



Wisborough Green: A village walk (with pub)

Distance: 3¼ km=2 miles

easy walking

Region: West Sussex

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Refreshments: Wisborough Green

Map: Explorer 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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Village, pub, easy field paths, church

In Brief

This is an easy village walk, designed as an appetiser for an even longer sojourn at the *Cricketers Arms* (ring 01403-700369 to book lunch/dinner) and possibly at weekends an afternoon watching the cricket. The walk finds some unusual paths and you may meet only villagers exercising their dogs.

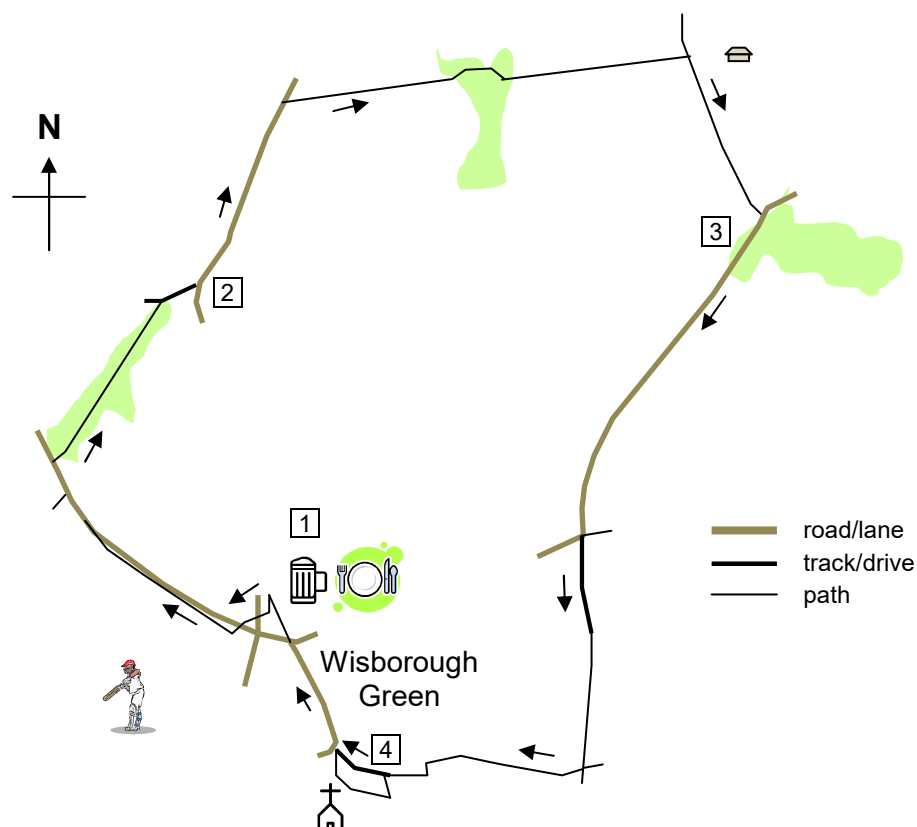


There are no nettles to speak of on this walk and the route is along quiet tarmac or good paths across fields and between meadows. In the wet autumn of 2019 the field paths were more muddy. You can bring your dog too.

The walk begins alongside the eponymous green in Wisborough Green, West Sussex, postcode **RH14 0DG**. For more details, see at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).

The first written record of Wisborough Green was in 1227, in correspondence between Henry III and church authorities. The prosperity you see around the village is partly due to the king granting it the right to hold an annual fair, dedicated to St Peter Ad Vincula (from the church's name), and a Thursday market. Further riches came from 18th-century industry, as you see in place-names such as "Furnace Wood" and "Glasshouse". The village received French Huguenots (fleeing Catholic persecution) in the 1500s and 1600s. They were expert glassworkers and a window in the church (see below) is dedicated to them. There are 96 listed buildings in the parish of Wisborough Green. One of them is the timber-framed Three Crowns inn (going back at least to the 1600s) which calamitously closed this year – will it re-open? The other inn-on-the-green is the 18th-century Cricketers Arms, now the beating heart of the village and a lively place where the chatter and merriment spills out most evenings. The village has a huge sense of community with every imaginable amenity, even though it is off the main north-south highways (between Billingshurst and Petworth). During WW2 you might have seen Canadian soldiers coming into the village for a pint from nearby Hawkhurst Court where they were stationed. Many of the Canadians died in the Dieppe Raid in 1942, a failure which taught many valuable lessons for D-Day in 1944. They are commemorated in an annual ceremony held in August.

