



Graffham Village, Hills and Inns

Distance: 6¼ km=4 miles or 5½ km=3 miles

easy walking with some modest gradients

Region: West Sussex

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Refreshments: Graffham

Map: Explorer 121 (Arundel) *but the map in this guide should be sufficient*

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

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Church, hills, woodland trails, views, meadows, village, pubs

In Brief

Graffham is a delightful country village sitting snug under the steep South Downs. But, in contrast to the sister walk which takes you over the Downs, this walk takes you lengthwise along the slope of the Downs on a path which, apart from a few harmless ups and unders, is delightfully level. The remainder of the walk is across green fields to visit the village itself, with a choice of two pubs (or maybe both). The walk can be shortened to 3 miles by following the short cut to Woodcote. Within the text of Section 1 is a hidden spectacular one-mile walk.



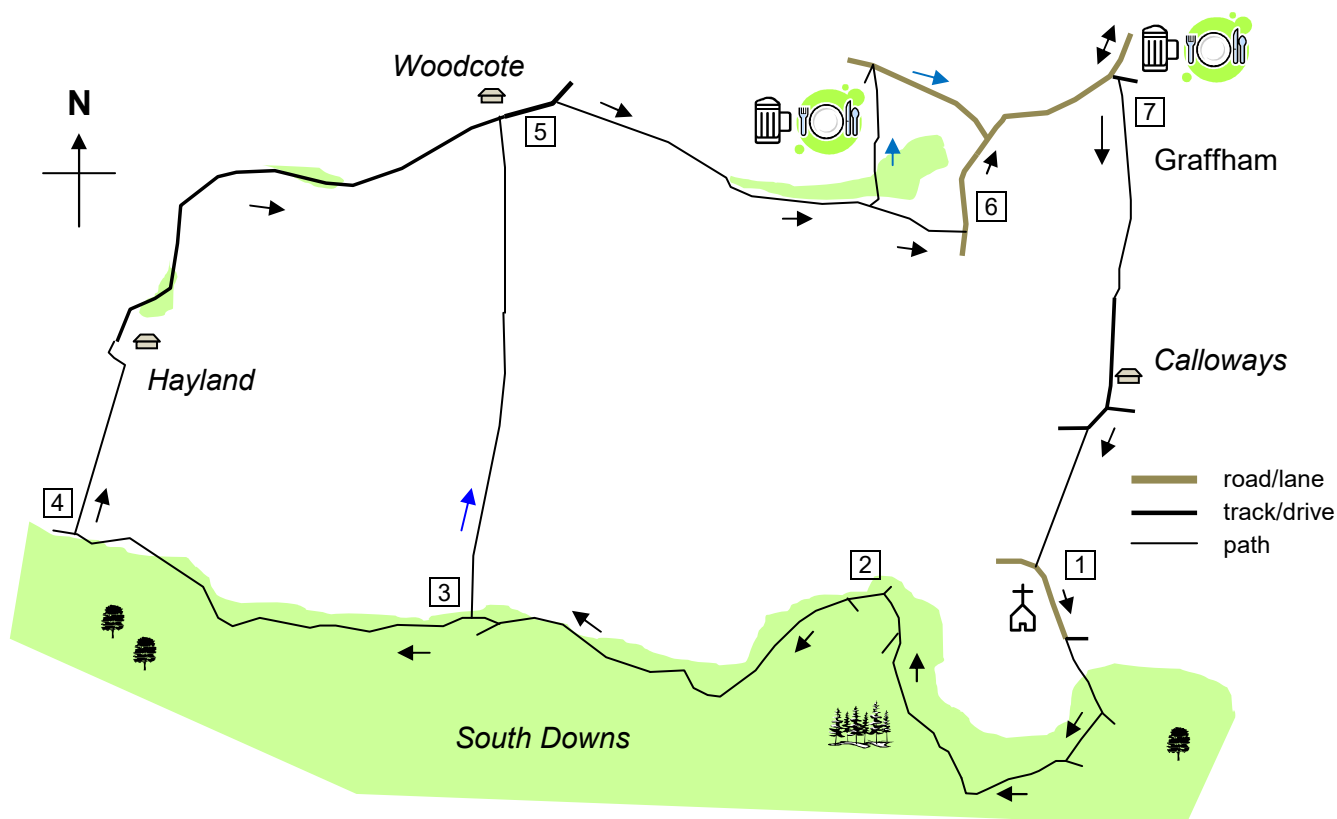
The *White Horse* is a serious pub/restaurant, welcoming visitors from afar, situated in a delightful cottage with a substantial garden. For enquiries, ring 01798-867331. The *Foresters Arms* is more of a local village pub, a friendly freehouse, and it “welcomes walkers”. It has been completely refitted, as shown on its whizzy website. It is often fully booked, but you can usually squeeze in. Food service is said to be pretty quick. The full menu, plus three roasts and other food, is well regarded. Beers are Long Man Brewery and Litlington East Susses, served in a beer garden. (Ring 01798-867386.) Both inns have accommodation in case you postpone your homeward journey.



