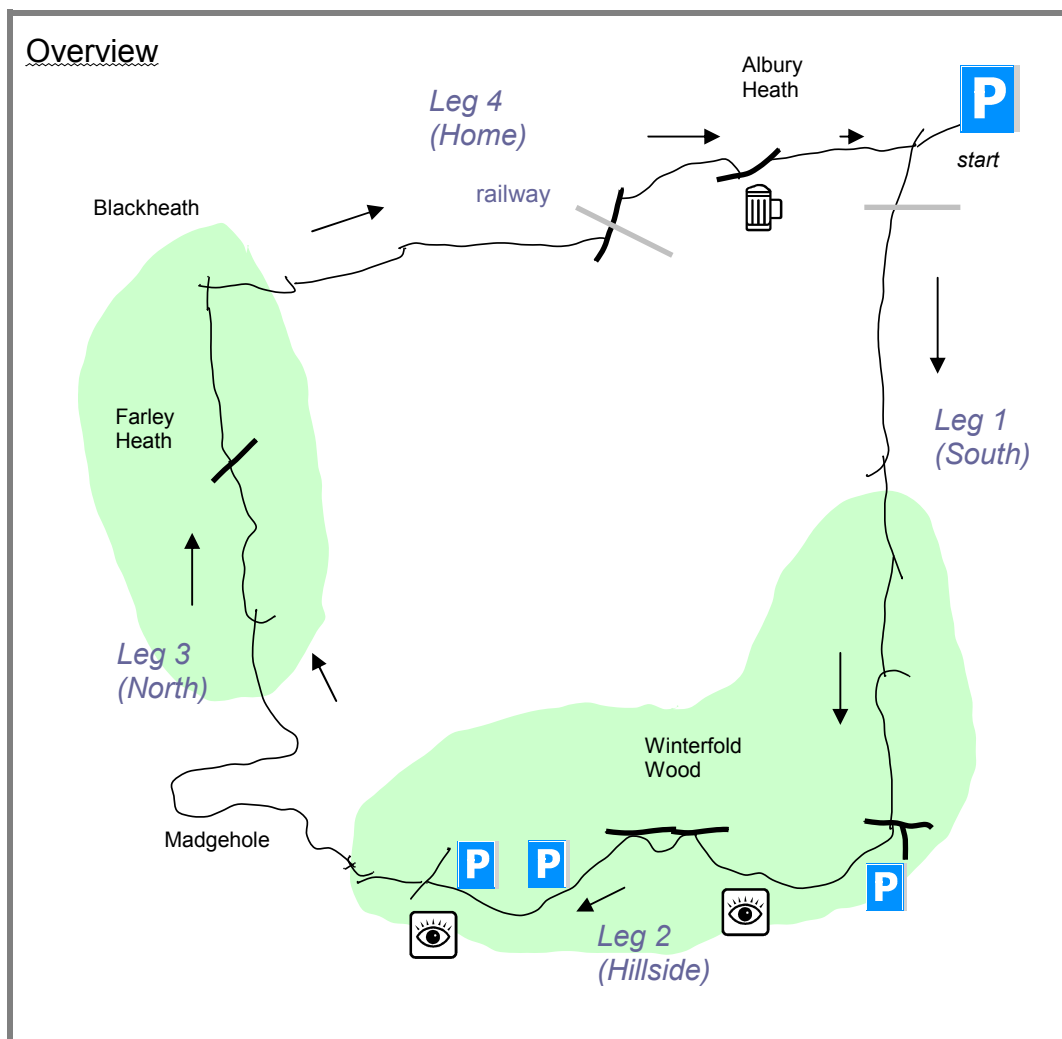
*Heath, woodland, hills, views*

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### In Brief

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This walk is an excursion from heathland in central Surrey to the Greensand hills in the south and back through more forest and heath.





It is fine at any time of the year – even in winter because the heath has a special luminous quality and you get great views southwards through the trees. There are some nettles, so shorts are not advisable, but good walking shoes are adequate. The stile count is very low and the walk seems fine with a dog.



The walk begins at the **Hurtwood Control car park No. 7** on Shere Heath, Surrey. For full details, see near the end: **Getting There**.

**Note on the diagrams:** There is a separate mini-map for each section. All the maps have **north pointing upwards**. They are not all drawn to the same scale.

