



Chiddingfold and Northchapel

Distance: 20 km=12½ miles

easy-to-moderate walking

Region: West Sussex, Surrey

Date written: 23-jul-2012

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Last update: 11-apr-2016

Refreshments: Chiddingfold, Northchapel

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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Villages, meadows, woodland, views

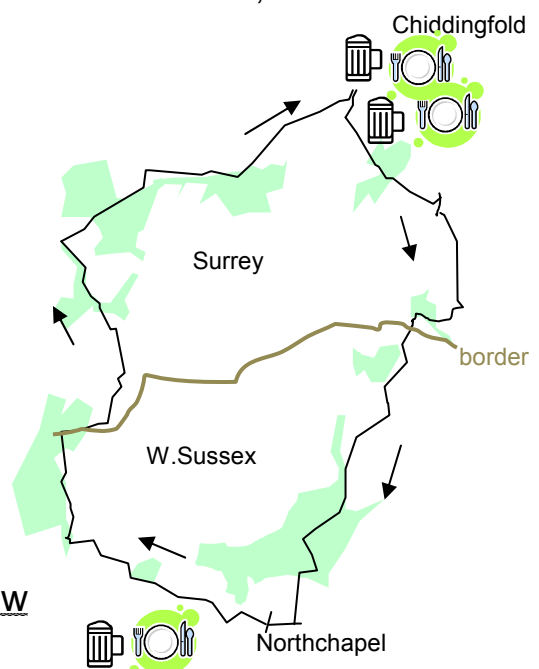
In Brief

This is a perfect circular country walk, evenly divided between Surrey and West Sussex. This border land is famous for its beauty and tranquillity, and this walk has added excitement from the lower slopes of Blackdown.

The walk has a village in Surrey and in West Sussex at each extreme, so ramblers from two counties can begin the walk in either village and tour both counties to decide which is more beautiful. The walk begins in the charming village of Chiddingfold Surrey, **postcode GU8 4TU**. Walkers from Sussex can begin in the equally delightful village of Northchapel, **postcode GU28 9HZ**, beginning and ending the walk at Leg 3 with a choice of lunch stops in Chiddingfold. If starting in Chiddingfold, park alongside the Green. If starting in Northchapel park in Pipers Lane (just off the main road, east, at the north side, by the village green). For more details, see at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).



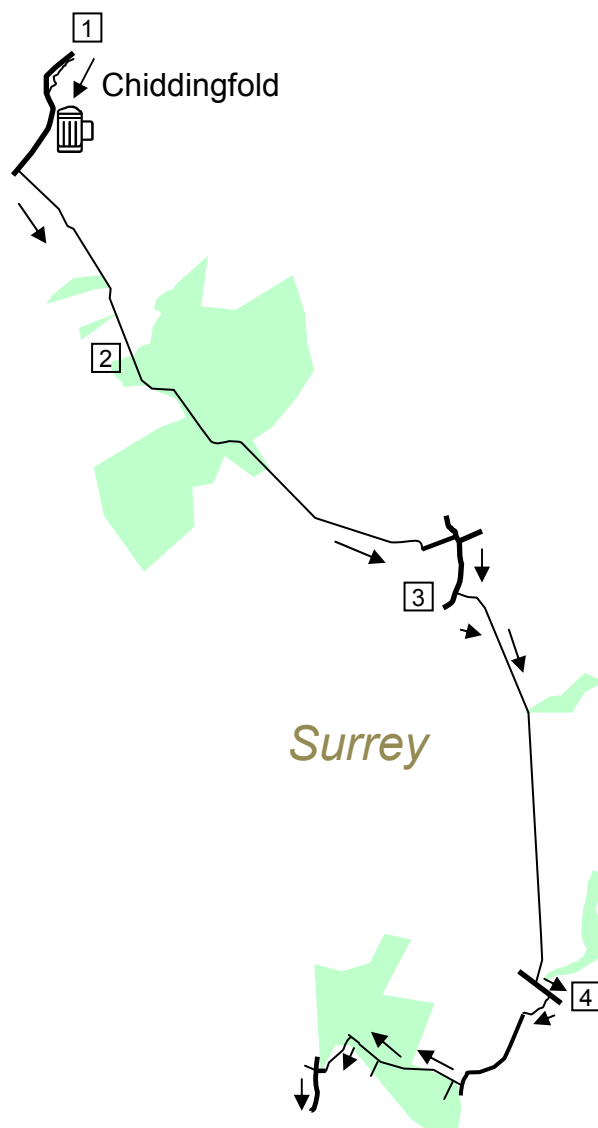
There **are** some nettles on this walk, so shorts are *not* advisable, unless you have attachable leggings or slip-ons. The walk was planned during the wet summer of 2012 when boots were essential. In view of the distance, boots are *always* recommended. Your dog can come too *if he is small*: not all stiles have a gap or a dog gate.



