



Newlands Corner and Merrow Downs

Distance: 8 km=5 miles

easy walking

Region: Surrey

Date written: 3-jan-2010

Author: Schwebefuss

Date revised: 15-sep-2017

Refreshments: Newlands Corner

Last update: 16-apr-2022

Map: Explorer 145 (Guildford)

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

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Woodland, views, quiet paths

In Brief

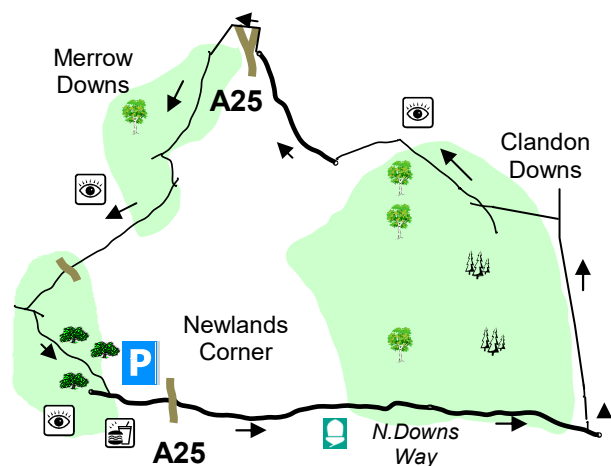
Newlands Corner is a tip-top favourite place for families and for very polite motorbikers. Many people just walk over the Downs, enjoying the views. There are good walks south to Blackheath (see e.g. *Gunpowder and Profound Silence* in this series). This walk, in contrast, take you through some lesser-known paths in the woods over Merrow Downs.



This is a good walk even in winter because of the green of the pine and yew trees. There is very little mud but just a few nettles that might catch bare legs. With only one compulsory stile, this walk should be fine for your dog too, with a short lead. There's a good hotdog stall in the Visitor's Centre.

The walk begins at the **Newlands Corner car park**, postcode **GU4 8SE**, www.w3w.co/driven.stews.cheese. Parking is now free. To locate this car park, see at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).

