Fancy Free Walks

point your feet on a new path

Around Hascombe Hill

Distance: 4 km=2½ miles   easy walking

Region: Surrey   Date written: 7-mar-2009

Author: Schwebefuss   Date revised: 26-nov-2018

Refreshments: Hascombe   Last update: 21-apr-2022

Map: Explorer 134 (Crawley & Horsham)

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

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Wooded hills, village

In Brief

This is a glorious undemanding walk round a Surrey beauty spot with views in all directions. You can combine this walk with *Hascombe and Hydon's Ball* in a figure-of-eight.

The *White Horse* pub, the start and end point of this walk, is an original coaching inn, dating back to the 1500s. It is now part of the Young's pub chain. The *White Horse* has a large garden and a restaurant serving locally-sourced food, described as good value by walkers. Note that the pub is closed all day **Monday** and on other days doesn't open till **12 noon**. The bar is open every day. Food is also available every day, all day from midday at weekends. Unusually perhaps, the pub also offers coffee and afternoon tea and an imaginative selection of soft drinks. For enquiries, ring 01483-208258.

All the paths on this walk are wide and easy to follow, but you will benefit from wearing boots because many of the paths are shared with horses and tend to get churned up. Any kind of sensible clothing will be fine. It is a quite perfect walk for your dog too.

The walk begins at the car park opposite the **White Horse pub** in Hascombe, Surrey, **postcode GU8 4JA**. For more details and for alternative transport see at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).

Hascombe Hill was a hillfort, covering 6 acres=2.4 ha. Excavations indicate occupation around 100 BCE. The top of the fort was shored up to discourage invaders, with a 1½-meter-deep ditch around it. In more recent times, it became a naval semaphore station (compare Wisley in Surrey). The height of Hascombe Hill is just short of 200m.

The Walk

Hascombe
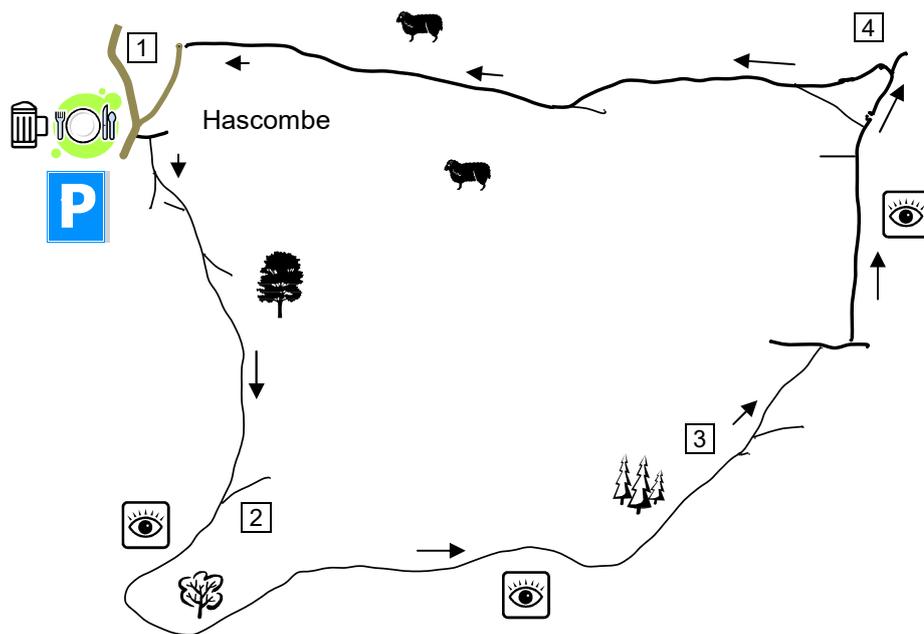
1 Cross the road and take the driveway on the **right** of the pub. In about 100m, turn **right** beside a garage built in the centre of a wide footpath, going over a (broken but easy) stile. (If this path is *very* muddy, it's possible to delay the right turn by going another 5m, scrambling up a bank and taking a high path above the main path.) In 100m, after a gentle ascent in a sunken path, veer **left** uphill. In 50m, you join a wider track coming in from the right. *In spring, bluebells are in evidence.* In another 150m or so, you pass a *Walkers Welcome* sign as your path continues uphill. 150m further, as the path begins to level out, you reach an open space with terrific views across to the Loxhill valley, the Hurtwood and Black Down. *The sculpture here, a stack of shaped logs where you can sit, is "Grains" by Tom Nicholson Smith.* Immediately after this, at a fork, stay on the main path which curves to the **right**, ignoring the forestry straight ahead. In 250m, at a junction, the main path bends to the left. **Leave** the main path here by passing to the **right** of a hollowed-out log seat. Only 20m later, turn abruptly **right**, slightly downhill, on a path which wheels left under tall pines and beeches.

