



Kirdford: *The Foresters Arms* (pub walk)

Distance: 5¼ km=3¼ miles

easy walking

Region: West Sussex

Date written: 14-nov-2011

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Last update: 31-jul-2020

Refreshments: *The Foresters Arms, The Half Moon*

Map: 134 (Horsham) *but the map in this guide should be sufficient*

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

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Woods, meadows, village, historic pub

In Brief



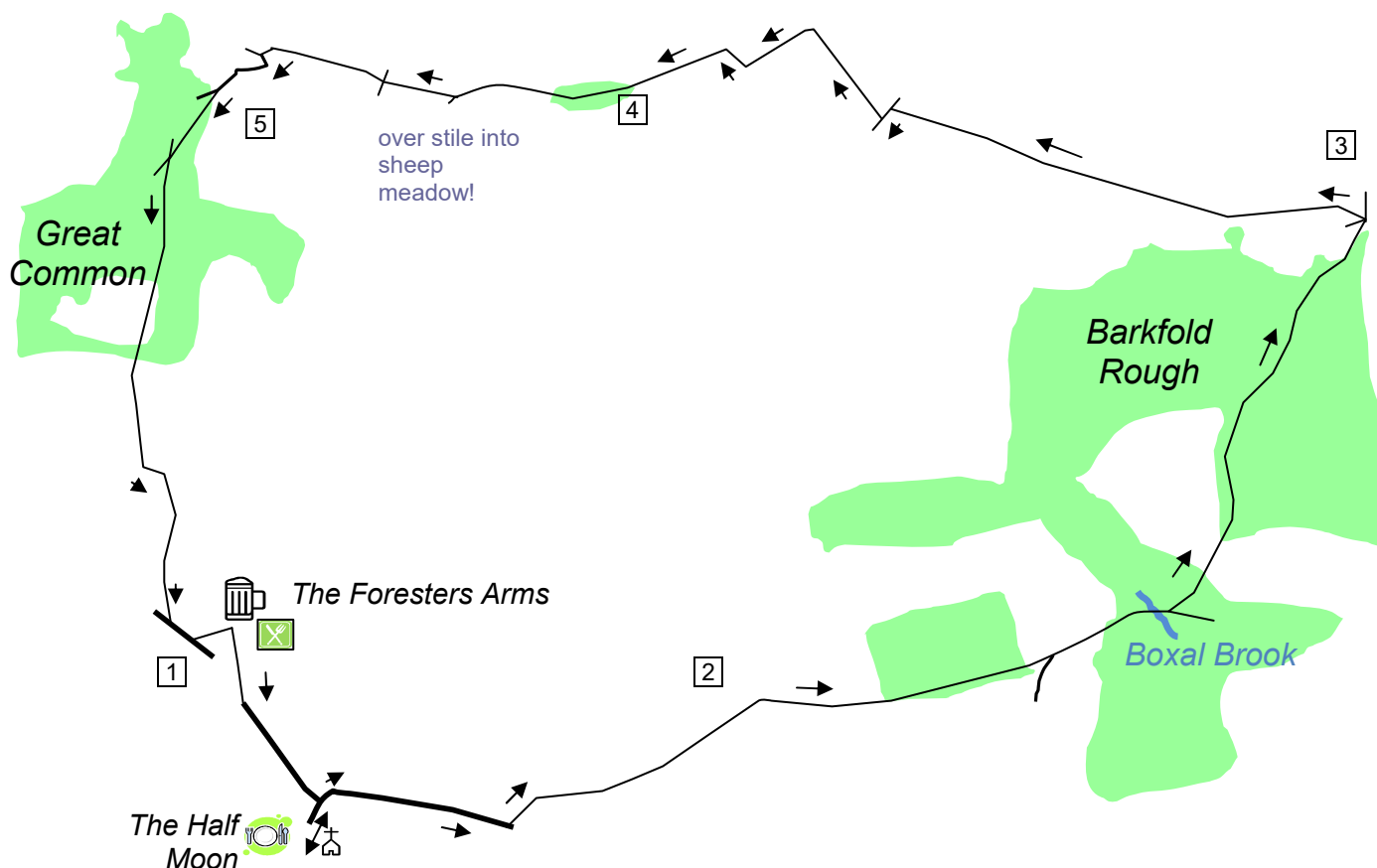
If the *Foresters Arms* wasn't a pub, you would probably want to visit it anyway, since it's one of the many lovely listed buildings in this part of Sussex. This is certainly the liveliest place around, attracting the thirty-somethings, but this is such a very quiet village (Kirdford) that steak and kidney pudding on Saturday night is billed as an "event". Inside and outside are cosy (the garden sometimes has petanque) and there's a cubbyhole outside by the side door which even has a winter heater. Beer is H&W and since this brewer awarded the pub "best of 2010" we can assume they keep the beer in good condition. There's a regular chef, so food should be freshly-prepared.



