



Woolbeding Common & Temple of the Winds

Distance: *you choose* from 22 km=14 miles* down to 11½ km=7 miles
moderate* or easy walking

Region: West Sussex

date written: 7-jun-2009

Author: Hautboy

date revised: 21-aug-2015

Refreshments: Lurgashall, Henley, Fernhurst

last update: 21-sep-2017

Map: Explorer 133 (Haslemere & Petersfield)

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

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Villages, woodland, high hills, views, peace, excellent pubs

In Brief

Here is the perfect long country walk with beautiful shorter options. The full walk is a circular walk through some of the remotest parts of the West Sussex Weald, not far from the Surrey border, taking you between two memorable viewpoints. Although this is a hilly area, the walk has only one ascent, up to Blackdown. The terrain consists of woodland, heath and small meadows full of wild flowers, with no large or ploughed fields or farmyards, no aircraft noise and hardly any road walking. Some of the routes are quite intricate and you will need to concentrate. There are only three picturesque habitations on the route, so this walk is an ideal escape.

The walk begins in **Fernhurst**, West Sussex, **postcode GU27 3HY**. For more details see at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).

The shorter options turn the walk into a figure of eight with a small loop in the centre, making *four* walks in all (see overleaf):

The *Big Circuit*, 22 km=14 miles: the full walk avoiding the shorter routes.

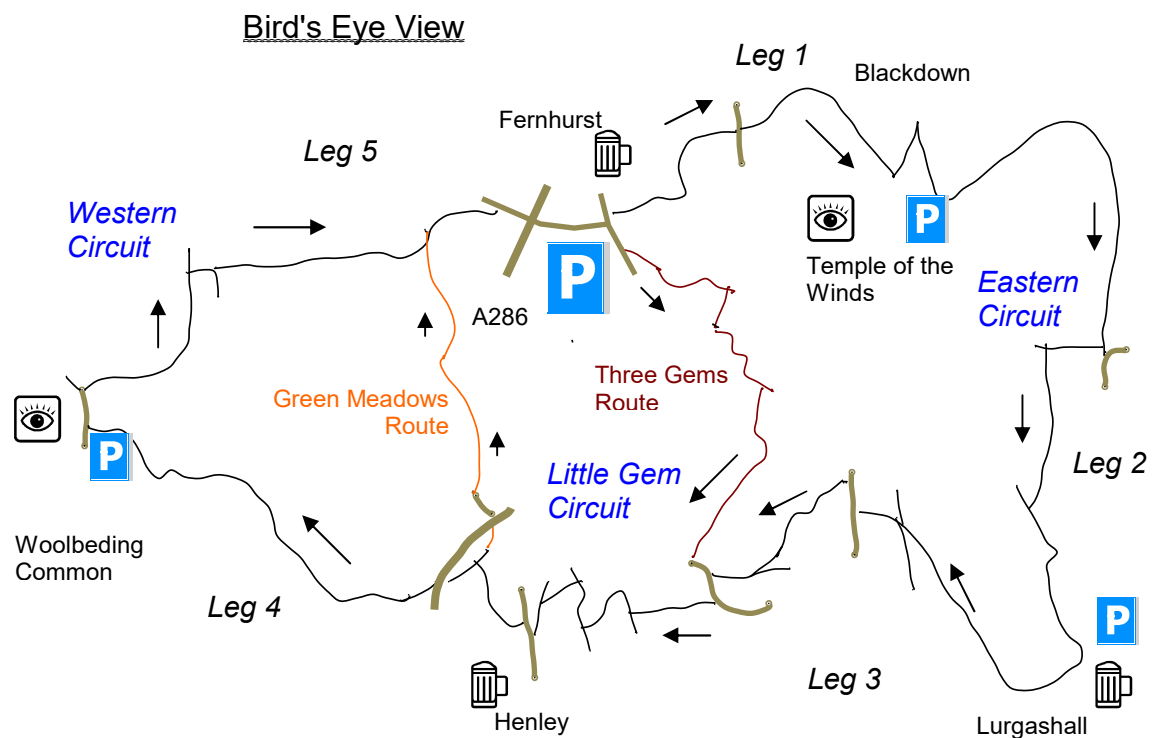
The *Eastern Circuit*, 19½ km=12½ miles: Fernhurst, Temple of the Winds, Henley and the shorter *Green Meadows* route straight back to Fernhurst.

The *Western Circuit*, 13½ km=8½ miles: Fernhurst, the *Three Gems* path to Henley, Woolbeding Common and back to Fernhurst.

The *Little Gem Circuit*, 11½ km=7 miles: Fernhurst, the *Three Gems* path to Henley, then the shorter *Green Meadows* route straight back to Fernhurst.



Long trousers may be advisable for the Big Circuit and the Western Circuit as there is one short stretch with nettles. As these are Wealden walks, one or two paths may be muddy except after a dry spell, so good footwear is necessary. There are long stretches where a dog can be free, but also several sheep fields and just one smallish field that occasionally has cattle.