Bird's Eye View

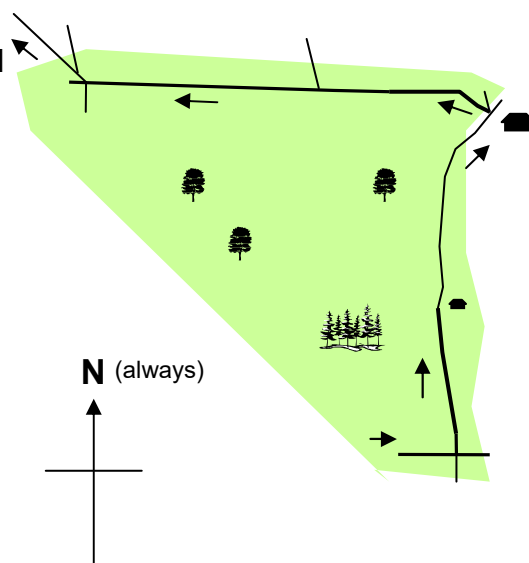


The Walk

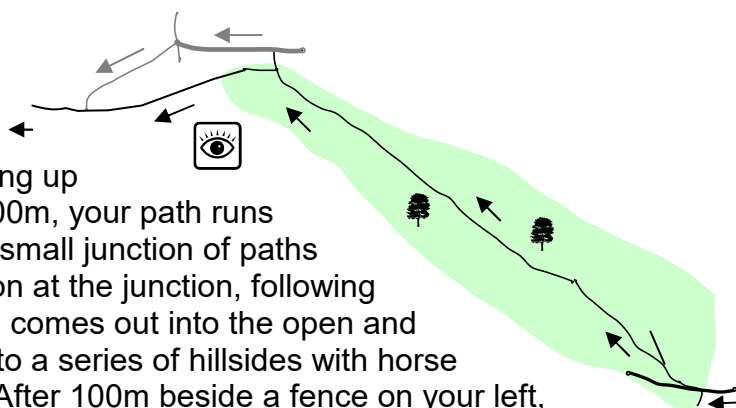
- 1 From the Newlands Corner car park, walk **back** towards the road and fork **right** on a path with a post and a green arrow to a fingerpost just before the road indicating the North Downs Way. Continue straight on and cross the main road, passing a wooden barrier and re-joining the North Downs Way on the other side. *The North Downs Way is a long-distance footpath from Farnham to Dover.* In about 1½ km you are joined on the right by a permissive horse ride and, after 200m or so, there is the first definite crosspaths with a smart new fingerpost, just before a darker area of yew trees. The *Silent Pool* is on the right but your route here is sharp **left** on a good path over a stile on the left of a new metal gate.



- 2 Follow this path, soon passing a black storage tank, with the woods of Clandon Downs on your left. (*Once open to the public as a "Secret Woods" walk – but no longer.*) Continue straight ahead. Your path joins a track coming from your right and passes a cottage and some farm buildings. Keep ahead now, on a wide grassy path. The path descends past a large metal gate to the larger Old Scotland Farm. Go straight over, past the house, the *Tillingbourne Brewery* and cow sheds and up a concrete track. In 20m, turn sharp **left** on a bridleway [care! in summer undergrowth the sign is easy to miss], avoiding a yellow-arrowed footpath to its right. After 250m, ignore a 3-way fingerpost and keep straight on. In another 300m or so along this fine woodland path, you come to a junction with a narrow path coming in from a small metal gate on your left and, 15m later, a good path branching off to your right, indicated by a new fingerpost.



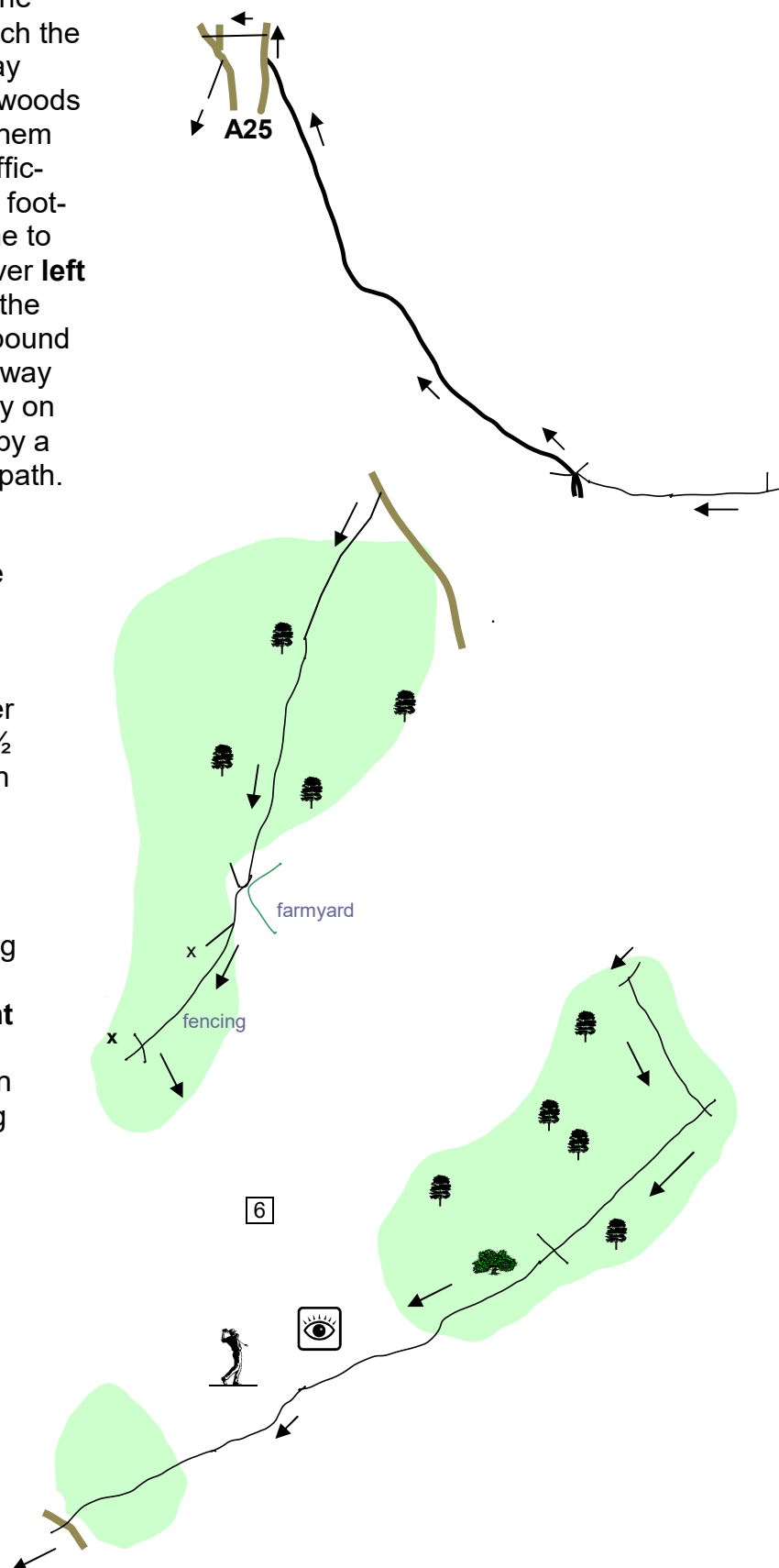
- 3 Branch **right** at the junction and immediately take the **left-hand**, more gradual, option of the two uphill paths now before you, leading up through a coppice. After about 400m, your path runs through a clearing and reaches a small junction of paths with a blue arrow. Keep straight on at the junction, following the blue arrow. In 50m, your path comes out into the open and on your left there are good views to a series of hillsides with horse pastures and the valley beyond. After 100m beside a fence on your left, the footpath re-joins you from the right. In 100m, the path




