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## Ebernoe, Pugs Bottom, Lurgashall

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Distance 19km=12 miles or 12km=7½ miles, easy walking

Region: West Sussex

Author: Hautboy

Refreshments: Lurgashall, Northchapel

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

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

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*Quiet villages, woodland, hills, views*

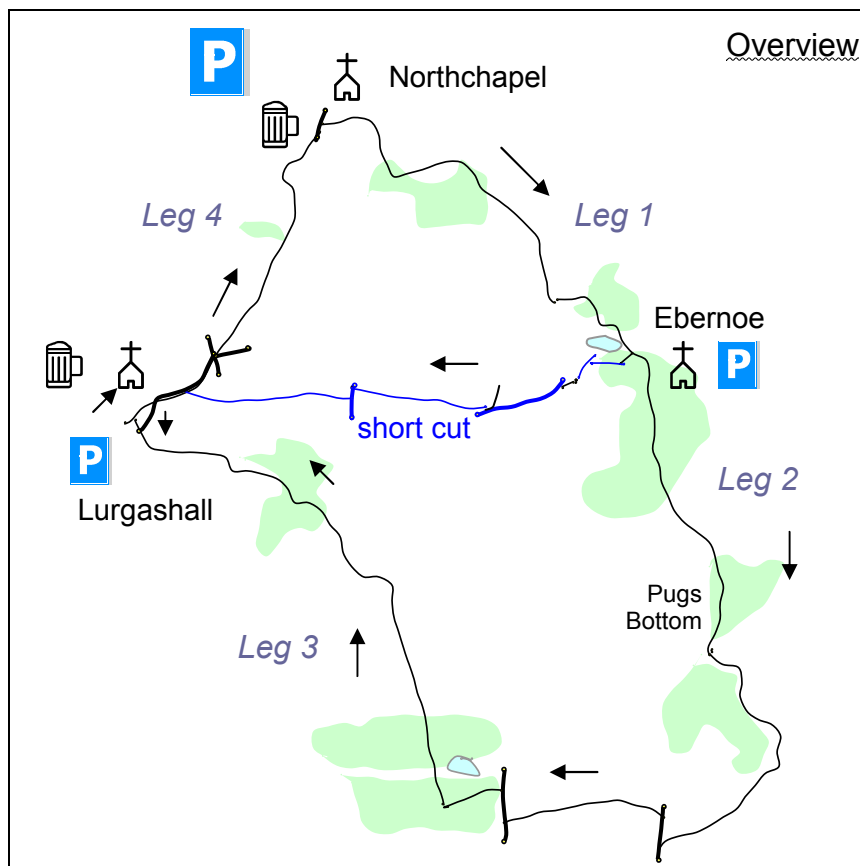
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### In Brief

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This walk is a fine day out in the gentle hills and forests of West Sussex. The main option is long but easy and very well marked with fingerposts. There is an option of a short cut straight from Ebernoe to Lurgashall, although this route is much less attractive because of a couple of ploughed fields and because it pre-empts a small section of the return leg.

The walk starts in **Northchapel** on the A283. If coming by car from the north, turn left on entering the village, just before the *Deepwell Inn*, into Piper's Lane





and park on the roadside. Other possible starting points are Ebernoe (by the church), Lurgashall and even Petworth Park (check closing times).