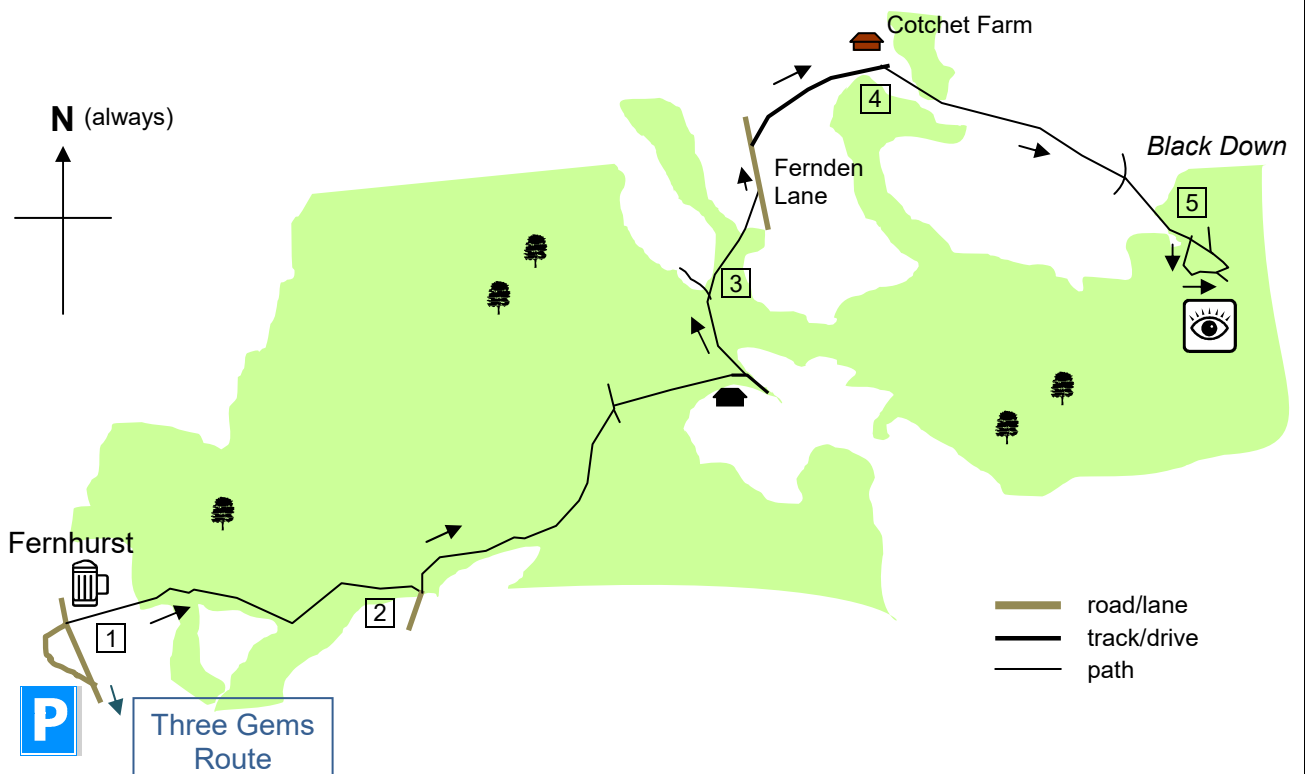
The Walk

Decision point. If you are doing the *Western Circuit* or the *Little Gem Circuit*, you need to start with the *Three Gems* path, described near the **end** of this text.

Leg 1: Fernhurst to Temple of the Winds 3½ km=2 miles

Fernhurst is a large village and parish. The village originally developed around crossroads and the village green, and ancient remains, both Stone Age and Roman, have been found here. Iron working took place in the 17th and 18th centuries and a turnpike ran through the village. St Margaret's church (c.1100), several old houses and the Red Lion pub dominate the picture-book green. With the coming of the railway at Haslemere the village gravitated north beyond the crossroads, and since the 1960s the village has expanded further in that direction. The village houses a large commuter population, attracted by the scenery and the ease of travel. In the 2001 census there were 1,158 households with a total population of 2,765 of whom 1,244 were economically active. Local claims to fame include the fact that Bertrand Russell wrote Principia Mathematica in the house "Millhanger" a mile or so southeast of the village.





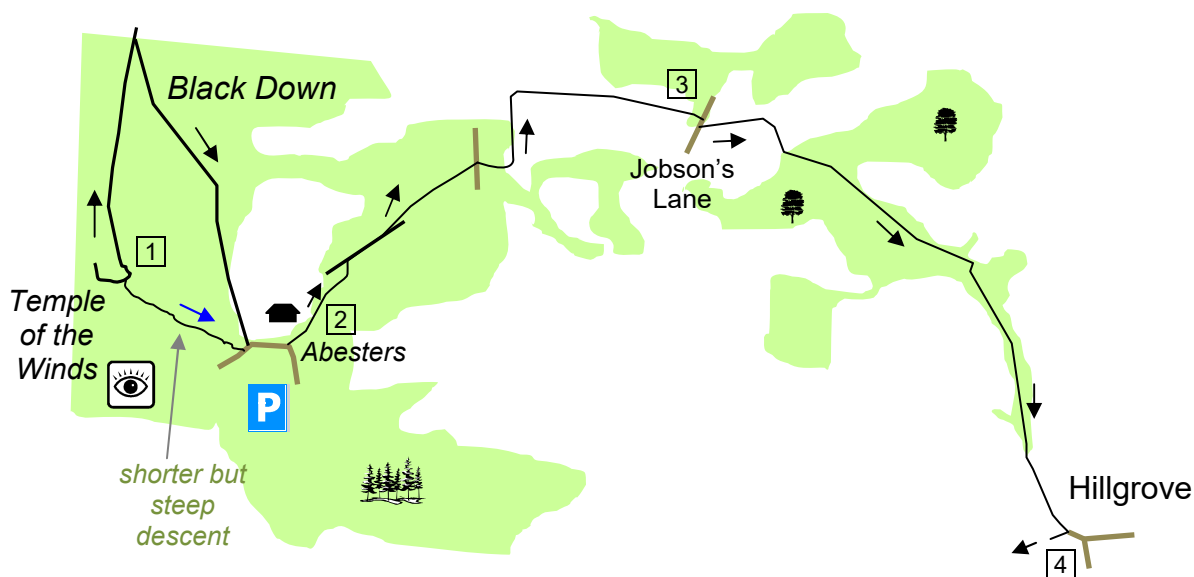
- 1 Take a wide tarmac track on the right of the *Red Lion* pub. Tennis courts are soon on the right, with gardens on the left. The track enters Reeth Wood and meets a rather dramatic deep stream gully on your right. Ignore an unmarked footpath on the right soon after and avoid another about 200m further on, continuing straight on with the stream bed down on your right. *There is a fine oak wood visible through the wire fence on the left.* Eventually your main track bends **right** over the stream and in 150m comes to a junction. On the right is *Tanyard Cottage* and its barn but your route is **left** up a wide but rather stony path. [Dec 2015: taped off due to fallen tree (?), walkers were seen to ignore it, passing without much difficulty.]
- 2 In 70m at a fingerpost, ignore a track forking left and continue on the stony ascending path which may seem arduous because of its length rather than the gradient. The path shares its course with a stream, but it is easy to skip around. *Don't be put off by mud on this path: the rest of the walk is generally much drier.* Ignore all paths branching off and keep following the signposts or yellow arrows and overhead wires. In 350m, keep straight ahead at a marker post. In another 150m, at a crossing path, keep ahead, a fraction right, still following the wires, now on a much narrower path. In another 250m the track comes out to a tarmac drive by a house, *Reeth*.
- 3 Opposite the house entrance, turn sharp **left**, almost going back on yourself. Soon the track comes to a junction by a 3-way fingerpost. Ignore the left fork and continue straight on uphill. Your path passes two fields on the left, levels and comes down to a lane. Turn **left** on the lane. Within 100m, just after some stables and before a house on the right, turn **right** on a marked bridleway. This lane leads up to a farmhouse, *Cotchet Farm*.
- 4 Turn **right** opposite the house through a gate past a National Trust sign onto the extensive open space of Blackdown. The track leads upwards under rowan trees through open heath land, sometimes grazed by belted galloway cattle. After an exhilarating ascent, at the top, the track meets a wide level track coming in from the left. Continue straight on here, past a (precarious) seat on the left, ignoring a track leading off right.

- 5 In 120 metres, as the path enters an area of fine scots pines, turn **right** at a fingerpost into the pines. In only 50m, leave the track by veering **left** to a wooden seat bearing a humorous dedication. Here, at the southern tip of Blackdown, you have an open view over the Weald to the South Downs. Continue **left** round the edge of the hill on a narrow rooty path, until you go through some posts and come to a viewpoint with a wide stone seat, a memorial and direction finder. This is the Temple of the Winds.

