Fancy Free Walks *point your feet on a new path*

Hindhead and Chiddingfold

Distance: 19 km=12 miles, or separately 8 and 11 km=5 and 7 miles
easy-to-moderate walking with a "sting in the tail"

Region: Surrey
Date written: 15-mar-2009

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Refreshments: Hindhead, Grayswood(?), Chiddingfold

Map: Explorer 133 (Haslemere & Petersfield)

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

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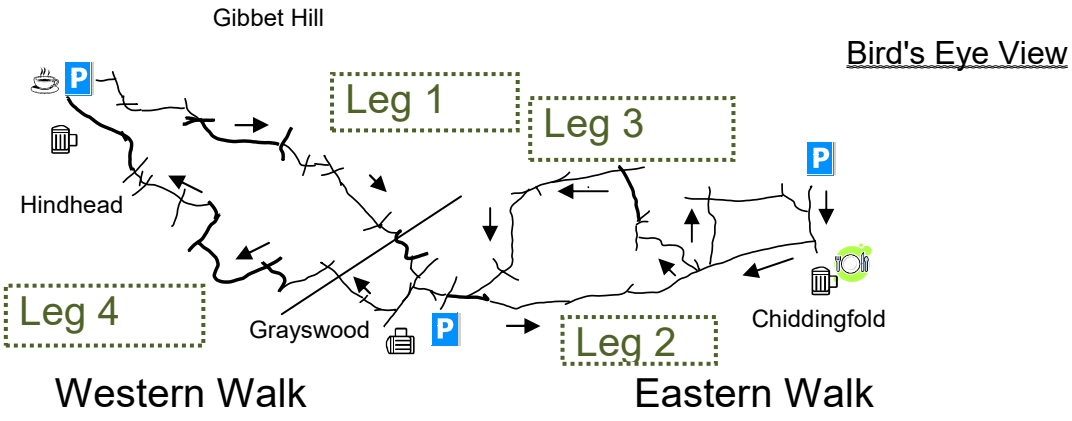
Wooded hills, lowland woodland, meadows, villages, variety

In Brief

This double-figure-of-eight walk goes from one of the best hills of Surrey to one of its best villages, through a variety of terrain. It can be split into two contrasting walks, one through the wooded hills and valleys of Hindhead Common and the other through lowland woods and over grassy meadows. Any good footwear is fine for the drier seasons but, after prolonged rain, there will be some muddy and slippery sections, making good boots essential. There are hardly any nettles, so shorts are wearable. It seems mainly fine for your dog.



The **Full Walk** and the *separate* **Western Walk** start in the Punch Bowl car-park at Hindhead, just off the A3, w3w:lizards.cooked.totally, postcode **GU26 6AG** (small charge for non-NT members). The *separate* **Eastern Walk** starts in Grayswood, postcode **GU27 2DR**, or Chiddingfold. The *full-length* walk may also start in Chiddingfold, **postcode GU8 4TX**. For full details, see **Getting There** at the end of this text.

