



Hindhead and Chiddingfold

Distance: 19 km=12 miles or separately 8+11 km=5+7 miles
easy-to-moderate walking

Region: Surrey

Author: Hautboy comments please to feedback@fancyfreewalks.org

Refreshments: Hindhead, Grayswood, Chiddingfold

Map: Explorer 133 (Haslemere & Petersfield)

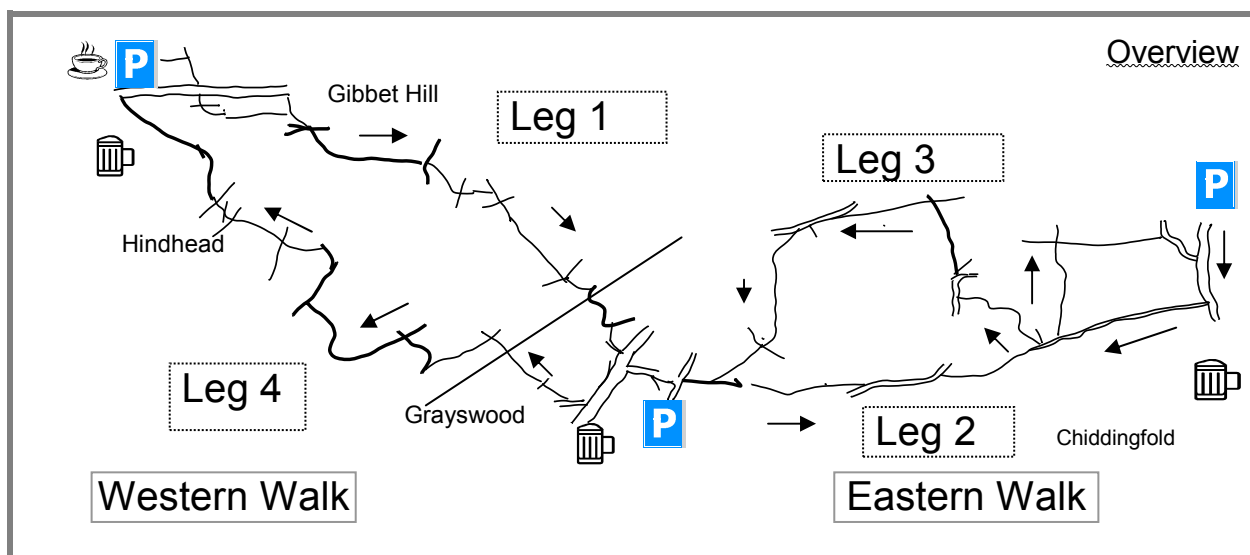
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Wooded hills, lowland woodland, meadows, villages, variety

In Brief



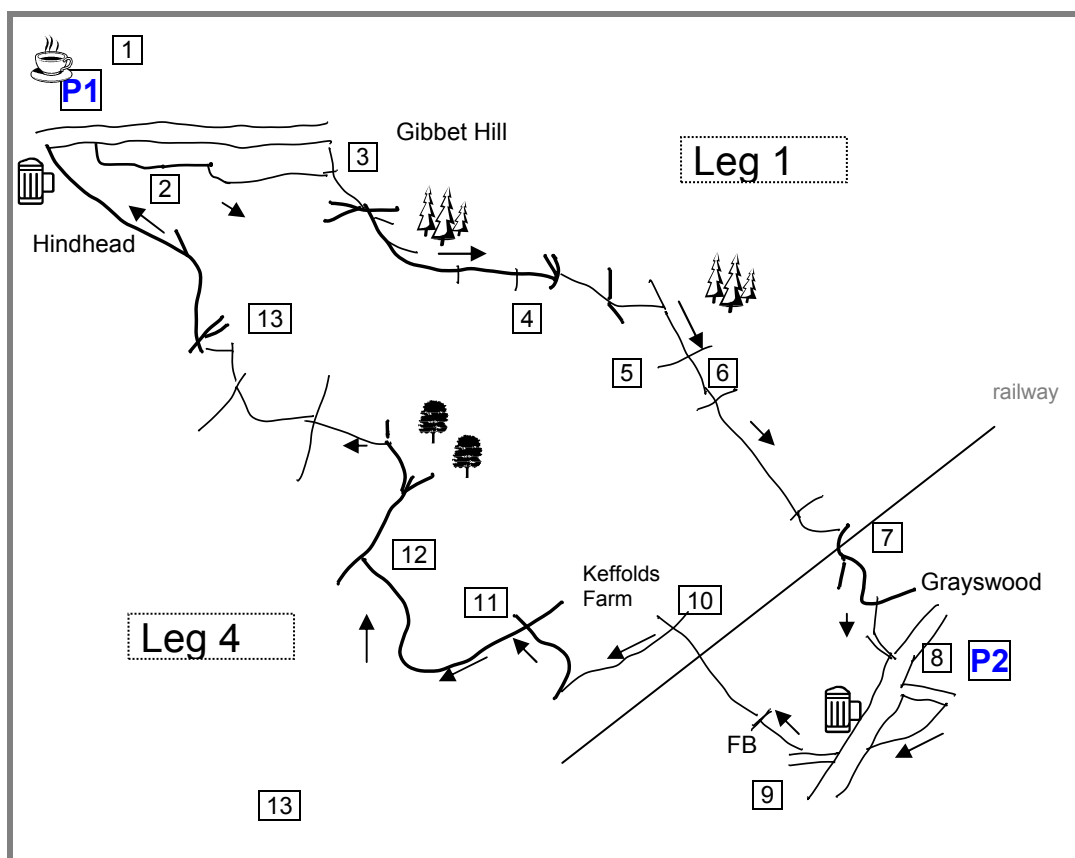
This double-figure-of-eight walk goes from one of the best hills of Surrey to one of its best villages, through a variety of terrain. It can be split into two contrasting walks, one through the wooded hills and valleys of Hindhead Common and the other through lowland woods and over grassy meadows. This walk is perfect for the drier seasons but if you have good boots it is fine at any time. There are hardly any nettles, so shorts are wearable. It seems mainly fine for your dog.