Blackdown, or Black Down, is the highest hill in Sussex, at 280 metres=918 feet, and is second only to Leith Hill (295 metres=968 feet) in south-east England. It is also the highest point in the South Downs National Park. The pine and heather-covered slopes are owned by the National Trust. Although common land, Blackdown was the property of various landowners until W.E. Hunter donated it to the National Trust in 1948, as a memorial to his wife. The Hunters are remembered by an inscribed stone seat at the Temple of the Winds. Flint artefacts show there has been settlement on Blackdown since the mesolithic period, around 6000BC. The name of an ancient track, pen-y-bos, indicates links with the Celtic world long since lost in more accessible parts of south-east England. (The name "pen-y-bos" comes from the Brythonic language of the ancient Britons that lived in the area.) Blackdown is well known as the site of the poet Alfred Lord Tennyson's house, Aldworth. Tennyson also purchased Blackdown and took long walks here.

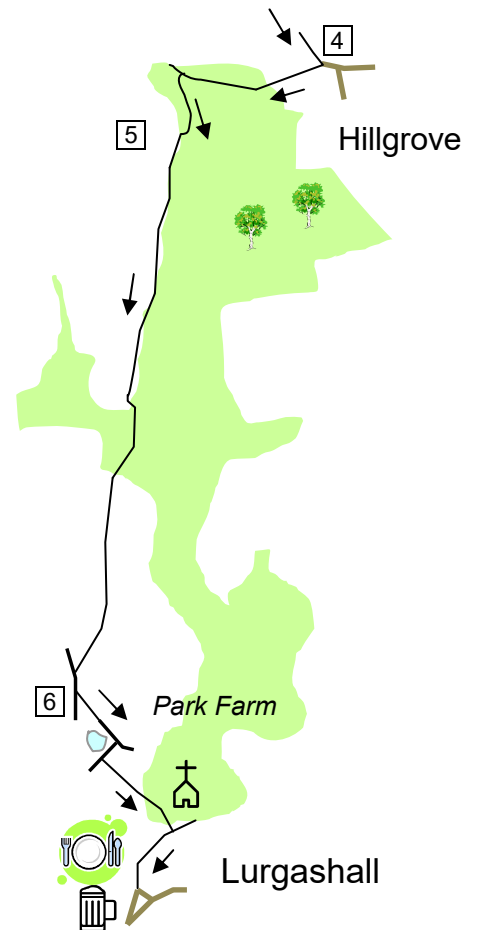
Leg 2: Temple of the Winds to Lurgashall 5 km=3½ miles

If you are in a hurry, you can cut out nearly 1 km by descending steeply south from the Temple of the Winds on a narrow path just to the left of the viewing platform. You will miss the gentle stroll along Blackdown and the pleasant views described in the next paragraph. This path takes a widely snaking course to keep a reasonable gradient. After the scrubland come holly and a small wooden gate, followed by steps descending through yew trees. Your path reaches a lane opposite a small car park. Turn **left** along the lane and immediately pass a bridleway on the left, which is where you would have come out without this short cut. Now jump to section 2. If you prefer a gentle stroll, continue as below:



- 1 Facing the view, turn **left** for 5m and **left** again through a wooden barrier and follow a path that leads through beautiful woodland. Keep to the main path that runs along the eastern (right-hand) side of Blackdown, passing a path on the left, avoiding a left fork and joining a wider path coming from the left. Ignore several minor paths leading off right, including many at a (possibly water-filled) sandpit. After a good 600 metres in total, you come to a major junction with a signpost bearing blue arrows. Double back sharp **right** on a wide track. The track begins level and then descends, through a gate. After some distance through more beautiful forest, it runs past a fence on the left and crosses a private driveway onto a road, Quell Lane, opposite a small car park. Turn **left** on the lane.
- 2 Pass *Abesters* on the left and, in 60m, just before *Telegraph Cottage*, take a marked footpath on your **left**. This path goes over a 2-plank bridge and, in 150m, comes to a driveway. Turn **right** on the driveway and stay on it for just over 200m to a right bend. Turn **left** here at a footpath sign on a winding path through more woodland, leading in 100m or so to a little footbridge and a lane. Cross the lane to another footpath which passes through a wood of tall pines. In 80m, the path bends **left** and, in 150m **right** again before a garden gate. It comes out via a stile into a field. The footpath now continues straight ahead, via a small redundant gate, through a delightful narrow strip of meadow full of wild flowers in summer. [2015: At the end of the first field on your left, there is now a fence across the path. **The easiest way is to step over the fence straight ahead using a rug that was helpfully hung there.** (The *official* path, according to the waymarker, appears to be **left**, ducking with difficulty under a barbed wire fence, and then **right** through a gap and round the next field.)] Continue to go over a stile to a road. Turn **right** for 20m on the road and then cross it to go **left** on a bridleway opposite, through a metal gate just to the left of a driveway to *Parkhurst House*.
- 3 The bridleway goes straight across a sheep pasture, turns **right** at the far side and, in 70m, goes through a small gate. Follow the wide path through woodland, soon with a field on your left. 500m into the wood, the path passes through a little gate and curves **right** over a wide wooden bridge away from a house visible on your left. Continue following the bridleway, in 350m going over a broad farm track connecting two fields. In 150m more, the path joins a lane into the attractive hamlet of Hillgrove. Notice the "hunting" weather vane on the barn and the excellent topiary in the first garden. In the next house on the left a little blue and white clock in the tower **chimes the hours**. Opposite the clock, 20m before a junction, leave the lane to take a footpath over a stile [2015: careful! - wobbly] sharp **right**.
- 4 The footpath follows a fence on the left of a sheep pasture and goes across the centre to another stile. It winds through woodland and, in 200m, descends to a two-plank footbridge. Immediately after that, turn **left** over a **second** two-plank footbridge. In 50m, the path goes over another footbridge and, in 60m, it turns **right** through a little gate and **left** again into a meadow. As you walk along the left-hand side, you need to negotiate (a) a stile or large metal gate, (b) a large metal gate, (c) a small metal gate, (d) a redundant stile, (e) a metal gate and (f) a stile. This last stile leads you down into an enchanting woodland glade, where the path crosses a footbridge, up to a stile and enters a large meadow.

- 5 Zigzag right-left and walk the length of the meadow along its right-hand edge. *As you go, the spire of St Laurence's church comes into view momentarily.* At the far bottom right-hand corner, with a children's adventure area on the right, go over a stile into a narrow enclosed path and at the other end cross a stile and turn **left** onto a broad track.
- 6 Continue along the track for only 50m. Where the track bends right, you come to a green gate directly ahead, with some farm buildings visible. Go over a stile beside the gate and follow the concrete path through another metal gate to the picturesque and tastefully developed Park Farm. Take the track that curves to the **right** round the pond with another pond on your left. In about 40m you come to a junction just before the main entrance to Park Farm. Turn sharp **left** here on a driveway and immediately go **right** under a large oak through a green gate in the hedgerow. Go along the left side of the meadow, past a gate affording a glimpse of a fine private garden, and then across the meadow, down to a stile visible ahead. Cross the stile and another smaller stile into the churchyard of St Laurence which is *definitely* worth a visit. Turn **right** just after the church, through a gate to reach the green in Lurgashall.



