



Faygate

Distance: 8½ km=5½ miles

easy walking

Region: West Sussex

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Refreshments: near Faygate

Map: Explorer 134 (Crawley) *but the map in this guide should be sufficient*

Problems, changes? We depend on your feedback: feedback@fancyfreewalks.org

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Woodland, hills, green meadows, quiet lanes, country pub, railway station

In Brief

Between the conurbations of Horsham and Crawley, the countryside is so perfectly gentle and peaceful that you could be a hundred miles from any town. The surrounding populace seem to stay away too and it's quite possible you will not meet any other walkers - a surprising fact considering how well marked out the footpaths are, how deliciously green the fields are and how good the connections are. So this walk could be considered an unknown treasure.

There is a popular, gorgeously eccentric, country pub near the end of the walk. (To enquire at the *Frog and Nightgown*, ring 01293-852764.) The pub near the railway in Faygate does not need walkers.

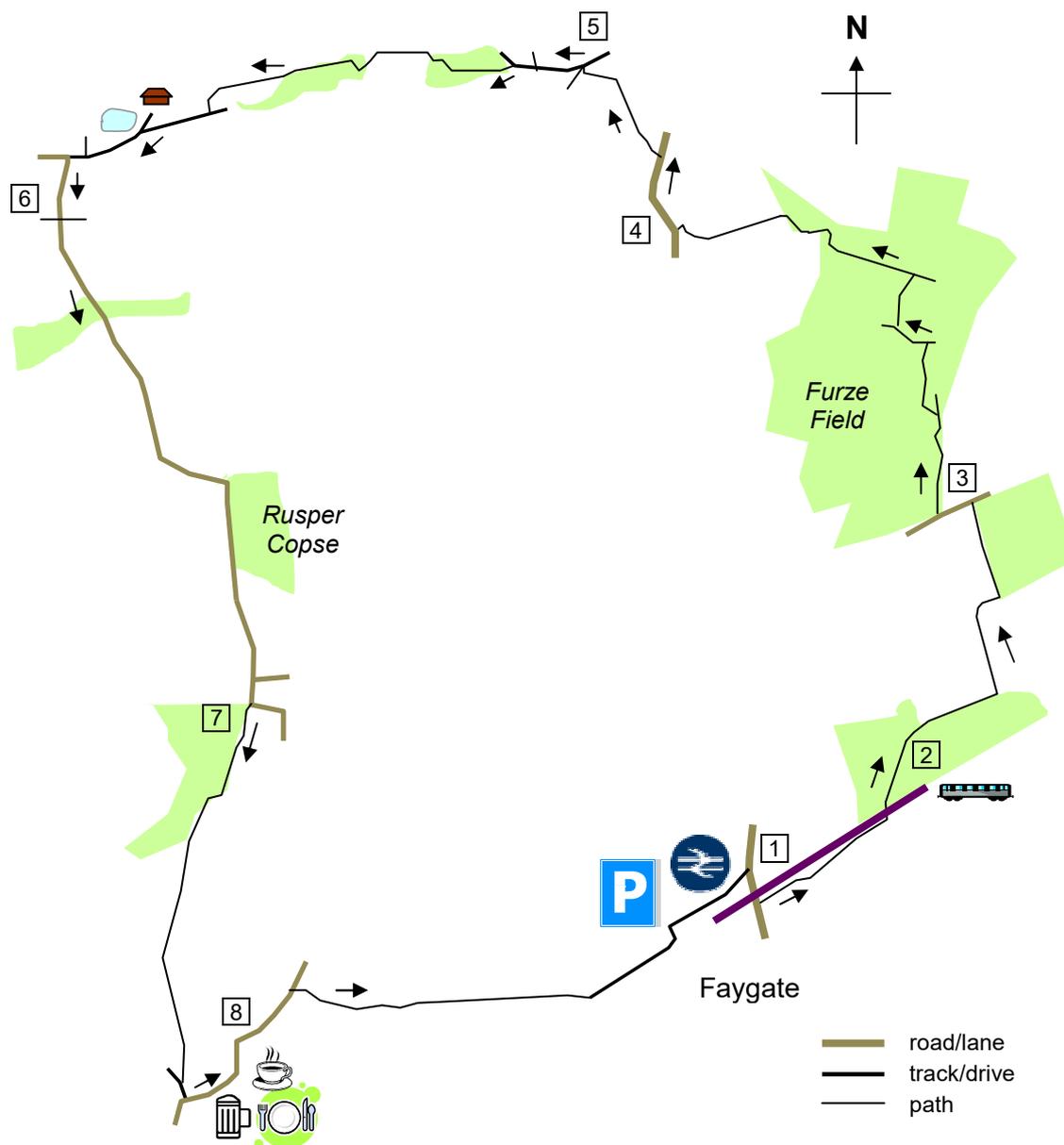


This walk is on quiet lanes, good woodland paths and grassy fringes, with just one crossing of a crop field, so shorts are wearable. At the time of writing, walking shoes or trainers were adequate but in winter or in wet conditions you will probably be glad to be wearing boots. Your dog is welcome on this walk if he can manage the stiles.