The *full-length* walk and the *separate* Eastern Walk start in the Punchbowl carpark just before Hindhead on the A3. The *separate* Western Walk starts in Grayswood or Chiddingfold. The *full-length* walk may also start in Chiddingfold. For full details, see **Getting There** at the end of this text.

The Walk

Leg 1: Hindhead to Grayswood



This is the start of the *full-length* walk (Legs 1 - 4). For a shorter walk, you can start here and do just Legs 1 and 4.

- 1 After possibly stopping to admire the view over the Punchbowl from the famous viewpoint at the back of the car park, leave the car park at the place where there is a sign for cars to **exit**. Cross over the tarmac and turn **left** on a wide track running parallel to the old road. The track quickly becomes a tarmac lane. In 250m, fork right on footpath (the first obvious right turn) leading to a wooden gate.
- 2 Continue through the wooden gate onto an open heath with views south. You may see belted Galloway cattle and also the sharp-horned Highland cattle loose amongst the heather and gorse; these may look menacing but they are really quite docile animals. Stay on this firm path, ignoring all branches off to the right, and gradually wheel **left** with the path into the woodland making, in effect, a full left turn and passing some wood stacks. The path goes through another gate and crosses a path obliquely before eventually emerging from the woodland at the open space of Gibbet Hill with its celtic cross and extensive views of the other Surrey Hills. *Not far from Gibbet Hill is the entrance to the A3 Hindhead Tunnel, completed in 2011. It can be viewed from a platform which is signposted from here. It was on Gibbet Hill that three men were hung in 1786 for the notorious murder of a sailor returning to his ship in Portsmouth. Charles Dickens even used this story in Nicholas Nickleby.*
- 3 From the direction finder turn **right** at the very edge of Gibbet Hill on a winding narrow path that begins to descend through pine trees, eventually reaching a junction of many paths. Take the wide path gently rising directly ahead through a green metal barrier, soon ignore a path branching left and,