Imagine the perfect village surrounding a village green, with brightly coloured houses dripping with wisteria in early summer, and Lurgashall fits this picture exactly. 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.

There was almost certainly an inhabited settlement in the village of Lurgashall in Roman times but the name is Saxon. It means "Hall of Leotegar" who, in about the year 495, found a convenient, and probably inhabited, clearing in the Wealden forest in which he decided to settle. In due course, Leotegar's descendants were converted to Christianity by the followers of St Wilfred and built the first St Laurence's Church. Although the church has had many additions over the years, it still retains some evidence of the original Saxon structure. The tower is interesting for its pointed arch. There is also an unusual closed porch. (See "History of Lurgashall and its Church" by A.C. Sharman, available from the rector.)

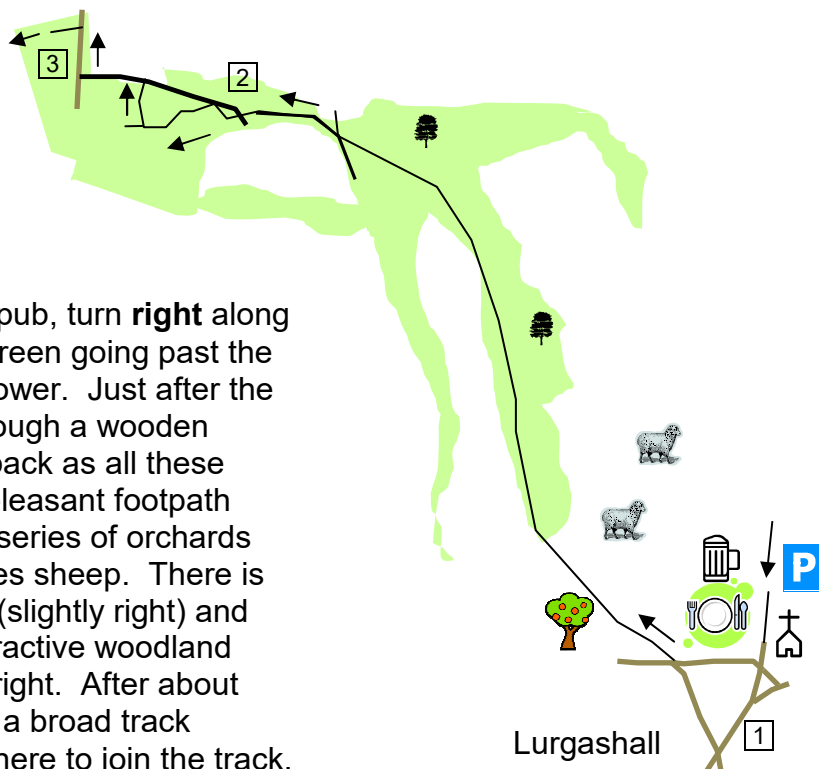
After the Norman Conquest the King gave the Lurgashall area to a Norman family called Alta Rippa who built a Manor House there in about 1100. But there is no mention of Lurgashall in the Domesday Book because it was situated in the dense Wealden forest and thought to be of little value. The Manor House itself has not survived but the area that the estate occupied is now Park Farm, which gets its name from the Deer Park which the Alta Rippa family established in about 1200. It is perhaps as well that the Alta Rippa family came to Lurgashall since, either through plague, or bad harvest, or for some other reason, the village had become almost extinct in 1100. The coming of the Manor revived the village's fortunes and it grew in importance throughout the feudal period.

The Noah's Ark pub (Greene King) is said to have acquired its unusual name because a pond was once outside the door, which patrons had to cross to refresh themselves, giving the impression of animals crossing into the Ark before the deluge. In former times, as well as brewing beer, the Noah's Ark baked bread for the village, giving rise to the old jingle: "For well-baked bread and home-brewed ale, you must come to Lurgashale". The Noah's Ark became the center of village

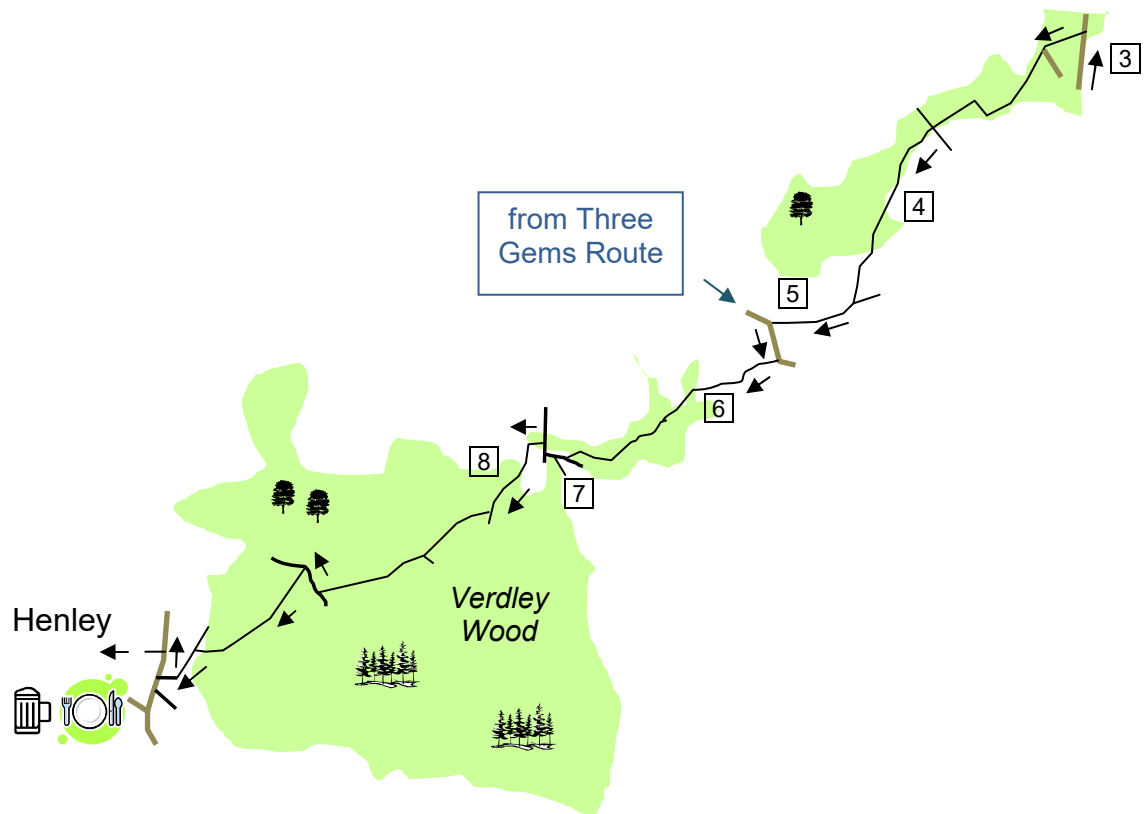


life - local meetings were held there, it provided refreshments for the Midsummer Fair held each year on "Tally Nob", it was the local headquarters of the Swing Riots of 1830 and it has refreshed many cricket and football teams after their exertions over the years. The Noah's Ark also plays host to a summer theatrical productions. It serves excellent food. It is open 11-11 (12-8.30 on Sundays).