The Walk

Leg 1: Chiddingfold to Shillinglee 4 km= 2½ miles

- 1 Go along the side of the Green towards the church and the *Crown Inn*. Just before the inn, go **left** through a passage, rejoining the road by a butcher's shop and continuing past the *Swan Inn*, crossing a bridge over the Anstead Brook and ignoring a side road. At a fingerpost after the last house, turn **left** on a footpath. This narrow path runs between fences, by a field, over a stile and along the right-hand side of a meadow. At a post with a yellow marker go **right** up some steps and **left** beside a wire fence. This leads you over a stile, uphill through a bluebell wood and over a stile into a sheep meadow. Turn **left** along the edge of the meadow.
- 2 Go over a stile in the corner onto a woodland path. Go carefully down the slope ahead, aided by steps, and pass a pond on your right. The path takes you over a stream, up and along a grassy path by a fence and a large pasture. The path elbows left by a gate and finally bends **right** to go over a stile. Turn **left** on the grass beside the driveway coming from *Old Pickhurst* and, at a T-junction, turn **right** on a road, avoiding a road junction on the left.
- 3 After 150m, go **left** over a stile into a small green meadow and, in less than 100m, go **right** over a small bridge and stile into a sheep pasture. Cross the pasture aiming for the right-hand edge of a line of trees on the other side. Once there, go over a stile beside a metal gate and continue uphill next to a fence on your right. In the far corner, which can be a little swampy, go through a metal kissing-gate and cross the centre of the next rough meadow, aiming for a large house visible ahead, adjoining some long buildings (actually racing stables). Go over a stile to a road and turn **left** on it, passing *Fisher Lane Farmhouse*.
- 4 After only 40m, go **right** on a rather narrow overgrown path which comes out by the racing stables, zigzagging right-left as it does so. Cross over a horse exercise path and continue up a wide cinder track. The track curves right and bends left again. You have an expanse of grass incorporating a large circular horse exerciser to your right and a line of trees ahead. Leave the track as it curves away and aim straight for the line of trees to go

