

**Natural Attractions:  
Wild Walks  
in the  
West Weald Landscape**





**Editor** Rich Howorth  
**Research** Lesley Barcock  
**Design** Neil Fletcher

Front cover photo by Richard Cobden, Cowdray Colossus photo by Klauhar

All other photos by Neil Fletcher and Rich Howorth

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## Welcome to the wonderful West Weald Landscape



We encourage you to explore this beautiful natural area by enjoying 'wild walks' around the nature 'hotspots' of this internationally important environment.

The West Weald Landscape extends over 240 square kilometres of West Sussex and south Surrey. It is characterised by gently undulating terrain on Low Weald clay soils, framed by elevated acidic greensand hills on three sides and the Upper Arun river valley in the east.

The high-quality traditional countryside of the West Weald is one of the finest lowland landscapes in Britain. Standing amongst the small fields and strips of woodland, peppered with historic small hamlets, you could be stepping back to medieval times or beyond, as much of the landscape remains fundamentally unchanged since then.

Woodland blankets one-third of the area, with two-thirds of this classified as 'ancient' in nature, making it one of the most wooded landscapes in Britain. It includes natural areas akin to the ancient 'wild wood' that once covered the whole country after the last Ice Age. A wide range of wildlife calls this landscape home, including numerous rare species such as the Lesser-spotted Woodpecker, Wood White butterfly and Barbastelle bat which are all regional specialities.

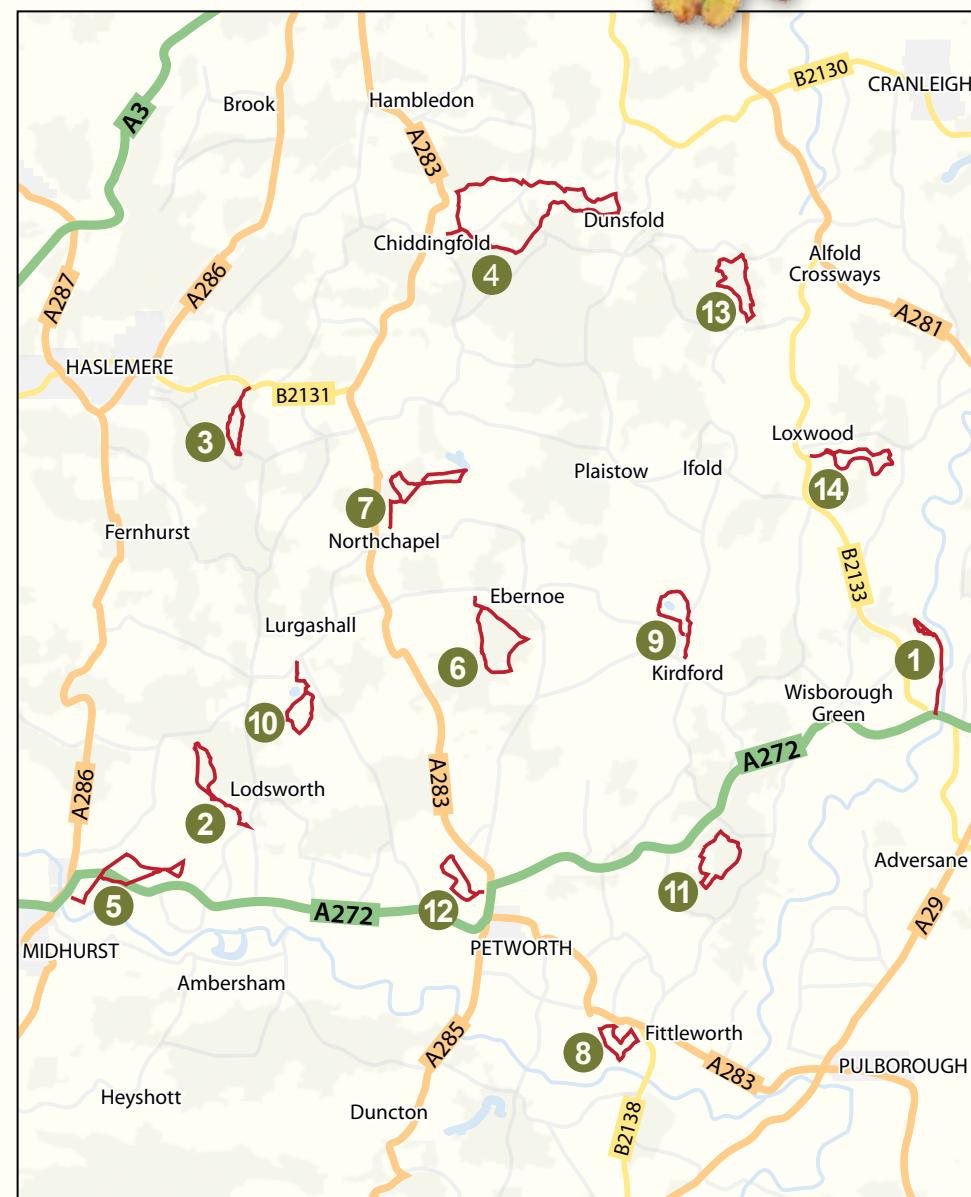
The West Weald is notable for more than just its forests and winged wildlife, representing an 'island of tranquillity' for people who live in and visit the highly populated south east of England. The walks that we have included offer the very best of what this landscape has to offer - taking in diverse and intimate ancient woodlands, historic parkland, farmed countryside, heathy hills and tranquil river valleys.

