

DOCKENFIELD CIRCULAR



Challenging Terrain

5 km
Circular
1.5 hours

110618



Access Notes

1. The walk has several steady climbs and descents throughout.
2. The paths through the woodlands can get very muddy, slippery or waterlogged after wet weather, so good boots are required (or wellies with grips in the winter).
3. Some of the village paths are fairly narrow and so can be prone to becoming a little overgrown at times.
4. You will need to negotiate several kissing gates plus 7 stiles (all of which have either built-in dog gates or fence gaps alongside, that should be suitable for most dogs).
5. You will cross several grass pastures along the way where you are likely to come across sheep (or other livestock) so take care with dogs. There are a couple of short sections of road walking that require care.

A 5km (3 mile) circular pub walk from The Bluebell in the Surrey village of Dockenfield, exploring the local village paths, woodlands and open fields along the way.

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

The walk is designed to start and finish at The Bluebell pub, where you can get refreshments after your walk. Ordnance Survey Map: Explorer 145 Guildford and Farnham. This walk follows public footpaths and bridleways 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

Dockenfield lies at the western edge of Surrey, alongside the border with Hampshire and adjacent to Alice Holt Forest. The walk starts and finishes from The Bluebell pub, which has its own car park for those taking refreshments after the walk.

Approximate post code **GU10 4EX**.

If you are coming by public transport, the walk can be adjusted to start at the Church of the Good Shepherd (Waypoint 4), which has a bus stop alongside. For help with planning your journey by public transport please visit <http://journeys.travelsmartsurrey.info>.

Walk Sections

Go → 1 Start to Dockenfield Street

Leave the pub car park via the vehicle entrance and turn left along the lane. Keep ahead as the lane narrows to become a tarmac track, passing a 'No Through Road' road sign on your left. About 60 metres later, you will see a fingerpost on your right. Turn right here to join the signed public footpath leading downhill into woodland.

At the bottom of the slope, keep ahead onto the tarmac lane, passing a large brick property (called Rose Cottage) on your right. Immediately after Rose Cottage, stay with the main lane which turns right, continuing downhill. After just a short distance (where the first

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stretch of hedge on your right ends), turn right to join a stone track (signed as a public footpath). Follow this path as its narrows to continue between trees and fences. At the T-junction in the path, turn left and follow the narrow path climbing to reach a junction with the village road, Dockenfield Street.



example of a former oast house later on the walk.

Pass through the metal kissing gate and continue straight ahead on the woodland path (which can be boggy or waterlogged in part). At the far side of the woodland, a metal kissing gate leads you into a grass field. Walk straight ahead (downhill) and exit via the stile (with dog gate) to reach the road, Old Lane. Turn left along the lane, taking care of traffic and enjoying the far-reaching views of the hills ahead.

Continue for just 220 metres (the length of one field on your left) to reach a stile (with dog gate) alongside a metal gate on your left. Turn left across this stile to enter a pasture (which may be holding livestock).

1 → 2 Dockenfield Street to Abbots Wood



Turn right along the street, taking care of any traffic. Immediately after the last house on the left, turn left to join the signed public footpath. Follow this grass path leading you uphill between hedgerows then fences. Eventually you will pass an old concrete barrier to reach a T-junction with another path.

Turn right along the path and, as you emerge to a property's driveway, keep ahead along this to reach a junction with the road, High Thicket Road. Directly ahead of you is the start of Alice Holt Forest, a Forestry Commission woodland within Hampshire that was once part of the Royal hunting forest, Woolmer Forest. Dockenfield was formerly part of Woolmer Forest in Hampshire but was transferred to Surrey in 1895.

NOTE: The next stretch of the walk follows the edge of this road, so take care of traffic. Turn left along the road and, after 300 metres (at the end of the second field on your left), turn left through a kissing gate. Follow the enclosed path with Abbots Wood on your right.

