



Slaugham, Bolney, Warninglid

Distance: 14 km=8¾ miles

or 2 walks of 6½ km=4 miles and 9 km=5¾ miles easy walking

Region: West Sussex

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Refreshments: Bolney, Warninglid, Slaugham

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

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

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Villages, pubs, green meadows, woodland, bluebells in season

In Brief

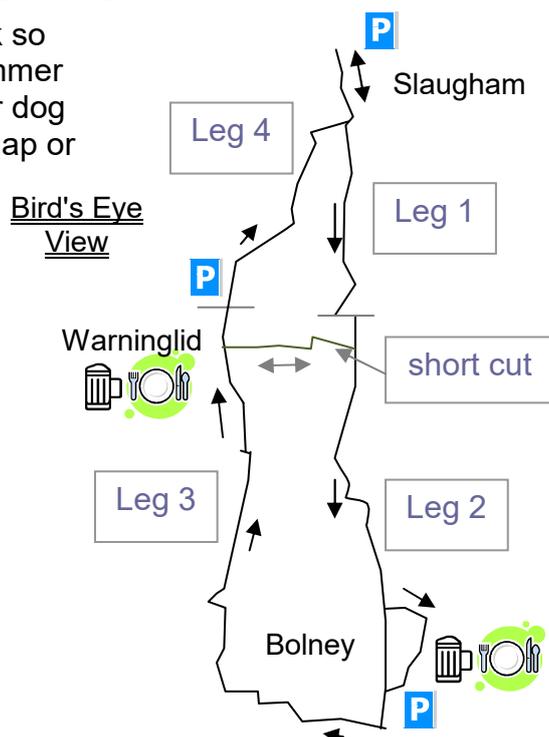
This is a gentle walk between three Sussex villages with two shorter options. This is a Wealden walk so it is best in dry sunny conditions. In winter you will need waterproof footwear. The big green meadows are stunning, so clean and peaceful, and there are no ploughed fields. Considering how close the villages are to the A23 road (and therefore easy to get to), the walk is surprisingly free of traffic noise, so you really can feel you are “away from it all”. Two villages have good pubs, the *Bolney Stage* being one of the best in West Sussex and serving food all day (ring 01444-881200 to reserve). For the *Half Moon* at Warninglid, ring 01444-461227.



There are a few nettles and brambles on this walk so shorts could be uncomfortable in summer. In summer you should find any sensible shoes are fine. Your dog can come on this walk since all the stiles have a gap or a dog gate.

The **Full Walk** and the **Northern Walk** begin in the village of **Slaugham**, West Sussex, www.w3w.co/quote.nuns.appear postcode **RH17 6AQ**. There is parking by the green in the village or by the church.

The **Southern Walk** begins in the village of **Warninglid**, postcode RH17 5TR. You can also begin the other options in Warninglid. You can also start in Bolney at the pub, postcode **RH17 5RL**, or in e.g. Cherry Lane. All villages are clearly signed from the A23 London-Brighton road (although Slaugham is now accessed via Handcross). For more details, see at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).



The Walk



Slaugham (pronounced "Slaffham") is a small village around an attractive green. Nearby is the ruin of Slaugham Place, the former home of Sir Walter Covert, designed by John Thorpe and built by 1579, but pulled down some 200 years later. The Coverts were a fabulously rich family who once boasted that they could walk from Southwark in London to the sea without stepping outside their lands. Horatio Nelson ("I see no ships") lived for a while in Slaugham and his sister Catherine is buried in the church.

Decision point. If you are doing the **Southern Walk** (Warninglid and Bolney only), skip to near the end of this text and begin with the section called **Starting in Warninglid**.