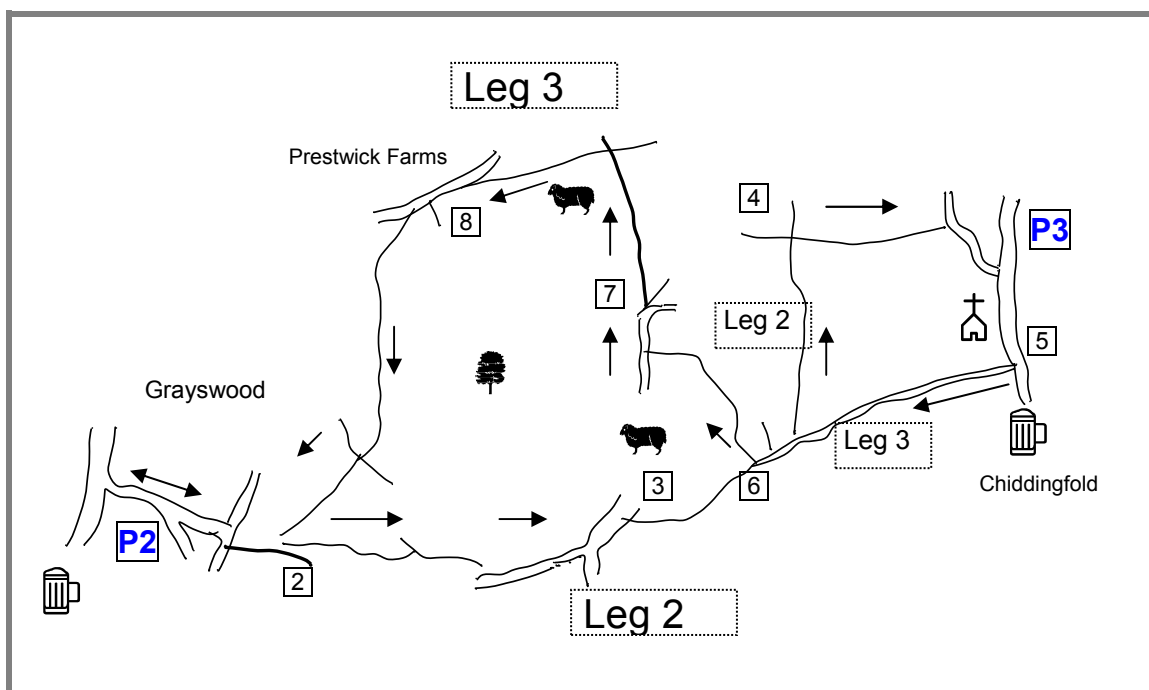
where the path splits at a tall bank of trees, keep to the path on the **right**. This fine path has views to the left. It eventually passes the foundation of an octagonal stone temple on the left and comes down to a junction of wide paths with a platform on the left which once held a seat.

- 4 Ignore the wide paths to the left and right and go straight ahead on a rather narrower path that curves right and descends steeply through a coppice. At the bottom, it is joined by a path from the left and reaches the side of a broad valley and a junction of paths.
- 5 Ignore the grassy path left and ignore the level path slightly right that skirts the valley and take a much narrower path opposite, just to the right of a post, through bracken. This path winds through a marshy and botanically very rich and diverse area and eventually widens and runs straight between coppices, reaching a forestry track where you turn **right**. Shortly you come to a crossing of tracks where you continue straight on.
- 6 The track immediately becomes a narrow path descending, at first, through a rather soggy grassy area. The path crosses a track and continues to descend through gorse. The terrain is still pleasantly grassy but becomes rather wet over one or two patches. Finally the path enters trees, goes over a bridge and approaches a house. It runs along the edge of the lawn to the left of the house and reaches the front drive. Cross over the drive and continue on a wide track ahead running to the right of a barn. The track reaches a drive where you turn **right**, ignoring a kissing gate ahead, and go under a railway arch.
- 7 Follow this drive past properties, including a timbered house of red slanting bricks. Eventually the track reaches a bridge over a stream with a little footbridge to its left. Leave the track here where it bends left by taking a narrow unmarked path directly ahead up a bank. This path leads up to a local road, Church Close, which in turn leads out to the main road at Grayswood.
- 8 If you are continuing on to Chiddingfold, cross straight over to the road across the green. If you are doing the short walk, turn **right** along the road to the *Wheatsheaf Inn*. *The Wheatsheaf is a hotel and upmarket pub with a promising restaurant in the conservatory*. Take the unnamed local road **right** after the *Wheatsheaf*.

Leg 2: Grayswood to Chiddingfold **see map overleaf**

- 1 Follow the road away from the main road, with the school on the left and, where the road forks by the Green, take the main **left** fork. The road is lined on one side with small houses. It reaches a T-junction with another road. Go straight over the road onto a bridleway. Follow the bridleway for a short distance past isolated properties until you reach a junction, just before a water treatment station. Turn **left** here but, immediately after, ignore a footpath on the left and stay on the wide path **right** that runs on the right hand side of the meadow.
- 2 Continue over two footbridges and into woods. From here you follow the blue arrows. After 100m take the **left** fork. After another 100m, go past a fence and posts on your right (do not go through them). After about 50m go over a bridge and about 50m further, when you come to a T-junction with a broad forestry track, turn **right**. After about 100m another track

crosses. After 70m, go through a (usually open) one-bar gate and wheel **left** and **right** onto a parallel forest track, shortly continuing on a narrow woodland path. After about 250m the path crosses a broad forestry track. Soon you ignore several paths right and left, go through a gate and shortly join a minor lane with a house on the right, *Frillinghurst Old Manor*. This lane runs for some distance through the attractive hamlet of Frillinghurst. Eventually you join a lane coming in from the right. You pass a red tile-hung house *Furzfield* with a sculpted hedge on the right. Just after, take a bridleway on the **right**.



