

TILLINGBOURNE AT WORK



Challenging Terrain

**12.5 km
Circular
4 hours**

160515



An 8 mile (12.5km) undulating walk in the Surrey Hills, starting from Chilworth Station and passing through farmland, woodland and parkland.

The route crosses the Tillingbourne stream, which used to power a number of powder, paper and corn mills in the area. Part of the walk follows the Pilgrims Way, running from Winchester to Canterbury. There is also a shorter version of this walk available on iFootpath, 4.5 miles in length. This walk is part of the Explore Surrey collection, published through a collaboration between iFootpath and Surrey County Council.

If you are looking for refreshments there are several options. The Percy Arms pub is at the start of the walk, opposite Chilworth Station, and the William IV pub is in Little London, 5 minutes walk south of Waypoint 4. There are a number of pubs, cafes and shops in the village of Shere, a short walk from Waypoint 5. Ordnance Survey Map: Explorer 145 Guildford and Farnham. This walk follows public rights of way which cross private and public land. Information is included for your interest, but please respect people's privacy, keep dogs under control and remember the Countryside Code.

Getting there

The walk starts from Chilworth Rail Station in Surrey. There is a bus stop directly outside the station on the A248, or one just to the east of this at Longfrey Farm. For help with planning your journey by public transport please visit <http://journeys.travelsmartsurrey.info>. There is no car parking available at the station. If you are travelling by car, park in the Martha's Hill car park on Guildford Lane and start the walk from Waypoint 8, in the section 'St Martha's Hill Car Park to Waterloo Pond'.

Approximate post code for car park **GU5 9BG**. Grid ref for station: TQ031472.

Walk Sections



Start to Postford Farm Cottages

Exit Chilworth railway station alongside the phone box to reach the bus shelter on the triangular green. Turn right along pavement for the A248 and follow it for 470m. As you draw level with Longfrey Farm on the left, turn right into Dorking Road (signed as the Downs Link). Follow

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Access Notes



- 1. The walk has several steady slopes plus a couple of steeper sections.*
- 2. The paths across woodland and farmland can get quite muddy so stout shoes or boots are required and wellingtons are recommended in the winter months.*
- 3. You will need to negotiate a number of kissing gates plus 9 stiles (all of which have open fence surrounds which will be suitable for most dogs to pass through).*
- 4. You will be sharing a few of the fields with horses and at least one field may be holding cattle so take particular care with dogs.*
- 5. You will need to cross the railway at an unsignalled footpath crossing so take extreme care and listen carefully for trains before you cross.*
- 6. There is one short stretch of road walking.*



the lane over the railway bridge and, immediately afterwards, fork left through the gap in the white fencing (passing the small cottage on the left).

Keep ahead on this grass path which soon runs between fences. Cross the stile into a horse paddock and walk diagonally right to reach the far right-hand corner. Pass through the kissing gate and follow the path which swings right, with a hedge on the right. Where the hedge swings away, keep ahead on the path along the line of the bank across the field (probably lined with electric fencing).

The path becomes a track, following a line of trees on the left. Cross a stile ahead (or use of the gate alongside) to pass Postford Farm Cottages on the right.

1 → 2 Postford Farm Cottages to Little Ford Farmhouse



Keep straight ahead on the main track (ignoring the footpath signed to the right) which leads you downhill and past the stables on the left. Continue across the stream and then stay on the main track which swings right past a barn/stables. Keep ahead along the tarmac track (ignoring the stile on the left) to reach a T-junction with a sunken lane.

Turn right and then immediately left over a stile to enter a pasture (which may be holding cattle). Follow the obvious grass track ahead with a grass bank immediately on the left and a stream (The Bourne) across to the right. The waters of The Bourne, a tributary of the Tillingbourne, are used for growing watercress.

You will pass Little Ford Farmhouse on the left, a timber-framed building dating from the sixteenth century. Immediately afterwards, pass through the kissing gate ahead to reach a junction with a stone vehicle track.

2 → 3 Little Ford Farmhouse to Sandy Track Crossroads



Turn left through the gateway into the courtyard and then turn immediately left again through another gateway to join a stone track passing the farmhouse on the left. Go through the gate and follow the path up through a section of old coppiced trees. As you emerge from these trees, continue ahead for just a short distance to reach the white gates of the railway crossing.

NOTE: This railway crossing is unsignalled so take extreme care, taking time to look and listen for trains before you cross. At the far side, follow the path at about 11 o'clock across the field, passing to the right of a small clump of trees. Continue in the same direction towards the woodland ahead. Just before the end of the field, a fence begins on the right. A few paces along this, turn right over a stile to enter the woodland.

