

HASLEMERE HILLS AND HEATHER



Challenging Terrain

**14.5 km
Circular
4.5 hours**

230816



Access Notes



- 1. The walk has several climbs and descents throughout including a couple of fairly steep sections.*
- 2. You will need to negotiate some single gates, kissing gates and steps but there are no stiles on route.*
- 3. Some of the paths are rocky and uneven underfoot and can also get very muddy at times, so good boots are a must (or wellingtons with grips in the winter months).*
- 4. Hindhead Common has grazing livestock at times to help with conservation (including wild ponies and Highland Cattle) and the hay pastures at the National Trust Swan Barn Farm can also be holding conservation livestock (Belted Galloway cattle and Jacob sheep), so take particular care with dogs.*

A 14.5km (9 mile) circular walk from Haslemere rail station, through the surrounding heathland and farmland and visiting Devil's Punchbowl and Gibbet Hill along the way.

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

There are public toilets available at the Devil's Punchbowl (waypoint 3) and if you are looking for refreshments, there are lots of pubs, restaurants and cafes in Haslemere High Street (at the start and end of the walk), a pub and cafe at Devil's Punchbowl (waypoint 3) and The Wheatsheaf pub in Grayswood (just a short walk from the church at waypoint 6). Ordnance Survey Map: Explorer OL33 Haslemere and Petersfield. 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

The walk starts and finishes from Haslemere rail station, which also has a bus stop directly outside. For help with planning your journey by public transport please visit <http://journeys.travelsmartsurrey.info>. If you are coming by car, the rail station has its own car park which costs £8 per day Mon-Fri, £2 Sat and Bank Holidays and £1 Sun (correct March 2016). There are several other car parks in Haslemere should you prefer to use these.

Approximate post code **GU27 2PE**.

Walk Sections

Go → 1 **Start to Church Lane**

Leave the rail station via the main exit on Platform 1. Turn left and join the left-hand pavement which leads you past a bus stop and cafe on your left. When you reach the pedestrian crossing, swap to the right-hand pavement and follow this along Lower Road (crossing over the side road, Sand Rock, with care).

The road climbs steadily towards Haslemere centre and soon you will be following an elevated section of pavement above the road. At the end of this section, use

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the zebra crossing to swap back to the left-hand pavement and stay with this as it swings left into Haslemere High Street, passing the war memorial on your right. The High Street has a whole host of pubs, restaurants and cafes ideal for a refreshment stop now, or at the end of the walk.

Cross over a couple of side roads and continue past the Georgian Hotel on your left. 50 metres later, look out for a narrow alleyway on your left, signed as a public footpath to Church Lane (it is easy to miss this so keep your eyes peeled!). Turn left and follow this narrow alleyway ahead, staying with the fence line on your right at the first junction. Half way along you will pass a community pavilion on your left and at the end you will emerge to a junction with Church Lane.

1 → 2 Church Lane to Farnham Lane



Cross over with care and turn left along the pavement, following it across the rail bridge. Stay with the pavement as it climbs and swings right, leading you past St Bartholomew's Church on your left. Designed by local architect JW Penfold, the church has windows in the north aisle that commemorate the poets Alfred Lord Tennyson and Gerald Manley Hopkins.

Continue ahead along the pavement, crossing over a side road as the main road becomes High Lane. Just after passing the property entrance for High Garth on your left (and where the railings for a raised section of tarmac path end on your right), cross over the road with care into the entrance drive for Lanreath. Within the drive, fork immediately right to join the narrow stone path, signed as the Greensand Way.

Since Haslemere High Street we have been following the Greensand Way. This scenic long distance route follows the Greensand ridge through Surrey and Kent, running for 108 miles from Haslemere to Hamstreet near Romney Marsh. Our journey today follows the first 4 miles of the route, from Haslemere to Gibbet Hill.

Follow this narrow hedge-lined path out to a junction with

Weydown Road. Cross over with care and go straight ahead to join the continuation of the footpath, taking time to enjoy the views which have opened up across the valley ahead and to your right. At the bottom of the slope, the path leads you over a short boardwalk and, soon afterwards you will emerge to a junction with a quiet country lane.

Turn left along this lane, taking care of any traffic, cross the stream bridge and then take the first right, Stoalety Hollow, marked as a no through road. At the fork in the lane, keep left and stay with this quiet access lane as it leads you steadily uphill. Where the tarmac lane ends, keep ahead on the unmade sunken path which climbs more steeply. At the top, bear right to merge with a residential access track. Follow this out to the T-junction with the road, Farnham Lane.