The walk takes you through forest, over streams and through fields. The grassy meadows at the start are wonderful underfoot, but later you may encounter high brambles and for this reason bare arms and legs may not be comfortable. Your dog is welcome too of course.

The walk begins in the village of Kirdford, **postcode RH14 0ND**, **what3words ///wooden.dolly.piper**, by the pub. Since you'll be en route for a couple of hours, it's best to park on the roadside rather than in the pub car park. For more details, see at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).

The Walk



- 1 With your back to the pub, turn left across the green and join the road. You soon pass, on your left, the village hall and an irrelevant concealed footpath to reach a T-junction. This is the oldest part of Kirdford. Directly in front is the village plaque showing the story of Kirdford. Opposite on the right is the church of St John the Baptist. On this side, on the right, is the Half Moon.

Kirdford has come a long way name-wise. Whether it came from a man "Cynered" or a woman "Cynedryð" (the hard "d"s are pronounced like "th") is uncertain but whoever named it also had to ford the stream, now called the River Kird. The church of St John the Baptist was built around 1100 and its great tower and vast indoor space shows the importance of this village in medieval times. The Half Moon is now also a restaurant offering quite an imaginative menu at not-too-outrageous prices.



Turn **left** on the road. In 250m, turn **left** at the entrance to Boxall Stud, marked as a footpath. Go through a kissing-gate, built into the double gate and follow the drive between the superb stable buildings and ahead down a concrete avenue of oaks. At the first corner, fork **right** as indicated by a marker post.

- 2 Your path runs between fences, over a stile (bypassable by stepping over a low fence) and into the woodland of Boxall Copse, an ancient site of iron mining. After around 250m you pass what's left of some wattle fencing, followed by a farmhouse on your right. Cross straight over the concrete drive to a path running through woodland. Follow the path downhill and across a bridge by a wide section of Boxal Brook. Immediately, at a 3-way signpost,

turn **left** on a path running between meadows. Veer **left** under wires on a path through the dense woodland of Barkfold Rough.

- 3 The path rises next to a house, *Chandlers Barn*. Immediately, at a 4-way fingerpost, turn **left** on a path between fields. You have fine views ahead. *The distinctive long hill in the distance is Blackdown, the highest in Sussex.* At the end of the shingle path, veer **right**, as indicated, on a splendid grassy path between wire fences. Your path zigzags right-left and goes across the centre of a crop field. On your right is the historic *Fountains Farm*. On meeting a crossing track, go **left** and quickly **right** on a footpath along the right-hand side of a field. At the corner, turn **left** along the far side of the field. This path takes you to the edge of another field. Go **right** and **left** at the corner of the field.
- 4 As the edge of the field curves left, fork **right** at a fingerpost [2020: gone - don't miss this turn!] into woodland. Go down steps, over a long bridge across the Boxal Brook and up steps again. This is a pleasant area with small green pastures on each side. Your path zigzags, then goes through a metal gate [Jun 2020: gone?] and along beside a sheep pasture. About 2/3 of the way along turn **right** through a metal kissing-gate and take a left diagonal path across the meadow to a metal kissing-gate on the other side. Opposite the kissing-gate, go straight ahead at a 4-way signpost [Jun 2020: hidden and fallen over in the bushes] and over another stile. Your path goes along the left-hand side of a meadow, through a metal gate, along the next meadow for only 30m, then **left** over a 2-plank bridge and (bypassable) stile to a 3-way fingerpost. Turn **left** at the fingerpost.
- 5 Your path immediately bends right and goes over a bridge into the Great Common at an intersection of driveways. Veer **right** on a drive and, in just 5m, turn **left** on a narrow path through hollies. Soon you come to an oblique crossing path at a fingerpost. Veer **left** here on a pleasant winding path over a stone bridge, under tall oaks. Pass a signpost and continue across a playing field. Keep straight ahead and take a path on the other side between concrete bollards. The stony path runs alongside a field and, at the end, turns left before some houses. Go over a bridge with nicely shaped rails and straight ahead at a signed junction. Go past a residential cul-de-sac and out to the road. Turn **left** to reach the pub.

Getting there

By car: Kirdford is signposted east from the A283 (Petworth) road south of Northchapel and north from the A272 road (from Billingshurst) at Wisborough Green.

By bus/train: bus 74 or 75 from Petworth station, not Sunday. Check the timetables.

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