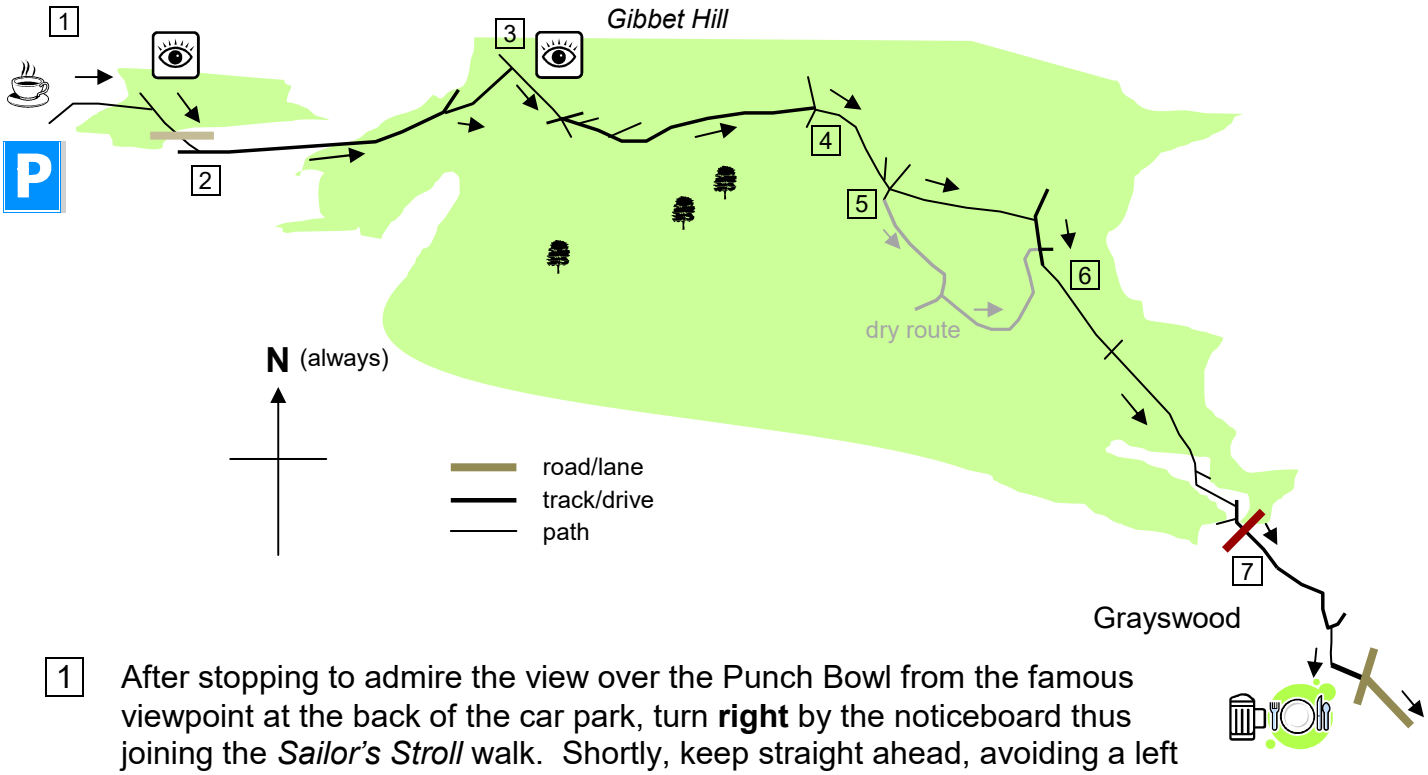
Aug 2026: there is a temporary closure on one of the bridleways used by this walk, but with an acceptable way around (Leg 2, end of Section 2).

This walk is also part of the **Hindhead-Alfold Monster**.

The Walk

Leg 1: Hindhead to Grayswood 4 km=2½ miles

This is the start of the **Full Walk** (Legs 1 - 4). For the shorter Western Walk, start here and do just Legs 1 and 4.



1 After stopping to admire the view over the Punch Bowl from the famous viewpoint at the back of the car park, turn **right** by the noticeboard thus joining the *Sailor's Stroll* walk. Shortly, keep straight ahead, avoiding a left fork and a wooden gate. Avoid a very wide rough crossing track (the old A3 road) and, 50m later, turn **left** on a surfaced trail, still on the *Sailor's Stroll*. You have great views left and soon pass the Sailor's Stone. *It commemorates the notorious murder of a sailor returning to his ship in Portsmouth. It was on Gibbet Hill that three men were hanged in 1786 for the crime. Charles Dickens even used this story in Nicholas Nickelby.*

2 After 400m on this trail, just before the track curves left, turn **right** on a wide track, still on the *Sailor's Stroll*, past a NT sign for Gibbet Hill. Veer **left** past a large metal gate, soon emerging onto the open space of Gibbet Hill with its Celtic cross and extensive views of the other Surrey Hills. *Not far from here is the entrance to the A3 Hindhead Tunnel which was completed in 2011.*

3 From the direction finder, turn **right** at the very edge of Gibbet Hill, following a sign for the *Hidden Hindhead Trail*, on a winding narrow path that descends for over 100m through pine trees, to reach a junction of many paths. Take the wide rising path directly ahead. In 20m, ignore a path branching left and later, where the path splits at a bank of tall trees, keep to the path on the **right**. This path has fine views to the left, where the foliage permits. The path passes on your left the octagonal foundation of the lost Temple of Four Winds, built by Viscount Pirrie, designer of the *Titanic*, in 1910 *(see the walk "Witley, Hambledon, Chiddingfold")*. Ignore a signed path right here, thereby leaving the

Hidden Hindhead Trail. 80m later you come down to a junction of wide paths under tall beeches.

