



Winkworth by the Wey

Distance: 19 km=12 miles, reducible to 14 km=9 miles, or two walks of
12 km=7½ miles, both reducible easy-to-moderate walking

Region: Surrey

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Bramley, Farncombe, Winkworth

Map: 145 (Guildford) *but the maps in this guide should be sufficient*

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Woodland, botanical garden, hills, views, river, boats

In Brief

This walk takes you through some spectacular areas of woodland in south-west Surrey, followed by easy long stretches in pleasant valleys and a walk along the River Wey. Because of the easy wide paths this walk may seem shorter than its given length.

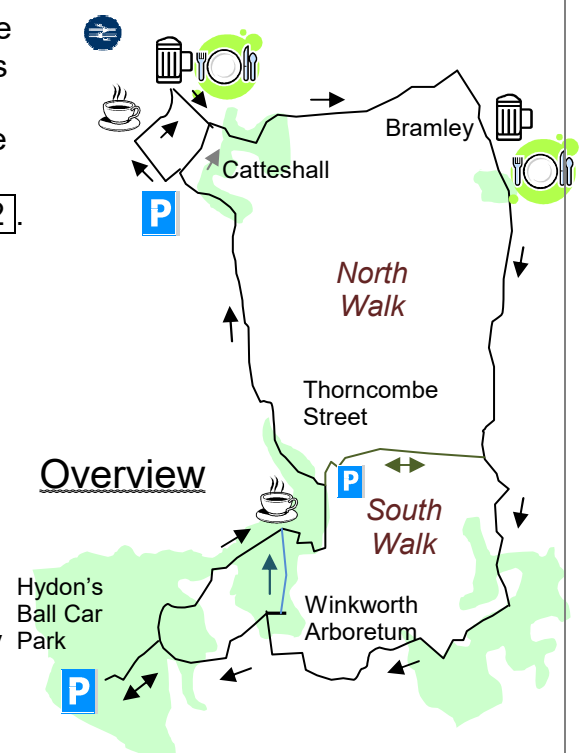


There are some nettles on this walk, so shorts are inadvisable. The best time to do this walk is after a dry spell. After prolonged rain, the tracks may be more muddy and tiring and at the very least good boots are recommended. Your dog can certainly come too.

This walk can be divided into a **North Walk** to include the Wey and Bramley and a **South Walk** which takes in Winkworth. Both take a scenic short cut through Thorncombe Street. A further 3½ km=2 miles can be saved on the South part by starting at Winkworth Arboretum and using the short cut in Leg 5 section 2.

The **full walk** and the **South Walk** begin at the **Hydon's Ball car park**, postcode **GU8 4BB**, www.w3w.co/requests.allowable.mushroom, which is off Salt Lane just east of Hydestile. You could also start at **Winkworth Arboretum**, postcode **GU8 4AD** (possibly restricted to visitors and members only in peak times) to omit 3½ km=2 miles from the walk (losing one of the best sections of the walk). The **North Walk** begins in **Catteshall**, postcode **GU7 1NA**, where there is plenty of roadside parking.

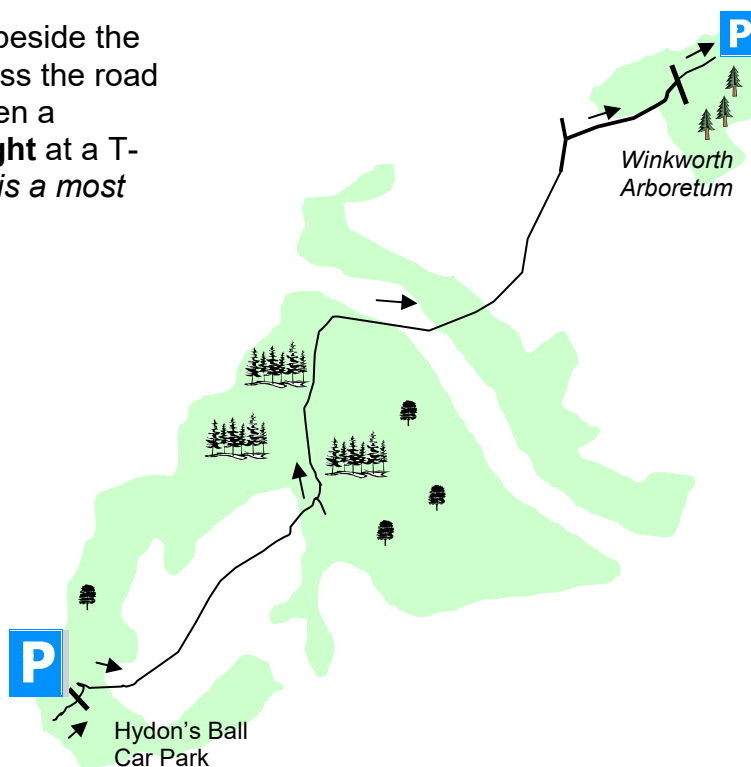
You can also begin the full walk or the North Walk by train from **Farncombe**. For more details, see at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).