The Walk



- 1 Opposite the *Cricketers Arms*, cross the grass and veer **right** onto Kirdford Road, which runs beside the green on your left, using a narrow tarmac path to bring you even closer to the cricket (if there is any in play). In the furthest corner, you pass a children's playground. Just after a side road, The Luth, and opposite the historic red-brick timbered *Gravatts*, turn **right** on a wide grass path. (The path runs between a house and garden on your right and a meadow. There is a signpost, almost hidden in bushes, indicating a "public way".) In 250m, the path comes out by *Brooklands Farm*, with a short driveway leading to a road, Durbans Road. Turn **left** on the road, using the footway on the other side.
- 2 The road is lined with various houses, including near the end, a cottage with an ornate porch and one called *Two Hoots*. After the last house, about 250m along the road, turn **right** on a signed footpath, a wide grass strip between maize fields. At the end, continue straight ahead on a track leading into a similar field. In only 50m, bear **right** in the corner to go straight over a stile into a sheep field. A long grassy path runs between wire fences with a green pastures on each side. At the end, at a fingerpost in front of farm buildings, turn **right**. *On your left, you may see a herd of black alpacas grazing in what used to be an orchard.* Go over a stile and a 2-plank bridge into a meadow. Keep to the left-hand edge, towards a group of four Lombardy poplars, going down some steps and over a stile to a road, Newpound Lane.
- 3 Turn **right** on this very quiet road and follow it for 500m. You pass on your left Jays Barn, part of the farm belonging to the *Likely Lads* actor, James Bolam. At a junction where the road bends right, go **straight ahead** by a

fingerpost, signed for *Champions Farm*. Continue past a house and take a narrow path through a belt of trees, between two meadows. At a 4-way fingerpost, go **right** over a stile beside a large metal gate. Go along the left-hand side of a pasture and through a large metal gate into the next pasture (lift the hook and close it again!). In the corner, go **left** over a stile into the churchyard and turn immediately **right**. On your left soon is the entrance to the church of St Peter Ad Vincula.

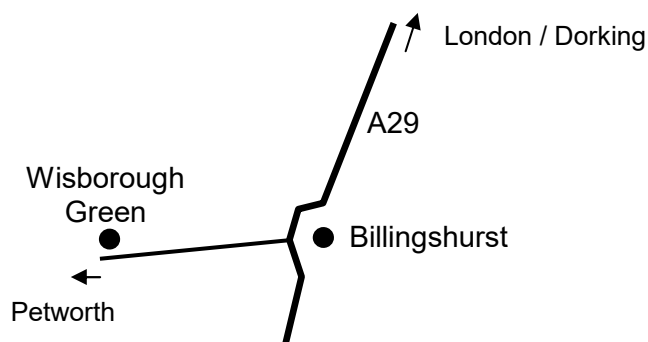
The dedication of this church refers to the holy relic in Rome of the “chains” in which the saint was bound in Jerusalem. The best-known church with this name is in the Tower of London. The oldest part of this church is Norman, but there is a theory that the building was originally part of a Saxon castle. If you look at the main door, it’s tall enough for a man on horseback to ride through – so this could be true! The church was a destination for pilgrims in medieval times, largely because of its religious relics, ranging from a hair shirt and comb, some bones of St James and a drop of the Virgin’s milk set in a crystal held in a crucifix. There are also wall paintings.



- 4 You can now keep straight ahead by the church signboard through a gateway, down a drive, past stone houses, down to the little green by a duckpond. Alternatively, after visiting the church (which is usually open), go **right** down steps, through a door, out into the yard and out to a road by the duckpond. Keep **right** on a quiet residential road which has a generous grass verge, with some fine houses. This road soon ends at the green near the “*Cricketers*” where the walk began.

Getting there

By car: Wisborough Green is easily reached from the A29 at the Billingshurst bypass. The village is marked from at the roundabout *Midhurst, Petworth, Wisborough Green*. Park alongside the green, not too far from the pub.



By bus/train: bus 64 or 69 from Billingshurst Station. Check the timetables.

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