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## Slinfold

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Distance: 9 km=5½ miles or 5½ km=3½ miles

easy walking

Region: West Sussex

Date written: 18-nov-2014

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Last update: 2-jan-2017

Refreshments: Slinfold

Map: Explorer 134 (Horsham) *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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*Village, woodland, meadows, bluebells, horse pastures, dismantled railway*

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### In Brief

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This is an easy walk through gentle countryside in West Sussex, beginning and ending at the isolated village of Slinfold where there is an excellent chance for refreshment at the *Red Lyon* pub. So this walk could be treated as a **pub walk**. The *Red Lyon* (with a “y”) is not a gastropub but it puts an emphasis on food and all the comments are very good: a worthy place to stop for a meal or a pint. It also has a good-sized garden.



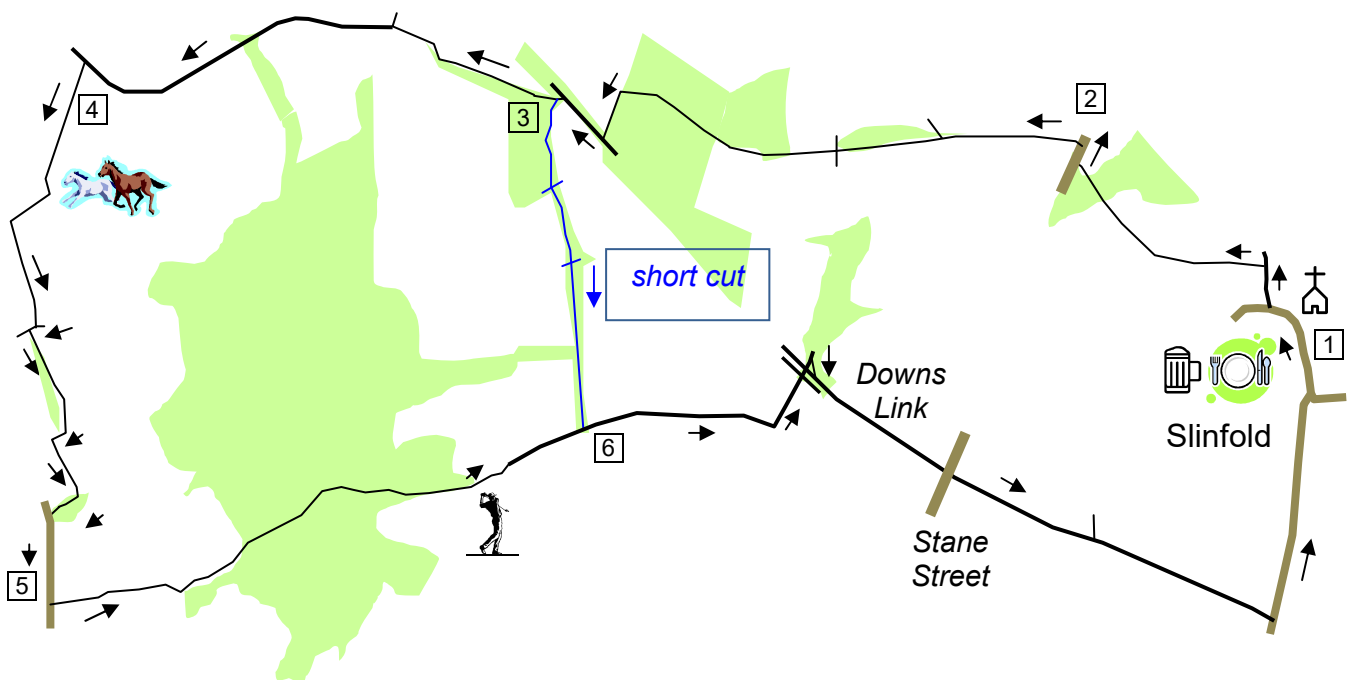
There are one or two patches of nettles on the longer option, so shorts are not advisable. Good walking shoes or trainers are usually adequate but for the longer option in wet conditions you will be glad to have your boots on. Your dog can accompany you on this walk.