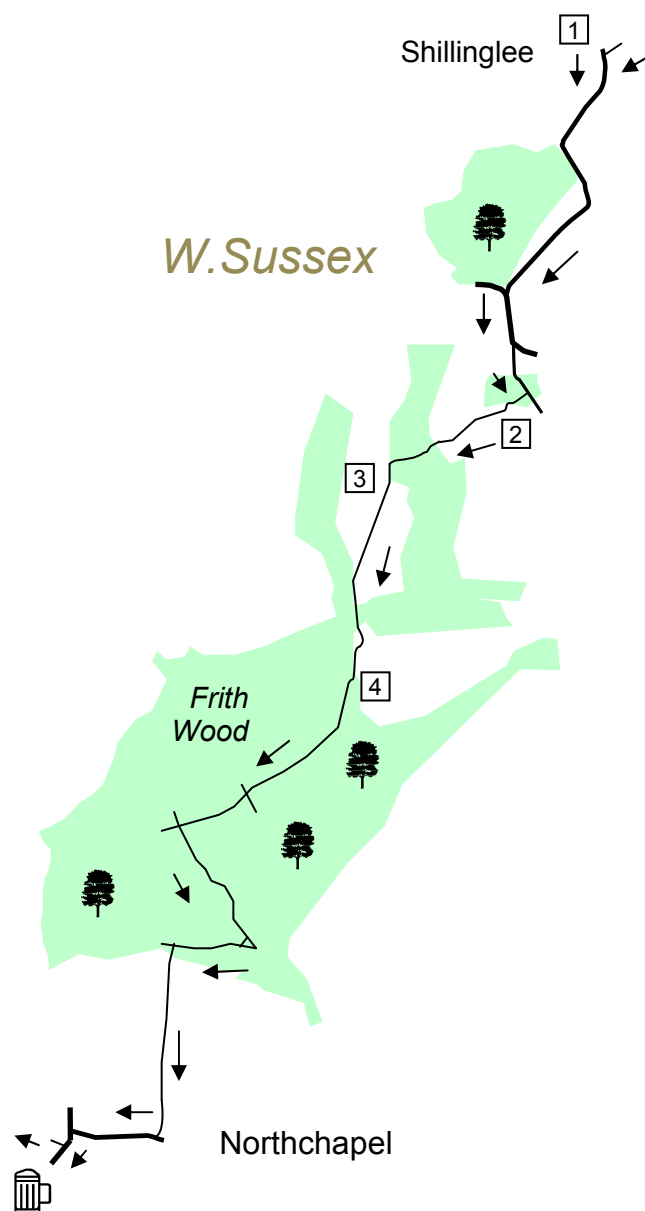


through a small gap in the hedgerow to a 3-way fingerpost. Turn **right** beside the hedge and, in 100m, on meeting a track, turn **right** and immediately **left** along the left-hand edge of the grassy expanse. Ignore the first yellow arrow on your left and continue to the far corner. Here, go over a wooden bridge and take a path straight ahead, gently uphill through a blue-bell wood, in the direction of the yellow arrow. Your path crosses under wires, veers left at a yellow arrow and reaches a fingerpost. Keep **left** to go over a stile or through a metal gate into a small meadow. Keep right across the meadow, with farm buildings on your right, go through two wooden gates and turn **right** to reach a tarmac lane. *You have made a brief acquaintance with the Sussex Border Path.* Turn **left** on the lane, Plaistow Road, avoiding the footpath ahead. Welcome to West Sussex !