The Walk

Leg 1: Hydon's Ball Car Park to Winkworth Arboretum 1¾ km=1 mile

- 1 Leave the car park by a narrow path beside the noticeboard, leading to the road. Cross the road directly to a footpath opposite, between a wooden barrier. Turn immediately **right** at a T-junction on a wide gravel track. *This is a most delightful stretch on a grassy path gently down a valley with occasional tall pines.* As the path approaches a thick pine forest, you reach a junction. Avoid a bridleway on the right here and veer **left** on the main path. In 50m, the path forks. Take the **right** fork uphill, as indicated by the blue arrow. Soon, as the path curves right, avoid a wide private path branching off sharp right and continue ahead on a narrower path. *On your left now is a steep-sided valley.* The path emerges from the woods and crosses a narrow green valley. Now sunken, the path rises beside the entrance to South Munstead Farm. Keep ahead on a rough tarmac drive, arriving at a T-junction with a lane. Turn **right** on the lane, soon reaching the B2130 road. Cross the road directly into the Winkworth Arboretum car park.



Leg 2: Winkworth Arboretum to Catteshall ≤ 6 km=3¾ miles

Winkworth Arboretum was established by dermatologist Dr Wilfrid Fox who lived at Winkworth Farm and acquired part of the Thorncombe Estate in 1937. He converted a simple wooded hillside into a fantastic mosaic of maples, azaleas, mountain ashes, magnolias and cherries. The natural bluebells also make a wonderful splash in late spring. The Arboretum is now run by the National Trust. There is a café at the entrance. There are footpaths through it, indicated by yellow arrows, which you must follow unless you are a member or have paid the entrance fee. Walkers too are invited to pay a contribution.



- 1 **See mini-map overleaf.** Keep straight ahead through a small wooden gate beside a large wooden gate, marked as a footpath, just past a cottage on your right, ignoring a footpath on the right. Go past the café, kiosk and toilets (unless you are a ticket holder and would like to wander) and keep ahead on a wide path. As you reach the second of two fingerposts, keep straight ahead on a narrow descending path, as indicated by the yellow arrow. At a junction of paths, turn **left** past a sign for *Fiona Adams Steps* and go steeply down. After a few zigzags, the path goes down six more steps to a T-junction in front of a large grassy space. Turn **right** here on a path that skirts the valley. At the end, turn **right** at a T-junction taking you to the lakeside with Rowe's Flash Boathouse, a pleasant vantage point over the lake with its upholstered chairs, a terrace and historical accounts on the walls.

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- 2 Turn **left** along an embankment with the lake on your right. As you enter a big meadow, you may be confronted by some noisy geese. Turn **left** along the edge of the meadow and follow the path round to the **left**, past large wooden gates. In 20m turn **right** (by squeezing past a large metal gate) onto a lane. Turn **left** on the lane. (However, you can instead turn immediately **left** after joining the lane through a small wooden gate onto a permissive path which runs parallel to the lane and joins it further down via another wooden gate.) You pass a terrace of pastel-coloured cottages. 200m after them, at a right bend, you reach a signpost on the left with a sign for *Phillimore Cottage*.

Decision point. If you are doing the shorter **South Walk**, omitting Catteshall and the River Wey, skip to the end of this text and do the section called **Thorncombe Street Traverse (East)**.

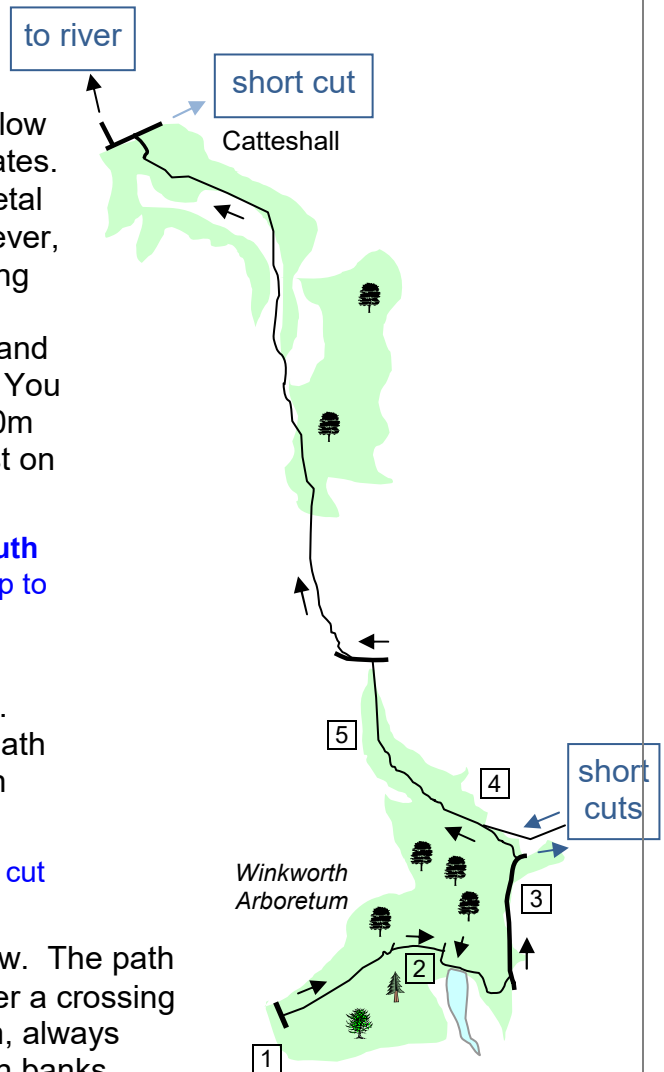
- 3 Go **left** at the signpost up the house's driveway. Keep left past the cottage on a narrow grassy path between fences and go **right** through a wooden swing-gate and turn **left** in a sloping meadow.