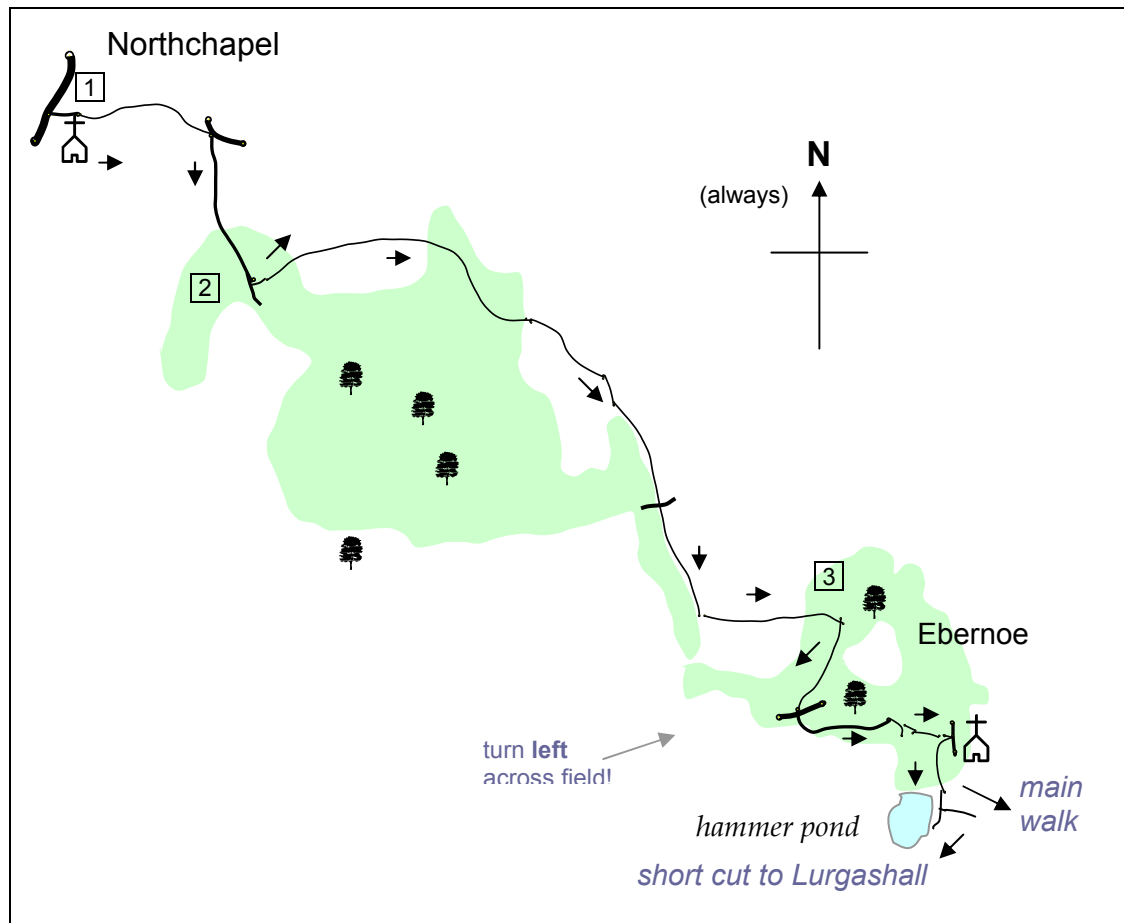
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The going underfoot is easy with a good surface and no nettles (but some heavy undergrowth on the shortcut). The stile count is moderate. The walk seems fine for a dog provided that a lead is to hand.



## The Walk

### Leg 1: Northchapel to Ebernoe 4km=2½ miles



- 1 Return to the main road and turn **left**, passing some delightful historic cottages. Shortly, opposite the *Half Moon Inn*, turn **left** on a marked foot-path. Pass to the right of the small St Michael's church and exit the churchyard through a metal swing-gate. Follow the path along the left-hand side of fields (possibly glancing back to enjoy the view of the church, village and Black Down), crossing the centre of the last field and going over a stile to a bend in a road. Turn **right** on a wide rough track, going past a farm-yard. When you reach a 3-way fingerpost, veer **left** on the main track into woods. In 200m, at a 3-way fingerpost, turn **left** onto a narrower footpath.
- 2 When you reach a field, continue ahead along its left-hand edge. Just into the next wood, at a 4-way fingerpost, keep straight ahead. Follow the wide path through pinewoods and, just after oak trees begin to dominate, turn **left** at a 2-way fingerpost and into a meadow. Cross a ditch and continue with the ditch on your left as the path curves gently right round the edge of the meadow. At the corner, go through a metal gate (or over the stile) and continue along the right-hand side of the next meadow. *Up on your left on a hillock, the object that looks like a lampshade is in fact an air traffic*

*beacon*. The path runs by a wood on your right where a pond can be seen. Cross a stile and a farm drive and continue along the right-hand side of the next two fields, with another stile in between. Just over 100m into the second field, look out for a fingerpost which is sometimes hidden in an invasive hollybush. Turn **left** here across the centre of the field.