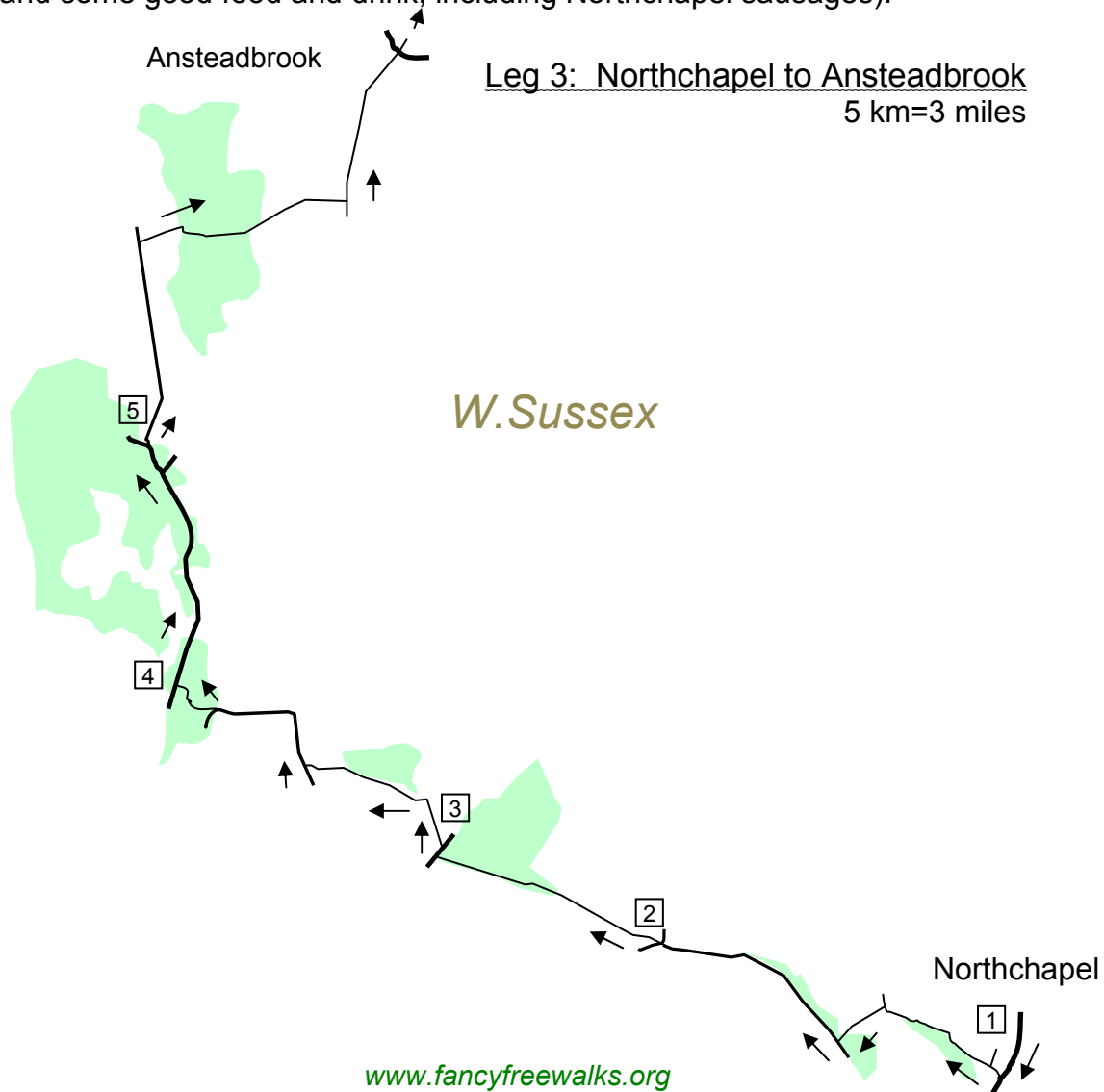
Leg 2: Shillinglee to Northchapel 4½ km=3 miles

1 As you proceed, *Shillinglee Park House* can be seen over on your left. *Shillinglee Park House is a late-Georgian house with a fascinating history involving the famous cricketers Ranji (Maharajah of Nawanagar) and W. G. Grace, plus Lawrence of Arabia and the future King Faisal of Iraq.* Stay on the lane for another 700m as it bends left and right, until you meet a major road (Shillinglee Road) coming from the right. Go straight ahead past *St Mellion* and, on the right, an artist's studio. Where the road bends left, leave it to go over a grid or through a gate, straight ahead on a drive for Park Mill Farm, soon darkened by small horse chestnuts. After 60m under the trees, turn **right** at a fingerpost over a stile on a path through an avenue of small trees. Your path takes you **left** over a stile into a large sloping pasture, possibly grazed by mares and their foals.

2 Turn **right** in the pasture and keep a straight line along the contour, in the direction of the fingerpost, with the sloping grass on your left, heading for a big wood ahead. You pass to the left of an oak, near a dead tree (which may disappear). After the oak, veer a fraction right and head for a stile in the tree line which may be almost hidden in bracken. (As a guide, the wood is made up of conifers on the *right* and broadleaf on the *left*: the stile is at the division between them.) The stile leads to a wide forest path between those conifers and broadleaves. The path immediately narrows and you pass a fingerpost, confirming your direction. Soon after, you come out of the wood into the open again.