- 3 The path runs alongside a field and re-enters woodland and eventually joins a tarmac driveway coming in from the left. This road passes houses on both sides in the hamlet of Upper Sydenhurst. You pass a footpath on the left and another that points down a lane on the left. A little further on, go **left** through the redbrick entrance gate of *Little Sydenhurst*, opposite the *Ukrainian Home*. When the driveway ends, go through a gate ahead on a sunken footpath, passing through woodland. After about 50m, pass the edge of a pond on your left. The path rises through holly and emerges via a stile onto a hillside. Near the top right of the meadow, turn **right** on a crossing path.
- 4 This path leads over two stiles (one unneeded), between fences and out into a superior residential road. It continues downwards over an open hillside with fine views all around and a sight of your destination below, passes a graveyard, goes through an old broken kissing gate and eventually meets a road where you turn **right** meeting the main A283 road through Chiddingfold where you turn **right** again.

There is a shop at Chiddingfold and the Crown Inn (founded 1250) serves good food. St Mary's church, which dates back to around 1190, and its churchyard with its notable brick-vaulted graves are definitely worth visiting.

Leg 3: Chiddingfold to Grayswood see map accompanying Leg 2

- 5 Passing the church on your right, turn **right** on Mill Lane. Follow the road for some distance, eventually passing the entrance to Little Sydenhurst on the right, and passing a lane on the right marked as a footpath. A few steps further on, turn **right** at another footpath sign through a modern kissing gate.
- 6 Follow the path across two small meadows (using a gate on the left in preference to the stile on the right). The path bends **right** at the end of the second meadow, through another kissing gate, round the back of a garden and **left** again on a path enclosed by banks. The path curves left and right through a plantation and then enters a large field via a gate or stile. Continue along the right-hand side of the field for some distance and then straight on at the field corner, eventually meeting a minor road.
- 7 Turn **right** on the minor road, ignoring the footpath ahead, and, when the road curves right in 40m, leave it to continue straight ahead on a wide footpath. Soon after, ignore a footpath forking off right. Continue along the footpath for some distance between fields. After about 500m, after an uphill section, turn **left** over a stile on a crossing footpath. Take care not to miss this. The footpath leads straight across several meadows and stiles, one of which is in the jutting corner of a sheep meadow. It heads towards a farmhouse, crossing a drive via two gates, and, via another gate, reaching a grassy path near the house. The map and the yellow arrow suggest that you cut the corner of the lawn in front of the house. In practice it seems better to weave left and right on the grassy path. Either way, you emerge on a road where you turn **left**.
- 8 Stay on the road for about 200m, passing Little and the High Prestwick Farms and ignoring the footpath through the latter. Just after the last house (Damson Cottage), take a narrow footpath **left** that starts just **after** a driveway and runs to the right of a shed, through a large metal gate and out into fields. Continue in the same direction along the left hand side of two fields, separated by a stile, leading to a junction of farm tracks with four metal farm gates. Go straight on through the gate ahead, continuing down the right hand side of the next field. There are fine views of Hindhead Common on the right. At the bottom, on meeting woodland, turn **right** over a stile or through a gate. Go **left** over a stile and little bridge in the corner and cross a broad track onto an enclosed path. After some distance, ignore a bridleway on the left and turn **right** after a few more paces on a broad track. On meeting a road, cross straight over on another road to the Green at Grayswood.

If you are continuing on to Hindhead, you can take a marked footpath on the **left** by the Green, just before the first house. You pass homes including Spring Cottage with its US Post box and amusing sign and come out to the main road opposite the unnamed local road, with the pub to its right.