- 3 On the other side, go over a stile into woodland. This is an enchanting area with a bridge over a stream and a path uphill through bracken. (There are two official paths to Ebernoe church. The one given here is slightly the longer but gives a wider view of the village.) At a 3-way fingerpost, turn **right**. The path runs between holly banks to a grassy area and a lane. Cross the lane, go about 20m across the grass on the other side and turn **left** on a woodland path. Continue over a farm track past a barn on your right and go straight ahead past *Barn Cottage*. In just 15m, turn **left** on a narrow signed woodland path, soon veering **left** at a T-junction. At once, you reach Ebernoe Church.

*Ebernoe is a much larger village than it appears because it includes so many scattered farmsteads. Its name means something like "tree by a stream" and its history goes back far into the past. Local folklore speaks of its short-bodied children who were stunted further by being fed on knotweed and sent to the royal court in service as dwarves. The church was built in 1865 from different coloured local stone. The supposed reason for building it was simply that the groom of Ebernoe House was tired of the Sunday journey to Kirdford church and wanted one day off in the week. Cricket is a local obsession and each summer at the Ebernoe Horn Fair the highest scoring batsman is presented with the horns of the roasted sheep. Ebernoe Common is a nature reserve and Site of Special Scientific Interest run by the Sussex Wildlife Trust. It is home to a host of species, notably of several rare bats.*

After visiting the church, stay on the same side of the churchyard by which you arrived and continue on the narrow path that runs by the low wall. This soon runs down steps to the Furnace Pond. Keep the pond on your right until you have a narrow wooden bridge a few metres ahead at a junction with a path.

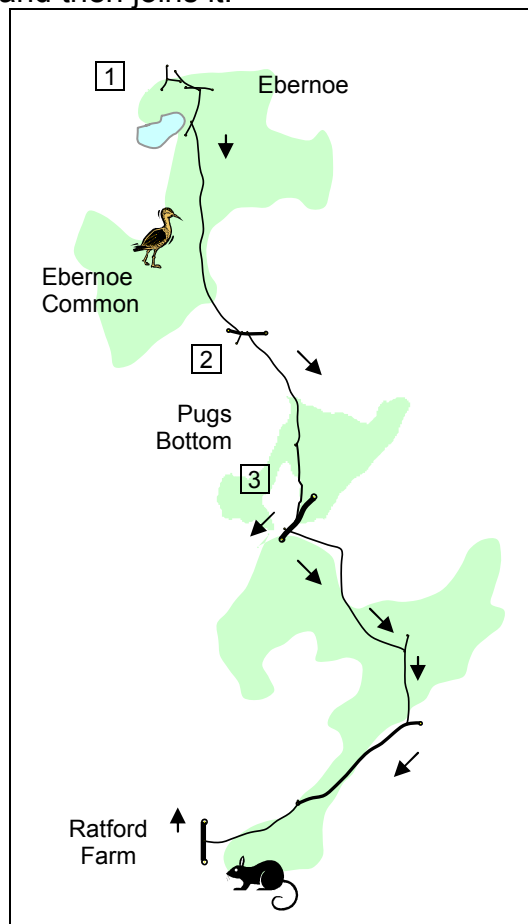
**Decision Point.** If you would like to proceed to Lurgashall by the shortest route, skip to the end of this text and follow **Short Cut: Ebernoe to Lurgashall**.

