

CORNER OF FOUR COUNTIES



Challenging Terrain

**8.5 km
Circular
2.5 to 3 hours**

220515



Access Notes

- 1. The route includes several climbs and descents throughout.*
- 2. The tracks and paths through woodland and farmland are mostly firm, but some sections can become very muddy and slippery in winter and after periods of rain so stout boots are recommended all year and wellingtons with grips in winter/after wet periods.*
- 3. You will need to negotiate a few kissing gates, a stream crossing (the stream is narrow but can be deep) plus three stiles (one of which is enclosed with wire fencing so dogs will need a lift over).*
- 4. You will be sharing some of the fields with livestock (sheep, horses and maybe cattle) so take particular care with dogs.*
- 5. Allow 2.5 to 3 hours, depending on the conditions underfoot.*



A 5.5 mile (8.5km) tranquil walk through rural Surrey passing close to the neighbouring counties of Kent, East Sussex and West Sussex.

The route passes a number of farms, past fields of sheep, cattle and horses and through woodland. There are extensive views to the chalk ridge of the North Downs, and the Weald to the south. Part of the route follows the Vanguard Way, a long distance footpath linking the London suburbs to the south coast. 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, the Plough Inn at the start of the walk is open all day. There are shops and other pubs in Dormansland village, half a mile from the start of the walk. Ordnance Survey Map: Explorer 147 Sevenoaks & Tonbridge. 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

Dormansland is located on the B2028 Lingfield to Edenbridge road. The walk starts and finishes at the bus stop directly outside the Plough Inn, close to the junction of Plough Road, the B2028 and Ford Manor Road. For help with planning your journey by public transport please visit <http://journeys.travelsmartsurrey.info>. If you are coming by car, there is limited parking in Ford Manor Road but please park with respect for the local residents.

Approximate post code **RH7 6PS**. Grid ref: TQ406428.

Walk Sections

Go  **1 Start to Barn**

The walk starts from the bus stop directly outside the Plough Inn. Standing with your back to the Plough Inn, turn right and then right again into Ford Manor Road. Follow this residential lane passing a number of pretty cottages. Some way along you will come to a fork in the lane. Take the right-hand branch towards Greathed Manor.

Greaded Manor was built between 1862-1868 by Robert Kerr, the influential Victorian house designer and author of "The English Gentleman's House". You will have a

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good view of the manor itself a little later.

At the first signed crossroads of paths, keep straight ahead passing through the old estate gateposts. Further along you will pass the entrance drive for the house on the right. Do NOT take this, but take a moment to glance to the right you will have a good view of the house.

Keep ahead for a further 40m, then fork left through the gateway on the lane signed for the Courtyard. Follow this lane to reach a second fork, by a large barn.

1 → 2 Barn to Spring Wood



At this fork bear left, passing the barn on the right. Follow the track as it swings first hard left and then right around the edge of a paddock. Pass the workshops on the left and follow the track ahead which leads you into a section of woodland.

Stay on the obvious path through the woodland with a pretty stream running first on the left and then later on the right. At the end of the woodland, you will come to a single wooden gate. Pass through this and keep straight ahead along the track between hedgerows. From the top of the rise there are views across Kent to the chalk ridge of the North Downs.

Continue past Littleworth Cottage on the left and, 60m later, turn right through a wide metal gate to join another signed bridleway. Follow the path as it swings left heading uphill between hedgerows. This path is part of the Vanguard Way, a long distance footpath linking the London suburbs to the south coast. The path climbs and then leads you down to the edge of woodland, Spring Wood.

2 → 3 Spring Wood to Entering Fort



Follow the path ahead through Spring Wood. The path swings right and then left, becoming a sunken rocky trench with fenced fields on the right. Stay on the path as it zigzags uphill and you will emerge to a signed T-junction (alongside houses on the right).

Turn right, passing the houses on the right for 70m to reach the next signed T-junction. Turn left and follow this track steadily uphill for 400m. Take a moment to turn round and look behind you to enjoy the great views of the North Downs that open up here. The left side of the track runs parallel to the boundary banks or 'ramparts' of an Iron Age fort on Dry Hill, which is protected as an ancient monument. More about this in a moment.

The track swings left passing through a gap in the rampart mounds, and you will see the corner of a fenced underground reservoir ahead.

3 → 4 Entering Fort to Leaving Fort



The track swings immediately right with a fenced field on the left and running parallel to the ramparts on the right.