Walk straight ahead on the narrow woodland path which soon widens to become a track to reach a crossroads. Keep straight ahead, passing a fenced clearing/section of young trees on the right. At the brow of the hill (where the fence ends) you will come to a crossroads with a sandy track.

3 → 4 Sandy Track Crossroads to South Lodge



Turn right along the sandy track for 400m, ignoring a bridleway off to the left. You may well pass a number of stacks of logs each side of this track. You will come to a large fork (probably with a large stack of logs in the centre). Keep right here and then keep straight ahead at the crossroads. Keep left at a minor fork and follow the narrow path ahead, crossing over an unmade road.

You will emerge out to the entrance drive for the village cricket field. Walk directly ahead to reach the junction with New Road. Cross over with care and join Park Road directly opposite (signed to Peaslake and Ewhurst). Walk along the right-hand edge of Park Road for 550m, taking extreme care of any traffic. You will pass Albury Heath and then a row of properties on the right. Where the road swings right, you will see some footpath fingerposts alongside the South Lodge of Albury Park on the left.

4 → 5 South Lodge to Tillingbourne



Cross over the road and take the middle of the three signed paths, passing through the wooden kissing gate. Follow this fenced track across the old parkland, the remnant of an avenue of chestnut trees.

At the bottom, the path leads you to the left of another lodge and through a kissing gate. Turn left for just a few paces to cross the footbridge over the Tillingbourne. The Tillingbourne rises on the slopes of Leith Hill and flows westwards to join the River Wey at Shalford.

(Note: If you wish to detour into the village of Shere, take the footpath on your right just before crossing the Tillingbourne, and follow it for approximately 300m to reach the village. There are a number of pubs, shops and a cafe in the village).

5 → 6 Tillingbourne to Albury Street



Keep straight ahead on the lane for 180m, passing a black and white property on the left and then a brick property on the right. A few paces later you will reach a waymarker post denoting a crossroads of paths. Turn left here onto the narrow dirt path heading uphill.

Pass through the kissing gate to enter the field and keep straight ahead following the left-hand fence line. Cross over the estate entrance drive and keep ahead to reach a kissing gate at the far side of the field. Pass through this and follow the path through a section of woodland. Stay on this woodland path, keeping the fence on the left, and it will lead you to another kissing gate.

Pass through this and walk ahead along the left-hand edge of this long field. Where the fence line on the left ends, keep straight ahead on the obvious grass track across the remainder of the field. You will have good views of the church to the left.

The church was built in 1840 by Henry Drummond, the then owner of Albury Park, to serve the Holy Catholic apostolic or 'Irvingite' church founded by his friend Edward Irving, a former Church of Scotland minister, in 1832.

At the end of the field, pass through the wooden kissing gate to join a stone track. You will reach a junction with Albury Street.

6 → 7 Albury Street to Water Lane



Cross over the road with care and go ahead through the kissing gate. Go over the stream and cross a stile to reach the corner of a large pasture. Walk ahead, following the right-hand fence line. In the top corner, cross the stile and follow the path through a section of woodland. Pass the waste facility entrance gates on the left and keep ahead on the woodland path.

Further along, bear left to merge with a track coming in from the right. Pass the property called Timbercroft on the left and you will come to a junction with a bridleway. Bear left along this. At the end of the path, pass alongside a wide gate, pass a property on the left and you will reach a T-junction with Water Lane.

7 → 8 Water Lane to St Martha's Hill Car Park

Turn left and then immediately right, climbing steeply up between bushes. Further along you will emerge to the edge of a large field. Continue in the same direction on the obvious path. Across to the right you will have great views up to Newlands Corner.

At the end of the field, go through the gap and go ahead at the crossroads to join the path with fenced fields on the right and woodland on the left. Follow this path for 600m and you will emerge to a T-junction with Guildford Lane. Turn right for 50m and then turn left into the vehicle entrance for St Martha's Hill Car Park.



(There is an option here to extend the walk by one mile, by climbing St Martha's Hill. Follow the broad sandy track from the car park and continue ahead uphill to reach the chapel after half a mile. There has been a chapel on the site for over a thousand years, and parts of the present chapel date back to 1190. The Downs Link long distance path passes close to hill, linking the North Downs Way to the South Downs Way).

8 ➔ 9 St Martha's Hill Car Park to Waterloo Pond



To continue the walk from St Martha's Hill car park, stand at the vehicle entrance for the car park with your back to the road. Walk ahead following the left-hand line of trees. Ignore the first small path on the left (which heads back to the road). Simply keep ahead between the two low wooden bollards and follow this path to reach a fingerpost junction (with four paths/bridleways signed). Take the second left, a public footpath which leads you downhill through a dense arch of trees.