4 Ignore the wide paths to the left and right and go straight ahead on a somewhat narrower path that curves right and descends steeply through a coppice. At the bottom, it joins a path coming from the left and immediately reaches the side of a broad valley and a junction of paths.

5 The main wide level path veers slightly right here to skirt the valley and there is a grassy path sharp left. **Ignore both** and take a much narrower path directly ahead, just to the right of a post with a yellow arrow (easily missed because of vegetation), through bracken. *(Skippy's dodge: if the narrow path is too wet or overgrown, turn **right** on the level path for 250m and then **left** at a post with blue arrows on a good path which curves left and in 350m meets the junction mentioned below; turn **right** and continue from the next section.)* This path winds through a marshy and botanically very rich and diverse area. If the ground is boggy, you can escape it through bracken on your right. The terrain *will* improve rapidly. The path widens and runs straight between coppices, reaching a forestry track. Turn **right** here. Shortly you come to a crossing of tracks: continue straight on.

6 The track quickly narrows, descending at first through a springy grassy area which can be soggy in any season. The path crosses a track and continues to descend through gorse. In good weather, this is a delightful straight path with only one or two patches of damp to be skipped over. Finally the path enters the trees of Tuder's Copse, goes over a bridge and approaches a house. It runs along the edge of the lawn to the left of the house and reaches the front drive. Cross over the drive and continue on a wide track ahead running to the right of an oak and an old garage. Keep **left** shortly at a yellow arrow. At a bend, turn **left** as directed by a yellow arrow. Where the track reaches a drive, turn **right** and stay on the drive bearing left to go under a railway arch.

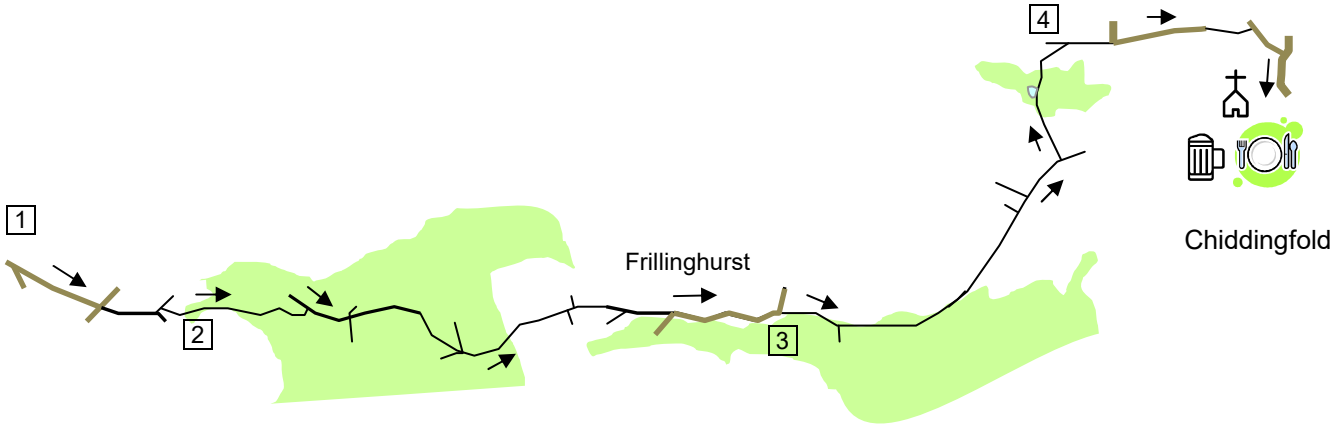
7 Follow this drive past properties, including the aptly-named Red Cottages with their herringbone bricks. Eventually the track reaches a bridge over a stream with a little footbridge to its left. Leave the track here where it bends left by taking a narrow unmarked path* directly ahead up a bank. This path goes up a steep step and leads up to a local road, Church Close, which in turn leads out to the main road at Grayswood. (*If the path is too overgrown and the laurel hedge too dense, you can instead keep left on the track and turn right on the main road.)

? ?? *The Wheatsheaf inn is close by on your right. It was closed for several years until 2024 but re-opened as a bar / restaurant. In 2025 it was closed again for 'personal reasons'. There is some hoping that it may be sold as a pub under new management.*

Decision point. If you are doing the short **Western Walk**, turn **right**, passing the *Wheatsheaf* and, 40m after the pub, turn **right** on an unnamed local road.

