



Fernhurst: Little Circuit

Distance: 4¾ km=3 miles

easy walking

Region: West Sussex

Date written: 27-jul-2020

Author: Hautboy

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Refreshments: Fernhurst

Map: Explorer 133 (Haslemere) *but the maps in this guide should be sufficient*

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

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Village, tree garden, woodland, millpond, green meadows

In Brief

This walk was originally intended as the “shorter” option of the 9-mile Fernhurst Great Circuit. But, at only three miles, this walk is a mere “baby”, and quite relaxing, so it could be done by a more casual rambler – maybe a family with children or a couple heading for the pub or the cricket. So the author decided to calve it off as a separate walk in its own right.



The *Red Lion* is a Fullers pub and is frequented by walkers and by villagers. The tables at the front embellish the Green with their colourful umbrellas and provide a delightful spot from where to watch village life go by. There is a garden at the back with a barbecue area. The pub is open all day every day but - note - food is not served between 3pm and 6pm. For enquiries, ring 01428-643112.

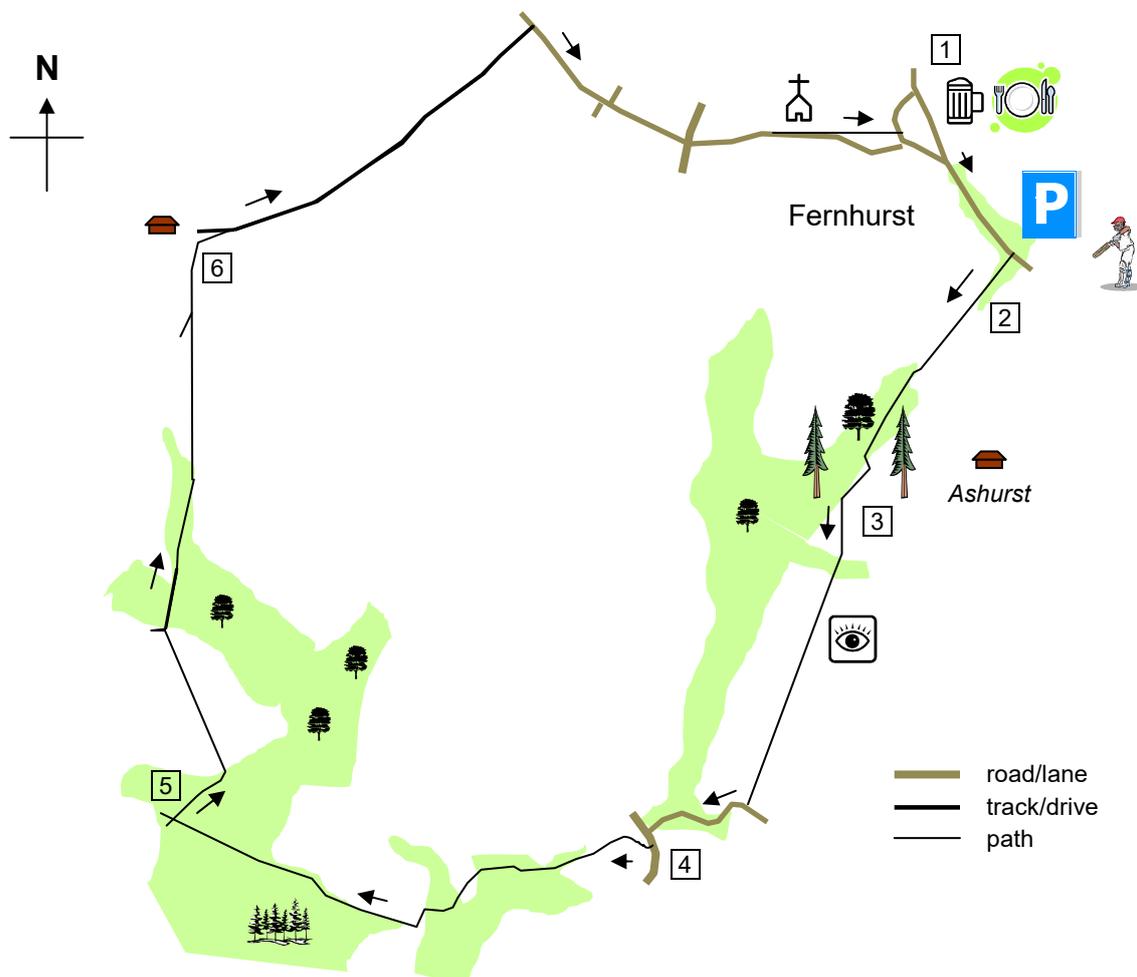


There are no nettles and very little undergrowth on this walk, so long trousers are not essential. All the paths are well-made and, in the drier half of the year when this walk is best, trainers or walking shoes should be fine. In very wet conditions, boots are necessary. (In winter 2024, there were several areas where forestry work was in progress.) Your dog can come with you on this adventure.

