



---

## North Downs, Westcott, Friday Street

---

Distance: 15 km=9½ miles or 9½ km=6½ miles  
moderate walking with many long easy sections

Region: Surrey

Date written: 10-dec-2011

Author: Schwebefuss

Date revised: 8-jul-2013

Refreshments: Friday Street, Westcott

Last update: 18-aug-2017

Map: 146 (Dorking) *but the maps in this guide should be sufficient*

[Problems, changes? We depend on your feedback: feedback@fancyfreewalks.org](mailto: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.**

*Hills, villages, woodland, views*

---

### In Brief

---

This is a completely new walk taking you from the most glorious part of the North Downs down into the greensand and memorable forests and hamlets to the south, then back up to the Downs for more forest and views. The attractive Friday Street lake and pub will be familiar from other walks in this series but the other routes are quite new and the experience unforgettable.

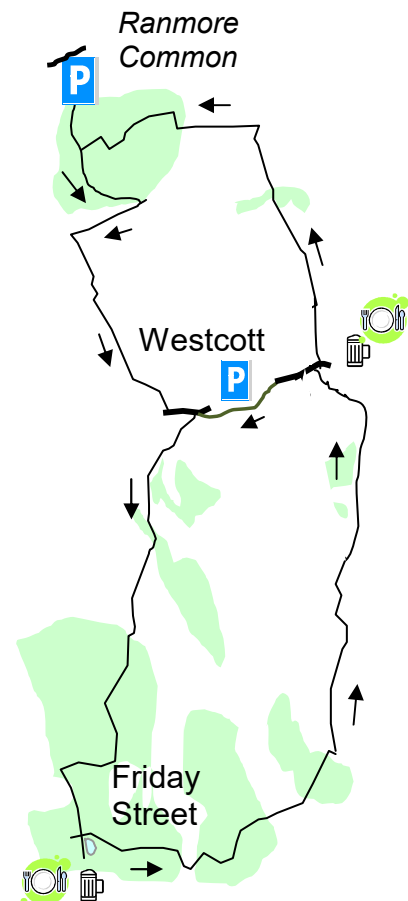


There are some nettles and brambles on this walk during the return to Ranmore Common. Because of the sandy paths, any sensible footwear is fine, except after prolonged rain when boots are essential. Your dog will love this walk too although he may need to be lifted over one or two stiles.

For people who like to finish the walk in a village and avoid the descent and ascent back to the car park on the Downs (with the loss of some stunning views), the walk can begin in **Westcott**. In this case, begin it at **Leg 2** with the [preliminary stage](#).

The walk begins at the National Trust **Ranmore Common** car park, nearest **postcode RH5 6SY**, grid ref TQ127502, just off the Ranmore Common Road near Dorking, Surrey. (This is **not** the Denbies car park but the *free* car park a mile further west along the road.) If beginning in Westcott, park off the triangular green in the centre of the village, **postcode RH4 3NH**. For more details, see at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).