To continue on towards Chiddingfold, cross straight over to a minor road, Lower Road, beside the Green.

Leg 2: Grayswood to Chiddingfold 5½ km=3½ miles



1 Follow Lower Road beside the Green and, where the road forks beside the school on the left, take the main **left** fork. The road is lined on one side with small houses. It reaches a T-junction with another road, Clammer Hill. Go straight over the road onto a bridleway opposite. Follow the bridleway for a short distance past isolated properties, to before the point where the track bends to the right just by a water treatment station. Turn **left** here but, immediately after, ignore a footpath straight ahead and instead turn **right** on a narrow path that runs on the right-hand side of the meadow.

2 Continue over two wide footbridges and into woods. After these you will be following blue arrows. After 100m, at a post with a blue arrow, take the **left** fork, avoiding a path on the right over a bank. After another 100m, ignore a forestry path on the right by a fence post. After about 50m go over a wide bridge and about 50m further, when you come to a T-junction with a broad forestry track, turn **right**. After about 100m go over a forestry track. After 70m, fork **left**, as directed by an arrow on a post, onto a narrow parallel forest path which goes straight ahead through woodland. *Note the two trees with their painted staring eyes!* After about 250m you reach a marker-post at a T-junction with a wider path. Turn **right** here and immediately fork **left**. Continue for another 100m or so, ignoring a waymarked path on the right and one on the left beside a small wooden gate (now bypassable due to the broken wire fence), Shortly you join a minor lane with a house on your right, *Frillinghurst Old Manor*. Ignore a footpath on the right soon after *(see the "Chiddingfold-Northchapel" walk)*. This lane runs through the attractive hamlet of Frillinghurst. After about 400m, you join a lane coming in from the right and pass the delectable *Dell Farm House*. Ignore a footpath on the left shortly after. You reach a red tile-hung house *Furzefield* on your right with its sculpted hedge. 30m after it, take a bridleway* on the **right**. (Alternatively, if the legs are protesting and you do not want to visit Chiddingfold, you can stay on the lane and re-join the walk at Leg 3 section 3.) [* Aug 2026: the bridleway is marked closed by Surrey C.C., duration 6 months, but work is already underway to repair "broken banks". Till then, one remedy is to stay on the lane and take the next footpath on the right in 500m. This leads down to Mill Lane just past the intended point on the bridleway. (This footpath is in fact Leg 3, Section 2 taken in reverse.) Walkers with a map may find other alternatives.]

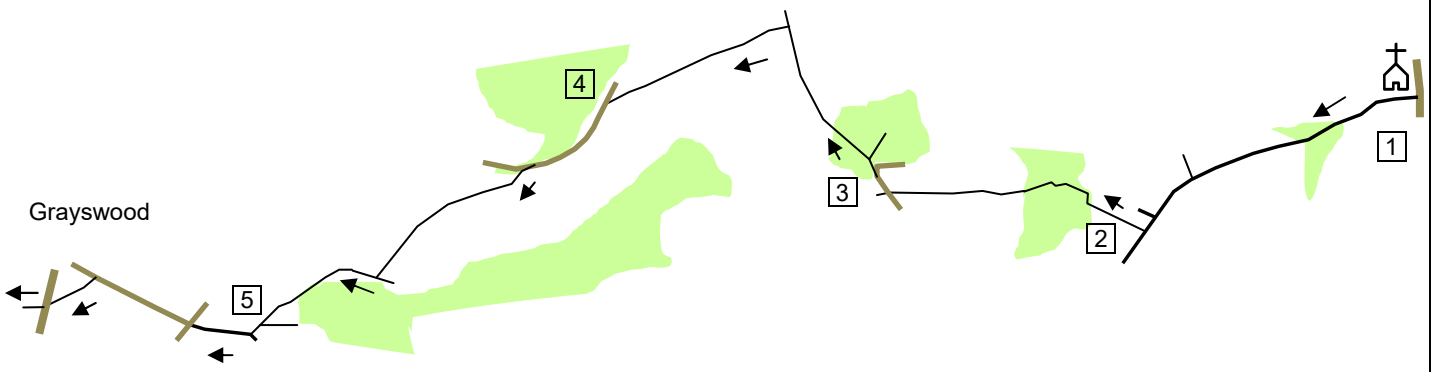
3 The path runs alongside a field and re-enters woodland. Ignore two footpaths on the right and continue for about ½ km through the wood to join a tarmac lane coming in from left from a house, *Hollyhurst*. This lane passes houses on both sides in the hamlet of Upper Sydenhurst. You pass a footpath on the left and another that points down a tarmac lane on the left. A little further on, you reach the redbrick pillars and elegant wooden gates