We hope that these walks provide something for everyone. Each offers a unique snapshot of the natural interest of the West Weald, as well as information on historical features and distinctive local services available en-route. We hope that you enjoy the remarkable resource that awaits you.

# Wild Walks in the West Weald Landscape



1	<a href="#">Arun valley</a> , near Billingshurst	3 km	River, floodplain meadows and historic canal
2	<a href="#">Bexleyhill Common</a> , Lodsworth	5 km	Woodland plantations and copses on high ground
3	<a href="#">Black Down</a> , Haslemere	3 km	Great hill with heathland, woodland and panoramic views
4	<a href="#">Chiddingfold Green - Dunsfold Common</a>	12.5 km	Wooded streams and charming old villages
5	<a href="#">Cowdray Park</a> , Midhurst	6.5 km	Medieval deer park with giant veteran trees
6	<a href="#">Ebernoe Common</a>	3 km	Ancient grazed pasture woodland and 're-wilding' land
7	<a href="#">Frith Wood</a> , Northchapel	5 km	Ancient woodland descending to a large lake
8	<a href="#">Hesworth Common</a> , Fittleworth	2 km	Wooded common with heathland and high views
9	<a href="#">Kirdford Commons</a>	4 km	Old wooded commons surrounded by flower meadows
10	<a href="#">Lod valley</a> , Lurgashall to Lord's Wood	6 km	Meandering river valley with woodland, grassland and lakes
11	<a href="#">The Mens</a> woodland, near Wisborough Green	4 km	Wild ancient woodland with wildflower meadows nearby
12	<a href="#">Petworth Park</a>	3.5 km	Ancient deer park with veteran trees in a designed landscape
13	<a href="#">Sidney Wood</a> , Chiddingfold Forest	5 km	Ancient woodland, old canal course and farmland
14	<a href="#">Wey &amp; Arun Canal</a> , Loxwood	5 km	Wooded canal towpath with restored locks and aqueduct