There are no nettles worth the mention on this walk. Paths are wide tracks or tarmac, and green meadows, with no challenge to footwear, although boots are a better option, especially after rain. This walk would be ok for a small dog that can be lifted over some of the stiles.

The walk begins at St Giles Church, Graffham, West Sussex, just outside the centre of the village, www.w3w.co/carrots.regrowth.automatic, postcode **GU28 0NJ**. Park on the roadside near the church. For more details, see at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).

The Walk



1 With St Giles' church on your right and the junior school on your left, walk up the lane,. At the end of the tarmac, ignore the tall entrance gate to Seaford College on your left and stay beside the flint wall, keeping straight ahead on a dirt track. In 150m, turn **right** carefully up a long untidy flight of steps. Continue uphill on a narrow path, shortly reaching a marker post. Avoid the ascending path ahead and instead turn **right** here on a level path. This path runs through steep sloping woodland where you may often see deer. It soon descends and gradually rises over woodland debris, passing under wires. As you descend between high banks, about 700m from the flight of steps, you meet a footpath coming down through the pines from your left (a meeting of the sister walk *Graffham Down*). Continue down to a meet a crossing path at the bottom. Take the **second turning left**, passing an info tablet for *Graffham Down Reserves*. (The sister walk *Graffham Down* turns **right** here and **right** on the lane, back to the church, providing a possible very satisfying one-mile walk.)

2 The track (designated as a byway) runs uphill and passes a junction with a track coming down from the left. ([The optional extension to the Graffham Down walk joins here.](#)) This area of ash trees is known as *Limekiln Bottom*, for clear historical reasons. The track swings right and left giving you a brief view of the fields and woodland beyond. In a further 400m, after you have passed two marker posts, you reach a junction with a crossing path, marked by a fingerpost followed by a flight of steps on your left. (As a guide, this is just before the byway curves left uphill.) Turn **right** at the fingerpost (*don't miss this turn!*). In only 50m or so, you meet a 3-way fingerpost. Here you have a choice.

Decision point. If you are doing the shorter 3-mile walk, skip forward to the section called **Woodcote Direct**. Otherwise ...

- 3 Ignore the fingerpost and keep straight on along the wide woodland byway. Your path descends and becomes narrow and grassy for a short stretch. [Jun 2023: several trees have fallen across the path making progress difficult for about 150m; you need to duck under or climb over or with care!] You meet a 3-way fingerpost where a footpath joins from the left. On your left is a small field. This area is called Golden Combe Bottom.

The “Three Bottoms” (Little Graffham, Combe, and Gadd’s) are deep clefts between the spurs of the Downs and they contain substantial prehistoric earthworks dating from the Middle Bronze Age, known as Cross Dykes. Built as shallow ditches running across the ridges, they probably served as markers of territory and later as cattle drovers’ routes. No one is sure.

Your track goes gradually uphill and then descends. Before the track begins to rise again, look for a marker post. (Some logs here are arranged as a makeshift stool, still there in 2023.) Leave the track by turning **right** here. Follow a narrow path through nettles, keeping **left** to go through a new metal gate into a horse pasture.

- 4 Go along the right-hand side of the pasture, heading for farm buildings, ignoring a fingerpost half-way down. Turn **left** in front of a large flint barn. Follow the arrows, turning **right** and quickly **right** again round the barn. [May 2022: some re-developments here and possible changes to the route – look for markers or a diversion.] Go through a wooden gate and then diagonally **left** across a yard between farm buildings (now converted as a country hideaway). Go out on the tarmac driveway, passing some great oaks and a line of Scots pines. *Graffham church, your starting point, is visible to the right.* You pass a fingerpost and the drive elbows right and right again under more great oaks, with a view of Baxters Copse on your left. (*The woods to your left are explored in the sister walk “Graffham and Lavington Common”.*) Finally you reach the big Woodcote Farm with its cottages and agricultural clutter. Ignore a junction on your right and continue past tumbledown buildings.