2 This fine path meets a footpath coming up from the right [May 20: scrabbling through a large fallen tree]. For the next km, you will be walking on a level path, curving round the hill, with a steep drop on your right, Where the vegetation allows, you have more good views on your right. *On your left, beyond the steep banks, are the remains of a Celtic hill fortress.* In 200m, you pass a large fallen tree on your right. In a further 400m, curving round, you pass, on your left, a wide sandy bank with a large log serving as a seat and opposite, on the right, an opening in the trees with fine views to Dunsfold Aerodrome and the South Downs. Your path passes a huge fallen beech on your left. Soon you approach an area where trees have been felled. They extend for another ¾ km.

These trees are sweet chestnut and some larches, affected by chestnut blight. This devastating disease killed nearly all the chestnuts in North America and is affecting some areas of the UK, here in particular. This disease can be contained by felling. To prevent accidentally spreading the fungus, **it is vitally important to obey any signs you see and clean your feet on leaving the**

area (i.e. as you come down towards the gate). Keep to the path, avoiding any bark or brushwood.

In another 150m, you pass two tall perfectly conical cypresses your left, the second slightly thinner than the first. About 20m after them, your path forks **left** slightly uphill. (The right fork is only a forestry path.)

3 This pleasant path rises into a high area with holly and beech and passes by an old metal fence. The path begins to descend into a valley with open fields on the other side. After a wooden barrier, it meets a junction near the field. Turn **right** here on a sunken path for a short distance. At the top of a rise, at a crossing path, take the wide path **left** running up a ridge with the field visible on your left and steep woodland on your right. After 200m, there is a bank on your right and a coppice (trees cut down to the roots and allowed to regrow) on your left. Ignore a marked footpath left here. Shortly, at a major fork, keep **right**, ignoring the blue-arrowed path between posts on the left and continue along the edge of the hill to another junction of paths at the corner of the hill by a marker post. Turn sharp **left** here.

4 You are now on the return journey on the other side of Hascombe Hill. Continue on this broad track. Soon, on your right, a field comes into view and, 500m from the turn, you pass a junction with a branching bridleway and footpath. The path descends gradually, weaving left and right and follows a hedge and fence, eventually coming out to a road in Hascombe village. Continue ahead to the village pond where there are ducks and benches to sit on. This is a wonderfully peaceful spot. Hascombe church is Victorian. The road by the pond leads back to the *White Horse* where the walk began.

For final refreshments, the White Horse pub is the perfect place to chill out after the walk. See intro.
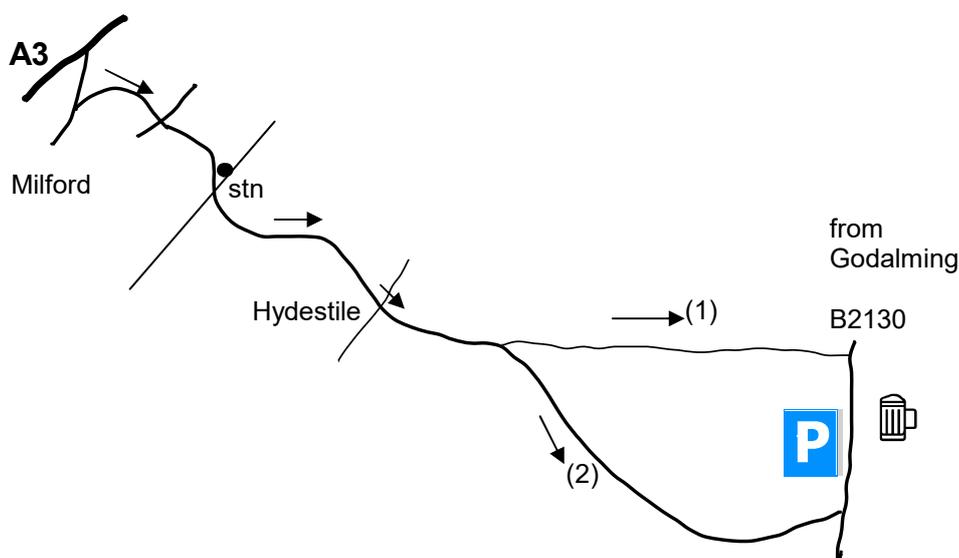
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Getting there

By car: The car park is the sandy area opposite the White Horse pub in Hascombe, 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. You ignore a turning left for Godalming and then pass some fine woods. After ½ mile, where the main road curves right, there is a house on the left called Mare Pond House. Here you have a choice:

(1) For the *adventurous* driver, fork left along a very narrow lane. As there are not many passing places you have to hope that you'll meet nothing coming the other way. Eventually you come out to the village of Hascombe. Turn right when you reach the main road. The White Horse is close by on the left and the car park is opposite it.

(2) For the *cautious* driver, stay on the main road ignoring the left fork. You eventually come to a T-junction at a main road where you turn left. The White Horse is about a 1½ miles on the right and the car park is opposite it.

By bus: Arriva bus 42 or 44 from Guildford or Godalming. Check the timetable.

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