## Leg 2: Ebernoe to Ratford Farm 5km=3 miles

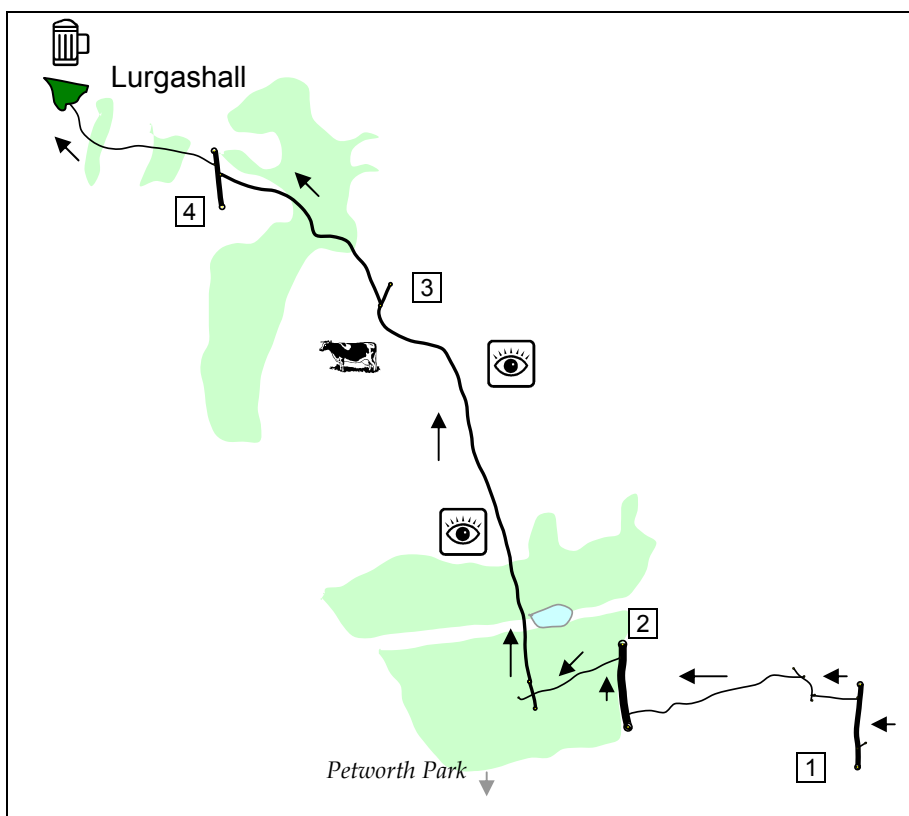
- 1 **See map overleaf.** Turn **left** on the path leading away from the pond, going over a bridge. At a T-junction, turn **right** on a wide path. Go through a gate by a cattle grid with a slanting information tablet giving information on Ebernoe Common. Shortly, at a fingerpost, turn **right** as directed. In 160m, at a 3-way fingerpost, fork **left** between two wooden posts. You are now in a fine woodland path of Ebernoe Common and the path follows the left-hand side of an open area with oak trees. Go through a gate by a house between two ponds, go over a two-plank bridge and, following the fingerpost, join a sandy track ahead. The track soon bends left with a farm gate on your right.
- 2 In 30m, the track passes a junction with a smaller path at a fingerpost on the right. Ignore this path and stay on the track. 50m further on, there is another junction with a fingerpost on the right. Turn **right** here on a narrow path into the woods. The path takes you through rather dense bracken under mature oaks and over a crossing path. You then have a nice clear path through woodland and over a two-plank bridge. At a 2-way fingerpost, turn **left** going over a stile via another two-plank bridge. Welcome to the greenwoods and

marshes of Pugs Bottom! After another two little bridges you are on a wide beechwood path. *The first big beech here is notable for the initials and monograms carved in it, some quite high up, some imaginative, some less so.* The path rises and runs parallel to a road and then joins it.