The walk begins in the centre of Slinfold village, near Horsham, West Sussex. For more details, see at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).

### The Walk

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*The name “Slinfold” is Anglo-Saxon from “Slynd”, meaning a slope, and “Fold” meaning just that: an enclosure (as in the word “sheepfold”). The village lies almost directly on Stane Street, the Roman Road from London to Chichester and was an overnight resting stage (the others being Dorking and Merton near London). The church of St Peter goes back to 1230 but it was completely rebuilt in 1859. The old church bell, according to legend, still lies in the bog here. The story is told that it fell off a wagon while it was being transported to the church and a local witch offered to retrieve it using her team of white oxen, but on condition that no one said a word. One man unfortunately shouted “hurray!” and the bell was lost forever. (Compare a similar story told in the Kintbury walk in the Berkshire series on this website.)*



1 From opposite the *Red Lyon* pub in Slinfold, go past the church on your right (*note the little nautical theme in the window of the house across the road*) and, immediately after the church, turn **right** on Clapgate Lane. In 100m, just before a redbrick cottage, go **left** on a footpath and along the left-hand side of a rather rough meadow. Your path takes you through a gap and across the centre of the next meadow. Go through another gap, across a stream and straight across a field, passing two oaks on your right as you go. A patch of woodland and another small meadow lead via a stile to the main A29 road (the old Stane Street). Turn **right** along the verge.

2 In 30m, cross the road carefully and go through a patch of tarmac and through a metal swing-gate beside a large metal gate. Go up the right-hand side of a large meadow. In 130m, avoid a right fork at a fingerpost and keep straight on with woodland on your right. In 300m or so, at a 4-way fingerpost, go through a (bypassable) wooden swing-gate and continue ahead. You pass on your right a line of majestic oaks that form a boundary of the field, followed by more woodland. In the corner, go through a swing-gate into Farm Copse (aka Whales Copse). Follow a clear path through the centre of this wood. After a 2-plank bridge, your path veers left a fraction. At the far side go through a small wooden gate into a meadow. Turn **left** along the edge of the meadow to go through a wooden swing-gate. Turn **right** now on a very wide level track. This is the route of a dismantled railway, now the Downs Link path, a popular route for walkers and cyclists. In only 50m, just before a useful seat, turn **left** at a fingerpost. Almost immediately, you reach another fingerpost at a wide fork.

**Decision point.** If you are doing the shorter option, skip to near the end of this text and do the **Little Woodland Trail**.

3 Take the **right** fork at the fingerpost on a bridleway and follow it with a meadow on your right, woods on your left. *This path may be a little squishy in parts in wet conditions, but this will soon improve.* This old rustic highway is called Penfolds Lane. The path zigzags through woods and over on your right is the timbered *Penfolds Farmhouse*. Your path joins a drive coming from the farm and you pass on your left *Morelands*, another timbered

treasure, whilst the surface becomes semi-tarmac. Your path descends to cross a stream and rises. On your right you pass *Naldrett's* and its farm barn with its low wide metal gates. 30m after the gates, at a fingerpost, go **left** over a stile into a horse pasture.

4 Keep to the left-hand side of three pastures with two stiles in between (one unneeded but you may need to lower the ribbon). At the top corner, go over a stile, turn **left** in a field and immediately **right** at the corner. In 100m, at a gap, turn **left** by a marker post, go past a ditch and take a path along the **left**-hand side of a field. *For the next ½ km, the paths along the field-edges are rather narrow, so you will need to walk in single file.* At the far end, turn **right** for 20m and **left** again along the right-hand side of a field. *(If this field edge is too nettly or has been made unusable by ploughing, go a little further and turn **left** along the **left**-hand side of the **next** field where the edge is mossy and easier to manage; then turn **right** at the end by a wire fence.)* After 250m, at the corner of a wire fence, by a marker post, turn **right** on a path through trees. The path goes over a long 2-plank bridge *(careful – it may be slippery!)* and turns left on a path beside cypress trees, through a nursery. At a fingerpost, your path turns abruptly **right** and emerges on a driveway to a road. Turn **left** on the road.