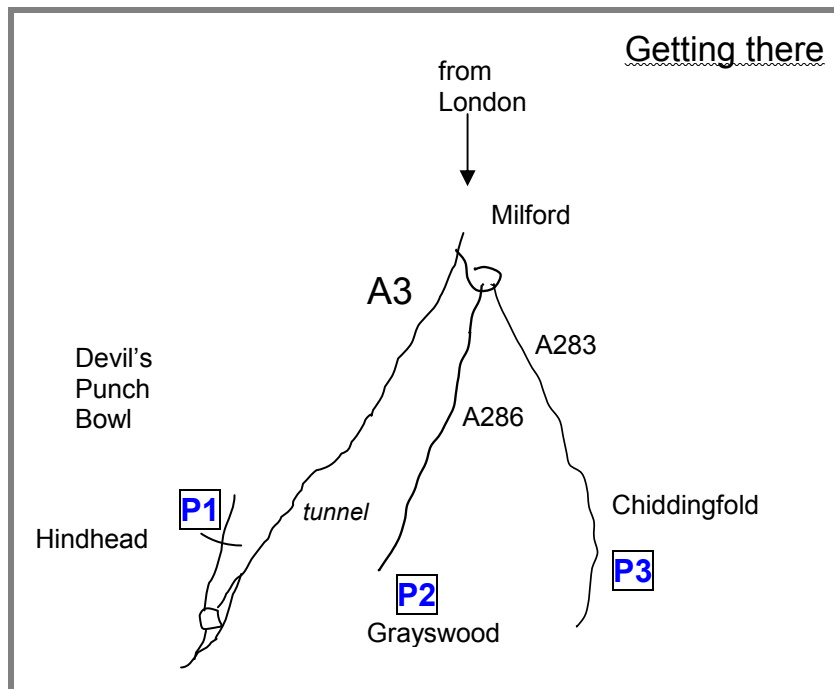
Leg 4: Grayswood to Hindhead see map accompanying Leg 1

- 9 Follow the unnamed local road almost to its end where you need to look out for a stile and footpath on the **right** opposite *The Alding*. Follow the path down steps and over a bridge in attractive woodland. The path reaches a stile and gate leading up to a railway crossing where you need to take care, followed by a stile and an old kissing gate. Soon you approach a stile leading into a field. Do not go into the field but instead take a marked path **left** through more woodland.
- 10 The path goes over a stream and curves right as it approaches a field. Follow the sunken path under tall beeches and eventually reach an open hillside, with a wooden swing-gate at each end, with Keffold's Farm prominent up on the right. The path now leads up to a small gate. Turn sharp **right** here, almost doubling back. The path curves round left past the farm and reaches a wide track at a T-junction.
- 11 Turn sharp **left** here on a lane marked as a footpath. Follow this pleasant lane for some distance until it reaches a hairpin. Here, ignore all the tracks on the left and keep **right** all the way round the hairpin. The lane eventually reaches a T-junction with a quiet road.
- 12 Turn **right** on the road, ignoring the private drive. *Note the little robin on the gate of "Robins"*. After a metal barrier, at a clearing with a National Trust sign for *Inval*, turn first **left** with the now sunken rising track. At the top, take a path on the **left** marked by a post with blue arrows. The path veers right, narrows and descends fairly steeply to a signposted crossing track. Cross straight over it. The path follows a fence and fields on the left and eventually reaches another junction with the hamlet of Coombe Head on the right. Go **straight ahead** at Coombe Head through a gate, leaving the wide track. Stay on this path for only 50m or so until you come to a footpath on the **left** which you take. Take care not to miss this: the sign is hidden on the top of a post and is not immediately visible.
- 13 The path rises steeply and so it is a bit of a "sting in the tail" for this walk. After a bracing climb, you reach a prominent clearing with views all around and a seat. Ahead is a popular broad level walk across the Common. Join it by crossing over one sandy path, ignoring another that forks right by a seat and rubbish bin and turning **right** on the broad stony path as it curves slightly left. Immediately you cross another path obliquely. Later, ignore a bridleway sharp left and 10m later, at a junction with blue arrows, turn **left** with the main sandy path. Here there are fabulous views left into Hampshire. Follow this path all the way to a gate into a National Trust maintenance area and the main road at Hindhead.

Getting there

Take the A3 and turn off, just south of the tunnel, at a sign for **Hindhead**. At the traffic lights in Hindhead, keep straight ahead onto a cul-de-sac. The car park is on the left (P1). Refreshments are available here. There is a shop at Chiddingfold.

The second separate walk begins in Grayswood (P2), or in Chiddingfold (P3). To get to Grayswood, turn off the A3 at Milford and take the Haslemere road through Brook. There is plenty of parking near the Green.



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