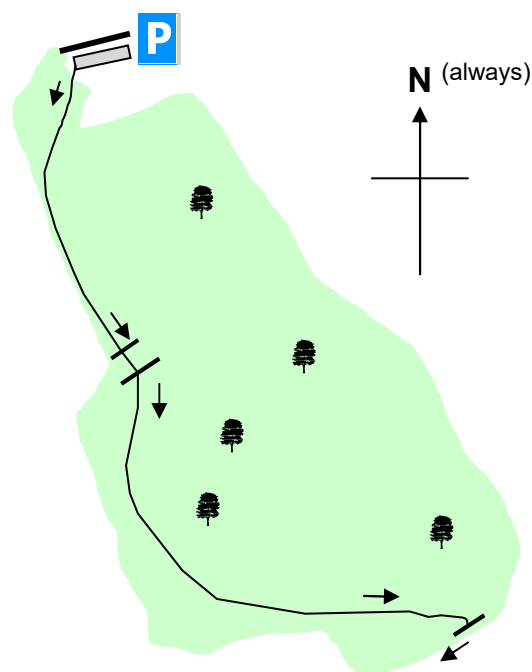
### Overview



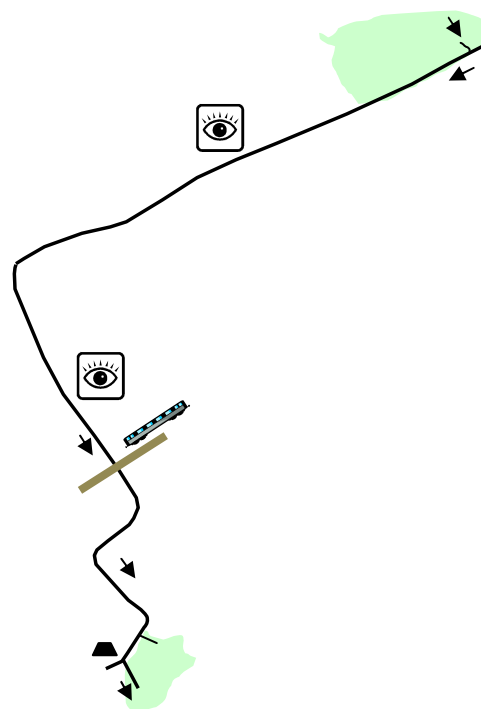
## The Walk

### Leg 1: Ranmore Common to Westcott 3 km=2 miles

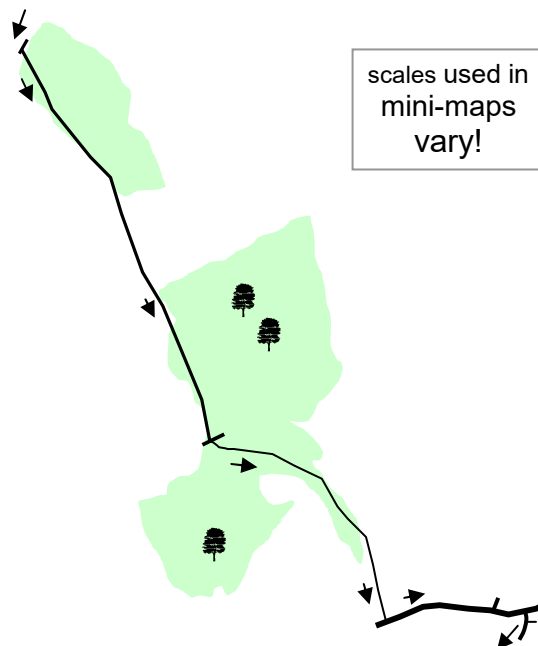
- 1 With your back to the road, starting from the extreme right-hand side of the car park, go ahead beside a metal barrier near a National Trust sign onto a path. Shortly, your route joins a path from the left and zigzags through woodland, on a clear stony path. Your path goes over a crossing path, winds its way onwards, going over another, narrower, crossing path and begins to descend. *If you encounter mud here, it is only for a short stretch and not typical of this walk.* You soon reach a wide level crossing path. This is the North Downs Way. Cross straight over, on a path which curves left and goes gradually more steeply downhill. At the bottom, you meet a level path at a fingerpost. Turn sharp **right**.



- 2 Your path goes through a small wooden gate beside a large one and passes a National Trust sign for White Down Lease (*"lease" is an old word for "meadow"*). After another 350m, you reach a gate and a fingerpost and another NT sign. Go **left** here onto a bridleway between fields. Your way goes under a railway arch and bends right and left, all the time with good views around, especially back and to the left where St Barnabas Church-on-the-Hill is prominent. You pass a barn of Combe Farm and your path bends right towards more buildings. Here, avoid a footpath on the left and its yellow arrow.