2 → 3 Farnham Lane to Devil's Punchbowl



Turn right along the lane, taking care of any traffic. Follow it for 300m, ignoring the first bridleway signed to the left, instead continuing on to reach a footpath sign on the left (directly opposite Little Scotstoun on your right). Turn left here and follow the woodland footpath through a kissing gate. (NOTE: you may come across livestock used for conservation grazing from this point).

When you come to a staggered crossroads, turn right and immediately left to continue on the Greensand Way (marked with a GW waymark). This path leads you steeply downhill between sections of heather and bilberry, a sure sign of the acidic nature of the soil here. Simply keep ahead on this undulating path through the heath, ignoring any side paths.

Further along, the path runs alongside a fence on your left. Continue ahead on the rocky path to reach a fork. Take the left-hand branch (still following the GW waymarker). The path climbs fairly steeply to reach a gate. Pass through this and continue climbing on the main path, passing a red tile-clad property through the trees to your left. The path swings left to reach the entrance gates for the property on your left.

Turn to your right (with the gates now behind you) and you will see a choice of two paths ahead into the woodland. Take the left-hand of these, which runs parallel with a line of garden fences across to your left. Now simply keep ahead on this woodland path and eventually you will emerge out to the edge of the parking area for the Devil's Punchbowl. You will see the Devil's Punchbowl pub to your left and the visitor centre and cafe directly ahead.

3 → 4 Devil's Punchbowl to Gibbet Hill



Standing with your back to the path from which you emerged (with the access road running in front of you), turn right to reach a fork marking a choice of paths; a tarmac byway and an unsurfaced bridleway. Take the right-hand one, the unsurfaced bridleway signed as the Greensand Way. Just out of interest, the tarmac byway is actually the former A3 road. The A3 road ran through this area for more than 200 years, before the Hindhead Tunnel was opened in 2011 meaning the traffic is now safely transported beneath your feet.

Pass a workshop outbuilding on your left and go ahead through the gate. NOTE: Once again you may come across conservation livestock from this point, in the form of Highland Cattle or wild ponies. Follow this wide stone track, leading you out from the dense woodland and into a more open heath section of Hindhead Common. The views open up to your right and on a clear day you can see for miles.

Further along, the track enters another section of woodland to reach a junction of paths. Go straight ahead (a path at about 11 o'clock marked with GW) and follow this stone track leading you uphill. Eventually you will reach a T-junction with a byway (marked with red arrows). Turn left along this and then pass through the gate alongside a cattle grid. Just beyond this you will reach a fingerpost. Stay with the main track, signed to Gibbet Hill (ignoring the track behind a vehicle barrier). At the major fork, take the right-hand branch. Pass beside a smaller vehicle barrier and keep ahead to reach the brow of Gibbet Hill with its trig point and Celtic Cross.

Gibbet Hill is the second highest point in Surrey, standing at 272m above sea level. Take time to enjoy the panoramic views. On clear days it is possible to see several landmarks within London, including Wembley Stadium and The Gherkin. The hill takes its name from the Gibbet (a type of gallows) that once stood here and was used to execute criminals. The bodies were hung in metal cages to deter other criminals.

4 → 5 Gibbet Hill to Halcyon House

When you are ready to continue, stand with your back to the trig point with the granite cross over to your left and facing the views ahead. Take the narrow path at about 2 o'clock which leads you downhill with the views to your left. Take care as this path is uneven underfoot. At the bottom you will reach a crossroads, go straight ahead passing alongside the vehicle barrier to join the track which climbs steadily.

Just beyond the brow of the hill, take the right-hand branch at the fork and follow this as it swings steadily left. Stay with this main track as it leads you through the woodland and you will come to the Temple of the Four Winds on the left. This platform



once housed an old hunting lodge, built in 1910 as part of the Witley Estate. Pass this old temple on your left and shortly you will reach a junction with a waymarker post (with several blue arrows).

Ignore the first path on your left (directly alongside a bank formed from a line of beech tree roots). Instead keep ahead for a few paces and then take the next narrow path which swings sharply left around the contour of the hill. Further along, stay with this main path which swings sharp right around a hairpin bend, still heading gently downhill. This section of woodland contains several old coppiced trees and, in this sheltered spot, the trunks are covered in beautiful moss and lichen.

As you emerge from the trees, ignore the paths off to the right and left, simply keep ahead on the main path. Eventually you will come to a T-junction. Turn right and follow the stone track to reach a vehicle barrier. Pass alongside this and stay with the vehicle track as it leads you past a brick and timber property on your right, Halcyon House, with a lake down to the left.