2 → 3 Abbots Wood to Pasture Stile

The path leads you through Abbots Wood, a pretty stretch of woodland which has a beautiful display of bluebells in the late spring. For many years hops were grown in this area and the hops were dried in local oast houses using charcoal produced from these areas of coppiced woodlands. We will see an

3 → 4 Pasture Stile to Church of the Good Shepherd



Walk directly ahead along the left-hand edge of the pasture and pass through the wide gateway (with disused stile) to continue along the left-hand edge of a second section of pasture. In the field corner, cross the stile (with dog gate) and continue ahead on the enclosed grass track to reach a metal kissing gate.

Take the kissing gate to enter a large hillside pasture (this field is likely to be holding sheep, even if you cannot see them yet) and walk straight ahead, staying close to the hedgerow on your right. At the far side, pass through the wide gateway and continue along the right-hand edge of this second sheep pasture. In the field corner, follow the path through a ditch (take care) and over a stile (with dog gate) to enter a section of woodland.

Keep ahead on the pretty woodland path, ignoring a footpath signed to the right part way along. At the end of the woodland you will emerge to a small playing field. Cross this diagonally left to reach a T-junction with the main road.

Our route continues to the right shortly, but first we take a small detour to visit some points of interest. Turn left along the grass

verge and almost immediately you will see the Dockenfield village sign, an elaborate sculptural plaque. Notice the reference to Noel Coward's song, A Room with A View. Coward's mother lived in Dockenfield and a house in the same road is thought to have been the inspiration for this song. It is also said that Coward wrote his famous play Hayfever whilst staying with his mother in Dockenfield. Continue a few paces ahead to the bus stop and if you look to your right you will see the roof of one of the old village oast houses, now converted to a private home. Beyond the bus stop you will come to the Church of the Good Shepherd on your left. Notice the bell mounted on the wall of church, rather than being within a tower or steeple. The church was built in 1910 using local bargate stone, galletted with brick dressing. Galletting, the studding of mortar with ironstone, is a characteristic local style and is both decorative and practical. The sandstone is difficult to shape accurately to give close joints and the studding prevents the mortar being removed by birds and weathering.

4 → 5 Church of the Good Shepherd to End



When you have finished at the church, retrace your steps back along the lane, passing the bus stop on your right and the oast house on your left. Just before you reach the road chicane, turn left into the side lane, Bealeswood Lane. Follow this pretty lane down through the dip and starting to climb. Just after the lane bends left, you will see a fingerpost on your right and at this point you have two choices.

For the shortest route back to The Bluebell, simply stay with the lane as it bends left, and this lane and then a brideway track ahead will lead you directly back to the pub.

For the full route, turn right on this bend (signed as a public brideway) and follow the grass path past a house and hedge on your left. Immediately after the hedge, turn left over a stile (with fence gap for dogs) to enter a large grass field. With your back to the stile, walk uphill at about 11 o'clock to exit via another stile (with fence gap) into woodland. Follow the woodland path leading you quite steeply uphill.

At the top of the slope you will reach a junction with a vehicle track. Cross over and go straight ahead through the next short stretch of woodland, emerging to a path crossroads (with a waymarker post). Turn left and follow the level path through this pretty stretch of woodland. Follow this path ahead to the far end of the wood (ignoring a footpath signed to the right part way along). At the far end, turn left across a stile (with fence gap) and follow the enclosed path, with horse paddocks on your left and a property on your right. At the end of this path, dog leg right (over a sleeper bridge) and then left to join a stone vehicle track. You will reach a junction with the road. Turn left and immediately left again, and you will reach The Bluebell on your left for some well-earned refreshments.

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

Surrey is the ideal place to explore the outdoors on foot. Whether you're an adventurous walker or someone who prefers a short stroll, there's a walk to suit you.

