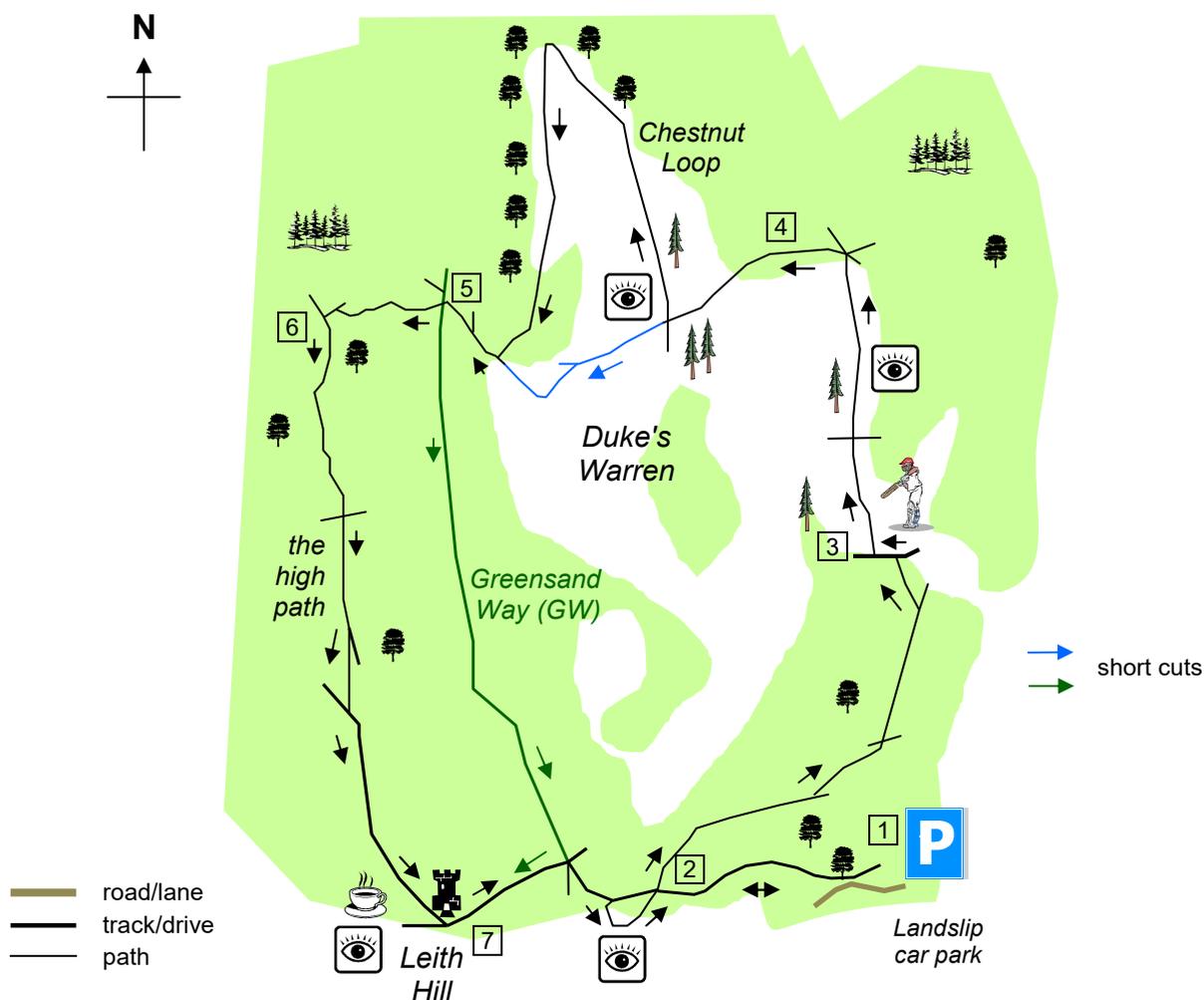


The Walk



- 1 With the road on your left, walk to the far corner of the Landslip car park where there is a sign *Footpath to Tower*. Follow this easy path, going downhill at first, over a bridge, veering right at a “tower” icon. The wide path is steepish but perfectly comfortable to walk and there are optional steps at the end. On reaching the top, just before a large tree trunk barrier, **leave** the Tower route by turning immediately very sharp **right** on a wide unmarked path along the edge of the hill. (Mountain bikes use the parallel path on your left.)
- 2 The path rises gently under beeches, passing a bench seat. Soon you pass a green-topped post, the first of a series you will be following in this first part. It bears the letter “K” and the words *Heathland Trail*. After a more stony section, you pass a bench seat and a post. At the next post, fork **left** as the green arrow. Your path goes through a chestnut coppice, over a raft of sticks and through a beech glade. Veer **left** here, ignoring a crossing path indicated by a post with a yellow arrow, staying on the level path, as always following the green-topped marker post. Your path snakes its way through a pinewood, passing another post. You reach another post, shortly before a wooden barrier you can see ahead. Turn **left** here as the green arrow. The path leads out, past two wooden posts, to a wide track beside a cricket green (the highest in Surrey).

3 Go forward to the edge of the green and turn **left** past a 1-bar gate. Immediately turn **right** as the green arrow, going behind the pavilion. You are on an easy sandy path across the glistening heath of Coldharbour Common with heather, moss and pine trees, a perfect panorama whatever the season. In 200m, you reach another of those posts at a crossing path. Go straight on, thus leaving the *Heathland Trail*. In 300m, you come to a multiple junction of wide paths with blue arrows. Turn **left** and keep **left** to go through a small wooden gate beside a large one into the National Trust's Duke's Warren.