Leg 1: Slaugham to Southgate Farm 2½ km=1¾ miles

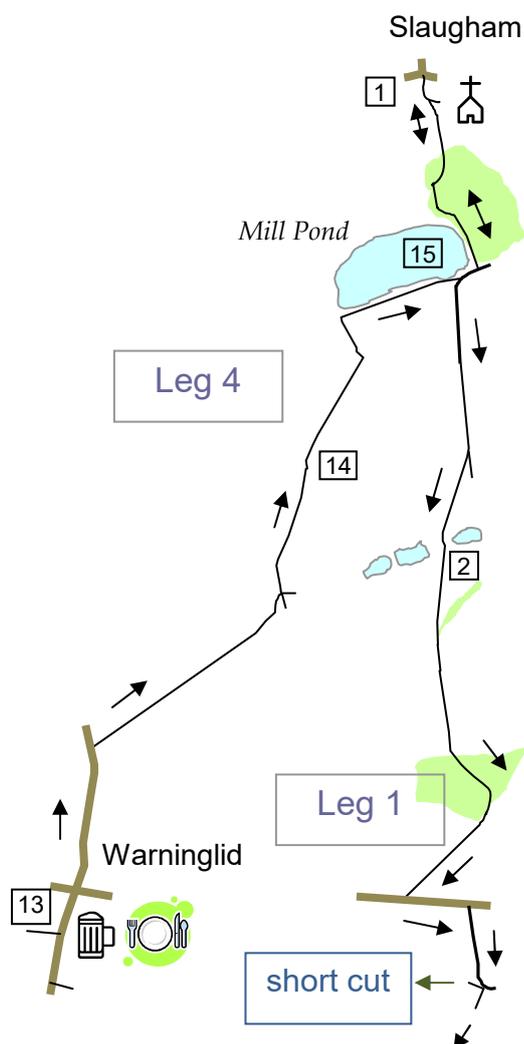
- 1 From the village of Slaugham, cross the main road and go through a lychgate passing St Mary's church on your left.

The church at Slaugham is originally Norman and the north wall dates from that time. Much of the rest is from the 1200s, such as the tower. The clock set in the north side is Victorian. The right-hand side of the altar is dominated by the Covert Chapel with its large carved monument to Richard Covert and his family.

WC

This bright church is usually open and has a loo (for a donation?).

Just before the side entrance there is a 3-way fingerpost. After possibly visiting the church, veer **right** here, away from the church. As a brief diversion, if instead you take the **left** fork at the fingerpost, you will pass some old yews and a small wooden gate leading into Church Covert, a pleasant grassy field with a picnic table and good views of Slaugham Place from the far end. You will need to retrace your steps afterwards. Your path runs beside a cemetery on your left, followed by some tree plantations. In the far right corner, keep **right** through a gap between wires and onto a narrow path through trees. This path curves left and takes you over a culvert with a deep millpool on your left (although it dries out in summer). *The mill pond is one of the sources of the River Ouse.* At a T-junction turn **right** on a tarmac track. *(The newer buildings of Slaugham Place, left on the track, are used by the Sussex Police as a training centre.)* Shortly, you pass a 3-way fingerpost by a sign for Slaugham Place Farm. Stay on the tarmac here, avoiding the footpath on your right. (*) As the tarmac ends, keep ahead on a path under an avenue of oaks, through a metal kissing-gate, then along the left-hand side of a meadow. When you reach the next meadow, a fingerpost directs you a fraction right across the grass, ignoring the wide grassy track ahead. *Note that you are on part of the High Weald Landscape Trail, a 140km=90 mile long-distance path.*



2



At the far side, your path takes you between two ponds and straight on, slightly uphill, across the next meadow. You gradually meet a line of trees on your left. Now follow a faint path directly uphill to woodland. In late spring bluebells grow here in profusion, as with much of this walk. The path goes over a wooden bridge, up through beechwoods, crossing a ditch (*Feb 2023: look left for a fairies' tea party!*), veering **right**. At the far edge of the wood, the path comes out by a fingerpost into another large meadow. Keep ahead, veering a fraction right away from the wire fence, heading for a small house with a prominent chimney. At the other side, go out to a road and turn **left**. In 150m, turn **right** onto a signed footpath, marked as the entrance to *Southgate Farm*. Go through a small wooden gate beside a cattle grid, go over a stile, and follow the concrete track as it bends left behind the stables. You soon arrive at a 4-way fingerpost.

Decision point. If you are doing the **Northern Walk**, missing Bolney, skip to the end of this text and do the section called **Shortcut to Warninglid**.

Continue straight ahead through a small wooden gate next to the fingerpost. Cross the horse pasture, not too far from the right-hand edge.