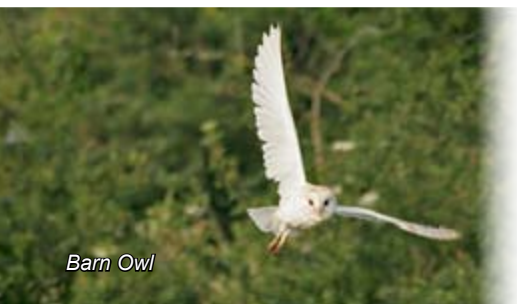


# 1 Arun valley, near Billingshurst

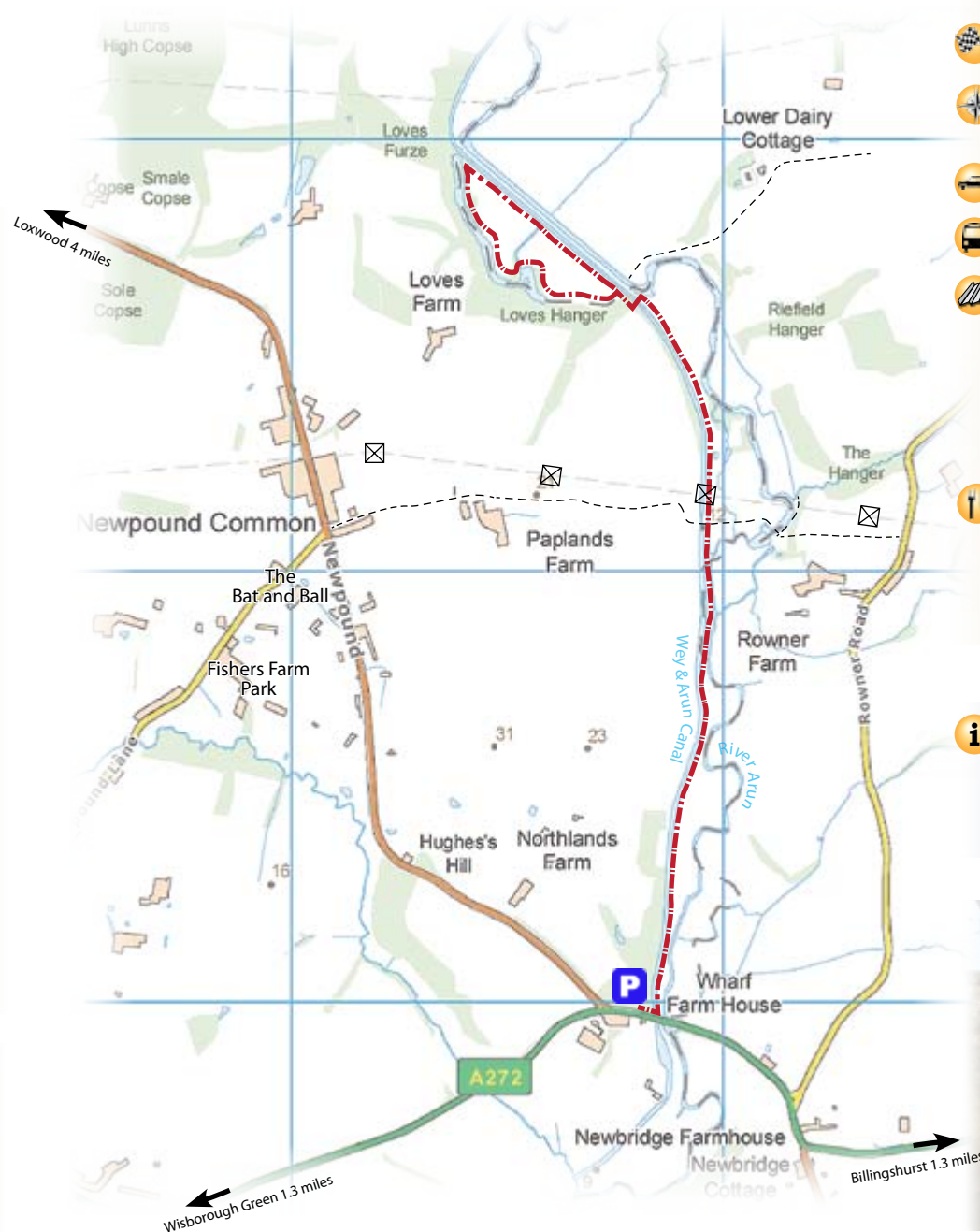
## Wonderful wetland wildlife found along the river and canal watercourses in this tranquil floodplain valley



The River Arun valley above New Bridge is considered to be a county **Site of Nature Conservation Importance** for its range of habitats and wildlife, whereas the river course below the bridge is designated as a national **Site of Special Scientific Interest**. The watercourses, wet ditches and river meadows of this floodplain are notable for the great diversity of dragonflies and damselflies in the summer months, ranging from the common Beautiful Demoiselle to the rarer Scarce Chaser, Club-tailed and Downy Emerald dragonflies. The area is also important for wading birds such as Lapwings, and other waterfowl such as Swans can be easily seen here throughout the year. Yellowhammers and Bullfinches are readily observable in the field boundaries in the summer, and big flocks of Goldfinches, Redwings and Fieldfares pass through in the winter, when the majestic Barn Owl is also often spotted. The conservation walk's old cut-off river meander and wet meadow is rich in wetland flora, including declining species such as Greater Water-parsnip. The water meadows are generally farmed in a low-intensive way without the use of agricultural chemicals, and with special efforts made by landowners to encourage the return of endangered aquatic mammals such as Otters and Water Vole.



Barn Owl



Flat and gentle, but there are stiles to cross and the route is prone to flooding especially in the winter months.

3 km (2 miles)



Start at New Bridge on A272 main road between Billingshurst and Wisborough Green



OS map reference: TQ068259  
Nearest Post Code: RH14 0JG  
SatNav Lat/Long: 51.023320, -0.478122



Limited to two small lay-bys on the west sides of the road by the bridge.



Bus - Compass Bus Service 75/76, Billingshurst to Petworth Train - Billingshurst station 2 km



Head north from the bridge along the signposted Wey South Path with the Wey and Arun Canal just to the west and Upper Arun River meandering to the east. The walk takes you past Northlands Lifting Bridge and Rowner Lock (and bridge) as far as Loves Bridge, which you cross to the west bank to follow a short permissive "country walk" loop (River's Rest, by Loves Hanger) around the cut-off river meander and a floodplain meadow. The walk then returns south to New Bridge the same way that you came.