reaches a junction of drives with Wellhouse Farm and Sun Valley Farm on your left.

- 4 Veer **right** on the main drive. The drive runs down for ½ km to reach the main road, the A25, at a one-way system. You need to enter the woods on the other side, but to reach them you need to go round by the traffic-light junction. Turn **right** on the footway beside the south-bound lane to reach the traffic lights. Cross over **left** just before the lights and follow the grass verge to reach the north-bound lane. Cross over this busy one-way road and turn **left** on the footway on the far side. In 30m, fork **right** by a redundant stile on a signed footpath.

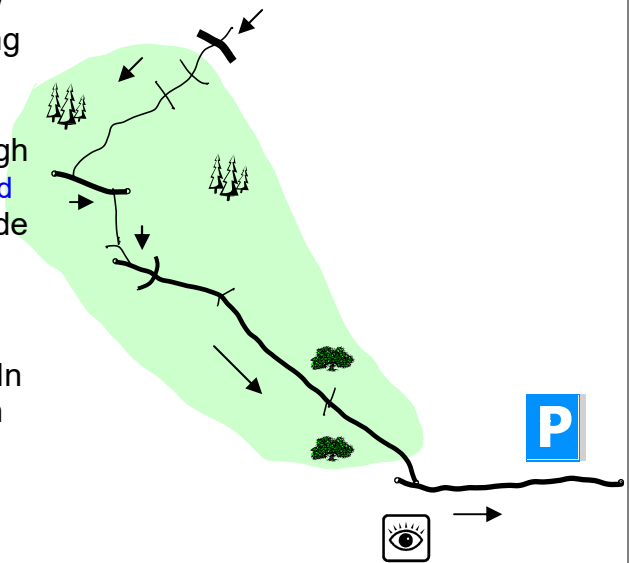
- 5 Follow this straight wide austere woodland path, through a lofty cathedral of planted mature trees, ignoring another wide avenue branching off right. After running gently uphill for nearly ½ km, the path meets a minor path from the right at the corner of a field, zigzagging right-left round it. Continue on the main path through an untidy coppice, avoiding any minor paths leading off. In 80m, at a little green triangular junction, take the **right** fork. In 130m, at another post with yellow and blue arrows, turn **left** onto a rather rough crossing path in the direction of a blue arrow.