Leg 3: Lurgashall to Henley 6½ km=4 miles



- 1 With your back to the *Noah's Ark* pub, turn **right** along the lane on the north side of the green going past the little cricket pavilion with its clocktower. Just after the corner of the green, turn **right** through a wooden swing gate (awkward with a backpack as all these gates are) onto a footpath. This pleasant footpath runs along the left-hand side of a series of orchards and fields of horses and sometimes sheep. There is another swing gate, then another (slightly right) and three more, finally leading into attractive woodland which drops into a valley on your right. After about 700m total on this path, you meet a broad track coming in from the left. Shift **left** here to join the track, ignoring a stile and footpath that fork right. Soon the track passes a timber yard on the left, curves slightly right before some posts and meets a service road coming from gates on the left.
- 2 Turn **right** on the service road for just 20m and go **left** at a 3-way fingerpost on a narrow footpath into the woods bordering Windfallwood Common. (Some walkers simply stay on the lane, missing some attractive woodland.) In 30m you pass a yellow waymark post. In 30m more, you come to a 3-way signposted junction. Turn **right** here and follow a winding and rather overgrown path, keeping the same direction until the path curves right, coming out to a lane opposite *Guardian Cottage*. Turn **left** on the lane, to reach a major road.
- 3 **See map overleaf.** Turn **right** along the road for about 50m and turn sharp **left** opposite *Keepers* along a rather hidden signposted path. Keep to this wide woodland path, going over a two-plank bridge in 100m and, 50m further, straight over a crossing track, where you will notice on the right the gatehouse to the Black Down Park Estate. In 100m, the path goes over another 2-plank bridge with a rail. In 150m, the trees on the left give way to fields with views to the South Downs. The path curves **right**, then **left**, goes over a stile into a large meadow and follows its right-hand perimeter. In 80m, at a signposted crossing path, go straight on, still in the meadow, and continue left-right round the jutting side of the meadow to cross a stile just after the next corner.



- 4 Your path goes over a two-plank bridge and enters the woodland of Gentles Copse uphill amid tall oaks. Your path finally veers left at a waymarker to enter a large meadow. Stay on the **right** side of the meadow for about 30m and veer diagonally **left**, in the direction of the tall relay mast at Bexleyhill, aiming for the corner of the meadow. At the corner, go through a large wooden gate just to the left of the corner and turn **right** on a wide path, going through a small wooden gate (*easier than the stile!*). The path takes you through trees and leads down between fields to a road by *Upperfold Farm*. Turn **left** on the road.

The Three Gems Walk rejoins the main walk here.

- 5 Where, in 120m, the lane turns sharp left, leave it by going through a metal gate on the **right** into a field. Walk at right angles to the lane you were on, down a slope, keeping to the left at first [*Mar 2016: clambering over a large fallen tree*], then down the centre of the field as it narrows. Aim for a wooden ramp and a signpost where your route veers **left** alongside a bank on your right [*Mar 2016: trying to pick a route not too churned up by hooves*]. Then, as the field widens again, keep **right**, still beside the bank, aiming for some electricity poles. Pass under the wires diagonally, and go over a stile in the hedge ahead and over a stream.
- 6 A small wooden gate leads you across a small field. A rather high stile takes you, veering right over a stream, into a marshy region which is rather overgrown at first but will get easier. *This area is dominated in summer by the tall pink flowers of that pernicious weed *himalayan balsam*.* A wide concrete bridge over the ample stream is followed by a rather muddy section. The path still follows the electricity poles, now with the stream on your right. The path later curves right and finally wheels **left** uphill and emerges via a stile onto a drive. Turn **right** on the drive, past a pond on your left with ornamental figures.

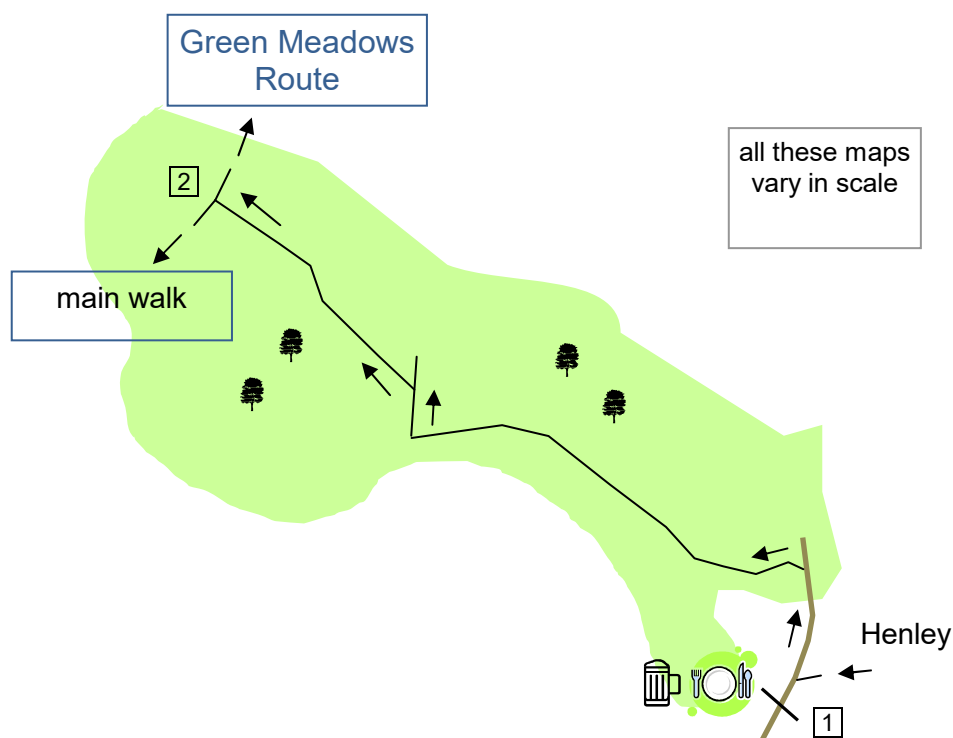
- 7 Continue beside some large wooden entrance gates and immediately ignore a byway sharp left. Continue along the drive for about 20m to a signposted footpath on the **left**, just before a metal gate marked *Private*. This path turns abruptly left round the field and becomes quite narrow and (in summer) overgrown. Finally, the atmosphere is transformed when you enter the dark pines of Verdley Wood [Sep 2017: heavily churned up by forestry work].
- 8 Continue down on a well-marked path through the wood, crossing two footbridges on either side of a valley and rising on a narrow path. At the top of the slope, the path joins a broad track coming in from the left. In 60m you reach a junction on the right by a fingerpost. Turn **right** here, as indicated (the path straight ahead being just a forester's track). After about 700m on this pleasant relatively dry sandy track, turn **right** at a T-junction onto a wide forestry track. Within 100m, just after a left bend, turn **left** at a yellow arrow on a path through the conifers. This wide path passes through mature woodland and, in nearly 500m, arrives at a T-junction with an open meadow on the other side. Turn **left** on a track, going past a cottage garden on your left. In a short distance, your entry into Henley is heralded by two enchanting cottages. Proceed to a junction of lanes and turn **left** through the village to come shortly to the *Duke of Cumberland* pub. Your route however is sharp **right** at the junction.