The **Thorncombe Street Traverse (West)** short cut re-joins the walk here..

- 4 Continue along the left-hand side of the meadow. The path enters woodland and goes over a stile, then over a crossing path. Continue straight ahead for around 300m, always following the clear path. The path runs between banks, between rows of conifers and past horse jumps, finally taking you through an old kissing-gate and down steps to a lane. Turn **left** on the lane. In 100m, fork **right** at a fingerpost onto a bridleway and keep left into woods.

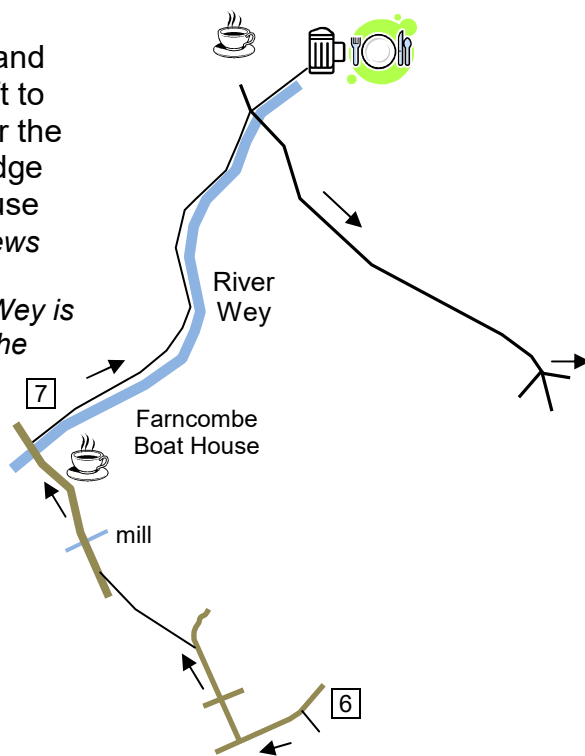
- 5 Follow this earthy path between hollies and, where it meets a crossing track at a 4-arm fingerpost, go straight over, with a fence and tennis court to your right. Continue onwards between fences to a road. Go straight over the road down a stony track, going past *Lane Cottage* on your left. You are now on an easy pleasant path running beside a very long meadow on your left. After a while, the path becomes quite sandy. After a long easy trek, you pass the entrance to Catteshall Farm on your left and the surface is now hard. As you pass the picturesque timbered *Springfield Farm*, you reach a right-hand curve by a little water cascade. Catteshall Manor, invisible up on the hill, is on your left. You reach a T-junction with a residential road, with the half-timbered *Old Cider House* on your right. *This was once the legendary Ram Cider House that sold over thirty types of cider before it fell victim to fashion and officialdom.*

If you do *not* want to make a short scenic excursion to the River Wey with opportunities for refreshment, do as follows. Turn **right** on the residential road, passing the *Old Cider House*. Where the road ends, keep ahead on a bridleway, gradually uphill. At a marker post, ignore a drive on your right and continue uphill, now a bit steeper. You reach a junction of several paths by a marker post. Take the **second path right**, which is signed with a blue arrow, avoiding the unmarked path sharp right. Now re-join the main walk at the start of Leg 3.