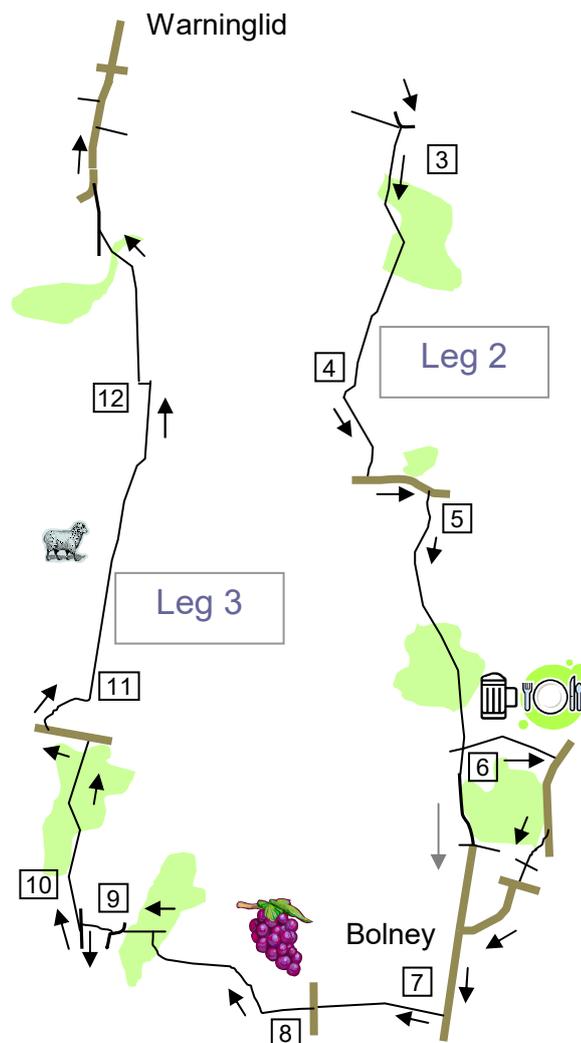
Leg 2: Southgate Farm to Bolney 3½ km=2¼ miles

3

The path leads you over a *stile into woodland. [**2023: stile collapsed; instead, step over a sagging tape.*] Keep on the main path through rhododendrons until the path comes out into a small meadow. It veers left round the edge of the meadow, passing two fingerposts and finally veers left and right again into woodland. You are now following some overhead wires. Your path runs over a flat bridge and goes gently uphill. It takes you over a new 3-plank bridge, through a small wooden gate and a small metal gate, then along the left-hand side of a meadow, still under the wires. In 250m, a modern kissing-gate near a house with a pond leads you on a narrow path down a bank to a tarmac driveway.

4

Cross straight over the driveway to go through a small wooden gate. Veer **left** across the pasture to a stile in the hedge. *The sheep here are very friendly.* Maintain the same slanting direction to a stile in the fence (or use a **small wooden gate** further left [*May 2020: the only option because of an electric fence*]), then diagonally to a small wooden swing-gate. A path beside a garden fence takes you down to a drive. Keep ahead to meet a tarmac lane, *Jeremy's Lane*. Turn **left** on the lane passing *Apuldram* (with views of the South Downs) and *Pavidia*. In 200m or so, opposite *Daizes Cottage*, turn **right** through a (tight!) wooden swing-gate, avoiding the private tarmac drive.



- 5 Keep left as you go down into the meadow, passing a copse and pond on your right. *Note again that you are on part of the High Weald Landscape Trail, a 140km=90 mile walking route between Horsham and Rye passing through the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.* The path twists down to a (redundant) stile under trees, crosses a track, a fraction right, and continues straight over on a narrow path in the valley. On your right soon is a sloping meadow as your path veers left down by a redundant stile. It bends right over a (in winter) gurgling stream and follows a course up through woodland. Keep to the main path through the woods, later going over a 2-plank bridge across a marshy section. *The monstrous Victorian Gothic Revival mansion, visible in winter, behind on your right is Wykehurst Park.* As the path reaches its highest point, you meet a 3-way fingerpost, just before another. Turn **left** here.

However, if you do **not** wish to visit the *Bolney Stage* pub, you may prefer to continue straight on, ignoring both fingerposts. The path goes under a stone arch and joins a farm track from the right by the first houses of Bolney, past a metal gate and onto a cinder track. It passes some attractive houses such as the timbered *Yew Tree Cottage*. At a tarmac lane keep straight on through the village, later passing a junction with Cherry Lane. Now resume the main walk at **Leg 3**, skipping the next section.