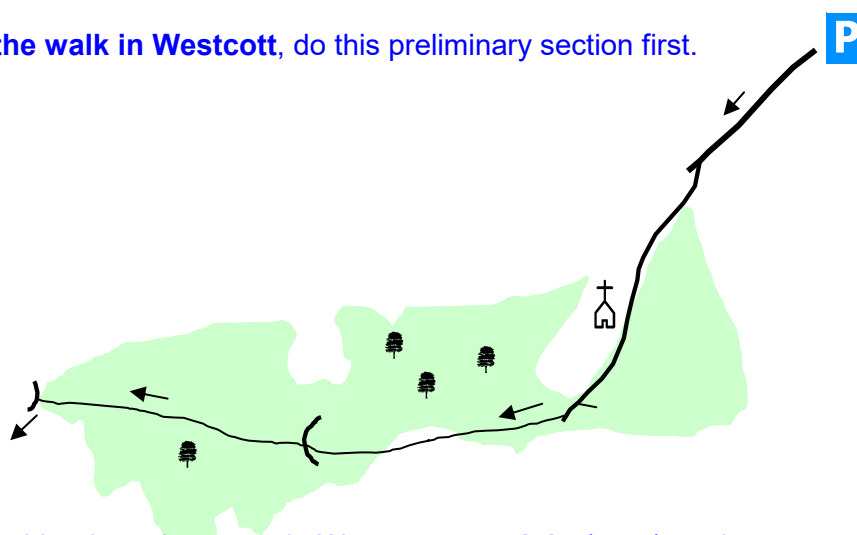


- 3 You pass some studio units and *Stockmans*, after which your way bends **left** on a driveway. You pass another house on the left followed by woodland and reach a junction. Cross straight over the tarmac drive. Before a wooden gate, keep **left** in the direction of the yellow arrow, between wire fences and later a rather constricting garden fence. Your path emerges on a driveway by *Woodlands* to reach a main road, the A25. Turn **left** on the main road towards the village of Westcott. Pass the junction with Balchins Lane and, shortly after, turn sharp **right** between the brick pillars of a tarmac lane, Rookery Drive.



Leg 2: Westcott to Friday Street 3½ km=2 miles

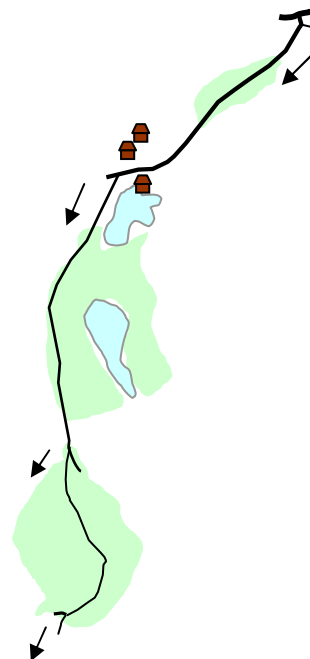
If you are starting the walk in Westcott, do this preliminary section first.



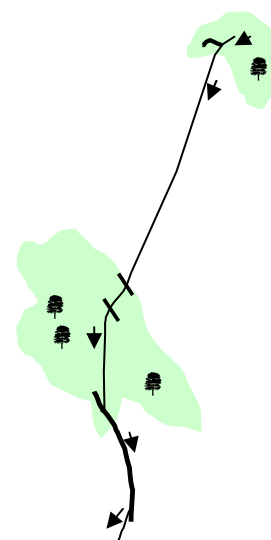
With your back to the big triangular green in Westcott, turn **right** (west) on the main road. When you meet a junction with the old *Cricketers* on the left (now an Indian restaurant), fork left on Westcott Heath road, heading for Westcott Church visible ahead. *The Church of the Holy Trinity is early Victorian, built to a design by George Gilbert Scott.* Continue past the church, soon meeting the Greensand Way coming in from your left, as indicated by a signpost. In a few metres, fork **right** on a footpath that takes you across the heath and grass, parallel to the lane you were on. The path meets the lane again at a point where the lane loops sharp right. Cross over the lane to a wide path by a fingerpost. This path takes you through more woodland and, in 250m, reaches Rookery Drive opposite the gate house. Keep left between the brick pillars of Rookery Drive.