- 3 Over 100m along the road, turn **left** on a marked footpath. There are pinewoods on the right and the path bends right. Just after entering the wood, turn **left** as indicated by the fingerpost. After some distance, go straight over a crossing track and, shortly after, veer **right** as indicated. Go under grid lines and continue through the wood. At a T-junction, with a field visible ahead, turn **right** on a cinder track. *The meadow on your left is enigmatically called "Stedmans Journey".* Follow the path, avoiding several side tracks, to emerge along the left-hand side of a meadow. At the other side, turn right on a cinder track up to a road by Ratford Farm. Turn **right** on the road.



Leg 3: Ratford Farm to Lurgashall 6½km=4 miles



1 Pass Keyfox Farm and two metal gates on the right and then turn **left** up three steps and through a metal swing-gate. Go along the right-hand side of the meadow, down steps, over a two-plank bridge and up the right-hand side of another meadow. In the corner, go over a stile and turn **right** along the edge of the field. At the next fingerpost, turn **left** along the edge of the field, avoiding the private path just to the right of it leading into the wood. The path zig-zags left-right around the edge and it is here that you gain your first good sight of Petworth Park ahead. Go through a broken gate in the tree-line into a meadow. Cross the meadow, aiming for the far left-hand corner. Go up a bank and turn **right** along the edge of a large field. Just after rounding a corner of the field, turn **right** into a coppiced wood, via an avoidable stile. There is no marked path through this strip of woodland: simply choose any route you like, keeping as far as possible to your original direction, heading for the road that you can now probably hear ahead. You reach the road via an unneeded stile. Turn **right** on the road, the A283, soon passing Limbo Farm.

As a brisk diversion, or as an alternative starting point, the entrance to Petworth Park can be reached in 250m by instead turning **left** along the main road.

2 After a total of 300m on the road, turn **left** through a metal gate into Pheasant Copse. Ignore several side tracks but when, after nearly 500m, you come to a major crossing drive, turn **right**. You are in a fine straight avenue of tulip trees. The drive runs past a lake and under grid lines. Go through a gate by the first of several cattle grids and then gently uphill, gaining fine views across the open country on all sides. Next come another cattle grid (or stile), a group of farm buildings, another cattle grid (or metal gate). *Cosily huddled in the valley on the left is Stagpark Farm with its dovecote. Ahead is a fine profile of Black Down, the highest hill in Sussex.* At the next junction, the route is straight ahead over a cattle grid (or through the metal gate).

This pasture usually contains a fine herd of pedigree cattle. You may have seen the *bull in field* sign. If you are nervous of cattle and they are in the pasture on the *left*, you can sneak along the *other* side of the hedge: just after the cattle grid, slip into the meadow on the **right**-hand side of the hedge. On reaching the corner, dart quickly **left** through one metal gate into the field where the cattle are and **right** through the second metal gate and continue along the edge of the next meadow to rejoin the drive. If the cattle are far down the meadow on the *left*, you can reach the two metal gates before escaping **right** through the second gate. If the cattle are in one of the pastures on the *right*, you don't need to make a diversion at all. All this said, the author has always got along fine by thinking of cattle simply as "big sheep". The farmer has a duty of care not to place you in any danger and would laugh at these antics. (Then, you may well ask, why does he put up a sign?)


3 The drive curves left and right and comes to a Y-junction. Take the **left** fork, as indicated by the sign. Cross yet another cattle grid (or go through a metal gate) and enter a long stretch of woodland. The drive bends right at a fingerpost and then left. Just stay on the metalled drive at all times. The final stretch takes you past cottages belonging to the estate and out through a metal gate in the wall to a lane. Turn **right** on the lane.