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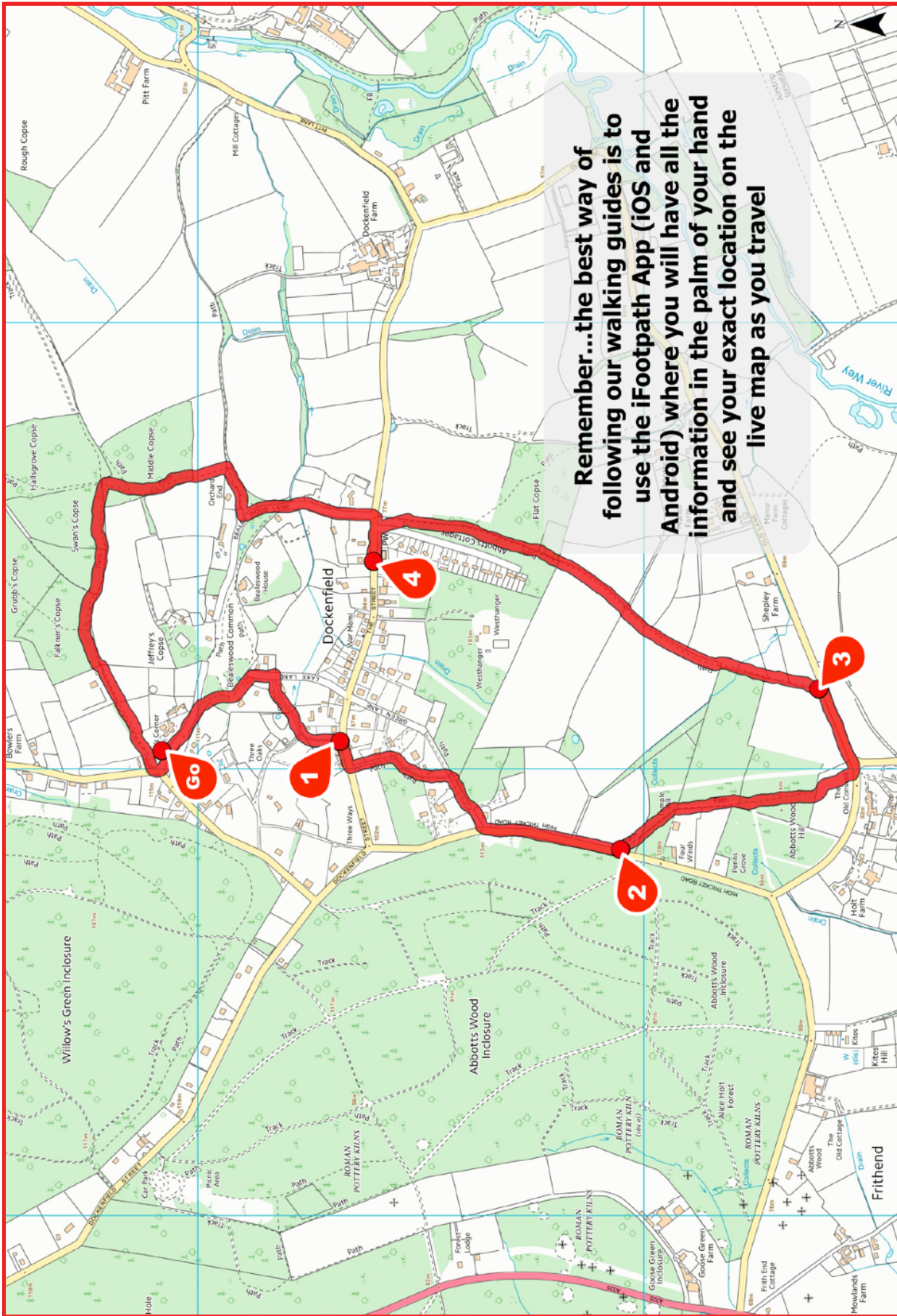
www.surreycc.gov.uk/explore

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.



Remember...the best way of following our walking guides is to use the iFootpath App (iOS and Android) where you will have all the information in the palm of your hand and see your exact location on the live map as you travel

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R Rail station **B** Bus stop **Go** Walking route **1** Start point **1** Waypoint