of *Sydenhurst House*, opposite a controversial new millionaire's mansion. Go **left** through the smaller gate onto the house's driveway. Where the driveway ends, keep left through a wooden gate ahead on a sunken footpath, passing through woodland. In about 50m, just after a marker post, you pass the edge of a pond on your left and your path rises gradually over tree roots through holly. It emerges via a stile onto an open hillside. Near the top right of the meadow, turn **right** on a crossing path.

4 This path leads over two stiles (one just a stump), between fences and out into a superior residential road. Keep ahead and, at the end, continue on a path which quickly becomes tarmac. This path takes you down between trees and hedges and eventually passes a graveyard. Go through an old broken kissing gate, eventually meeting a lane. Turn **right** on the lane meeting the main A283 road through Chiddingfold and turn **right** again.

There is a shop at Chiddingfold and both the Crown Inn (founded 1250) and the Swan Inn serve good food. There is also the "Elliotts Coffee Shop". St Mary's church, which dates back to around 1190, and its churchyard with its notable brick-vaulted graves are definitely worth visiting.

Leg 3: Chiddingfold to Grayswood 5¾ km=3½ miles



1 Passing the church on your right, turn **right** on Mill Lane. Follow this quiet lane for nearly 1 km, going by the entrance to *Sydenhurst House* on the right, and ignoring a tarmac lane on the right marked as a footpath. 60m after the lane, turn **right** at another footpath sign through a modern kissing gate.

2 Follow the path across a meadow (till recently two smaller meadows). The path bends **right** at the far end of the meadow, through another kissing gate, round the back of a garden and **left** again on a path enclosed by banks. The path curves left and right though a plantation and then enters a large field via a gate or stile. Continue along the right-hand side of the field and then straight on at the field corner, after a total of 450m meeting a stile onto a tarmac lane.

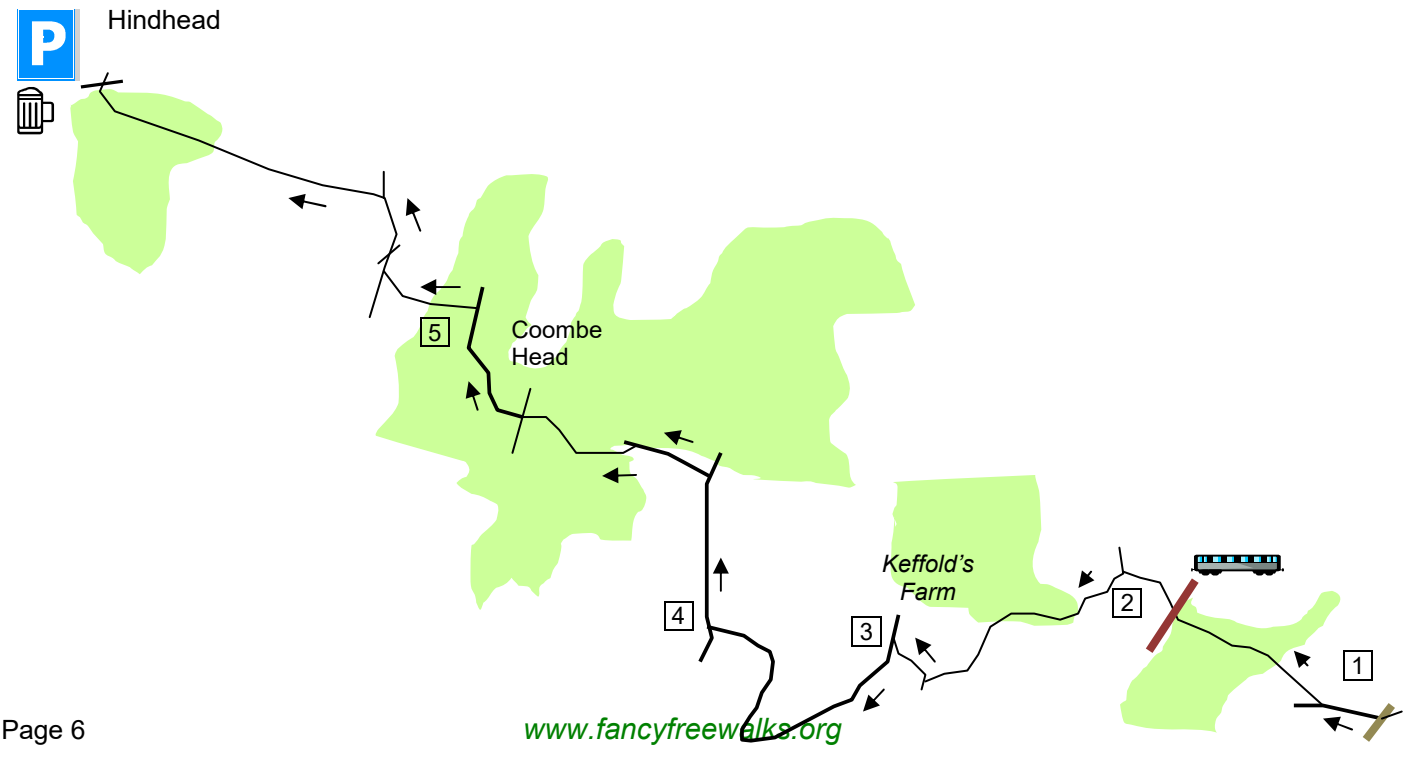
3 Turn **right** on the lane, ignoring a footpath ahead, and passing *Hawlands* where the lane curves right. **Leave** it here to continue straight ahead on a wide footpath, as directed by a fingerpost. In 50m, ignore a footpath forking off right *(see the walk "Witley, Hambledon, Chiddingfold")*. In 120m the footpath runs between fields. After another 400m or so, as the path begins to descend after an uphill section, turn **left** at a crossing footpath through a small galvanized metal gate. *Take care not to miss this turn!* Go straight ahead across the meadow. Your path leads over a stile in a gap in the hedge, along the centre of a sloping meadow and over a stile in the corner of