Henley is a hamlet with just sixteen houses, one of which is a pub and another a converted mission hall. Over half the buildings are Grade 2 listed and date back to 1575 or before, which makes the hamlet a heritage site. Levadas and watercourses run through it, sourced from a prolific local spring which never dries up even in the driest summer. Up to the early 1950s the whole lane was made up of huge, pillow-shaped cobbles the origin of which is still believed to be Roman, though there is no evidence of the road pre-dating 1550.



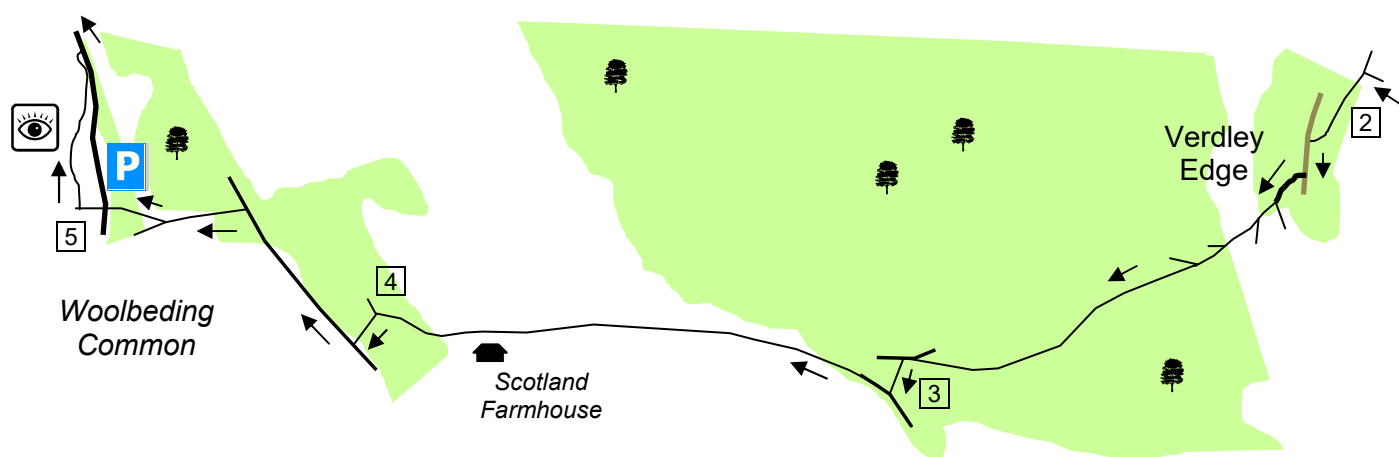
The "Duke of Cumberland", hardly changed from two hundred years ago, draws people from afar who appreciate its unusual rural setting. The Duke - as it is affectionately called - has several acres of woodland gardens with ponds, streams, rushets, sinks and troughs - with trout swimming in them - and a cobbled path which leads to the front door. There is still gas lighting in the pub and long wooden tables surround a small bar. The pub is tiny and full of character with old framed deeds on the walls and other icons from a line of tenant publicans with fishing and other country interests.

Leg 4: Henley to Woolbeding Common 3½ km=2 miles



- 1 Having turned **right** down the lane (or straight on if coming back from the pub), within 100m take a signposted footpath on your **left** over a small footbridge by a fence. This path leads up through pines alongside the fence and turns **right** at the top to become a broad path. Ignore all forestry paths leading off until, in about 400m, your path bends **right** downhill. In 60m, turn **left** on a marked footpath. *Take care not to miss this turning.* Stay on this path through holly and straight on through a fine beech wood, ignoring any small paths leading off. Your path crosses first a drainpipe then a double-plank footbridge, comes within 50m of the busy A286 road where it meets a fingerposted T-junction in the woods.

Decision point. If you are doing the **Eastern Circuit** or the **Little Gem Circuit** you need to return to Fernhurst by a shorter way. In this case, go to the end of this text and take the **Green Meadows Route**.



- 2 Turn **left** at the T-junction on a signposted path parallel to the road which finally reaches the busy main road at a sign for *The Forge*. Cross the road carefully to a driveway the other side leading up to the hamlet of Verdley Edge. In 50m, ignore a footpath on your left. 40m further, at another fingerpost, ignore a path branching left up a grassy slope by taking the main **right** fork. *You can tell from the sign that you are now on the Serpent Trail, a 108-km sinewy path from Petersfield to Haslemere*. In 40m ignore an unmarked path that forks left but, 20m further on, fork **left**, still obeying the yellow arrow. This path leads uphill through the chestnut coppices of Northpark Copse [2015:ducking under a fallen chestnut]. The path eventually emerges into a clearer spot and, now about 800m from Verdley Edge, joins a wide path coming in from the right.
- 3 In 20m, turn sharp **left** with the main path. This path runs through trees and, in 50m, emerges by open fields at a T-junction with a farm track. Turn sharp **right** on this track. In about 150m your path takes you over a stile (sometimes unneeded if the large metal gate is open) and veers left away from the trees into a large meadow. The route continues dead straight across the grass and then runs close to a fence on your right, heading to the right of a house visible in the distance, *Scotland Farmhouse*. When you reach the house, go over a stile, with the house's large barn and a reedy pond on your left, and wheel **right** to follow the main track.
- 4 In 90m, the signposted track curves **left** and takes you in 60m to a T-junction with a very wide track. Turn **right** on this track and follow it straight on through the wood. *You are now on the New Lipchis Way, a 61-km trail from Liphook to Chichester Harbour*. After about 250m through this fine woodland, turn **left** at a three-way signpost onto another footpath, following the *Serpent Trail* sign [2015: the signpost is missing but this wide junction is unmistakable]. In 70m fork **right** on a signposted footpath that takes you to one of the principal Woolbeding Common car parks. (See another walk in this series: *Titty Hill and the Rother Valley*.) Go through the car park and out onto the narrow lane. You have reached Woolbeding Common with its stunning surprise of extensive views west into Hampshire and south to the South Downs.