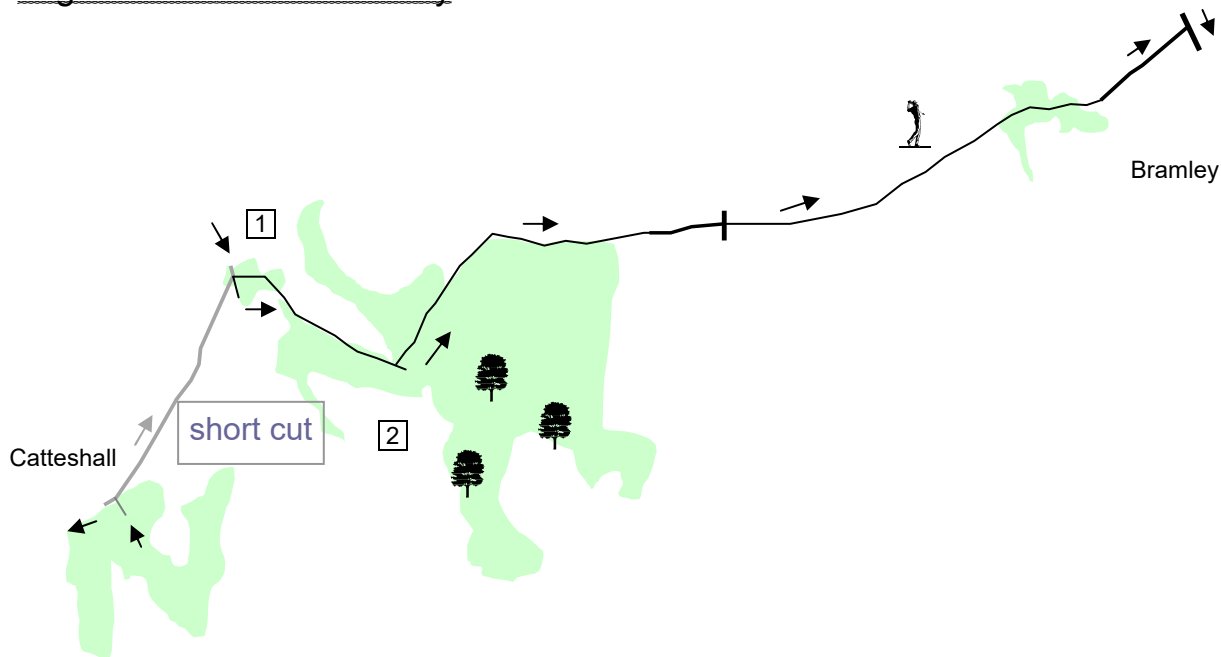


6 Turn **left** on the residential road and, in 100m, turn **right** into Catteshall Road. Go over a crossroads and avoid the cul-de-sac (Brock's Close) by keeping left to join the pavement by the main road. Continue over the Mill Stream, past the Mill Medical Practice, to a bridge across the River Wey next to Farncombe Boat House with Catteshall Lock on your left. *You have good views left across the watermeadows to Godalming (see the Godalming walk in this series). Hector's Bistro on the Wey is an extremely eccentric café in a dreamt-of location by the river; it is possibly closed early in the week.* Cross the bridge and turn **right**, through a metal gate and onto the towpath.

7 You will be enjoying the languid dabbling-ducks scene with multifarious canal barges for at least 500m where you come to the old Trowers footbridge (built around 1770 as an entrance to Unsted Park on the hill to your right). Your route is **right** over the footbridge. First, however, for refreshment, the *Manor Inn* is only 150m further along the towpath, a Beefeater pub with mixed reviews and a large garden backing onto the river. (As an alternative, by turning left away from the river and crossing the main road, you reach the *Broadwater Golf Club café* which is open daily and positively delights in welcoming non-golfers with more than just good coffee.) Having turned **right** over the bridge, follow the gently rising gravel track through water meadows. *Pushkin Place on your left, an area named after Russia's favourite writer, is a tribute to Peter The Great who stayed one night in Godalming.* In about 400m, ignore a fingerposted bridleway left and stay on the track as it passes Bunker Hill Farm, bends right and steepens uphill. You reach a junction of several paths by a marker post. Take the first path **left**, following a blue arrow.



Leg 3: Catteshall to Bramley 3 km=2 miles



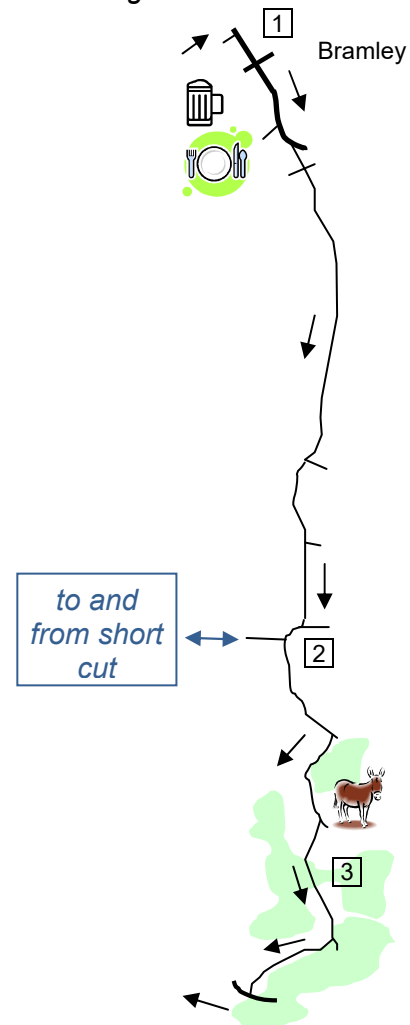
- 1 On your left now is steep-sided Bunker Hill as your path ascends between banks. Where the meadow on your left ends, you meet a post with a yellow badge showing the emblem of the Guildford circular walk, the *Fox Way*. Turn **left** here and keep straight on up, avoiding side paths, as you ascend Farley Hill.
- 2 Your route flattens out and runs between fencing and along the edge of a wood. It passes a house and continues on its drive to a road. Cross straight over the road to the **right** of a red post box and into the green space of Bramley Golf Club. *Because the path keeps to the side, sheltered by trees, and does not cross the links, it is quite gratifying to listen for the “tink” of the ball as a player launches it towards the hole, a good walk unspoilt.* Keep to the right-hand edge, soon avoiding a signed footpath off to the right and several other paths that would lead you away from the golf, including a signed footpath left. Finally the path descends between banks and discharges onto a driveway. Continue between properties along Clock House Lane. Note the helicopter weathervane. At a main road, the A281, turn **right** into Bramley.