the next hedge. It runs along the left-hand side of a pasture and over a stile into a paddock. It next crosses a drive via a stile and a small wooden gate. Two wooden gates lead you across a wide grassy path near the house. Go through another wooden gate, diagonally in front of the house and through another wooden gate. (The path seems to cross the private garden of the house but this is correct!) Cross in front of a second, smaller, house and keep left close to its fence to emerge on a road. Turn **left** on the road.

4 Stay on the road for about 200m, passing Little and the High Prestwick Farms and ignoring the footpath through the second of these. Just after the last house, *Damson Cottage*, take a narrow footpath left, as directed by a finger-post, just after a gravel driveway. This narrow path runs to the right of a shed, close to the road, through a small wooden gate and out into fields. Continue in the same direction along the left- hand side of two fields, separated by a wooden gate, leading to a junction of farm tracks with four metal farm gates in a grove of ash trees, a good spot for a picnic. Go straight on through the gate ahead, continuing down the right-hand side of a rather clumpy horse pasture. There are fine views of Hindhead Common on your right. At the bottom, on meeting woodland, turn **right** through a modern kissing gate. In the far bottom corner, go **left** through a kissing gate (somewhat waterlogged in season), over a little bridge, and cross a broad track through a wooden barrier onto an enclosed path.

5 At the end of the path, you meet a path on the left. This is the path used on the outward journey. (If you are doing the Eastern Walk beginning in Chiddingfold and you do *not* want a break for refreshments in Grayswood, take the path on the **left** and continue the walk from Leg 2 section 2.) Ignore the path on the left and in 20m turn **right** on a broad track. On meeting a road, cross straight over on Lower Road and follow it past houses to reach the start of the Green at Grayswood. Immediately before the first house (a hair salon), turn **left** on a narrow signed footpath. You pass homes including *Spring Cottage* with its US Post box. Keep straight ahead to come out to the main road opposite an unnamed private drive.

Leg 4: Grayswood to Hindhead 4 km=2½ miles



1 Follow the unnamed drive almost to its end where you need to look out for a footpath on the **right** opposite *The Alding*. Follow the path down steps and over a bridge in attractive woodland. The path reaches a gate leading up to a new crossing. Cross the railway line here (carefully – look and listen as it is on a curve) and continue through a gate and past an old kissing gate, now disused. In 120m you approach a metal kissing gate

leading into a small pasture. Ignore the gate and the pasture and instead take a marked path **left** through more woodland.