4 Gradually your path comes out into the open with ever widening views, passing a small fenced-off pond. About 50m after the pond, you come to a crosspaths with a marker post and blue arrows in a grove of oaks and



Turn **right** here, soon passing a rustic seat, from where to admire the extensive views into the wooded valleys. Continue downhill to start the delightful Chestnut Loop. (As a short cut, you could instead keep straight on through pines, downhill, forking **left** at a blue arrow, with a fine view of the Tower, to re-join the route; but you would miss the best part of this walk.) Follow this very wide sandy path under isolated pines heading towards the wooded valley that seems to stretch to the horizon. The colours change in every season. If you see any cattle near this path, they are the gentle belted Galloway breed. In 500m, **ignore** a marker post and a path on your right leading to a wooden gate. Shortly after, your path does a total left wheel, running under the first of the chestnut trees which dominate the rest of this path. The landscape here is striking with deep woods on your right and lofty heath on your left. The Chestnut Loop ends at a T-junction. Turn **right** and immediately fork **right** downhill to go through a wooden gate ahead, leaving Duke's Warren. Your path leads over a flat bridge to reach an oblique T-junction with a wide path near a fingerpost. This is part of the Greensand Way, a long-distance path. Here you have a choice:

Along the Greensand Way (easy). This route avoids the ascent in the next section by taking you back along this wide path. At the end, you can still take a break at the Tower with its café and views. Turn sharp **left** on this wide woodland path and follow it for 1 km, avoiding all turn-offs. It rises during the last stretch, past a 1-bar wooden gate, to the main multiple junction of wide paths by the hollow. For a break and refreshments, turn **right** uphill to the Tower. (You will be coming down the same way.) Or, if you are pressed for time, proceed straight ahead, just to the left of the hollow. Continue on this path, avoiding all turns-offs, for around 500m. It leads you back to the car park, where the walk began.

5 **The High Path** (moderate). The next section is quite an adventure and a little tougher than the preceding because it includes a steepish section. However, no climbing is involved and the path is perfectly manageable – but take your time! Turn **right** on the wide path for only 2m and go **left** up a narrow path. (This is the narrow path *before* the fingerpost, not the wider diagonal path *after* the fingerpost.) You have a steady ascent on a path where the many tree roots act as natural steps. (You may meet the occasional cyclist and need to stand to one side – they are usually very considerate: cyclists have to share all the paths with walkers and horses.) Avoid any side paths and keep going steadily upwards. In under 200m the gradient eases and you reach a T-junction. Turn **left** and immediately keep **left** on a good level path.

- 6 This narrow path will take you to the Tower. The course is always straight ahead and almost level all the way, because you are now on the long ridge on which the Tower stands. In 200m or so, your path goes through a space where forestry work has left a lot of woodland debris: be sure to weave a little to the left and the right here so as not to lose the path. In another 100m, you come out into the open and go over a crossing path. Your path now goes over a fallen trunk (good! as it keeps cyclists away) and rises and falls over some steep bumps. The path now widens and there is a large stand of tall pines ahead to your right. You will meet a number of irrelevant crossing paths leading to more hillocks: always keep straight ahead on the level. Just after those hillocks, a total of about 500m on this high path, your path forks with the wide left fork going downhill. Take the **right** fork which is much narrower and only a little to the right of the downhill path. You are now walking very gently uphill through bracken. 200m after the fork, you meet a much wider path coming from your right. Veer **left** onto this path and continue, always keeping to the main path, uphill, reaching the Tower after 400m.



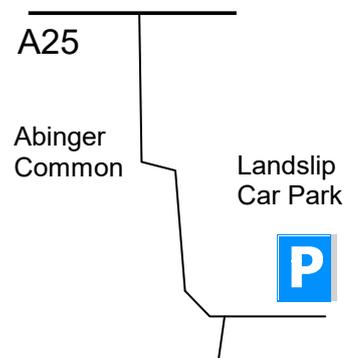
Leith Hill Tower was built in 1766 to raise the height of the hill to the magic 1000 feet. It later fell into disuse until 1864 when the side-tower staircase was built. It was fully restored by the National Trust in 1984. The servery has refreshments and nice homemade cakes, now open daily, closing at 5, or 3 weekdays. You can ascend the tower where there are extensive views all round.

- 7 After your break, facing the view, turn **left** steeply down, following the *Greensand Way* sign. In 200m or so, you reach a major junction with a hollow on your right. Go past the hollow and take the next path **right**, following a sign for the Landslip car park. After 100m on this wide stone-lined path, looking to your right you will see a narrow path between two short, wooden posts. Turn **right** here and follow this path through bracken quickly arriving at a crossing path. Turn **left** here. The path leads you to a bench seat with terrific views across the Weald of Sussex, especially memorable at the end of a sunny day. Continue on the path until it ends at a green-topped post, back on the main path. Turn **right** downhill and follow this clear path, avoiding all side paths, soon arriving back at the Landslip car park where the walk began.



Getting there

By car: the Leith Hill Landslip car park can be reached from the A25 road near Dorking. The well-named Hollow Lane is signposted *Abinger Common, Friday Street, Leith Hill*. The junction is about 3 miles=5 km west of Dorking, via Westcott, and about 8 miles=13 km east of Guildford. Follow this lane, sometimes through a dramatic cutting, for about 3½ miles=6 km. Avoid the Starveall car park on your left and continue on the road, keeping left at a junction. Avoid the two small Windy Gap car parks, either side of the road. The Landslip car park is a little further along on your left. You can also arrive from the Dorking area via Coldharbour: the car park is on the right just after a sharp right bend.



fancy more free walks? www.fancyfreewalks.org