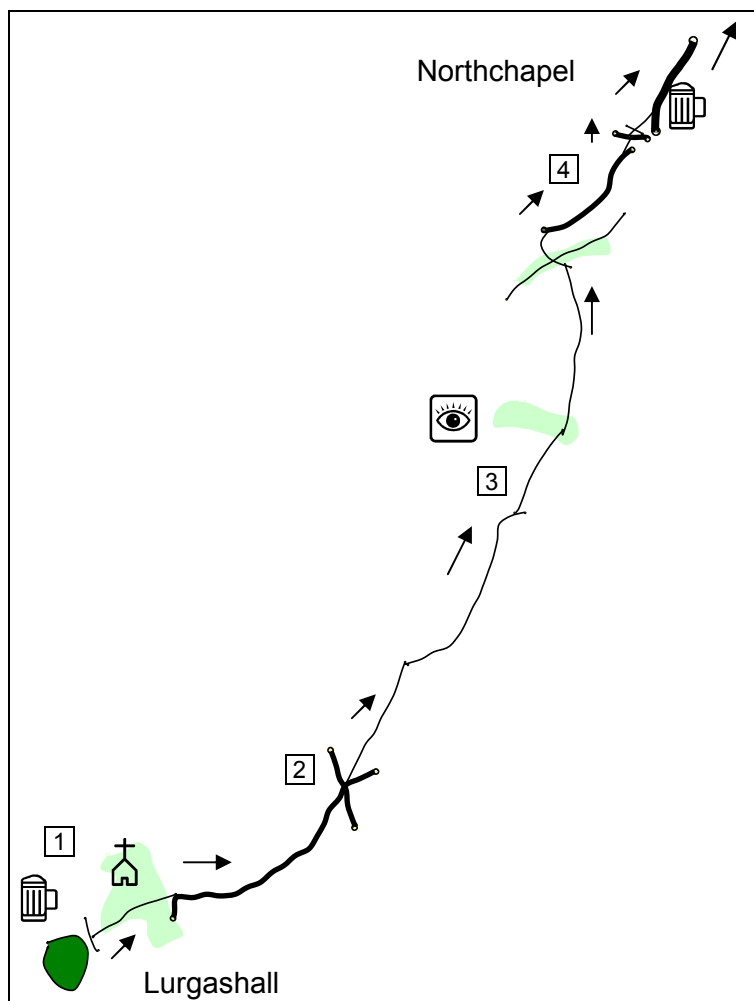
4 After 60m, turn **left** over a stile and cross a field on a clear path. Go by an unneeded stile into woods and then out again into more fields. Go straight ahead keeping the hedge on your left. At the other side, go past an unneeded stile and descend into woodland. The path takes you across a

bridge over a stream, up beside a horse meadow, by a playing field and out to a lane in the village of Lurgashall.

*Lurgashall is a perfect village surrounding a village green, with brightly coloured houses dripping with wisteria in early summer. On the south side is a tiny village store where you can stock up for the journey. On the east side is the church of St Laurence with its large yew trees. For a much more detailed description and history of Lurgashall, see another walk in this series: [Woolbeding Common & the Temple of the Winds](#).*

#### Leg 4: Lurgashall to Northchapel 3½km=2 miles

-  1 Keep ahead alongside the village green heading for the *Noah's Ark*. In the far corner, turn right through a wooden gate into the churchyard, over-swept by age-old yew trees. Pass the unusual covered porch of St Laurence's church on your left. (See "*History of Lurgashall and its Church*" by A.C. Sharman, available from the rector.) Go down a fenced path and over a wooden bridge, emerging at a lane beside *The Chines*. Turn **left** (really straight ahead) on the lane, a notoriously narrow one for traffic. After about 500m on the lane, you reach a crossroads by the delectable *Crossways*.