2 The path goes along a boardwalk, over a stream and curves right uphill. Follow this sunken path under tall beeches, through bracken, eventually going through a wooden swing gate onto an open hillside. Cross the grass on the level, with Keffold's Farm prominent up on your right, exiting through another wooden swing gate. The path now leads up to a small gate [May 2020: half fallen over, including the marker post]. Turn sharp **right** here, almost doubling back. The path curves round left past the farm and reaches a wide track at a T-junction.

3 Turn **left** and **left** again here on a surfaced track signed as a footpath. Follow this pleasant track for nearly 400m until it reaches a hairpin. Here, ignore all the tracks on the left and keep **right** all the way round the hairpin. The lane eventually reaches a T-junction with a quiet road by *Ormiston Lodge*.

4 Turn **right** on the road, ignoring a private drive. *Note the little robin on the gate of "Robins".* Continue up the hill for around 200m to pass a metal barrier. After a further 50m, you arrive at a clearing. Turn **left** up a sunken, rising track. At the top of the rise, leave the track by turning **left** on a partially hidden narrow path marked by a post with blue arrows. (Do not make the mistake of taking a more obvious path 5m *before* the post: your path is *exactly* at the arrowed post and is very indistinct for the first 10m or so.) The path veers right, narrows and descends fairly steeply to a signposted crossing track. Cross straight over it. The path follows a fence and fields on the left, curves away right opposite a large wooden gate. Ignore a bridleway on the left and continue to reach another 4-way junction with the hamlet of Coombe Head on the right. Go **straight ahead** through a metal gate, thus leaving the wide track. Stay on this path for only 70m and take a footpath on the **left**. Take care not to miss this path: there are two badges on the other side of a post but they are not immediately visible.

5 The path rises steeply and so it is a bit of a "sting in the tail". After a vigorous climb, you reach a prominent clearing with views all around and a seat. Ahead is a popular broad level walk across the Common. Cross over to a slanting information board and turn **right** on a wide path in the direction of the *Hidden Hindhead Trail*, passing over on your right a stone-and-wood seat. Immediately you cross another path obliquely. In 150m, ignore a bridleway sharp left and 15m later, at a junction with blue arrows, turn **left**

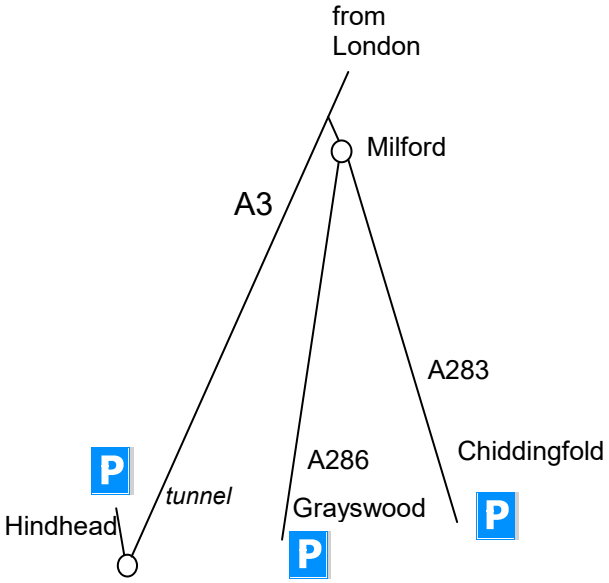
with the main sandy path past a seat, thus leaving the *Hidden Hindhead Trail*. There are fabulous views left into Hampshire. Follow this path all the way to a gate into a National Trust maintenance area and the parking area at Hindhead where the walk began.

Getting there

By car: there are three possible starting points. Begin in **Hindhead** for the **Full Walk** or **Western Walk**: take the A3 and turn off, just south of the tunnel, at a sign for **Hindhead**. At the traffic lights in Hindhead, keep straight ahead onto a cul-de-sac. The car park is on the left. Refreshments are available at the *Punch Bowl Café*.

Begin in **Grayswood** for the **Western Walk** or **Eastern Walk**: turn off the A3 at Milford and take the Haslemere road through Brook. There is plenty of parking near the Green.

Begin in **Chiddingfold** for the **Full Walk** or **Eastern Walk**: turn off the A3 at Milford and take the Petworth road. Park beside the Green.



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