The walk begins at the village car park in Fernhurst, West Sussex, next to the pavilion and cricket green, www.w3w.co/passenger.learns.rotation, postcode **GU27 3HY**. For more details, see at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).

The Walk

A detailed history of Fernhurst will be found in the longer walk in this series: "Fernhurst and the Temple of the Winds".



- 1 With the pub on your left, walk along the road, passing the car park and the cricket green on your left, signposted to the three "L"s (*Lickfold, Lurgashall, Lodsworth*). Just after the green, it's best *not* to take the narrow tarmac footway on the left because it leads off into the bushes. Just 10m before the corner of a garden on your left with a sign for *The Bottom*, look right for a footpath (the signpost is set back from the road). Turn **right** on this narrow path. It leads you under low trees and shortly you are walking beside a sheep meadow on your right, in a more open landscape between fences.
- 2 Next, one of the most sublime parts of this walk, is the great tree garden of *Ashurst*. Tall oak and ash trees rise skywards whilst on your right is a lake with a willow and more trees of different kinds. [Feb 2024: trees were being felled, with a sign saying that damage to the paths will be rectified.] The blessing of this path is that it runs through the centre of the garden whilst the owners of *Ashurst* have to cross a small wooden bridge to reach the lake. Your path continues high above the woodland on your right and leads over a stile onto a grassy hillside.
- 3 Take a path that forks **left** away from the edge of the wood, across the centre of the grass. After a stile you come down through hollies to another stile into a wide pasture with views ahead including, to your left, the relay



mast at Bexleyhill. Avoid faint paths left and right and go straight down, heading for a 4-way fingerpost. Here, go over a stile and straight ahead on a path between wire fences. At the end, go over a stile (or duck under a bar) and turn **right** on a tarmac lane. The lane curls downhill under trees and reaches the main road.

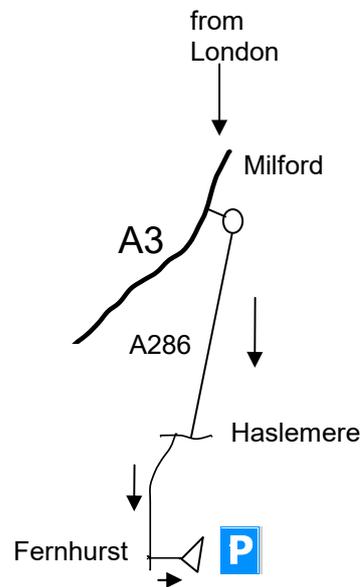
- 4 Carefully cross straight over the main road, about 20m to the left, and go through a large wooden gate by opening the latch. A wide grass path leads to the little millpond, an unknown gem. *This millpond, complete with millrace on your left, was recently cleared. The watermill itself is long vanished, having stood where the trees are now. The mill was served by a stream which was channelled some distance round the hillside ahead to your left.* Continue on a winding course between a sheep field and a stream on your right. You emerge through a large metal gate onto a woodland path. Another metal gate leads into a horse pasture. *The horses are usually in residence and keen to meet you: if you prefer, you can simply ignore them: do not feed them!* The path forks here; ignore the right fork which curves away along the length of the pasture, and follow the **left** fork across the width of the pasture to a metal gate in the corner opposite. At the top of a slope, turn **left** in front of a metal gate and **right** at the corner. On your left is a silver birch wood and, on your right, a large wild meadow. Your path now leads you between plantations of spruce and over a flat bridge to a junction of four paths.

[This is the point where the Fernhurst Great Circuit splits off. If you would like another seven miles of similar enjoyment, remember, you chose the Little Circuit !](#)

- 5 Turn **right** at the junction on a wide footpath through the ferny wood. In 60m, the path goes over a 2-plank bridge-with-rail, then another similarly, and rises to a little gate leading into a large meadow. Take a path across the centre. At the other side, go through a large metal gate (or over the adjoining stile) and keep **right** downhill on a wide woodland track. The track goes over a stream and is joined later from the right by a grassy farm track. You come out into the open to run along the right-hand side of a long meadow, heading for the red roofs of Hawksfold Farm. Keep straight on to the far corner where you meet another footpath coming from the left, passing a 3-way fingerpost.
- 6 Your path is now an enclosed path which soon leads through a small wooden gate and joins the drive coming from Hawksfold Farm. Follow the drive, going through the smaller of two wooden gates, 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 and the *Red Lion* where the walk began.

Getting there

By car: (see drawing), to get to **Fernhurst, West Sussex**, take the A286 road from Haslemere, following signs to Midhurst. On reaching Fernhurst, turn **left** up 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*.



By bus and train: no. 70 from Haslemere to Fernhurst (**not Sunday**).

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