Bramley, whose name means “clearing in the broom (bushes)”, was a comparatively large town in the Middle Ages and its manorial lands stretched to the Sussex border. There were two mills, on tributaries of the River Wey. Bramley had a station (with Wonersh) on the Guildford-Horsham railway before it was dismantled. Bramley church of the Holy Trinity is originally Norman but it was vastly changed and widened with an unusual screened-off chancel. Bramley boasts two pubs, the “Jolly Farmer” and the “Wheatsheaf”, both serving food and some real ales. There is also a café a little further down the High Street.



Leg 4: Bramley to Scotsland Farm 5 km=3 miles

- 1 Continue along the main road through the village. You go over a delicate stream, almost unnoticed, the same as the one that runs through Winkworth. Just after a car dealership and after the junction with Mill Lane, the footpath leaves the road and re-joins it. 30m further, just past a small green, take the signposted bridleway forking **right**, Woodrough Lane. Continue ahead on a residential road, cross over another road and take the bridleway opposite at a fingerpost. The steep-sided gully leads uphill. (If you find illegal timber across the path, this can simply be skirted round.) The bracken path runs beside a large horse pasture, over a track by a barn and between more pastures. At the other side, you walk beside some woodland on the left. You reach a white house *Daneshill*. Keep straight ahead here, avoiding side turns, on a short stretch of tarmac. Your path now follows a narrow finger of woodland between sheep pastures. It descends to meet a 3-arm fingerpost at a bend in a gravel path. Turn **right** on the path, shortly passing the building at *Upper Bonhurst*. The path continues between willow banks and comes to a T-junction at a fingerpost. Turn **right**, thus joining the Greensand Way (GW) and immediately coming to a second junction.



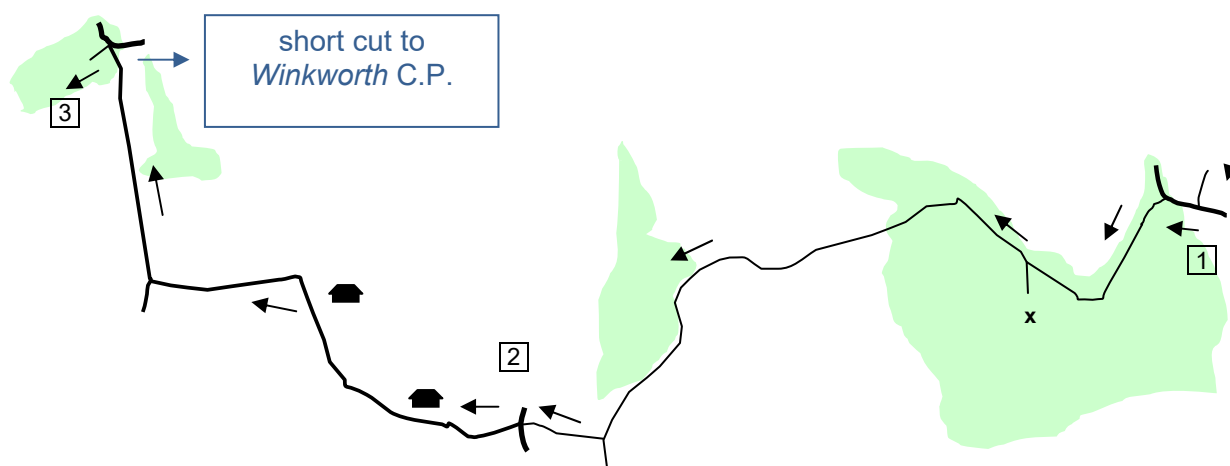
If you are doing the shorter **North Walk**, omitting Winkworth, skip to the end of this text and do the Thorncombe Street Traverse (West).

Turn **left**, ignoring a footpath on the right, thus regaining your original direction.

The Thorncombe Street Traverse (East) re-joins the main route at this point.