Stay on this main path which leads you fairly steeply downhill and you will come to a T-junction with a fenced grass hillside ahead. Turn left here, continuing downhill (and manoeuvring over a fallen tree). The path soon swings left to become a long level section, follow this for 540m.

Down through the trees on the right the Tillingbourne and an old mill stream can be seen. Gunpowder was manufactured in this valley from at least 1625, when the East India Company set up mills here, until the end of the First World War. The remains of works of various dates stretch for two miles westward down the valley. Colyers Hangar on the left is old coppice woodland. The wood was used to produce charcoal, one of the ingredients of gunpowder.

The path will lead you past a property on the right, over some sleepers and out to a T-junction with a large lake ahead, Waterloo Pond.

9 ➔ 10 Waterloo Pond to Sluice Bridge



Turn right onto the tarmac track, passing over a bridge, and then follow the main tarmac track as it swings right. You will pass Postford Mill Pond on the left and a former mill building on the right (now converted into residential and office buildings).

Over the years there has been a series of powder, paper and corn mills in this area relying upon the Tillingbourne for water power.

Immediately after the mill on the right, you will come to the bridge over a millpond sluice.

10 ➔ 11 Sluice Bridge to Sleeper Bridge



Cross the bridge then bear right (at about 2 o'clock) to join the signed public footpath which leads you between fences. Follow this narrow path with a house on the right and fenced horse paddocks on the left and it will lead you past a disused stile. Keep ahead on the fenced path between fields.

The Admiralty Cordite Works were built in this area in 1915, during the First World War. The remains of a stove house can be seen by the modern pond to the right and the row of cottages were converted from the cordite press house.

You will come to a sleeper bridge and stile ahead.

11 ➔ 12 Sleeper Bridge to Lockner Farm Track

Cross the bridge and stile to enter the horse paddock. Keep ahead in the same direction across this field, crossing some



concrete foundation remains from the Admiralty Cordite Works. At the far side, cross the stile to enter a smaller paddock. Keep in the same direction across this field and cross the stile opposite to reach a junction with Lockner Farm Track.

Station on the right, where the walk began.



12 ➔ 13 Lockner Farm Track to Picnic Area



Turn right, crossing the bridge, and then turn left through the staggered barrier to enter the site of Chilworth Gunpowder Mills. You will pass an interpretation board on the right which gives more information about the mills. Continue ahead with the canal on the left, passing the old buildings on the right.

The Smokeless Powder Works were built in the 1890s and this middle section of the former works is owned by Guildford Borough Council, stretching for over a kilometre down the valley. Substantial remains of the works, the canal used for transport and water power, roller mill stones for mixing the gunpowder and the site of the older water powered mills can be seen.

Beyond the building remains, follow the path as it swings right, passing a bench on the left, then continue straight ahead. You will come to a picnic area on the right.

This walk is part of the Explore Surrey collection, published through a collaboration between iFootpath and Surrey County Council.

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www.surreycc.gov.uk/explore

13 ➔ 14 Picnic Area to End

Immediately alongside the picnic area, turn left and follow this footpath (known as Vera's Path) across the footbridge. You will see the remains of an old rail track across the stream on the left. The path leads you out to a T-junction within Chilworth, alongside the school. Turn left along the pavement and you will pass the Percy Arms on the left and then come to Chilworth

Disclaimer

This walking route was walked and checked at the time of writing. We have taken care to make sure all our walks are safe for walkers of a reasonable level of experience and fitness. However, like all outdoor activities, walking carries a degree of risk and we accept no responsibility for any loss or damage to personal effects, personal accident, injury or public liability whilst following this walk. We cannot be held responsible for any inaccuracies that result from changes to the routes that occur over time. Please let us know of any changes to the routes so that we can correct the information.

Walking Safety

For your safety and comfort we recommend that you take the following with you on your walk: bottled water, snacks, a waterproof jacket, waterproof/sturdy boots, a woolly hat and fleece (in winter and cold weather), a fully-charged mobile phone, a whistle, a compass and an Ordnance Survey map of the area. Check the weather forecast before you leave, carry appropriate clothing and do not set out in fog or mist as these conditions can seriously affect your ability to navigate the route. Take particular care on cliff/mountain paths where steep drops can present a particular hazard. Some routes include sections along roads – take care to avoid any traffic at these points. Around farmland take care with children and dogs, particularly around machinery and livestock. If you are walking on the coast make sure you check the tide times before you set out.