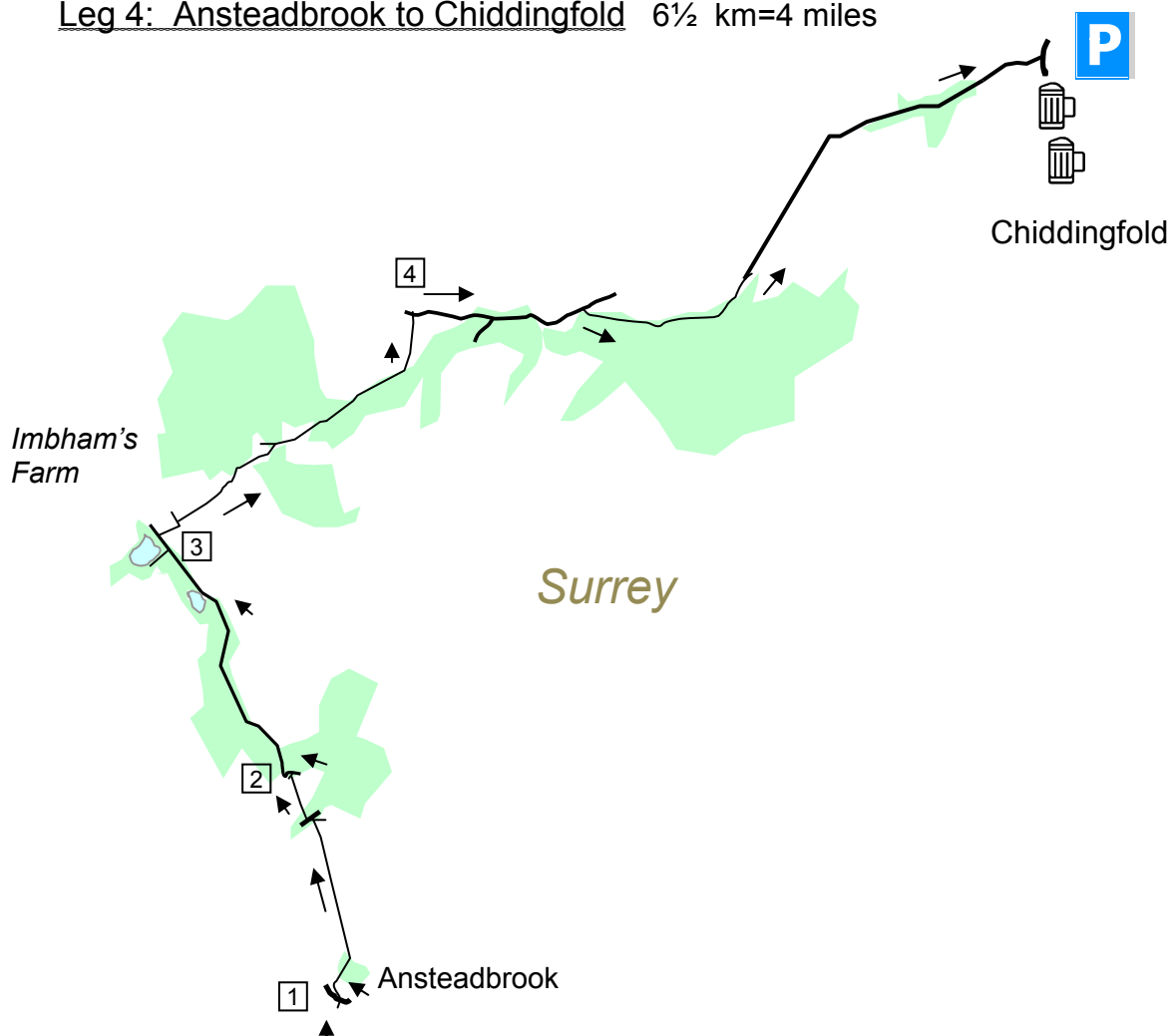


- 3 A fingerpost points you **left** on a lovely grassy path, continuing between fences and then along the left-hand side of a meadow (at the time of writing of waving grass). This wild and wonderful countryside will now continue all the way to your destination. Your path now runs alongside a wood on your right, then runs between woods to a fingerpost. Veer **right** here, as indicated, up the right-hand side of a meadow. The path bends right into a holly wood where you may run into some mud. This is Frith Wood.
- 4 Keep straight ahead on a wide path through the wood, avoiding all paths off. In about 400m, you reach a 4-way fingerpost (at the time of writing with one finger broken off). Keep ahead until you reach a second 4-way fingerpost, after another 300m. Turn sharp **left** here and follow the path for about 400m, sometimes uphill, ignoring all paths off. Just after the path levels out, you will see a junction ahead with a fingerpost and a metal gate. Turn very sharp **right** on another path. (You can take a short cut **right** across some grass and **right** again at a T-junction.) In 120m, disregard a white-on-blue arrow and continue straight on. 100m further, take a wide **left** fork, avoiding the downhill path ahead. The path comes out of the wood and runs along the right-hand side of a crop field, followed by another, with great views of the South Downs ahead. At the bottom, continue on a track to a road and turn **right** into Northchapel. The *Deepwell Inn* at the crossroads is no more, but **left** on the main road takes you quickly, on the right, to the *Half Moon*, a 15th-century coaching inn, also a hotel, with an amazing collection of pots and pans above the inglenook (and some good food and drink, including Northchapel sausages).



- 1 After possible refreshment, leaving the *Half Moon*, turn **left** on the main road and turn **left** on signposted footpath in just 50m. (If you did not visit the pub, this is on the **right**, 50m before the pub.) Follow the path through a barrier and ignore a path on the right, continuing ahead along the left-hand side of a crop field. As you reach the corner, the edge begins to bend round to the right. Turn **left** here at a marker post on a path between fields, soon going over a stream. Turn **right** now at a T-junction by a signpost onto a bridleway. Avoid a track right through the trees and stay beside the field on your left. You have fine views of Blackdown, the highest hill in Sussex (see the other walks in this series *Blackdown* and *Hindhead and Blackdown*). Eventually you reach an old barn by a house at Upper Diddlesford Farm.