- 2 The path becomes a wide farm track. After Keepers Cottage (which does B&B) the track becomes even wider and leads you into the hamlet of Gatestreet Farm. *Gate Street Barn, just ahead, has been converted into a wedding venue.* At the corner of the building, at a fingerpost, turn **right**, still on the GW, going through a wooden gate beside a cattle grid. Follow the track past a piggery and through two small wooden gates. The track bends left, goes through a large wooden gate and passes a low barn, going over another cattle grid. The small meadow on the left is used by donkeys. When, after 50m, you reach a large wooden gate into the donkey meadow, look to your right for a marker post. Go diagonally **right** here up the left-hand side of the meadow, soon passing a green painted wooden hut. Continue ahead on the clear path to a small wooden gate visible on the other side. The path crosses a gravel drive and descends a grassy slope to a bend in a track. Turn **right** and follow the track uphill through wooden gates and up into a meadow. Keep straight ahead across the centre of the meadow on a clear grassy track. *The land belongs to the Wintershall Estate and the open-air theatre on your left is used by them to stage Christian dramatic productions.*
- 3 About 20m before a metal gate ahead, veer **left** through a wooden swing-gate down into the woods. The path runs just inside a wood which was obviously once an old coppice with, on your right, a sheep field. The path goes between two posts. The narrow path runs through very dense bracken near a wire fence on your right and eventually comes down to a lane. On your left is the exquisite *Scotsland Farm*, complete with converted barn and willows. However, your route is **right** on the lane.

Leg 5: Scotsland Farm to Hydon's Ball Car Park 4 km=2½ miles



- 1 In 30m, leave the lane by forking **left** on a signposted bridleway. The path runs under trees and bends right, avoiding a path on the left by a new marker post, on a deep sunken path with pines on the left. The path climbs gently and, as it levels out, you come to a post with arrows where the GW

bends away to the left. **Leave** the GW here by turning **right**. The path bends immediately left down into woods, gradually descending. It reaches the corner of a pleasing patchwork of horse meadows and runs along the right-hand side of them. The path runs past Langhurst Farm on your right with its beautiful converted barn. Eventually, after a long meadowside walk, you arrive at a three-way junction by two metal and two wooden gates and an old shack. Veer **right** here. You soon pass a large metal gate to reach a road.

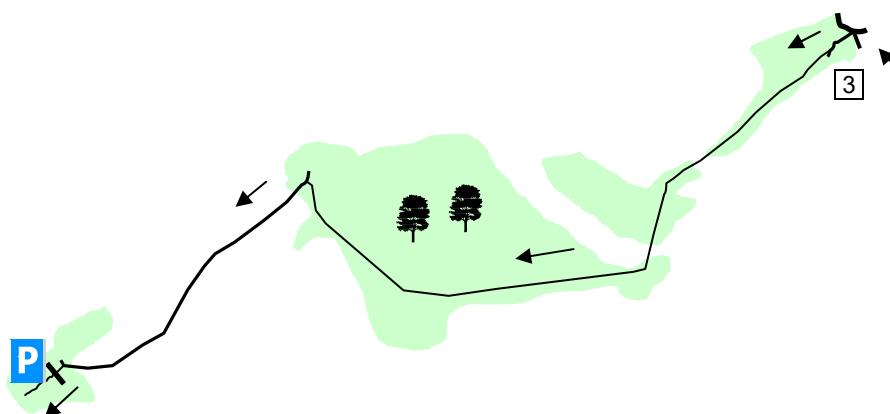
- 2 Cross carefully straight over the road to a bridleway opposite. Go past *Elm Cottage* and continue uphill on a gravel path with pines and a garden on your left. At the top, you pass *High Winkworth* and some other rather grand houses and your lane bends left. You arrive at a T-junction with another tarmac drive. Turn **right** on the drive. A long straight stretch with tall pines leads to the main road.

Decision point. If you parked at Winkworth Arboretum and you want to return there directly, whilst swapping a beautiful stretch of woodland for a short stretch of busy road, do as follows. Turn **right** carefully on the main road. In 120m, where the road starts to descend, immediately before the entrance to *Eden House*, turn **left** on a narrow signposted footpath between fences. After some distance between more fences, you arrive back at the car park.

- 3 Do not cross the main road but turn sharp **left** almost looping back. This drive leads to houses (*The Old Dairy* and *High Barn*) just before which your route veers **right** on a darker signposted straight path. Stay on the path as it curves round a lovely valley and rises again. The path gradually drops to the bottom of a wooded valley, after about 1km total. Ignore a narrow path on your left and continue until you meet a very wide gravel path at a bend.