5 → 6 Halcyon House to All Saints Church



Continue on the vehicle track leading you between woodland paddocks and out through the property's gateway. Just 30 metres later, at a waymarker post, turn left to join a side bridleway leading you downhill. Soon this path widens out to a stone track which can get very muddy in part. Later, the path leads you past a number of fenced grass pastures on your left (one of which held a beautiful herd of alpacas when we walked by).

Ignore the kissing gate on the right, simply stay with the main track which passes a couple of barns on your left (you may meet the resident donkey here). Keep ahead to reach a T-junction at the end. Turn right, passing under the arched railway bridge. Pass the beautiful brick and timber Red Cottages on

your right then stay with the track which winds past more houses and over a stream. At the end of the track you will reach a junction with the road. Turn right along the pavement and continue for just 70 metres to draw level with All Saints Church in Grayswood on your right. (Note: If you are looking for refreshments at this stage, keep ahead along the pavement and you will find The Wheatsheaf Inn on your right).

6 → 7 All Saints Church to Hammer Pond



Alongside the church, cross over the road with care to enter the car park for the village hall. Just before you reach the hall ahead, fork right across the village green heading for a path in between the school on your left and a play area on your right. Pass between the school and play area and you will come to a junction with the side road.

Cross over with care and turn left along the pavement, passing Grayswood House on your left. At the crossroads go straight ahead to join the stone access track marked as a private lane. Stay with the main track as it swings right passing a treatment works on your left. At the end of the track you will come to a gate ahead. Pass through the gap alongside to enter a field. Walk at about 1 o'clock, following the line of a fence on your left.

In the bottom corner, keep ahead on the path through a belt of trees and you will emerge to a crop field. Take the path between 10 and 11 o'clock, heading for a waymarker post at the woodland corner on the far side. As you reach the post, bear right and follow the field edge footpath with the woodland running on your left. At the end of this first crop field, go through the hedge gap in front of you and walk ahead across the centre of the second crop field. Go through the gap in the tree line and turn immediately right, following a grass track with the trees on your right. You will emerge to a T-junction with a tarmac access lane with a large hammer pond ahead.

7 → 8 Hammer Pond to Holdfast Lane

Nearby Imbhams blast furnace is thought to have been built in about 1570. Iron was extracted from iron-rich seams of Wealden clay. Colliers used coppice wood cut in the surrounding woodlands to produce charcoal to fuel the furnace. The large pond is comparatively modern, but just beyond it is the boring mill pond which was used for the iron works. Large guns were cast at the furnace and the pond provided water to drive the boring mill, where the hollow cast guns were bored out to the required internal diameter by a revolving cutter. The furnace had ceased to operate by 1667, probably due to the difficulties in transporting the produce across the Wealden clay,



and competition from coal-based industries in the midlands.

Turn left and follow the tarmac lane as it swings right, with the pond still immediately on your right. The lane leads you past farm buildings on your left and then continues for a long straight stretch with a woodland running on the right and open pastures to the left. At the end of this lane you will come to a junction with the road, Holdfast Lane.

8 → 9 Holdfast Lane to End



Turn left and then fork immediately right, passing through a kissing gate to enter a rough pasture. Walk ahead, following the right-hand fence. At the far side, a short section of path takes you through an area of trees and then a kissing gate leads you out to a quiet residential track. Turn right and after a few paces the stone track becomes an unmade path through a belt of trees. At the end you will reach a National Trust sign marking the start of Swan Barn Farm.

Swan Barn Farm is a quiet retreat of pastures and woodland. The pastures are lined with hedgerows, where Belted Galloways graze and hay is cut to encourage meadow flowers. Long-term volunteers live in a specially designed eco-house whilst a basecamp makes a temporary home for those volunteers on working holidays.

NOTE: You may come across grazing cattle and sheep from this point. Pass through the gate and keep ahead following the path along the right-hand edge of this first field. Continue along this bottom boundary of several more fields, passing through five more gates along the way. Beyond the fields you will enter Witley Copse. Follow the obvious woodland path through the copse. At the fork, take the left-hand branch and at the next fingerpost go straight ahead. Cross the narrow footbridge and go through the gate ahead to enter the last pasture.

Walk at about 11 o'clock, heading for a gap in the tree line opposite. Pass through this gap and keep ahead, following the

fence on your right. Pass out through the gate and you will reach a concrete track within the buildings of Swan Barn Farm.