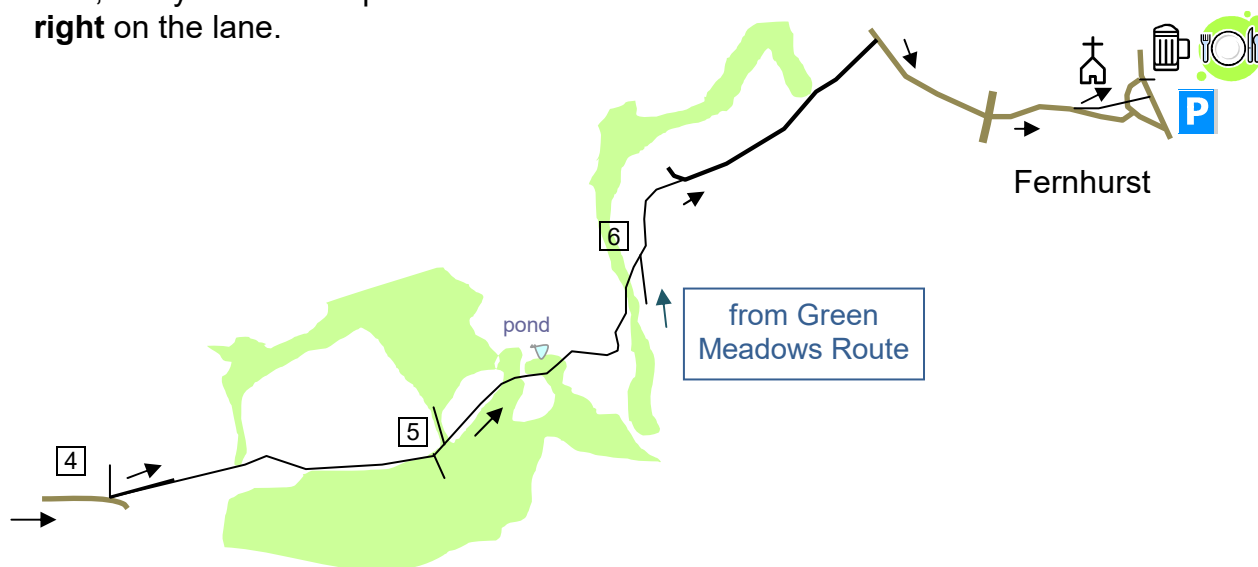
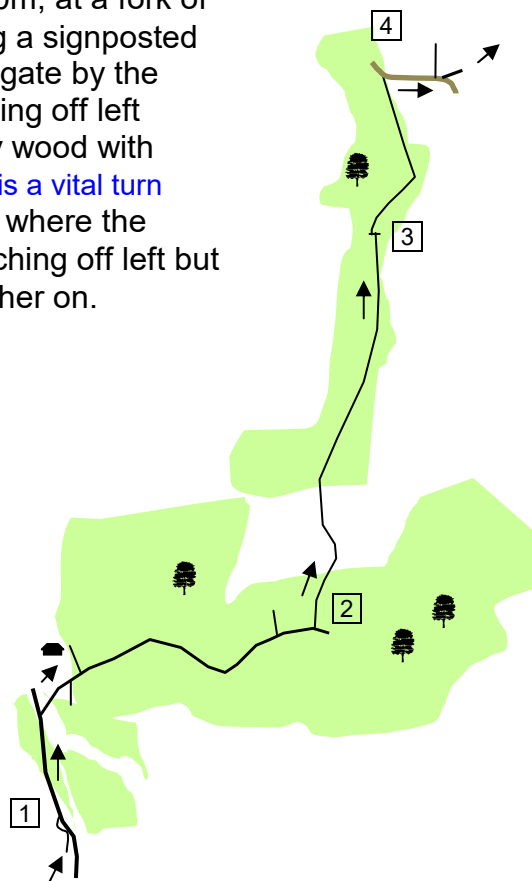
The village of Woolbeding (pronounced "wool beeding") is in fact 4 km south of here. Its parish is 1 km wide but 11 km long. Such "strip parishes" were a traditional way of dividing the land so that each parish had an equal share of arable land, meadow, heath and woodland. The Common is National Trust and a Site of Special Scientific Interest because the heath land here supports rare birds such as the nightjar, woodlark and dartford warbler as well as insects such as the heath potter wasp. Most of the boundary banks on the Common date from medieval times.

- 5 Cross the narrow lane to a small path leading to a seat with great views. Just 10m **before** the seat, turn **right** along a narrow path leading over the heath of bracken, gorse and birch. The path runs through many twists and turns, roughly parallel to the tarmac lane, more-or-less level, still offering great views. In about 200 metres, you reach a signpost and another seat. Turn **right** here, immediately arriving back at the narrow tarmac lane.



Leg 5: Woolbeding Common to Fernhurst 4 km=2½ miles

- 1 Turn **left** down the narrow, now sunken, lane. In 180m, at a fork of two tracks, take the **right** hand track, shortly ignoring a signposted footpath right, passing a house and going through a gate by the entrance to *Oak Cottage*. Avoid a track here branching off left downhill and continue on the level through the dusky wood with conifers right and mixed woodland left. [Care! There is a vital turn ahead which some people miss.] In about 500 metres, where the pines suddenly end, **ignore** an unmarked path branching off left but take a signposted footpath sharp **left** about 50m further on.
- 2 Your path leads down and into a forestry area, sometimes dotted with timber debris. Keep in the same general direction down on a clear path, going past a signpost. The path becomes a broad grassy track, occasionally a bit marshy, through woods. After another 250m, the path ends at a T-junction with a gate into a field visible half right.
- 3 Turn **left** at the T-junction and immediately **right** through thick bracken, thus resuming your direction. (This path may be very overgrown, but this problem soon improves and does not recur.) This grassy path runs through fine shady woodland, rich in bluebells in season. In 400m you reach a stile by a gate into a meadow. Turn **left** and traverse the edge of the meadow, finally going over a stile into a lane, really a kind of superior farm track. Turn **right** on the lane.



- 4 In 200m, where the lane turns right at a junction of tracks, avoid a footpath left and leave the lane by keeping the same direction ahead into a large ploughed field. Go straight across the field heading for a gap in the trees ahead. After the gap, keep to a narrow path along the right-hand edge of the field. The path runs close to a deep wooded gully on the right. Near the far corner, at a 4-way fingerpost, keep straight ahead and, at a marker post, enter a band of trees and go over a stile.

- 5 Continue on the right-hand side of the next sheep pasture, over a stile beside a gate and through a small grassy meadow with a stream on your left. Your route veers **left** over a stone bridge, rises on a stony path and bends **right**. The path becomes an enclosed mown path by *Lower Hawksfold*. It then bends **left** close to the house and garden above a rough shallow field and goes over a stile into woodland. Next, the path goes over a footbridge and passes an unneeded stile. It then runs along the left side of a small field, through a swing gate and, at a 3-way fingerpost, is joined by a footpath coming in from the right.

[The Green Meadows Route rejoins the main walk here.](#)

- 6 Your path is now an enclosed path which soon joins the drive coming from Hawksfold Farm. Follow the drive, going through a wooden gate, for about 500m until you pass the first houses of Fernhurst, coming out to a road. Turn **right** at the road, soon reaching the main road. Cross over the main road, passing the tiny post office, and continue ahead soon taking a path forking **left** through the churchyard back to the green in the village centre where the walk began.

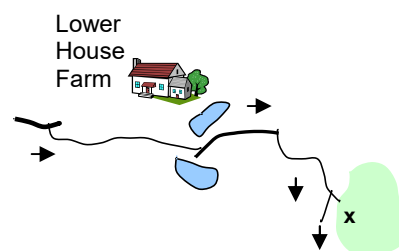
The Three Gems Path (Fernhurst to Henley) 6½ km=4 miles total

This route is so named after the three unexpected and different treasures found along the way. It takes you from Fernhurst to the hamlet of Henley from which you may return (after refreshments in the *Duke of Cumberland*) to Fernhurst by the Green Meadows route or via Woolbeding Common.