The walk begins at **Faygate Railway Station** (**weekdays only** half-hourly service from London Bridge, **or** from Victoria). The little station car park (www.w3w.co/lightly.waltzes.weekend, postcode **RH12 4QN**) is free-of-charge and almost empty at weekends - presumably well-used on weekdays when you could park somewhere on the roadside, e.g. next to the *Frog and Nightgown* (postcode **RH12 4SS**). For more details, see at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).

The Walk



- 1 If you are beginning the walk at Faygate Station or the station car park, go out on the Station Approach and turn **right** on the main road. Immediately after the railway bridge, turn **left** on a signed footpath, a narrow path with the railway on your left. You come out into the open by a playing field. Shortly, your path runs beside a brambly hedge and leads **left** over a stile and across the railway. *Cross the line carefully - this is a nice clear straight section but trains come regularly and very fast.* Your path goes over a similar stile and into woods.
- 2 Take a diagonal path through the wood, Fullers Shaw, in the direction of a black-on-yellow arrow. At a fingerpost, the path bends right, goes over a 3-plank bridge-with-rail, and enters a large field which, at the time of writing, is fallow and gone wild. Keep along the right-hand side, beside woodland on your right, and turn **left** in the corner up the side of the field. At the top, you enter a large meadow. Turn **right** along the edge and **left** in the corner. At the top, go round a large metal gate and turn **left** on a tarmac drive.