Turn right on the concrete track and follow this as it swings immediately left. The track leads you past some allotments on your left and then swings left, climbing up to a junction with the road. Turn right along the pavement and, just before the junction, swap to the left-hand pavement using the zebra crossing. You will pass the end of the High Street on your right, your last chance for a well-deserved refreshment stop!

From this point you will be retracing your steps back to the rail station. Keep ahead on the left-hand pavement, crossing over the side road with care to join Lower Street. Simply follow Lower Street winding ahead and it will lead you directly back to Haslemere rail station where the walk began.

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

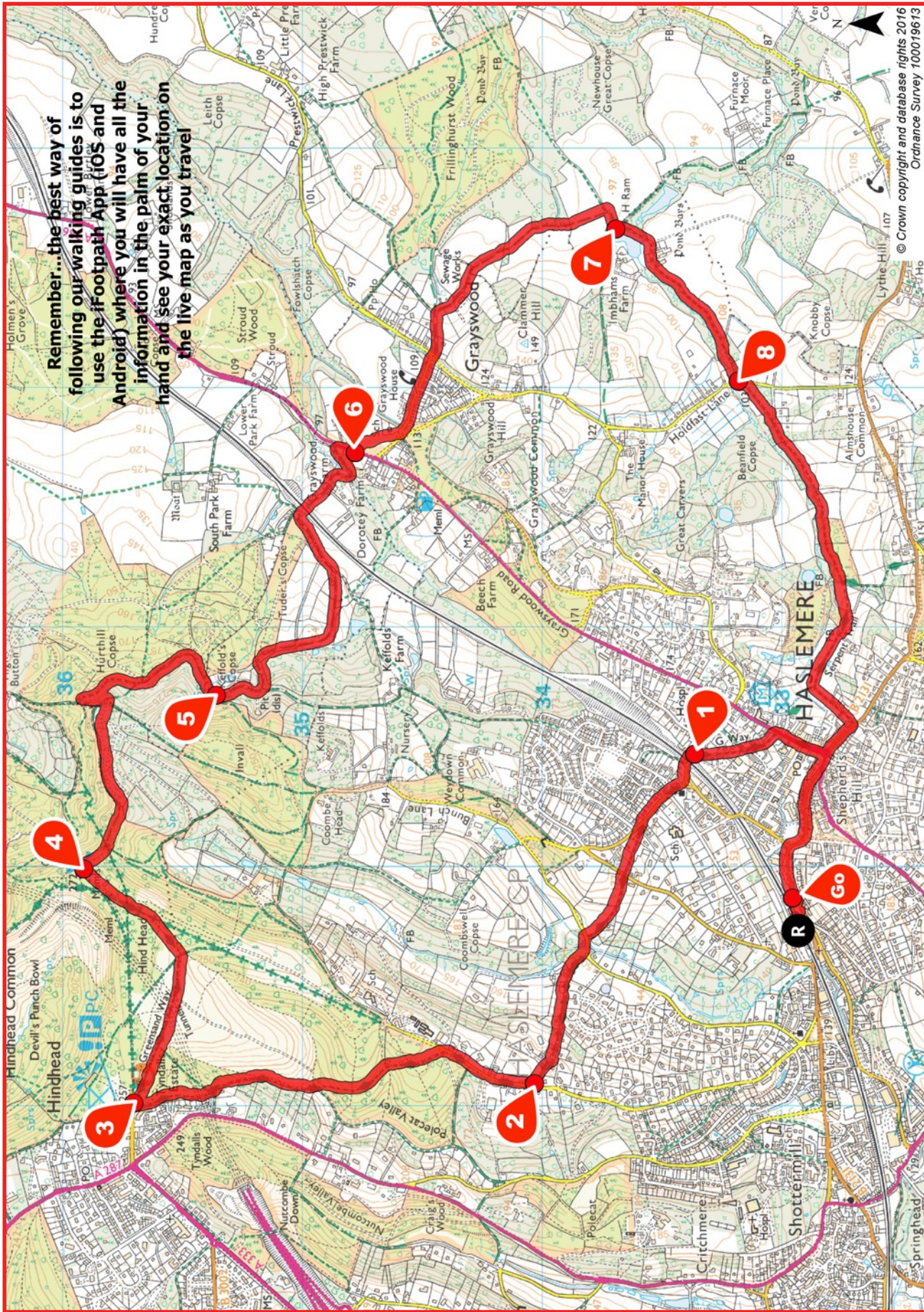
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Walking Safety

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.

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