- 2 Keep **left** into the farmyard and veer **right** in the direction of the yellow arrows. Go over a stile or through a metal gate and along the right-hand side of a hay field. As you meet a copse that penetrates the field edge, keep ahead over a stile (easily missed) into woodland of Wateredge Copse. Soon the path goes over a stile or over a bank by a fingerpost. It takes you across a bridge so that the stream that was unseen on your right is now on your left. You emerge at a lane opposite *Jobson's Cottage*. Turn **right** on the lane.
- 3 In just a couple of metres, go **left** over a stile into a high pasture. Keep **left** over the brow of the slope and, just over 100m from the stile, find a metal farm gate on the left. Go **left** through the gate and continue ahead along the right-hand side of the next big pasture. At the far side, go over a stile to a tarmac drive, nicely lined with trees on the left. Turn **right** on the drive and follow it as it bends left. Where the drive bends left again by a house, leave it to go over a stile into a wood, part of Roundhurst Common. Go uphill, fairly steeply, through this ferny wood, to emerge at a lane by a National Trust sign. Turn **right** on the lane.
- 4 This lane is in fact Tennyson's Lane that could take you all the way to Haslemere and serves as the jumping off point for several of our walks. Immediately ignore a signpost left by a National Trust sign. (This would take you to the top of Blackdown on the Sussex Border Path.) Continue along the lane, passing *Upper Roundhurst House*. At a road junction, keep ahead, avoiding the road right downhill. After a further short stretch uphill and a left curve, turn **right** at the entrance to *Barfold*.
- 5 Veer **left-right** on a wide track. After 500m, go **right** at a signpost through a wooden swing-gate on a footpath across the field. On the other side, go through a wooden gate and follow the path down, fairly steeply, through woodland. At the bottom, go through a gate and continue along the left-hand side of a meadow, over a narrow stile and similarly by the next meadow. At the far corner, go over a stile and turn **left** on a path that runs through a strip of woodland for 300m, passing another meadow on you left. Go over a stile, or through the gate beside it, to continue on a driveway leading out to the road at Ansteadbrook.