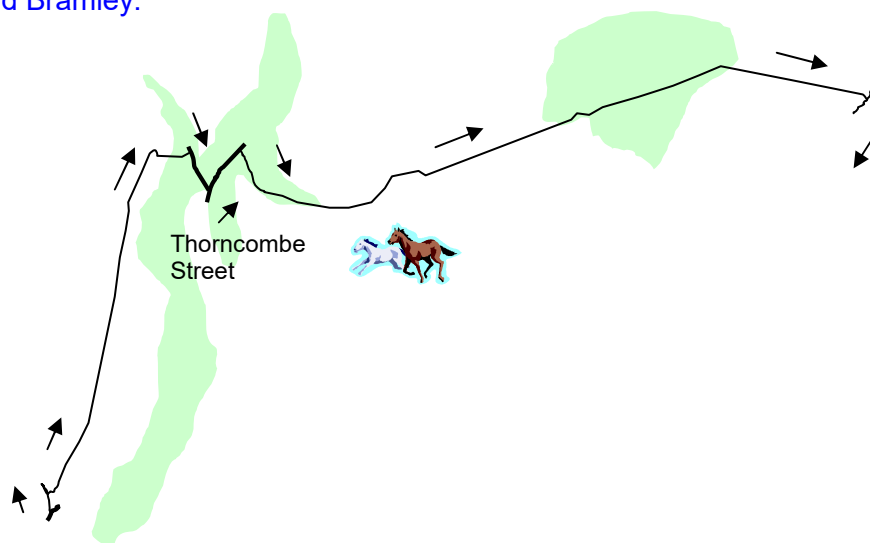
If you did **not** begin the walk at Hydon's Ball car park, turn **right** here and resume the walk from Leg 1 section 1 line 11, after the words "veer **left** on the main path. Otherwise ...

Turn sharp **left** on the wide gravel path. This is the path you took on the outward route. It leads gently up the beautiful shallow valley. As the path bends right at the top, turn **left** at a post with a yellow arrow to a road. Cross the road to a narrow unmarked path opposite. This path quickly leads you back to the Hydon's Ball car park where the walk began.



The Thorncombe Street Traverse (East) 1½ km=1 miles

Take this short cut if you have decided to do only the **South Walk**, omitting Catteshall and Bramley.



Go **left** at the signpost up the driveway of *Phillimore Cottage* and immediately turn very sharp **right** and up four steps by a wooden shed onto a path that runs along the right-hand side of a meadow. You pass some converted farm buildings on your right. At the corner, go through a farm gate and continue similarly along another larger meadow. In the far corner, go past a redundant stile and follow the path between wire fences. The path veers right past a wooden gate and down a dirt track to a lane. Turn **right** on the lane and over a stream to a T-junction in the hamlet of Thorncombe Street.



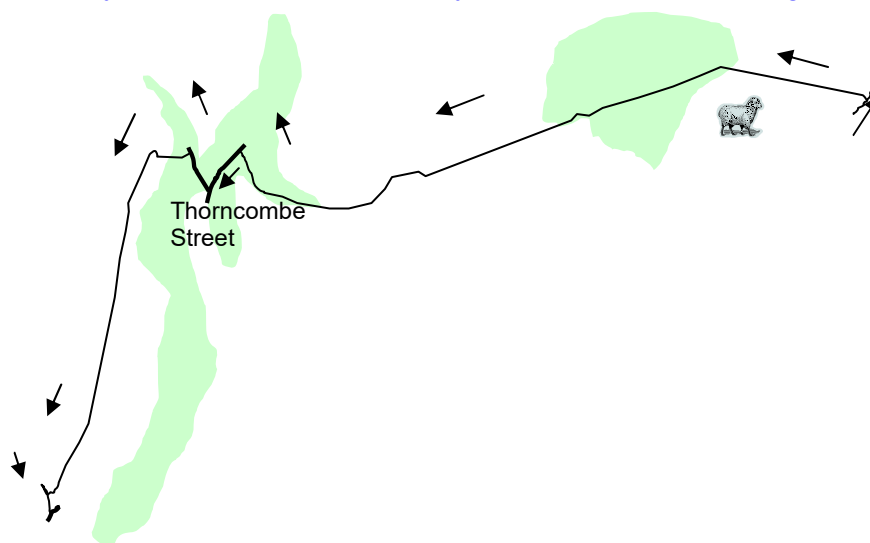
Turn **left** at the T-junction, passing the little wooden village hall (which doubles as a beehive). On your left is a dirt strip with enough room for several cars. 5m further, turn **right** on a signposted track. In around 75m take a path **left** (25m before a large metal gate) which runs up through rough shrubbery, under trees, up over roots, bypassing two horse pastures on your right. At the top, join a level path between fences and later a holly hedge. There are fine views behind to the village and the Arboretum and Hydon Heath. The path now goes over a stile and into woodland, veering a fraction right under young oaks and along the right-hand edge of the wood. It then takes you past a disused stile and across the centre of a large pasture (in 2021 enclosed by new fencing with planting for a new mixed hedgerow). You have fine views ahead to Pitch Hill and the line of the North Downs in the distance. At the other side, at a junction by a finger-post, turn sharp **right** on a path. This is part of the Greensand Way (GW).



Now resume the main walk from Leg 4 section [2](#).

The Thorncombe Street Traverse (West) 1½ km=1 miles

Take this short cut if you have decided to do only the **North Walk**, omitting Winkworth.