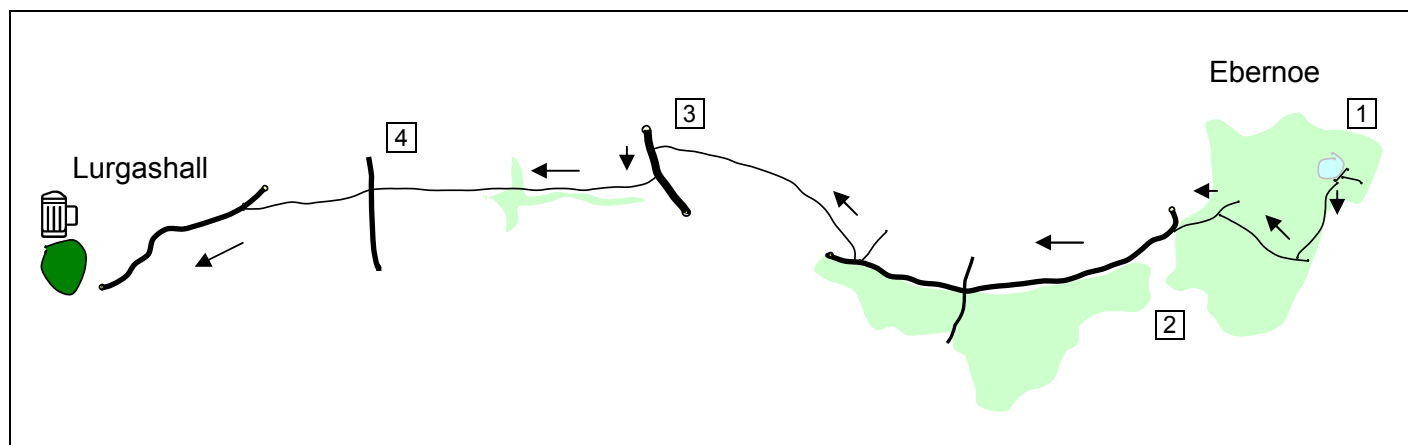
- 2 Go over a stile in the opposite left-hand hedge. Cross the large meadow on a path that cuts it diagonally. Go over a stile on the other side and through a large metal gate on the right. Go down the length of this narrow meadow and then over a ditch and stile into a large meadow. Cross the meadow, veering slightly left and aiming for a jutting corner visible up ahead. On reaching the corner, continue along the right-hand edge of the meadow and, in the far corner, go over a stile. Keep **right** along a fenced, rather over-grown, path. (You can instead keep left through a yawning gap into the large meadow and thereby avoid the rather flimsy stile described in the next sentence.) In just 30m, turn **left** over a stile into a very large grassy meadow.
- 3 Cross the meadow veering a fraction to the right and aiming for a tree-line visible on the other side. As you come over the brow of the hill, look for a stile visible in the tree-line ahead. Cross the stile (which at the time of

writing is avoidable by squeezing past) and go through the belt of trees. Go over a stile on the other side and, ignoring the fingerpost, go straight down an untidy meadow, with the village of Northchapel now clearly visible in the valley below. Negotiate two stiles in the next hedge, one entirely avoidable. Follow a path across the grass aiming to the left of a red-brick house. In the bottom left corner, go past a stile into woodland and turn sharp **left** over a bridge. Follow this little woodland path over another bridge, turn **right** just before a lane and finally join the lane.

- 4 Pass *Grove End* and reach a triangle of urban woodland. Veer **left** on a narrow path along the left-hand side of the woodland. On reaching a lane, turn **left** for just 10m and then **right** on a marked footpath through woodland. The path crosses a drive by a house, crosses a stream and goes up steps to the main road through the village. Turn **left** on the road, passing several refreshment opportunities and charming cottages, soon reaching Piper's Lane and the start of the walk.

### Short Cut: Ebernoe to Lurgashall

Take this short cut if you want to shorten the walk and go directly from Ebernoe to Lurgashall.