Leg 4: Ansteadbrook to Chiddingfold 6½ km=4 miles



1 Cross straight over the road and go through a small wooden gate. The path turns left and right through a tree plantation and runs along the left-hand side of a large field. At the far end, go **left** on a track beside a house, *Verney*, to a lane. Cross straight over the lane over a small bridge and stile and across the centre of a small meadow. In the corner, go over a stile, carefully down some natural steps, **right** on the front drive of a house and immediately **left** on a wide tarmac driveway.

2 This elegant drive soon goes over a bridge with the Anstead Brook running deep beneath. You pass on your right the rather splendid *Furnace Place*. Later the drive becomes a track and runs for some way with a deep wooded gully on your left. You are met by a track on the left just before a pond. Keep straight on for only 20m more and turn **right** on a signposted bridleway. However, as a short diversion, by keeping ahead for 150m you will reach Imbhams Farm, after which you need to retrace your steps.

Imbhams farmhouse is from the 1500s and the barns have been restored to close to their original state on their raised stone stalks. This area was a centre of the iron industry at that time, the two artificial ponds providing the power. They often invite visitors and have animals, such as donkeys, on display.

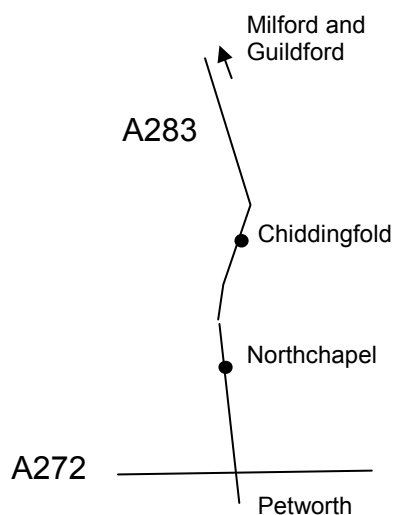
3 The path runs along the left-hand side of a field and then goes **left** through a gap into another field. Avoid the bridleway that runs straight ahead across the field and turn **right** on a footpath along the right-hand side of the field. Soon you enter birch and bracken that announce the start of Frillinghurst Wood. In summer several different butterfly species may also be seen. The path goes deeper into the wood, through a clearing with

bracken and back into the depths. At a junction by a 2-way fingerpost your route turns half **right**. *You may encounter some mud at this point, caused by the springs that abound here: it will soon clear.* On reaching a stream, go over a long bridge and continue uphill. At a marker post, avoid a path left, go through a kissing-gate into a meadow and avoid a footpath on the right, continuing along the right-hand side of the meadow. The path veers away from the edge to a go through a kissing-gate in a fence. Cross the next meadow and, at the other side, go through a metal gate or over a stile and turn **right** on a concrete track in a farmyard.

- 4 Stay on the main track through the farm and a hamlet. At a junction, a major lane joins you from the right. You pass through more woods and pass a house *Dell Farm*. Ignore a footpath left and stay on the lane until you pass a red tile-hung house *Furzfield* with a sculpted hedge on the right. Just after, take a bridleway on the **right**. The path runs alongside a field, re-enters woodland and eventually joins a tarmac driveway coming in from the left. This lane passes houses on both sides in the hamlet of Upper Sydenhurst. Keep straight on along this very quiet cul-de-sac lane passing several footpaths on the left. In one more km, the lane reaches the main road in Chiddingfold. Turn **left** and cross the road to the *Crown Inn* and the Green where the walk began.

Getting there

By car: both villages are on the A283 Milford-Petworth road. If coming from the London area, turn off after Guildford through Milford and take the A283 south. Sussex-dwellers should aim for Petworth and go north on the A283 to Northchapel.



By bus/train: there are several bus routes to both Chiddingfold and Northchapel from Haslemere station but they run on odd days. The best idea is to check the web for the latest options.

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