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## Ashington and Woodland

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Distance: 10 km=6½ miles

easy walking

Region: West Sussex

Date written: 17-jun-2013

Author: Hautboy

Last update: 27-mar-2020

Refreshments: Ashington

Map: Explorer 121 (Arundel) *but the map in this guide should be sufficient*

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

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*Woodland, meadows, daffodils & bluebells in spring, views, pub/restaurant*

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### In Brief

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This is a gentle walk through the forested area not far from the foot of the South Downs in West Sussex. At the start and end of the walk is an excellent lunch stop, the *Red Lion*, so this walk can be treated as a pub walk. The pub is open all day from 12 and *serves food at all times*.



There are a few nettles in one stretch of the woods so shorts might not be advisable. Sensible walking shoes are fine if the weather has been dry but, as always, boots are better if there is a hint of wet. This walk is fine for a small-to-medium dog, with a lead of course, but a large one will find some of the stiles challenging.

The walk begins at the small town of **Ashington, West Sussex, postcode RH20 3DD**, just off the A24 road, about half way between Horsham and Worthing. For more details, see at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).

### The Walk

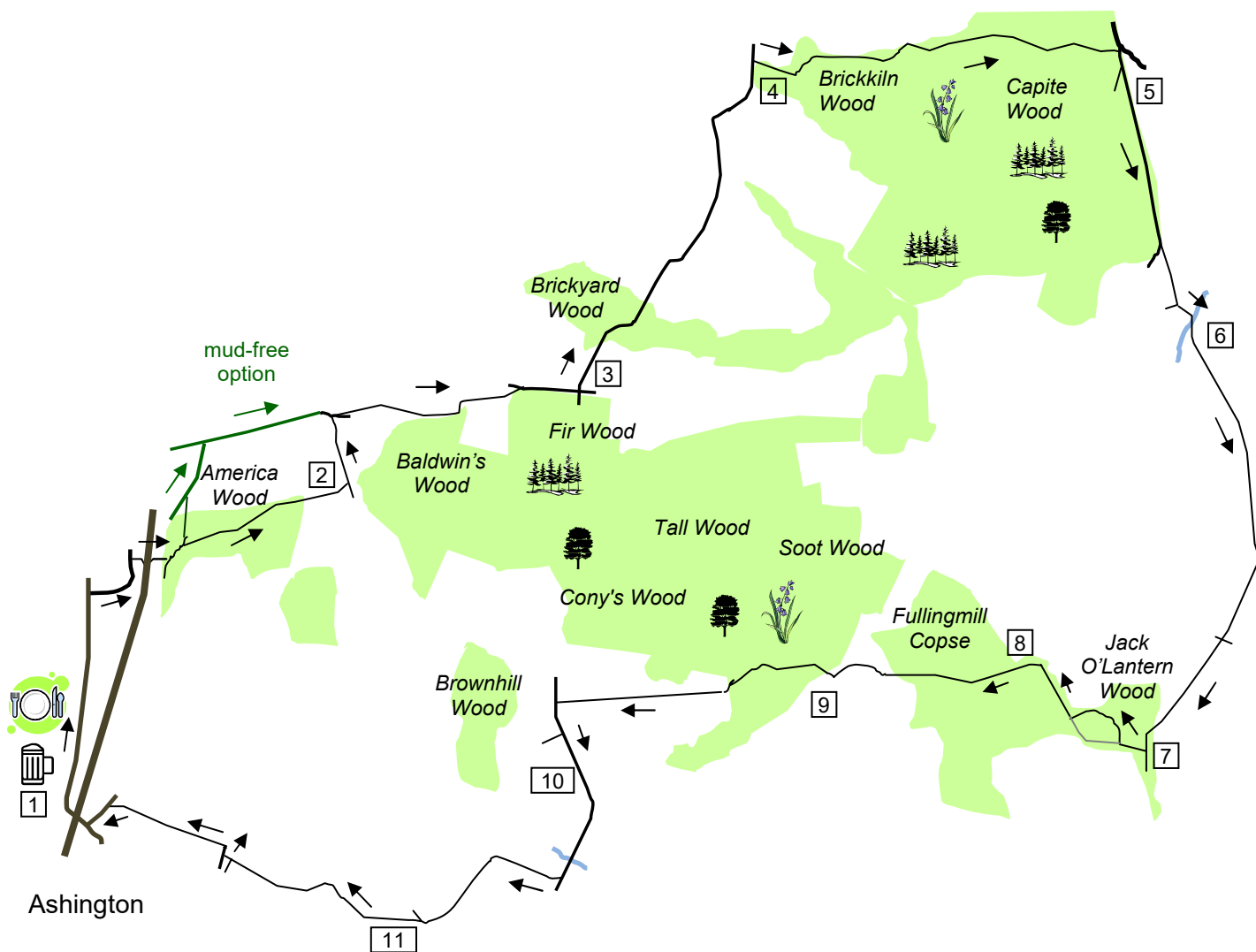
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*The “Red Lion” at Ashington has 300 years of history as it was once a posting house where horses were changed and refreshment taken before the next stage of the journey. It is now hugely popular as a destination for lunch and large enough to receive visitors by the score, thanks to the clever combining of two solid adjacent houses. Three ales are on tap, including at least one guest. Furnishings are elegant and supremely comfortable. Service in the several eating areas is prompt and charming. But this is a town pub, not a country pub, though you may be glad of the stylish interior.*