- 3 In only 80m, by a new fingerpost, turn **right** over a stile into the deep woodland of Furze Field. [May 2024: the woods have been felled and cleared at this point (the fingerpost propped up behind a tree), but for the moment you can still access the woods by walking down the right-hand side of the clearing.] A wide chalky track leads you along the right-hand edge. Ignore one junction on the left and, just before a notice, at a marker post, turn **left** onto a footpath which shortly bends right. You reach a T-junction in a very dark section of the wood. Turn **left** here on a woodland path. In only 50m or so, turn **right** at a marker post. In under 150m you meet another notice and a marker post. Turn **left** here on a straight woodland path. After an attractive 200m, your path bends right and shortly turns left over a long bridge-with-rails across a gulch. Some steps lead you up into a meadow. Go straight ahead, curving right to stay beside the trees for 80m until your route turns abruptly **left** on a wide grass path between pastures. At the end, go over a stile (avoidable if you look to your right) to a road.
- 4 Turn **right** on the road and follow it as it rounds a bend, using the verge where possible. After 170m turn **left** onto a signed footpath, going through a small wooden gate on a narrow fenced path. The path takes you over a long bridge-with-rails, through another small wooden gate, and onto another narrow fenced path. *You may encounter some very fine horned sheep in the pastures either side; you should not feed them!* You come through a small wooden gate, out into a meadow. Go diagonally **left**. Near the corner of a house, go through a simple turnstile (the horizontal part used to rotate to let you through but it may be fixed when you try it, so you have to step over) into the next meadow. Turn immediately **right** and over a stile [May 2024: warning!! badly damaged: you need climb over very carefully] to meet a double concrete driveway.
- 5 Turn **left** on the driveway. Ignore a junction on the right and, where the drive bends right, **leave** it to continue straight ahead on a rough track which becomes a rough grass path. Your path shortly bends right under tall oaks and yews, snaking its way onto a woodland path. The path soon turns to go over a wide bridge-with-rails, leading to a fine straight path under a canopy of great oaks. You come out into the open, heading for farm buildings, where the path turns left and right to run beside the driveway and paddocks of Baldhorns Park Farm. The path is joined by the driveway and a tarmac drive coming from the right. *On your right is the lake of Baldhorns Park.* Ignore a footpath on the right to arrive shortly at a bend in a tarmac lane.
- 6 Turn **left** on this quiet lane, shortly ignoring footpaths either side. The lane goes over the Sloughbrook Gill and you pass busy Coomers Farm on your right. Soon after, a long wood, Rusper Copse is on your left, with a large house nestling inside it. Ignore a turning on the left and keep straight ahead, as for *Wimlands*. Shortly after, the lane bends left again. **Leave** the lane here by going straight ahead, next to a large metal gate by a house, on a signed footpath into woods.
- 7 The woodland path runs straight ahead, parallel to a field you can see on your left. It crosses **right** to pass under wires, down into more woodland. Keep to the left-hand edge. You emerge into a crop field: keep **right** around the edge. Cross a bridge-with-rails into a meadow and go straight across it. A double stile-and-bridge lead into another pleasant meadow. Cross it straight over and go over a stile, through a few trees, into a large meadow. Cross it straight ahead on a faint path. Go over a stile into yet

another meadow and cross it straight over. Go over a stile and **left** on a concrete drive. Turn **left** on a tarmac lane to meet the *Frog and Nightgown* country pub and tearoom.



*The pub was originally called the Royal Oak and it was a single small cottage with enough room for ten people at a squeeze. Later the two cottages were knocked together and the Frog and Nightgown was born, re-opening in early 2016 as a freehouse. The "Lily pad" is a new dining extension: booking may be needed! "Toad Hall" is the Tea Room. The menu features a large range of pizzas, plus tapas-style dishes. There is a garden bar serving the big lawn, open in high summer only. This pub seems to be a bright beer specialist but Surrey Hills, Harveys and others join the range of cask ales. The pub is open daily from 12. The Tea Room is **closed on Sunday (NB)**.*

- 8 After your break, continue along this very quiet lane for 350m. Just after a farmhouse comes into view ahead, opposite a gushing spring, turn **right** onto a signed footpath, with an avoidable long bridge-with-rail and a stile. Go over a stile into a field and follow the right-hand edge. Just before the corner, your path bends **right** over a stile and **left** into a crop field. Your direction is straight across, heading for a marker post visible half-way along the far side. *At the time of writing the field had been harrowed, obscuring the tractor track, but at other times the route should be more obvious, through the crop or along the track.* After the field, a clear path runs between brambles, past a new orchard and vegetable garden on your left. It wheels left and turns **right** round the corner of an industrial building and leads out to the main road. If you began the walk here, you need to double back to the station where the walk began. *(It is possible to scramble **right** up a bank immediately after the last building to avoid doubling back.)*

Getting there

By train: begin at Faygate Railway Station (see intro).

By car: Faygate is **directly** off the **A264** trunk road. The easiest way to reach it is via the M23, Come off at Junction 11 and take the A264, signposted *Horsham*. At the second roundabout, keep left, still on the A264 *Horsham*. In 2 more roundabouts, turn **right** into Faygate. Another way is via the A24 from London, Dorking or Worthing. At the roundabout junction with the A264, where the A24 bends south, follow the A264, signposted *Crawley*. In 2 miles, turn **left** at the second roundabout, still on the A264. In 1.3 miles, at a roundabout, turn **left** into Faygate. The station car park is over the bridge on the left.

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