## The Walk

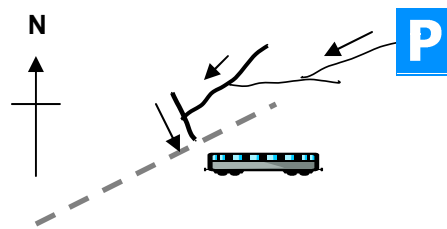
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*The Hurtwood is a huge area of heath and forest stretching to the boundary of the Greensand hills, where this walk leads. It was one of the first privately-owned places in England to create a "right to roam", in 1926. The present-day Hurtwood Control Trust looks after 3000 acres (1200 hectares) and 60 miles of official paths, not to mention small unmarked ones.*

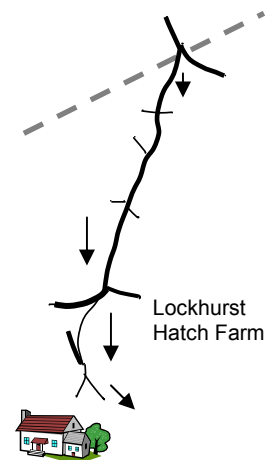
### Leg 1: South 5 km (3 miles)

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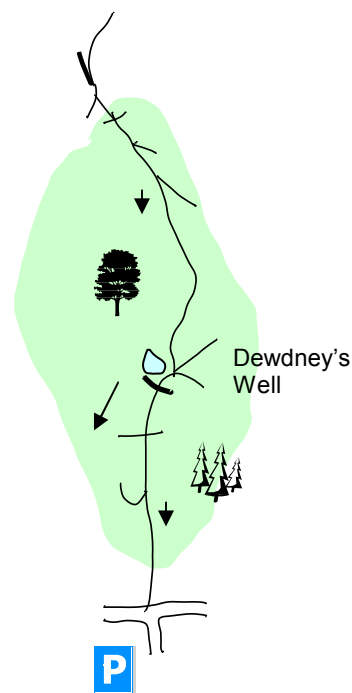
- 1 From the car park, take the grassy path, south west, past the small noticeboard across the beautiful Shere Heath. The sandy bracken-fringed path is joined by a small path from the left and meets a crossing path at an angle. Go half **left** onto the crossing path and follow the sandy track to a T-junction where you turn **left** to a railway crossing. Cross the railway carefully.



- 2 Turn **right** on the broad track Ponds Lane, straight ahead past houses on your left. You follow this lane for about a mile (1½km), ignoring all turnings off. At first it is extremely sandy and you go past Ponds Farm. After Dilton Farm it has a harder surface. Finally, at an entrance on the left to the historic Lockhurst Hatch Farm, the lane curves right. Leave the lane here by going **straight ahead** on a marked footpath. Later, the path is joined by a track from the right. A short distance further, your track forks either side of a beautiful cottage and garden. Take the **left** fork.

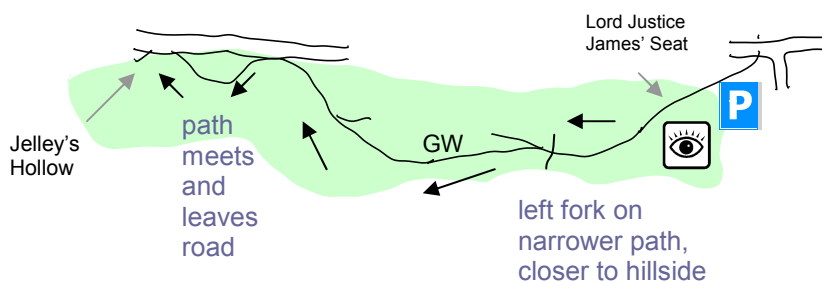


- 3 The track leads you on a straight, then wandering, course into Winterfold Wood. Within the first 500m you pass marked paths leading off left and right and then reach a major fork. Take the **right** fork. In another 500m, the path ascends to a major junction known as Dewdney's Well with a gate on the left and a bend in a forest track. Veer **right** onto the right-hand arm of the bend. This track passes a pond on the right and crosses a tarmac forestry road. Keep straight on at all times, avoiding a track right. Later the forestry track swings away to the right but the route continues ahead on a narrower path and through a gate. Gradually it enters the more upland vegetation of pine and bracken. Finally the path reaches a road at a junction with a car park ahead.