- 1 **See map overleaf.** With your back to the *Red Lion* and its car park, turn **left** along the main road, going past two shops. Pass Church Lane on the left and then a Co-Op and fish-and-chip shop. Shortly after, turn **right** in Cricketers Close, a name that sounds like a warning but is really a cul-de-sac of tasteful modern houses. Follow the road round left and, after no. 27, turn **right** by a metal barrier onto a footpath. Follow this stony path right-left-left-right, over the A24 road and turn **left** at a 3-way fingerpost into woods. *If conditions are dry*, in 20m, go **right** at a fingerpost on a footpath. *(There is some deep mud ahead, churned up by horses just before the*

farm. The following *mud-free* option is available, for the loss one small bluebell wood: Ignore the right turn and keep straight on, coming out beside a meadow on your right. Join a tarmac drive and follow it to a T-junction. Turn **right** on a stony brideway which leads past a house with riding stables on your right. Go through a small wooden gate and keep ahead on a cinder track. Resume at point “(\*)” in the next section.) Always keep straight ahead through the forest of America Woods, with a driveway and some houses visible on your right. After 350m, the forest walk ends at a small metal gate and stile into a meadow with good open views.



- 2 Keep along the left-hand side of the meadow and, in the corner, go **left** at another small metal gate and stile, and **right** to reach a T-junction by a 3-way fingerpost. Turn **left**, going beside the buildings of East Wolves Farm, passing the stables and house. At a fence, turn **right** on a cinder track. (\*) Immediately fork **left** on a narrow footpath between wooden fences. Go over a stile and diagonally across a grassy meadow. A stile in the corner is followed by a path along the right-hand side of a meadow. Baldwin's Wood is on your right. *Hook Farmhouse* is visible on your left. At the corner of its garden, veer **right** over a stile, across the grass and through another large metal gate in the fence. Your route goes parallel to their drive and takes you over a stile in the corner to join it. At the end, go through a large (open) wooden gate to a crosspaths with Fir Wood on your right. Turn **left** here on a concrete drive.