The ramparts of this hill fort were probably constructed in the 1st or 2nd century BC around a sandy hilltop which has extensive views over the Weald. The triangulation pillar in the field stands at 172m above sea level. The fort covers an area of 10 hectares (24 acres). In places these defences have been damaged by ploughing, but on the north east and south west sides there are double ramparts which are still over 2.5m high in places, and ditches. There would have been a wooden palisade fence on top of the upper rampart. The original entrance may have been where the walk first crossed the ramparts. Little is known about the tribe who built the hill fort or the extent of its use.

In 200m the track drops down and re-crosses the ramparts to leave the site of the fort.

leads you through a wooden gate to reach the entrance drive for Lower Stonehurst Farm.

4 → 5 Leaving Fort to Beeches Farm Yard



Follow the fenced track downhill between fields, noting the views to the Weald of West Sussex ahead and of East Sussex away to the left. Ignore the path signed off to the left, simply keep ahead on the Vanguard Way which leads you towards the buildings of Beeches Farm.

As you come to the buildings ahead, turn left and then right onto the concrete drive (passing the barns on the right). From the drive there are extensive views ahead across the rolling wooded hills of East Sussex.

5 → 6 Beeches Farm Yard to Lower Stonehurst Farm



At the end of the buildings, pass through a gateway and then turn immediately right, leaving the Vanguard Way and joining the signed public footpath alongside Beeches Cottage. The path leads you between Beeches Cottage on the left and some wooden outbuildings on the right (don't worry that this looks like a dead end – you are going the right way!).

At the end of the courtyard area you will find a small wooden gate on the left with a waymarker arrow. Pass through this to enter a large pasture (which may be holding livestock). Walk straight ahead, following the line of the fence on the right.

At the bottom of the field pass through the gate ahead and then walk straight ahead across the open hillside in front of you. The subtle path leads you across the centre of the pasture, heading steadily downhill. Towards the bottom, the path swings right and

6 → 7 Lower Stonehurst Farm to Upper Stonehurst Farm



Bear right along the drive passing a bungalow and stables on the right. At the end of the driveway, go through the metal field gate into the paddock. Walk straight ahead along the grass track, following the hedge line on the right. Go over the sleeper bridge and keep straight on the obvious path which leads you through the centre of this wider section of paddock.

The path now runs parallel with a stream and leads you to a stile ahead. Cross this into a pasture (probably holding sheep). Keep ahead on the path which crosses the stream and then stays close to the right-hand boundary to reach the top right-hand corner of the field.

Go through the gate ahead to enter the next pasture and continue on the dirt track, still following the hedge on the right. The track leads you via another gate to reach the buildings of Upper Stonehurst Farm.

7 → 8 Upper Stonehurst Farm to Moon's Lane



Walk ahead, passing between the farm buildings on the left and the house on the right. Turn left along the concrete drive, passing a newer property on the left and converted stables on the right. In 90m, at the bottom of the dip, turn right over a stile into a field. Walk straight ahead, following the fence line on the

right.

At the top of the field, cross the stile ahead into the woodland. Keep ahead on the path with the fence on the left. Cross the stream (it is narrow but can be deep so take care not to get wet feet) and continue following the fence on the left. The path narrows and leads you between fenced fields on the left and a hedge on right.

At the top of the fields, keep ahead on the tarmac path which leads you between the house and the stables. At the end of the drive, use the stile or gate to emerge out to the road, Moon's Lane.

8 → 9 Moon's Lane to End



Turn left along the quiet road, taking care of any traffic. The chalk ridge of the North Downs can be seen to the right, and the Sussex Weald to the left.

After 360m you will come to a farm on the right, Burnt Pit Farm. Turn right here onto the signed public bridleway which leads you through the gateway and past a barn on the right. As you come to the fenced field ahead, follow the gravel path as it bears right and then leads you around the edge of the field on the left. The path leads you through a single metal gate and on through a section of woodland.

Further along, the path merges with a larger tarmac track. Keep ahead and the track will lead you between courtyard buildings on the left and an equestrian menage on the right. A few metres later you will reach the signed junction which you passed through on your outward leg, with the barn on the right. From this point you will be retracing your steps back to the start point.

To do this, keep ahead on the tarmac lane which swings left. The remains of an icehouse from Greathed Manor can be seen in the field on the right under an oak tree. Continue ahead along the lane which leads you past the manor entrance on the left and then, much further along, becomes Ford Manor Road. At the end of this road, turn left to reach the bus stop where the walk began.

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

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If you would like to know more about Explore Surrey and find more walks please visit

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.