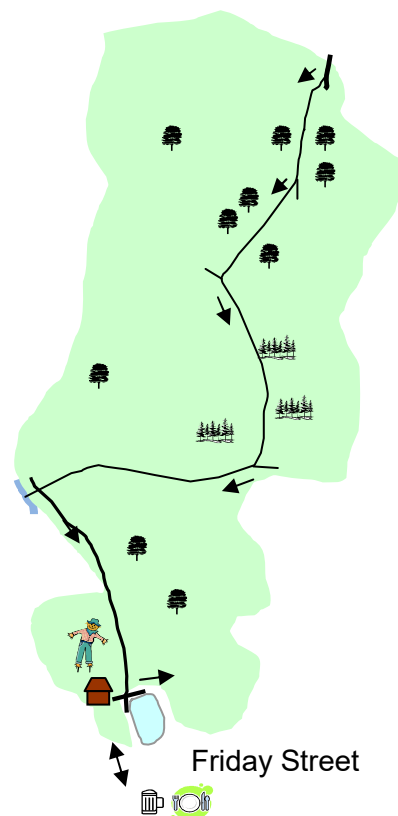
1 Follow the tarmac lane following Pipp Brook down on the right in the valley. The lane now reaches a stunning group of cottages, beginning with *Rookery Cottage*, then between *Springs* and *Mill House* where Pipp Brook spills in a cascade from the pond. At the start of a private road, fork **left** on a bridleway between cypresses. Your path soon runs on a pleasant course between a meadow and a river valley. You reach a fork with a yellow arrow on the right indicating the Greensand Way (GW). Fork **right** here, by an unneeded stile. Your path goes fairly steeply upwards through hollies and then levels out and winds under beech trees. You pass another avoidable stile and reach a junction of paths at the corner of a field.



2 Go straight ahead, between two wooden posts to the left of a gate, onto a faint path diagonally across the field. (If you want to avoid the field, such as when the rape is wet or in flower, you can instead turn **right** on the track and **left** just before a lane, keeping a stone cottage on your **right**, forking **left**.) In winter, as you proceed, you will catch sight of Leith Hill Tower in the distance. On the other side, maintain your direction over a track and a stile and through a small plantation. Veer **left** downhill through laurels and go quite steeply down to cross a tarmac drive, continuing downhill at another signpost. Shortly, you reach a lane. Turn **left** on this quiet lane, with the Tillingbourne stream babbling down on your right, then on your left. You pass a meadow and a cottage. Shortly after, go through a new wooden swing-gate on the **right** onto a footpath.



3 This path at first runs parallel to the lane and then diverges from it. You meet a pleasant grassy path at a bend. Keep straight ahead on the right-hand bend. Soon, keep **left** with the path at a metal gate, avoiding some private land of the Wotton Estate. Your path continues through superb pine and beech woodland, beautiful in all seasons. When you reach a junction by the corner of a meadow, swing **right** on a wide grassy path, avoiding the narrow path ahead. Your path veers right alongside a fence and then goes steeply downhill. Go through a swing-gate at the bottom to a 4-way junction and turn **left** on a level track. First though, it is difficult to resist stepping forward to the stone bridge and gazing at the water meadows of the



*Tillingbourne stream as it runs down over the narrow weir.* The track goes past *Yew Tree Cottage* with its scarecrow family and over a ford using a small wooden bridge, then past *Pond Cottage* to a lane by the lake of Friday Street.