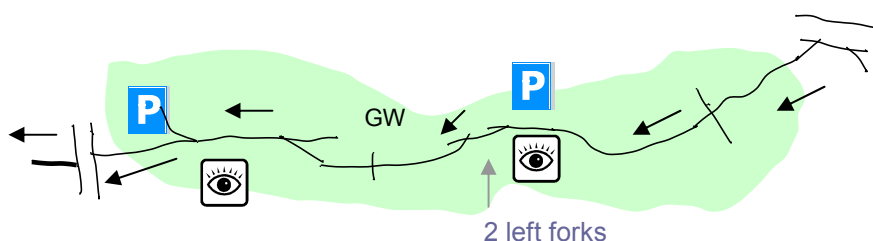
## Leg 2: Hillside 3 km (2 miles)

- 1 Cross the road to the car park (Hurtwood Control 4) and turn **right** through it. You are now on the Greensand Way and you now follow it for about a mile (1½km). There are great views to the left across the Weald of Sussex. Very soon, you pass Lord Justice James' seat on the left, a well-known viewpoint. Roughly 200m after the seat, the path passes small paths left and right and, shortly after, forks. Take the **left** path, the narrower option. This path goes down a bit and then up again giving you good views left. Later, the path comes near to a road on the right. Don't join the road but veer **left** on the main track. Finally, the path reaches the road again at a junction of paths with a deep ravine known as *Jelleys Hollow* on the left.

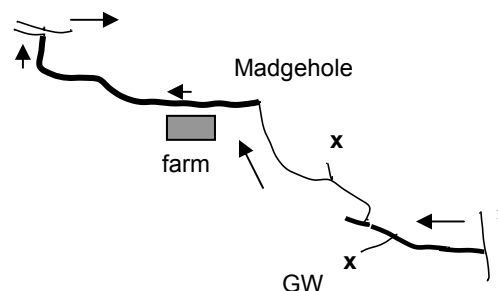


*Greensand is a sandstone rock that was laid down during the Jurassic and Cretaceous periods before the clay and the chalk that form the Downs. The whole structure makes up the Wealden Anticline, which is like a huge dome stretching between the North Downs and the South Downs, with the central part completely worn away to expose the underlying rocks.*

- 2 Do not cross the road but continue on the Greensand Way, marked with the familiar GW symbol, that goes **left**, leaving the road. Keep following the yellow GW arrows and yellow blobs on trees. The path keeps left at a line of tree stumps by a hollow, crosses a rough tarmac path and curves right. The track then passes Hurtwood Control car park 5 on the right with fine views left. About 100m after the parking area, the path forks. Take the **left** fork. A little further, look out for a post with a yellow arrow and take the **left** fork again, thus temporarily leaving the GW. Keep straight on for some distance on this undulating path with fine views. Eventually, on reaching a T-junction, turn **left**, thus rejoining the GW. Soon there is an open view with a metal seat. Immediately after, you reach Hurtwood Control car park 6 and another viewpoint. Do *not* cross the centre of the car park but **keep left** on a path marked with a yellow arrow and go down steps to a road.



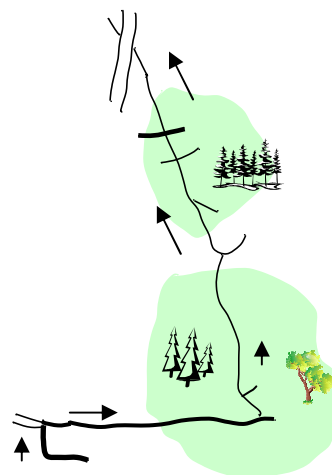
- 3 Cross the road, slightly left, on a level track ahead. In 200m you reach a signposted fork. Go **straight on** here, ignoring the left fork and thereby leaving the Greensand Way. At the next junction fork **right** in the direction of a blue arrow. In a few steps, near a metal gate, do *not* veer right into the plantation but go straight ahead on a narrow, somewhat overgrown path. The path widens and becomes a stony sunken track. It leads down to the historic isolated hamlet of Madgehole. Turn **left** on the drive past buildings and continue on Madgehole Lane past the magnificent Tudor *Madgehole Farm* on the left. Stay on the winding lane for some distance as far as another house called *Smarkham*.