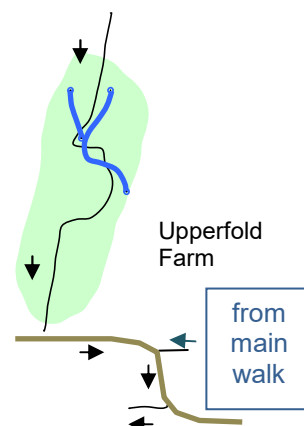
- 1 From the car park, turn **left** along the road signposted *Lickfold, Lurgashall, Lodsworth* (the “three L’s”). Immediately take a footpath that runs parallel on the **left** and veers away from the road, shortly crossing a track. **Gem No. 1:** The path runs past the garden of a house called *The Bottom*. This delightful local village path now runs over a bridge, close to another cottage *Jackett’s Hollow* (now diverted a short distance away) and reaches a lane. Keep ahead on the lane and in 100m go straight ahead on a signposted footpath between two stone lions on a concrete track to *Lower House Farm*. Blackdown (which you would have climbed on the Big Circuit) is soon prominent on your left. The lane eventually approaches the farm via a linden avenue.



- 2 Just before Lower House Farm, at a gate, a fingerpost directs you **right** and **left** on a track that runs past the big house on your left. The lower lake comes into view down on the right and on the left is a pond and a bank. At a signpost in the corner, turn **left** on a rather muddy path. Now you realise that the bank has been concealing **Gem No. 2** the upper lake. Continue on the path beside the lake and at a signpost in the next corner, keep **right** along the right-hand side of a fine grassy meadow with Blackdown in full view. At a signpost in the corner, your path goes down into woods of a stream gully and through a large wooden gate. Your path veers **right** alongside a fence and, in 100m, turns **left** on a fenced path between two meadows. At a T-junction, turn **right** on a wide grassy path. After more than 100m you reach a 3-way fingerpost at a junction by a stile into the woods. Do *not* cross the stile but turn **right** through a tall wooden swing gate and walk the length of a small meadow dotted with beeches and oaks.



- 3 In the centre of the far side, go over a robust stile into woodland. Notice the deep gully on both sides, formed by two streams that meet here. This area of bridges, streams and winding paths is **Gem No. 3**. You need to follow the yellow markers that take you through the complex twists and turns, horizontal and vertical. The path goes down, over a **bridge*** and up the other side. [*Mar 2016: careful! the path is slippery and steep.] It bends **left**, goes down steps over a **second bridge** and up steps again. Up a bank, 10m after the steps, turn



smartly **right** and follow a fairly level path through woods, between the deep gully on your right and a lighter area with many scattered trees. In 100m, the path descends into the gully on your right, crosses the stream again by a **third bridge** and rises again. Now there is a nice level path that eventually descends to a road. Turn **left** on the road, stay on it past some houses and follow it when it bends **right**, after 250m, by *Upperfold Farm*.

Your walk to Henley now resumes at Leg 3, stage [5](#).

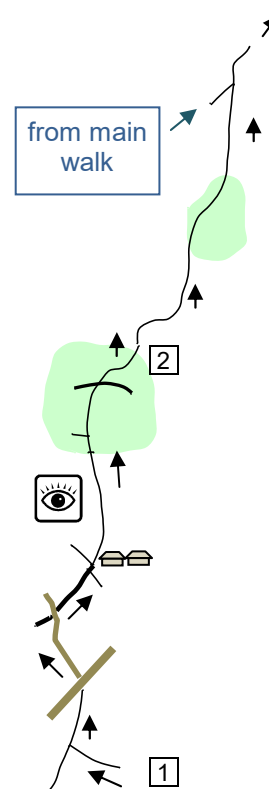
The Green Meadows Route (Henley to Fernhurst) 5 km=3 miles total

This route takes you from Henley to Fernhurst by a route through woodland and meadows and is therefore used to conclude the Eastern Circuit and the Little Gem Circuit. However, you will miss the beautiful heath and views at Woolbeding Common. The first stage of this route is the same as Leg 4 stage [1](#) after which it diverges as described below.

1 Turn **right** at the T-junction and continue to the busy main road. Cross the road carefully and continue directly opposite on a lane, Whites Lane, going past some fine houses. In nearly 200m, at a 4-way junction of drives, turn **right** in the direction of *Corner Cottage* and *Cuckoo Cottage*. In 200m, just before the cottages, turn **left** over a stile and then **right** along the right-hand side of the meadow. *As you progress, it is worth looking back at the sight of the cottages in the valley.* Finally the path goes through a gate into woodland. In 40m ignore an unmarked left turn. After 350m through the woodland, at a 4-way junction with a wide bridge on your right, continue straight ahead, downhill. In 60m, the path goes over a 2-plank bridge [2016: one end rotted away – be careful!], then another similarly, and rises to a little gate into a large meadow.

2 Go straight ahead, a fraction left, on a faint path leading across the grassy meadow. Eventually, the path reaches the far corner of the meadow. Veer **right** here through a metal gate leading into the woods. Keep **right** on a wide track going downhill. The track goes under wires and over a stream and later is joined from the right by a grassy farm track. Keep straight on, towards the red roofs of Hawksfold Farm. Soon your path goes over a stile (or you can use the swing gate further over on the left!) and, at a 3-way fingerpost, meets another footpath coming from the left.

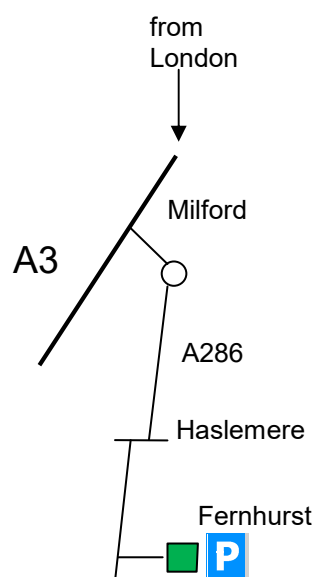
For the final short section of your walk to Fernhurst, resume now at Leg 5, stage [6](#).



Getting there

By car: (see drawing) to get to Fernhurst, West Sussex, if coming from the north, take the A286 Haslemere-Midhurst road from Milford. (You can bypass Milford by staying on the A3 until the narrow turn-off left signposted "Brook". Turn right at the end. But you can't do this in reverse on the return journey.) Go through Haslemere, following signs for *Midhurst*. On reaching Fernhurst, turn **left** to the village green. There is a large car park on the other side of the green next to the cricket green, not far from the *Red Lion*.

Alternative starting points are (a) the little car park beneath the Temple of the Winds, (b) Woolbeding Common and (c) Lurgashall (take the A283 Petworth road and look for signs; park beside the *Noah's Ark* pub, next to the gate into the church).



By bus: no. 70 from Haslemere (**not Sundays**).

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