*The name "Friday Street" is a little mysterious but the name probably indicates an impoverished out-of-the-way unproductive place, because Friday was a day when not much food was eaten. The lake is in fact a hammer pond, like so many in England, the result of damming the stream to provide water power. "Friday Street" is the name of a track on Surrey native Paul Weller's album "Heavy Soul". Much of this area is preserved by the National Trust.*

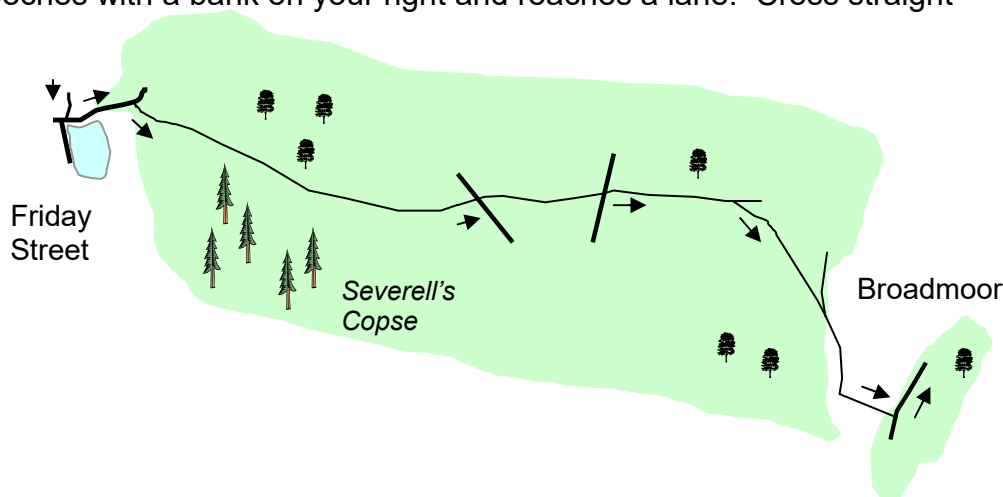


Your route is **left** on the lane. However, first you will want to take the lane directly opposite, with the lake on your left, to reach the *Stephan Langton* pub / restaurant in 200m. For more details of this interesting local, see the "*Stephan Langton pub walk*" in this series. You need to retrace your steps after a refreshment break and turn **right** on the lane by the lakeside.



### Leg 3: Friday Street to Westcott 5 km=3½ miles

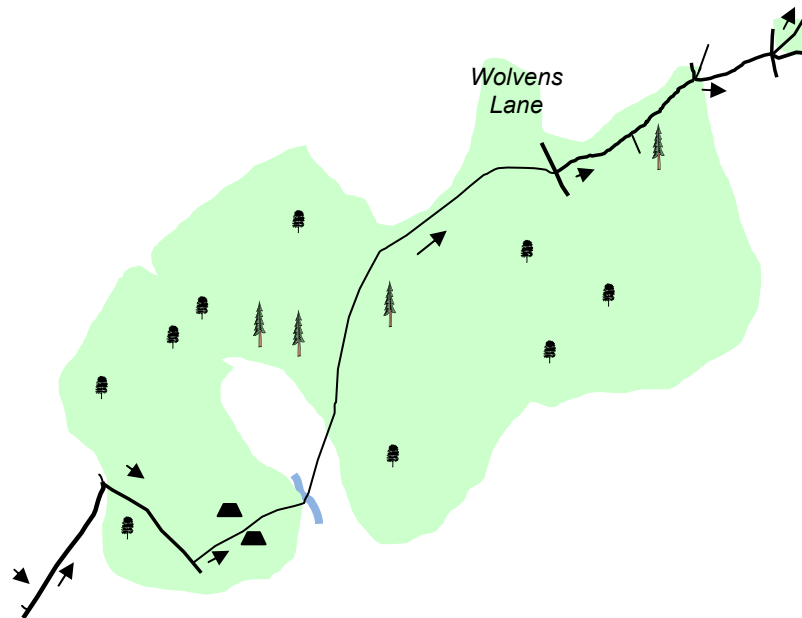
- 1 Just after the lake, before the lane bends left, go **right** between wooden posts onto a signposted footpath. Your path curves left uphill fairly steeply between hollies and beeches and some fine scots pines. On your right soon is the National Trust's Severell's Copse. Your path runs beside a line of beeches with a bank on your right and reaches a lane. Cross straight



over the lane, shortly reaching another lane. Cross straight over this lane and continue on a signposted footpath opposite. Very soon, just after your path goes downhill, you reach a fork. Take the **right** fork, the more level option, avoiding the left-hand descending path. Your path becomes sunken and joins a path coming from the left just as the hamlet of Broadmoor comes into view. Soon, the path turns smartly **left** by a house and follows a grassy strip down to a lane. Turn **left** on the lane into the hamlet.