- 6 The path leads between fields and pastures and reaches a quiet slip road of the A23 with the *Bolney Stage* pub on the other side. Your route is immediately **right** on the tarmac footway but first you will wish to take some refreshment.



If the Bolney Stage looks like an Elizabethan mansion, it's because it is just that. In fact it dates from about 1500 but it wasn't an inn till the 1960s. This road was originally the turnpike and the famous stage coach "The Brighton Comet" would have passed the building, hence the name. Despite the smart façade, the Bolney Stage is not fussy about boots and, according to the old colonials who haunt it, the chef's a good one, as borne out by the impressive menu and good reviews from our walkers. Beers include Arundel, Double Gold, Turners, Horsham and Long Man. You can also buy coffee from noon.

Having turned right on the tarmac footway (or, crossing the road back from the pub, this is a left turn), continue for 200m or so till you are opposite a Bolney name sign. Go **right** here over a narrow stile onto a footpath into woods. The path winds through maples and hollies and goes through an old metal kissing-gate. It now runs between fences, over a residential road and down to a road in the village. Turn **right** and immediately **left** on Cherry Lane. When you reach a T-junction turn **left** on The Street, the main artery of the village.

Leg 3: Bolney to Warninglid 4¾ km=3 miles

Bolney is not in the Domesday Book but it is recorded in 1284 as being held by Earl Warenne and the Bishop of Chichester. The name means "Bolla's landing place", possibly referring to the Saxon family's dry spot in a marshy area. The old part of the village and its church are further down the road and worth seeing on another walk. It may interest you to know that you are standing in the most central spot in the old county of Sussex.

- 7 **For map, see Leg 2.** Pass a side road on your left, some interesting Tudor-style houses (some genuine) and the *Old Bakery*. *Rawson Hall* on

*your left has a community café, loos and playing fields. Just after the playing fields, turn **right** on a narrow signposted footpath (easily missed!). The path goes over a 3-plank bridge and runs beside a meadow on your left. Eventually you come to a lane opposite the entrance to Bolney's Wine Estate.*

Rodney Pratt was a city worker with a passion for wine. In 1972 he and his wife Janet bought a farm here to realise his dream of starting a vineyard. Back then English vineyards were almost unknown. Long years of effort with 3 acres of vines paid off and the Bolney Wine Estate has flourished since then, winning awards and expanding to 22 acres. Four of their vintages can be bought in Waitrose. Several tasting tours are available. The shop is open daily and there is a comfortable café.



- 8 Cross the lane and take the driveway directly opposite, soon running between vineyards. You pass a house and a large wooden gate marked *Private* on your right. In 20m further, you see a small 3-way fingerpost on your left. Fork **right** here across the grass with a long black shed on your right. Go through a large metal gate (or over a stile) and turn **left** in front of a big modern structure. *(The café and shop are on your right.)* Keep ahead on a wide grassy strip beside the vines on your right. At the far corner of the vines, keep straight ahead and over a flimsy stile into woodland. The path bends immediately right and runs through the woods to a fingerpost at a 3-way junction. Turn **left**, going over a footbridge.
- 9 Your path joins a track coming from a horse exercise area on your right. Immediately, where the track bends left to a wooden gate, keep straight ahead over a stile on a path between fences. On your left is Old Mill House Farm with its duck pond and chicken coop. Another stile takes you to a T-junction with a wide track. Turn **left** on the track for only 10m and turn **right** and **right** again, doubling back, on a sunken footpath running between banks, parallel to the track you just crossed.
- 10 Soon you have steep woodland down to the infant River Ouse on your left and an apple orchard on your right, as you go beneath hollies on a nice wide level path, lined with tree branches. After 250m or so through fine woodland, the path goes over a culvert pipe, through a modern kissing gate and up the right-hand side of a meadow with tall trees to another kissing gate and a lane. Turn **left** on the lane in front of the greystone *Colwood Park*. In 150m turn **right** on a tarmac drive (marked as a bridleway with a very overgrown sign). Follow the drive as it curves right and keep on uphill past more houses. At the top of a rise, ignore a concrete drive that forks left into a farmyard, staying on the signposted footpath. 20m further on, fork **left** in front of a large wooden gate and take a narrow path uphill between hedges. *Note the warning sign 'dog will bark' (an empty threat). More noisy is the cockerel in luxurious chicken accommodation in a garden to the left.*
- 11 Your path runs between meadows, now with good open views, taking you through a small metal gate before it continues uphill beside a wire fence on your left. You are now walking along a path through a landscape of large sheep pastures. *It is worth pausing when you reach the top to look back at the distant view of the South Downs.* At the top, before a modern building of Rout Farm, turn **left** on the grass. Keep ahead beside sheep dips. At the corner, turn **right** and keep straight ahead along a tarmac drive beside the farm building, gently uphill.