5 Pass the entrance to *Tittlesfold* and, 60m after that, go **left** at a fingerpost by an unneeded stile into a meadow. Keep along the right-hand side and, over a stile, into the next meadow. At the next corner, a stile takes you between fences and immediately to a 3-way fingerpost. Keep **left** here, staying beside the meadows on your left. At the end, go over a stile *(avoidable by vaulting the ditch on your right)* into Tittlesfold Copse. Follow a clear path through the wood which passes two fingerposts along the way and descends beside a mossy bank on your left. At the bottom, go over a large bridge and steeply up again. At the top, go through a gap in a wire fence by a fingerpost, continuing beside a fence on your left. Your path continues along the left-hand edge of Slinfold Golf Course. In just over 200m, just before the jutting corner of a wood, go **left** through a small wooden gate and **right** on a tarmac drive. In 200m, at a 3-way fingerpost, ignore a junction on your left.

*Here the shorter option re-joins the main walk.*

6 In 450m, the drive bends smartly left and, in another 100m, it takes you through a wooden gate to meet a concrete track. Go straight over the track to cross a bridge over the dismantled railway, the Downs Link path again. Immediately after the bridge, go sharp **right** down a narrow path to join the Downs Link and turn **left** on this wide straight highway. In 350m, the Downs Link goes through a long arch under the main A29 Stane Street. It zigzags past the old station yard and goes past a metal gate. At a white house, zigzag left-right, ignoring a path on your left, to continue as before. Eventually, the path runs between houses and through a gate to meet a road in Slinfold. Turn **left** on the road, keeping straight ahead at a road junction. At a T-junction turn **left**, quickly arriving back at the *Red Lyon* where the walk began.

## Little Woodland Trail

Take this option if you are doing the shorter (5½ km=3½ mile) walk.

(Note: your correct path *seems* to be the **left** fork at the fingerpost, going through a modern kissing-gate into a horse pasture. However, this seems to be an error since there are no further markers and the gate in the far corner is locked. So ...)

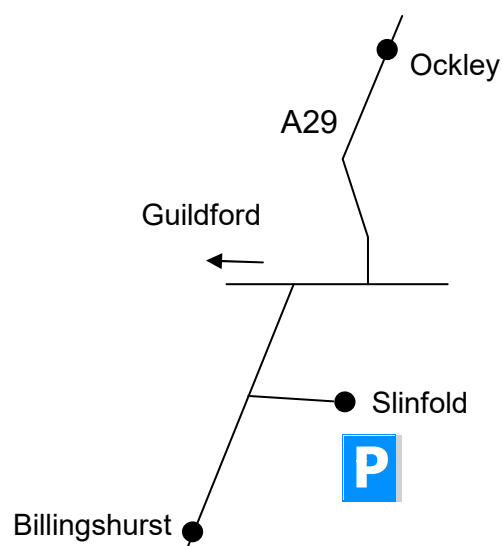
Take the **right** fork at the fingerpost but, after only 10m, take a narrow unmarked path on your **left**, going over a ditch and keep straight ahead on a winding course through woodland, always keeping Newbury Paddock (the green pasture) not too far away on your left. In 250m, step over a sliding barrier, passing a 2-way fingerpost which confirms that you were on the correct path. Keep ahead through a small wooden gate and follow a path through this pleasant woodland strip. Your path crosses a private cinder path and later takes you over a stile. A wooden gate is followed by a V-stile at a T-junction with a tarmac drive. Turn **left** on this drive.

Now re-join the main walk at section [6](#).

## Getting there

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By car: Slinfold is signposted just off the A29 (Dorking-Bognor) road, 4 miles west of Horsham. Park on the roadside near the church and pub.



By bus/train: bus no. 100 runs from Horsham station to Slinfold, Mon-Sat only. Check the timetables.

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