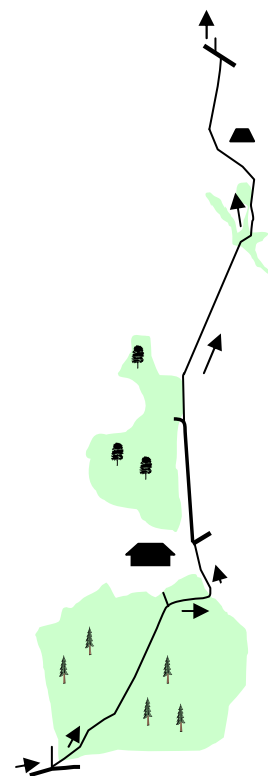
- 2 **See mini-map overleaf.** The lane passes the well-named *Old Cottage*, with its stone devil, and Home Farm, a noted stud and livery. Opposite the farmyard, at a fingerpost, turn sharp **right** on a bridleway. In 100m, at a marker post, turn **left**. The path goes uphill between the fences of *Simons Cottage* and *Tillingbourne Cottage*, over a stream, then rather steeply up. Eventually your path levels out (with a fine view of Leith Hill Tower to your right) and runs beneath some more tall pines. At a junction of sandy paths, keep ahead, a fraction right, reaching that perennial wide sandy byway *Wolvens Lane*. Cross straight over *Wolvens Lane*, with a metal barrier each side, onto another wide sandy bridleway.





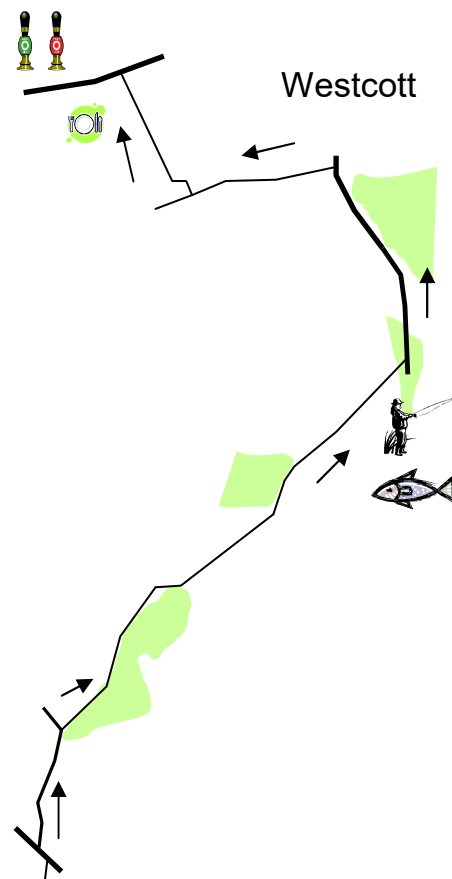
Continue ahead to a fork of sandy paths. Take the **right** fork, a wide downhill path, almost straight ahead. In 80m, you reach a junction of five paths. Take the steep downhill wooded path ahead, a fraction **left**.

- 3 You come to a 3-way junction at a fingerpost. Bear **left** on a straight path through the conifer forest. As you reach the edge of the forest, ignore a modern kissing-gate on your left and instead stay in the woodland by veering **right** on a cinder track. The track bends left and passes the redoubtable Squires Farm on your left, with a view of Ranmore church spire on the horizon. As you reach the entrance to the farm, avoid its driveway on the right and keep straight ahead, still on the cinder path. Where the track bends left into woodland, keep ahead on a grassy path, going through a modern kissing-gate. Cross the centre of a meadow, slightly right, heading towards a red-roofed house on the hill ahead. Go over a stream in the corner and immediately **left** over a stile. Your path runs by a fence and takes you over a stile near farm buildings. Continue along the right-hand side of the long pasture with the hillock of Bury Hill in view ahead. At the next corner, go **right**, diagonally across the pasture to the corner of the field, and over a stile to a tarmac lane.