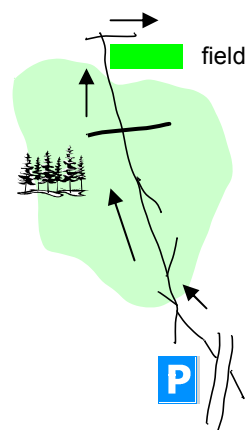
### Leg 3: North 3 km (2 miles)

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- 1 Leave the lane here by turning **right** on a track. The track ascends gradually and becomes very stony. Finally, it reaches a junction by a wire fence and a tall ash tree. Turn **left** here on a narrow sandy path running beside the fence and ignore a footpath right. There are a lot of nettles at first but they soon ease off. The path rises to meet a very sandy path at a hairpin. Go straight ahead, on the left arm of the hairpin. The path meets a path coming from the right. At a crossing path, go straight on as indicated by the blue arrow and cross a wide track used by vehicles. The path continues across magnificent Farley Heath, site of an ancient Roman camp, with its fine tall pines then a mix of oak, birch, rowan and whitebeam until it finally meets a road.

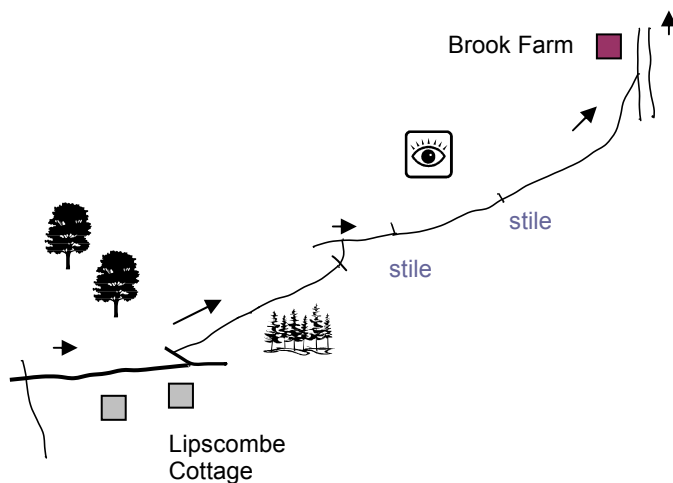


- 2 Cross the road, going through a large area used as a car park. Veer **right** past a noticeboard and immediately take the **second path left**, the one to the right of a post with a blue arrow. Soon, ignore a footpath forking right past a wooden barrier. The path joins a wider path sandy coming from the left. Eventually, the path reaches a wide crossing track. Go straight ahead here. Soon, you can see a small green meadow over on the right with a house visible just beyond it. Immediately after the meadow, turn **right** at a post with several arrows including a fox and crown symbol indicating that this is part of the *Fox Way*, a 39-mile circular walk around Guildford.

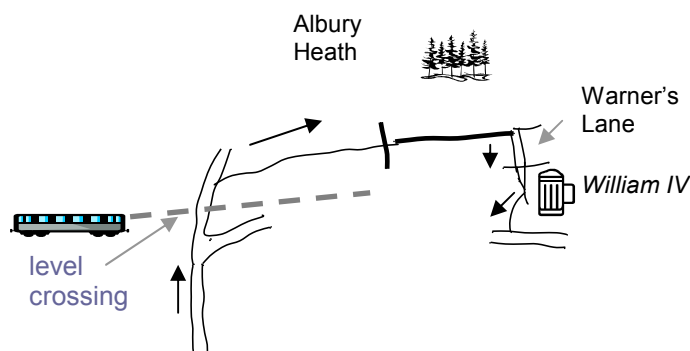


## Leg 4: Home 3 km (2 miles)

- 1 Go past the entrance to the house, *Remnants*, and continue on the drive to the delectable *Lipscombe Cottage*. Immediately past the cottage, go **very sharp left** up a track (or take a short cut up a bank) and in a few steps turn **right** on a signposted footpath, still the Fox Way. Follow the path up to an unneeded stile and go straight ahead through pinewoods. (At the time of writing, a tree trunk has been placed across the path and you need to bypass it.) At the end, cross a small path, go through bracken and at a T-junction turn **right** and go over a stile into a large meadow. You now have a fine view of the North Downs with the hamlet of Brook ahead. Follow the path over another stile between fields and, where the hedge on the left ends, join a farm track leading to the road and turn **left** on it. The road passes Brook Farm on the left with its magnificent redbrick house.