- 12 In 100m or so, at the top of a rise, avoid a junction on the right and keep ahead, still on the tarmac drive, going through a wooden gate, small or large, now downhill. At the bottom, the drive becomes rough gravel as it goes over a stream in a belt of trees and joins a drive coming from the house *Routwood* on your left. Continue uphill to meet a road at a bend by *Riflemans Cottage*. Keep straight ahead up the road, passing a house which in bygone days was the Rifleman Inn. As the gradient eases you reach the prim village of Warninglid. On your left is the arched sandstone bridge leading to the private Lyndhurst Estate. The *Half Moon* pub is at the crossroads. If you began the walk here, this makes a fitting end to the adventure.



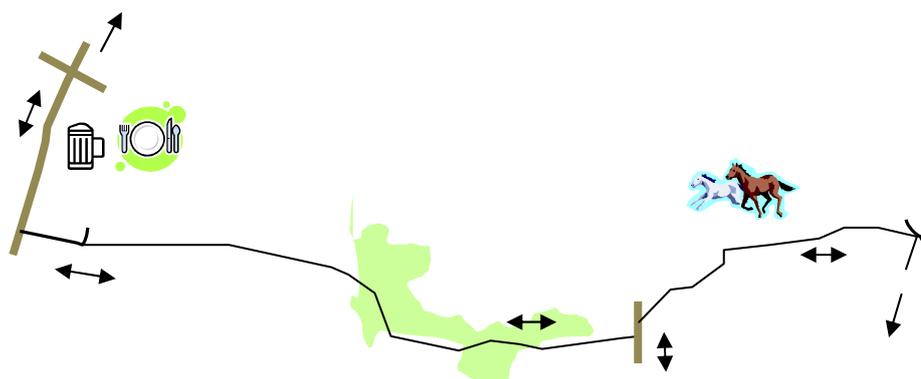
*The name "Warninglid" is Anglo-Saxon, possibly arising from the word "lád" meaning "a course or way" preceded by the tribal derivative of the name "Werna" or "Warna", in other words, "the way to the settlement of Werna's people". Since it has no church, perhaps the village should be considered as just a large hamlet. But the presence of a good pub raises its status. The "Half Moon" is a well-restored 18th-century freehouse with a vaulted timbered bar that keeps its rustic flavour with broad wooden tables and an open fire in winter. There is a lunch menu to please everyone, including partridge, calves liver, venison and the Halfmoon Burger. At least three local brews are pulled. The pub is **closed Monday**, otherwise open from 12, closed Tue-Sat afternoons, closed Sun after 5.*

Leg 4: Warninglid to Slaugham 2¾ km=1¾ miles

- 13 **For map, see Leg 1.** From the crossroads in Warninglid, take the road downhill, Slaugham Lane, signposted *Slaugham, Handcross*. In 200m you have a pavement on the right. In another 100m or so, look for the remnants of a swing-gate next to a fingerpost on your **right**. Go through this gate (rather a squeeze if you have a backpack) and straight across this large meadow, slightly left, on a faint path, passing to the right of an electricity pole. You gradually meet a stream ditch from your left and your path leads past a marker post and crosses a bridge. It rises to the meet the corner of a fence, next to a bend in a farm track. Veer **left** here, as directed by humble footpath signs near a redundant stile. Your path follows a fence on your right and shortly runs between a fence and a brambly hedge. You soon reach the barns of Old Park Farm and your path veers right between two barns (one totally stripped in 2018).
- 14 Cross a concrete drive to a fingerpost into another large meadow. Keep straight ahead, aiming for the far right-hand corner. In the corner you come over a bridge-stile combination. Veer **left** in the next pasture, cutting the left-hand corner. A stile takes you to the banks of the Mill Pond of Slaugham Manor. Turn **right** along the edge of the pond, soon passing a boathouse. You reach a 3-way fingerpost near the buildings of Slaugham Place, which will be familiar if you began the walk in Slaugham. Veer **left** on the wide driveway. (Or, if you do not wish to visit the pretty village of Slaugham and its church, go sharp **right** on the driveway and wrap round to Leg 1 section 1 at the point marked with *.)
- 15 In 50m, at a fingerpost, turn **left** on a footpath to the right of a large metal gate. Your path goes over a culvert with a cavernous discharge pond on your right. It curves right through trees and leads out into an area of tree plantations. Keep **left** along the edge of the plantations, soon walking beside a cemetery and past Slaugham church, out into the centre of the village where the walk began.