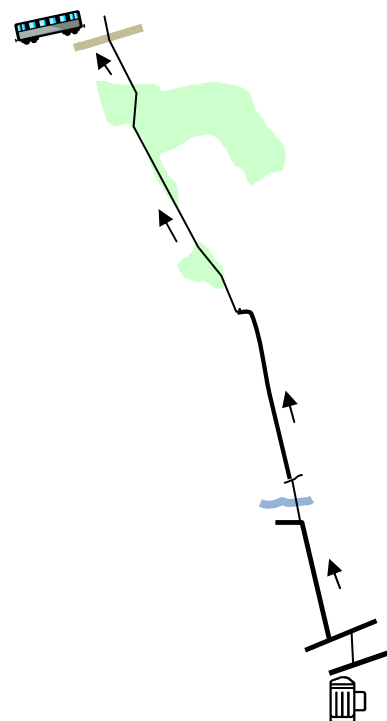
- 4 **See mini-map overleaf.** Go straight over the lane on a track diagonally opposite. In 180m you reach a choice of two paths near Mad Horse Copse. (This route was changed in July 2013; previously you would keep **left** here and this is still an option.) Leave the wide path here, taking the **right** fork, as indicated by a yellow arrow. Follow this long narrow path, through a wooden kissing-gate, with a wire fence on both sides, passing on the way a series of wooden bridges and a stile. A metal swing-gate leads you onto the right-hand side of an attractive meadow. In 10m, your path forks **left**

across the centre. In the far corner, go through a metal swing-gate, over a bridge and a stile, turning immediately **left** with the path. *On your right are the Bury Hill Fisheries, a large angling centre with four lakes.* At a bridge with rails and a T-junction, turn **left** on a wider path. An old optional kissing-gate takes you past *Keepers Cottage* onto the tarmac of Milton Street, passing the aptly-named *Hedgerow* and ignoring a bridleway on the right. *The very fetching houses here are tile-hung or timbered, some with access over a bridge across a ditch.* Spot the statue at no. 4. After *Peppermint Cottage* on your right, turn **left** at a marker badge on a footpath over a bridge, passing a timbered cottage on the right and going uphill on a sheltered path, soon keeping ahead by a fence. Just after a metal gate into a garden and before the path rises more steeply, turn **right** on a narrow path between fences. The path zigzags onto a gravel track, going past a school and leading to the main road. Turn **left** here on a raised path parallel to the road. *Soon on your left is the "Bertram bees" café / deli / wine bar with nicely landscaped steep sloping beer garden, offering a fresh italianised menu and fruit teas.* Cross by the lights to the *Prince of Wales* pub on the other side with a more traditional menu. **If you started the walk in Westcott, you are back to where the walk began.**



#### Leg 4: Westcott to Ranmore Common 3½ km=2 miles

- 1 Turn **right** immediately **before** the Prince of Wales pub, passing its car park on your right. At a road, turn **left** and immediately **right** on St John's Road. Where the road bends left at the end, leave it to go straight ahead over a bridge. Go through a metal gate, straight on through either of two metal swing-gates and straight over the grass under wires to a wooden gate ahead [2016: [unneded as the adjoining metal gate is lying flat](#)]. Cross a cinder path and go straight ahead uphill on a tarmac lane, in the direction of a [2016: [de-fingered](#)] fingerpost. The path bends left in front of *Springfield House* and right by the stables of Bushy Plat Farm. It then runs by a fence, later with fields on your left. *In summer this path may be very overgrown.* The North Downs loom ahead and you have one more short climb in prospect. The path veers away from the fence and takes you over some stepping stones. It then goes by an unneeded stile, through a wooden barrier, across a meadow, then through a metal gate and up steps to the railway line. Cross the line carefully.