At the second junction just after joining the GW, turn **right**, thus leaving the GW and go over a stile into a large green pasture. Veering a fraction left, go up the centre of the pasture on a faint rising path (in 2021 enclosed by new fencing with extra stiles and planting for a new mixed hedgerow). Head for a stile visible on the edge of the wood, 200m or so away. Go over the stile, up two steps into the wood and take a path along the left-hand side of the wood, gently rising, to meet a gate and an avoidable stile.



Continue on the path with a tight holly hedge and then on a level path between fences, soon with terrific views. Go down four steps, keeping right, down a steep very knobbly path under hollies. Your sunken path eventually goes past two redundant stiles and continues downhill through bracken with horse pastures to your left. The path gets wider and comes down to meet a road in the hamlet of Thorncombe Street. Turn **left** on the road. On your right is a dirt strip with enough room for several cars. The little derelict village hall doubles as a beehive.



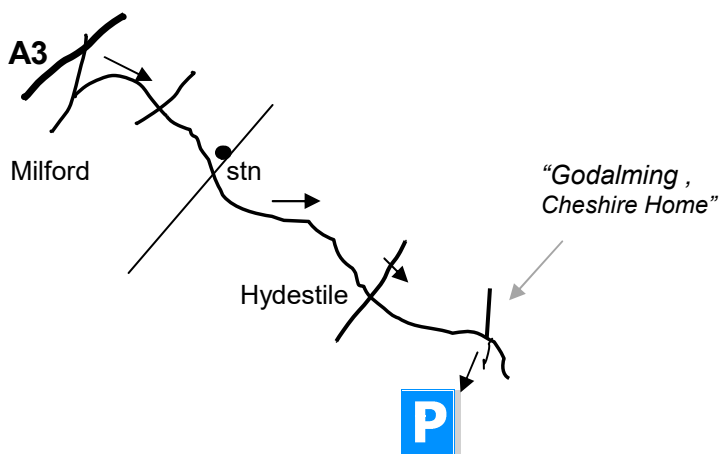
At a road junction, turn sharp **right**, going over a stream. In 10m, turn **left** on a dirt track. At the end, turn **left** onto a narrow path which runs beside a fence alongside a large sheep pasture on your right. Your path runs under a clump of trees and continues alongside another large meadow of wild grass, soon with gardens on your left. In the far corner, to continue the North Walk to Catteshall, turn **right** on an unofficial path. (In case you have finished the North Walk and are making your own way back to Winkworth or Hydon's Ball, ignore the unofficial path and continue ahead to the road at *Phillimore Cottage*.) Walk along the far edge of the meadow. In 100m you will see a wooden swing-gate on your left. Ignore the gate and continue ahead along the edge of the meadow. (* In case you need to use the official path for any reason, stay on the footpath by keeping straight on in the corner, down steps to the garden of *Phillimore Cottage*, turning **right** on a tarmac drive, passing close to the cottage on your right, on a grassy path, **right** through a wooden swing-gate and **left** in a meadow.)

Now resume the main walk from Leg 2 section 4.

Getting there

By car: The **Hydon's Ball car park** is near a junction on Salt Lane near Hydestile, Surrey. To get there: take the A3 through Guildford and later turn off for Milford. At the first traffic lights in Milford, turn sharp **left**. Along this road on your left is Secretts, a huge farm shop which sells an astonishing range of delicacies as well as organic produce. At the mini-roundabout turn **right** and then immediately **left** signposted *Milford Station* and *Hydestile*. Continue on this road for 1½ miles ignoring all turnings off. Cross a major road at Hydestile and continue for just over a mile. Immediately after a junction on the left marked *Godalming, Cheshire Home*, turn **right** by a National Trust sign on a dirt track leading to the car park.

Or, for the **Winkworth Arboretum car park**, instead of turning right as above, continue straight on. At a fork, you have a choice, but it's best to **avoid** the left fork which is an extremely narrow lane. At the end turn **left** on the major road. The car park is later on your **right**. Note: this car park does not open till **10 am**.



Farncombe is near Godalming. Catteshall Road is a junction at traffic lights off the A3100 road (Meadow), opposite the *Leathern Bottle* pub. Follow the road over the River Wey, past the mill into Catteshall and park in a side road.

By train: begin at **Farncombe Station** (regular service from Waterloo or Guildford). Come out at the quieter southeast side. Walk down the approach lane to Summers Road. Turn **right** and shortly second **left** on St Johns St. Just after the church, turn **left** on a narrow passageway. Follow it, crossing over Fern Road, all the way to Meadow (the A3100). Turn **right** and immediately **left** on Catteshall Road. It leads in 200m to the bridge over the River Wey. Before the bridge, turn **left** on the towpath and start the walk at Leg 2 section 6.

By train and bus: bus Arriva 63 from Guildford to Bramley. Bus 42 or 72 from Godalming to Farncombe Lock. Check the timetables.

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