- 6 In 120m, at another crosspaths by a post with blue and yellow arrows, turn **right** in the direction of the yellow arrow. In 150m or so, the path reaches a sunken path. Cross straight over here as indicated by the yellow arrows. [2020-21: blocked with branches and a *no entry* sign, to prevent damage to the roots of the ancient Yew: simply turn **right** for 2m and then **left** to re-join the path.]

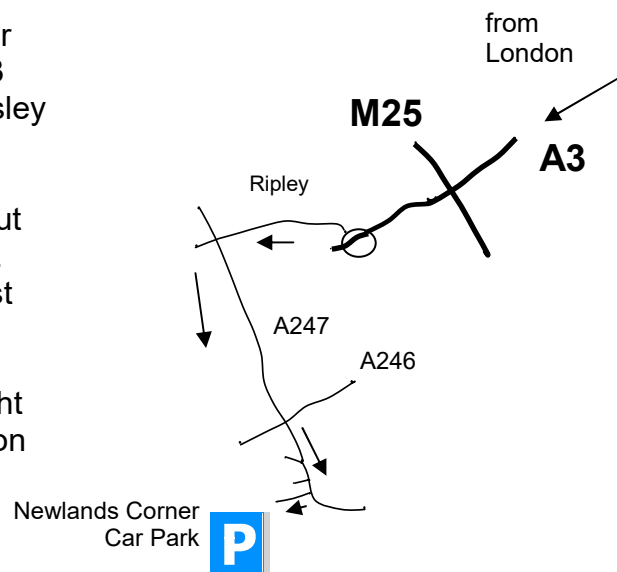
 The footpath leads through yew trees and dense ferns. *The small concrete pillar showing "G.B.B.1933" marks the Guildford Borough Boundary.* You come up to the golf course at the top of Merrow Downs with more views ahead. Keep left along the edge of the green, going past a triangulation pillar. 70m after the pillar, just before a yew tree, go **left** on a rather hidden path overgrown with bracken, by a rather hidden marker post. This very winding path leads through bracken and ferns and more yews and out rather abruptly down steps to a road where you need to take care.

- 7 Cross straight over the road up a step to a path opposite. Keep straight ahead along this narrow path [2014:over a few fallen tree branches], following the occasional yellow arrow [Jan 2021: now all gone], crossing first a wide bridleway and then a narrower path. Finally, the path descends through a yew glade to a marker post [Jan 2021: rotted and grounded] at a T-junction. Turn **left** here on a wide track. In 50m, after more large yews, turn **right** on a narrow path uphill. On meeting a path coming from the right, veer **left** and, at the top, turn **left** at a T-junction onto a wide stony path. In 30m, go straight across an oblique crossing path and follow the path through fine woodland for some distance, ignoring all crossing paths and minor branches. After 400m in the woods, the path reaches the west side of the Newlands Corner car park. Turn **left** here, back to the point where the walk began.



Getting there

By car: to get to the **Newlands Corner** car park from the London area, take the A3 towards Guildford and turn off after Wisley onto the B2215, signposted *Ripley*, go through that village and, 2 miles=3 km after the village, turn left at a roundabout on the A247 signposted West Clandon. Follow the road through the village, past the entrance to Clandon Park and the church, to major traffic lights on the Leatherhead-Guildford road. Go straight over, uphill. The car park is at the top on the right.



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