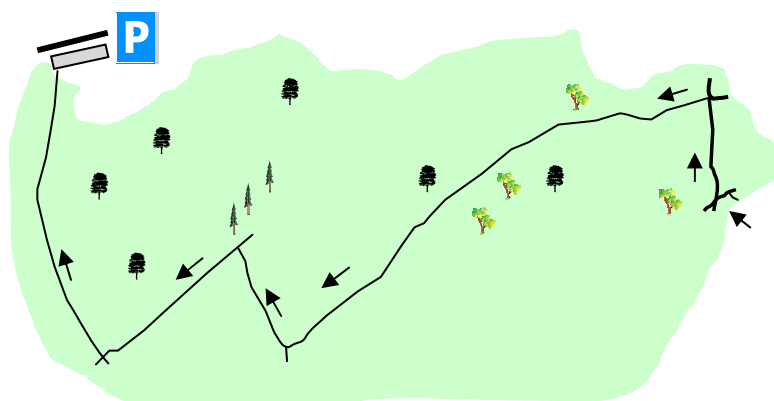


- 2 **See mini-map overleaf.** Your route goes through another metal gate, up the left-hand side of a meadow and through a large wooden gate, where it is worth looking back to admire the view of the area where you were walking. Continue uphill, up some steps under trees and through a wooden gate to a wide track. Turn **left** for a just 5m and go **right** up more steps on a path beside a yew wood on the right (beside a tall wood carving on your

left). This is the steepest part of the walk and it is quite a relief to reach a stile on the left. Go over the stile, continue on the other side of the fence and immediately veer **left** up some steps. Just 10m before a wooden swing-gate at the tree line, turn **left** and take the **right** fork, the higher of two narrow paths that run along the contour of the hillside. Pass a gate and seat on the right and continue ahead on the higher path, close to trees on the right. Your path goes very gently uphill, with great views on the left of Dorking, Westcott and Leith Hill Tower. *This is part of the Denbies Hillside Nature Trail, established by the National Trust.* Finally, you reach another bench and go through a wooden swing-gate. Turn **left** on the North Downs Way.



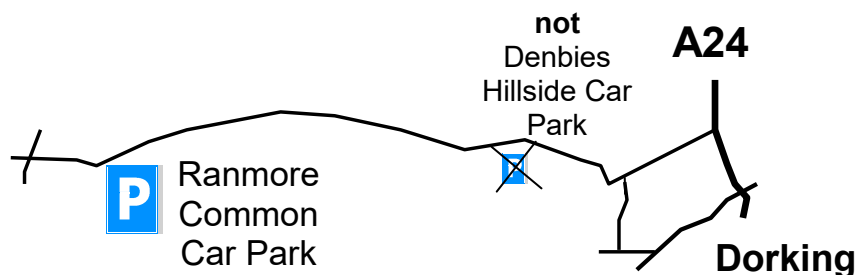
- 3 In 20m, at a fingerpost, turn sharp **right** on a diagonal crossing path. You approach a track at a curve with a large metal gate on your right. Just 5m before the entrance to the gate, turn **left** on a narrow path through woodland.



Keep to the main path at all times, avoiding lesser paths branching off. In about 500m, your path makes a definite **right** turn. 100m further on, turn **left** at a T-junction on a wide straight path running under tall scots pines. In 170m, you reach a crossing path. Turn **right** on the path which quickly takes you back to the car park where the walk began.

## Getting there

By car: Ranmore Common Road is reached from Dorking. If coming from the A24 from Leatherhead, turn **right** just before Dorking, signposted *Guildford*, on Ashcombe Road, keep straight ahead at a mini-roundabout and turn **right** at a T-junction signposted *Ranmore*.



By bus/train: bus 21, 22 or 32 from Dorking to Westcott. Check the timetables.

fancy more free walks? [www.fancyfreewalks.org](http://www.fancyfreewalks.org)

[www.fancyfreewalks.org](http://www.fancyfreewalks.org)