- 3 This easy path goes over a stream, through the pines of Brickyard Wood, then under oak, maple and ash, part of the Wiston Estate (see also the neighbouring walk *Chanctonbury & Steyning*) and past horse pastures. The drive bends right and, soon after, reaches the buildings of Woodman's Farm.
- 4 At a 3-way fingerpost, turn **right** across grass to the right of a large sheepshed to enter Brickkiln Wood and later Capite Wood. *This name means "chief (tenant)", referring to the landholding in feudal times.* You can immediately fork **right** on a small path which avoids mud and takes you through the best of the bluebells, re-joining the path. The path curves left and then right over a 2-plank bridge. Bluebells are in profusion here in late spring and, in summer, birdsong fills the air. The path takes you over two bridges with rails, joining a wider path coming from the right. Silver birch and chestnut take you deeper into the woods. The path goes over a strip clearing, then down, over a 2-plank bridge with a rail and up again, now under large oak trees. Finally it comes to a junction of a wide track with Honeybridge Lane on your left.
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- 5 Turn **right** on the track, avoiding a private path that forks right, passing through more of the woodland. In 500m, the track leaves the wood and bends right. **Leave** the track here by going straight ahead through a tall metal gate and along the left-hand side of a field. You have fine views of the South Downs ahead. As you pass a kitchen garden, at a fingerpost, ignore a path branching right and keep ahead to go through a wooden gate and over a long bridge over a stream (unnamed, but you will cross it twice more). You are now in the southern end of a beautiful long green meadow. Turn **right** to the corner and up into a large grassy field.
- 6 Go along the left-hand side of the field and, at the end, go quickly left-right through gate posts and in the same direction along the left-hand side of the next meadow. At the far side, continue on a path through woodland, over a 2-plank bridge and across a farm drive. Go through a metal gate and follow a beautiful long rather clumpy grassy path, full of wild flowers in early summer, with King's Barn Farm visible in the distance. At a crossing path, go through a small wooden gate and continue as before. You pass a disused gate onto a narrower path, then another (unnecessary) wooden gate to enter a wood of tall oaks. You shortly pass a 2-way fingerpost and, in about 100m, you reach a 3-way fingerpost.
- 7 Turn **right** at the fingerpost on a footpath. In 70m, with a meadow visible on your left, you reach the start of a marshy section. *The recognised path runs for another 100m or so, keeping the wood on your right, and turns right. But, because of the many springs that rise up in this area, this section is often very marshy. This guide bypasses the wet section on a handsome woodland path.* At the start of the marshy section, turn **right** on a clear but narrow path into the woods of Jack O'Lantern Wood, going over a ditch in 10m. Now take a dry route through the woods, keeping more or less parallel with the official (marshy) path. Finally the path goes over another ditch and comes out of the wood onto a wide grassy (sometimes spongy) crossing path. Turn **right** on this grassy path, thus rejoining the official footpath. In 170m, you reach a junction a few metres from a fingerpost, with Jessops Farm visible on the right. Fork **left** here and **keep left**, keeping straight ahead past another fingerpost.
- 8 The path follows the tree line leading into the open woodland of Fullingmill Copse [2020: due to be thinned out soon], in 100m going past a magnificent line of pines and redwoods. [2016: at a fallen birch, keep straight on.] Your clear



path continues through the wood, thick with bluebells in spring. After a wooden bridge with a rail, a large metal swing-gate takes you into a small meadow with a grassy mound on your left. [Dec 2018: flooded - a walker had to wade through.] Make your way round the base of the mound, keeping it on your left. At the start of a beautiful long reedy meadow, look for a wooden bridge with a rail on your right. Go over it and turn **right** over a stout bridge across the stream, continuing up into woods, variously known locally as Tall Wood, Soot Wood and Cony's Wood.

- 9 Follow the black-on-yellow arrows through more towering forest, keeping straight on for about 300m. In a clearing, your path goes down and up, and takes you over a [Mar 2020: broken] stile into a large pasture. Keep along the right-hand side of the pasture, then another with a stile in between. A last stile places you on a concrete drive in front of one of the houses of Brownhill. Turn **left** on the drive.
- 10 The drive goes past another drive on your right and crosses the stream. As the track rises, just before the start of a large meadow on your right, turn **right** at a fingerpost on a path that runs just inside the wood. Go over a stile [Mar 2020: broken – careful!] and keep ahead along the left-hand side of a delightful small meadow. 10m before the corner, go **left** over a (somewhat hidden) double stile and 2-plank bridge [Mar 2020: broken] combination into the next meadow. Go straight across the meadow, with a great view of the South Downs, staying near the right-hand edge. Just before the next corner, go **right** over a stile (or through a metal gate), down on a wide farm track over a stream. Now veer diagonally **left**, on a gradually-rising path across the grass to a stile in the hedgerow at the top.
- 11 After the stile, your path leads through bracken, beside a hedgerow, trees and a horse pasture on your right. More hedgerows and various green fields take you under power lines. Here, ignore a footpath on the left and continue over a footbridge to a track. Turn **right** and, just before some large gates, turn **left** on a narrow path. A modern swing-gate and a 2-plank bridge take you into a flowery meadow. Keep straight ahead towards the far right corner. Go down through trees and a very muddy kissing-gate to a side road next to the A24 road. Turn **left** and, at a T-junction, turn **right** under the A24, reaching the centre of the town where the walk began.



*For congratulatory refreshments, you now have the “Red Lion” with its extensive menu or the “Frankland Arms” in Washington (check open).*

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## Getting there

By car: Ashington is signed from the A24 road, 10 miles north of Worthing and 15 miles south of Horsham. Turn **left** as for *Ashington Village* and park in the road next to the *Red Lion*.

By train & bus: bus 23 from Horsham or Worthing. Check the timetables.