- 1 Stay on the pondside and go over the narrow wooden bridge. You are in a nature reserve looked after, as is much of the woodland here, by the Sussex Wildlife Trust ([www.sussexwt.org.uk](http://www.sussexwt.org.uk)). Follow the narrow path into the wood and under wires. At the corner of a meadow, veer **right** to stay in the woods, now descending to the floor of the forest. Soon you meet a crossing path with a plank bridge on your right. Turn **right** over the bridge which is followed by another. The path then goes steeply up a bank. Keep ahead all the time through an area of tall pines, beeches and oaks. At a T-junction, turn **left** as indicated by the fingerpost. You reach a road at a bend. Keep straight ahead along the road.
- 2 You pass Colhook Farm and brideways left and right and finally reach the brick gateposts of a cottage and farm workshops. Ignore the footpath just before the gateposts but turn **right** on a footpath just after the gateposts. The path follows the right-hand side of a triangular meadow and passes a vineyard. Go over a rickety stile in the corner, across a small meadow that sometimes holds shetland ponies, over a stile and into a field. At the time of writing this field is ploughed up and crossing it is harder than it should be. Walk diagonally to the top far corner where you can see a gate. Go over a stile, along the left-hand side of a meadow, over a plank bridge and

continue ahead. You have a fine view of Black Down. Go over a stile and along the left-hand side of small meadow. Finally go over a stile to the main road.

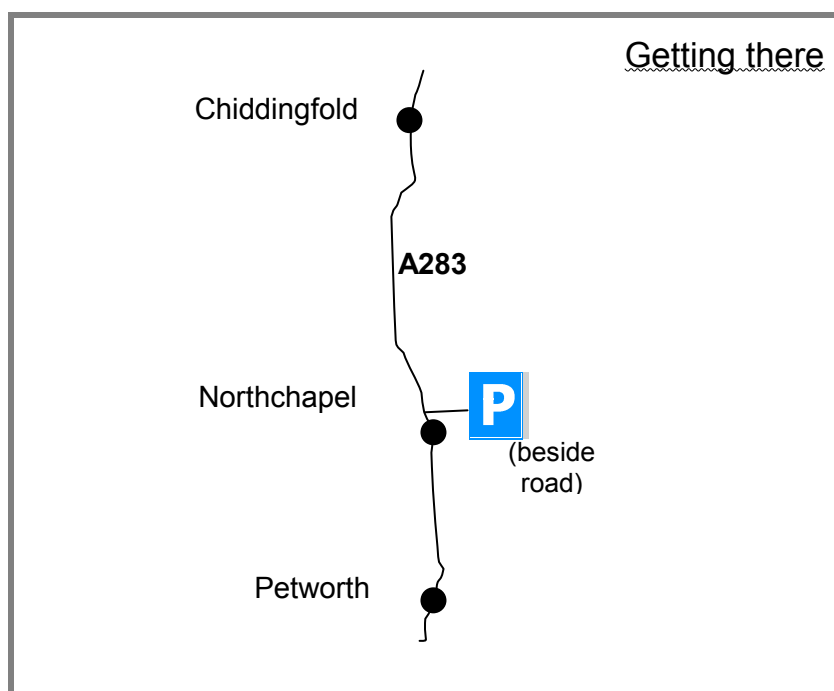
- 3 Cross the main road and turn **left** for 100m. Turn **right** over a plank bridge and stile (broken at the time of writing) on a signed footpath. You need to keep straight ahead across the field keeping parallel to the line of trees on the left. At the time of writing the field is covered with weeds but it has recently been a wheat field. Either way, you will be able to find a comfortable line that gradually nears the left-hand edge and finally reaches the far left corner of the field. Go through a belt of trees with a stile on each side and continue along the left-hand side of a field. Go over a stile a few paces to the right of the corner, through a light metal gate and step over a wire. (The wire has a plastic cover on the left to assist you.) Go diagonally across the meadow towards a wooden pylon. Go through a gate on the other side and across the centre of the next field. Next come a stile and plank bridge taking you to a lane.
- 4 Cross the lane and go over a similar bridge and stile. Go along the left-hand side, then the centre of the next field. After a gap in the trees, barely 5m into the next field, turn **right** over a stile into a lane. Turn **left** on the lane into Lurgashall. The village is signalled by a sight of St Lawrence church and the first cottage. Follow the lane as it bends left here and soon reaches the Green at Lurgashall.

To finish the walk, continue from [Leg 4](#) above.

## Getting there

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By car: Northchapel is on the A283 between Chiddingfold and Petworth.



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