Starting in Warninglid 1¼ km=0.8 miles

From the crossroads with the *Half Moon* pub on your left, walk along the main village street for 250m till, just after a double cottage, turn **left** on a signposted gravel drive to the “three *Herrings*” and keep ahead. Where the drive bends left after 50m, keep straight on along a narrow path, over an avoidable stile, first beside neglected allotments, then beside a meadow on your left. In the far corner go over a (broken) stile on a path between fences in a wood. Go through a very old kissing-gate into a large field, with sudden views right, and follow the fenced path down the left-hand side and up to another old kissing-gate. A section of holly and rhododendrons leads into another large field. Keep to the left-hand fenced path to emerge onto a lane opposite a modern architect-designed house. Turn **left** on the lane for just 10m and then **right** over a wooden bridge on a (possibly unsigned [and in 2020 relocated?]) footpath into a rather rough field. Your path crosses the field diagonally to the opposite corner and turns right over a 2-plank bridge and through two small wooden gates. The path runs along the right-hand side of horse pastures, going through two more wooden gates. A stile beside a large metal gate leads to a 4-way fingerpost next to a narrow bench seat. Turn **right** here through a small wooden gate next to the fingerpost and across a horse pasture, not too far from the right-hand edge. You have joined the main walk: continue now from **Leg 2**.



Shortcut to Warninglid 1¼ km=0.8 miles

Turn sharp **right** at the fingerpost beside a large metal gate onto a path that runs alongside two horse pastures on your right. The path takes you through two small wooden gates, through two close-together wooden gates, over a wooden bridge and into a rather rough field. Cross the field diagonally, following the direction of the wooden ranch fence. Finally, cross over a 2-plank bridge to a lane next to a modern architect-designed house. Turn **left** on the lane and, in 10m, turn **right** on a signposted footpath. Follow the fenced path up the right-hand side of the field, into a woodland strip of holly and rhododendrons, with good views left. Follow the fenced path to go through two very old kissing-gates and eventually out via a broken stile into another field, this time on your right. Continue straight ahead to pass neglected allotments on your right in around 100m. A marker post takes you onto a driveway which comes out into the road in Warninglid. Turn **right** on the road, passing cottages and soon reaching the crossroads and the *Half Moon* pub. You have joined the main walk: resume it now at **Leg 4**.

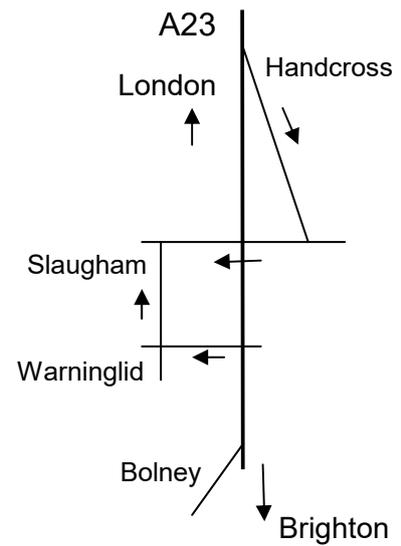


Getting there

By car: Slaugham, Warninglid and Bolney are all signposted from the M23/A23 London-Brighton Road. For Slaugham, leave the M23 at Handcross and *Nymans Garden*, continue to Staplefield and go right on the other side of the green, going under the A23.

Or go via Warninglid.

By bus/train: Compass bus 89 runs from Horsham station to Warninglid and Bolney. Check the timetables.



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