The **Woodcote Direct** shortcut joins the walk here.

- 5 Where the driveway elbows left, keep straight ahead on a signed new footpath between fields. You emerge through a wooden gate into a lovely meadow. Keep ahead, following a line of oaks on your right. Your path veers **right** to go over a stile and a bridge-with-rail. Go up steps, over a stile (squeezable by your dog at least) and up into a new meadow. Turn **left** along the edge. As you near some houses of Graffham Village, you will see a stile on your left under an electricity pole. *If you would like to take refreshment at the **White Horse** pub instead of the **Foresters Arms**, skip to the end of this text and do the **White Horse Trail**, otherwise...* Continue in the meadow, keeping **right** around the jutting edge of the house and garden. At the far side, go over a stile onto a tarmac lane.

- 6 Turn **left** on the lane and follow it round to the right, ignoring a junction on the left. *The **White Horse Trail** re-joins the walk here.* You pass a small memorial garden on your right, followed by a tarmac drive. Your route leaves the road here, but first, just 50m further up the road, you will find the *Foresters Arms*.



- 7 After your break, retrace your steps and turn **left** on the drive (that is, **right**, if you didn't visit the *Foresters*). But immediately **leave** the drive by turning **right** between posts into a meadow. Take a faint path along the centre. At the far side, go through a gap and take a wonderful grass strip under oaks,

with a sheep pasture on your right. Go through the smaller of two wooden gates and follow the track through some farm buildings which have grown into a hamlet of Calloways. At a 4-way fingerpost, keep ahead and, where the drive divides, take the **left** fork. The drive ends at the Junior School and a small white wooden gate taking you onto the lane opposite St Giles Church where the walk began.

Woodcote Direct

Take this route if you are doing the shorter 3-mile walk.

Turn **right** at the fingerpost, go down a bank and over a stile into a sheep meadow. Go straight down the grass, over a second stile and down the left-hand side of a crop field. In the corner, go over a new fancy stile. Turn **right** on a bridleway for only 3m, then turn **left** and go over yet another stile and along the right-hand side of a meadow. At the bottom, go over a stile in the corner by a 4-way fingerpost and keep your direction, via a large metal gate, onto a concrete track, heading for farm buildings. The track ends at an untidy collection of farm huts and contraptions and a T-junction. Turn **right** on a driveway.

Now re-join the main walk at section 5.

White Horse Trail

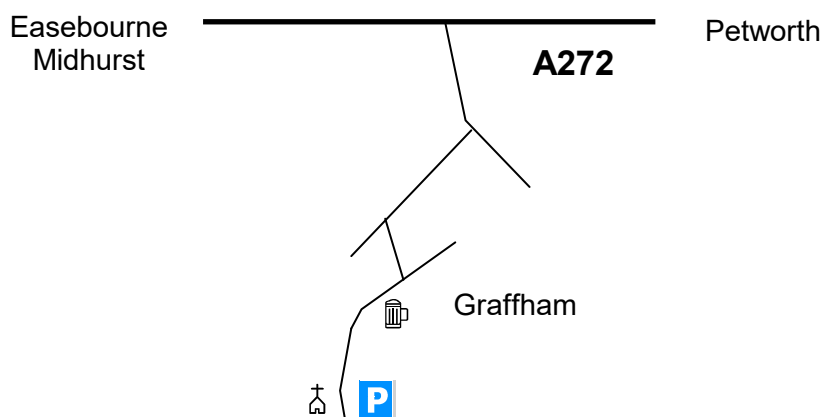
Take this route if you are lunching at the *White Horse* instead of the *Foresters*.

Turn **left** over the stile under the electricity pole. Your path takes you over a 2-plank bridge, down steps, over a 2-plank bridge-with-rails, over another bridge (*care! wobbly rail*) into a small meadow. Cross the meadow to a large metal gate (the bridge and stile here were taped off) into a pasture. Walk up the left-hand side, passing the pub entrance, going over a stile out to the road, turning sharp **left** into the pub. After refreshment, turn **right** on the road and, at a T-junction, turn left, re-joining the walk in Section 7.



Getting there

By car: Graffham is easily accessed from the main A272 (Midhurst-Petworth) road. Graffham is signposted 3 miles east of Midhurst or 3 miles west of Petworth. Follow the little road signs. Continue through the village heading for the hills and the church. Park on the roadside near the church, leaving more leeway for church attendees on Sunday.



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