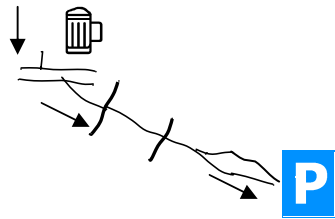


- 2 Ignore a road forking right and continue over a level crossing. Immediately after the crossing, turn **right** on a narrow path between banks. Once out of the very thick bracken, keep straight ahead on a distinct grass path across the south (right-hand) side of Albury Heath. Cross a wide track and continue ahead on another wide track leading to houses. Always keep the Heath on the left and houses and gardens on the right. 40m after passing a house called *Heather Lea*, turn **right** on Warner's Lane. This leads to a junction of drives where you keep straight on and at the end turn **right** over a stile. The path leads down through a small farm plot, via another stile, and out into the car park of the William IV pub. (For more details of the pub, see the walk *Shere and Little London*.)



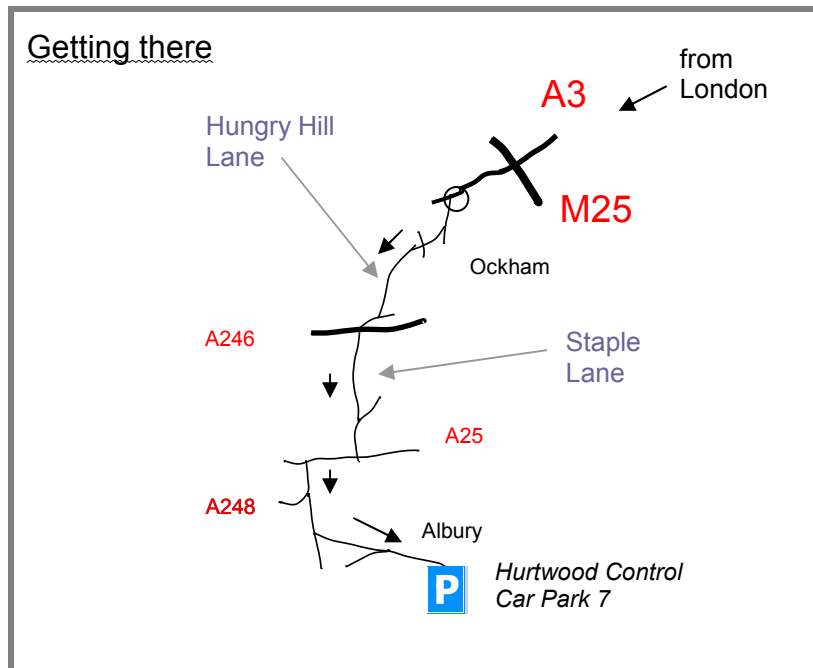


- 3 Turn **left** up the road from the pub. In about 20m take a path forking off **right**. This leads over Shere Heath. Cross two major tracks and take either the left or right fork to reach the car park where the walk began.



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## Getting there



The walk begins at the Hurtwood Control car park No. 7 on Shere Heath, Surrey. To get there from the London area, first you need to get to the start of the A248 off Shere Road, signposted Godalming and Albury. **Either**, follow the directions given in the walk *Blackheath and Shamley Green* **or** follow the scenic route in the diagram and as described here:

Take the A3 and, after crossing the M25, exit at a sign for Ockham and Ripley. Take the B2039 road **left**, signposted to Ockham. In about 1km (0.6 mile), at a left bend, just after the entrance to the church, turn **right** on Guilehill Lane. This lane becomes very narrow for a short stretch ahead and there are passing spaces in case you meet another car. Follow the lane to a T-junction and go straight on, slightly right, on Hungry Hill Lane. Follow this lane all the way to East Clandon village where you turn **right**. On reaching the main A246 Leatherhead-to-Guildford road, cross straight over carefully and continue up Staple Lane. This lane goes over the Downs and ends at a junction with Combe Lane where you go straight on downhill. On reaching the A25 Shere Road, turn **right**. The A248 is the second road left.

At a junction where the A248 bends sharp right, turn **left** (really straight ahead) on a road signposted *Albury Heath, Farley Green, Peaslake*. In about 1/2 mile (800m), take the first road on the **left**, Park Road, signposted "Peaslake, Ewhurst". Follow the road for 1/2 mile (800m) and go past a triangular junction with Little London. The car park is about 1/4 mile (400m) further, on the **right**. You can also get there through Shere, but the village already has enough cars (see the walk *Shere and Little London*).