**Fishers Farm Park** - popular family attraction on Newpound Lane between Newpound Common and Wisborough Green.

**The Bat and Ball**, Newpound Common, Wisborough Green, RH14 0EH. 01403 700313. Local ales, beer garden and camping area.

Limeburners Arms



**Wey-South Path** - follows the original tow path of the disused Wey & Arun Canal. The **Wey & Arun Canal Trust (WACT)** provides information boards and leaflets along the canal, and have restored some features here such as Northlands Lifting Bridge (1980), Rowner Lock and Bridge (1982) and Loves Farm Bridge (1975).



New Bridge

# 2 Bexleyhill Common, Lodsworth

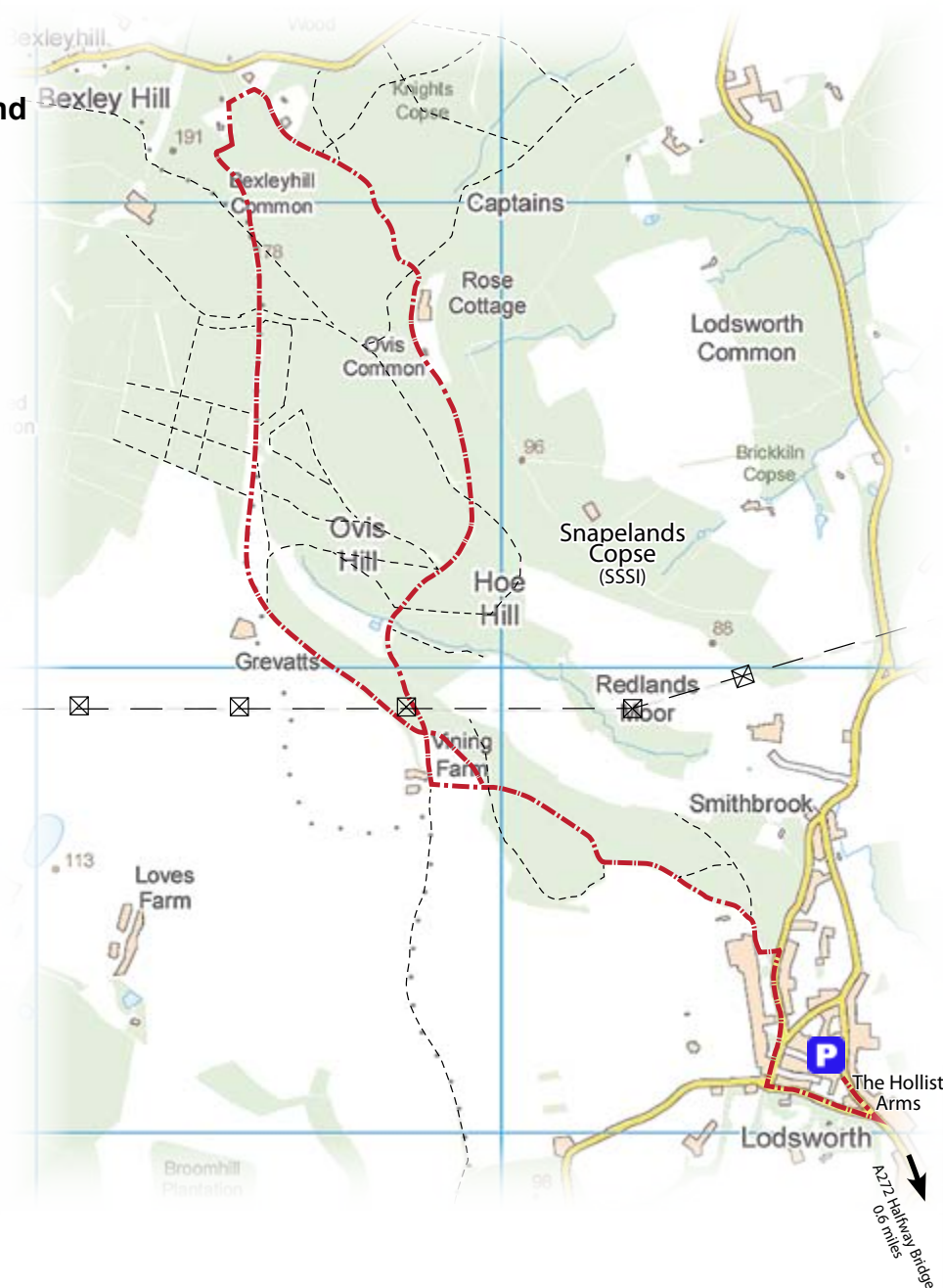
**Diverse woodlands with some stunning views from the greensand ridge, reached from the attractive and dynamic community of Lodsworth**



The walk takes you through pockets of ancient woodland on the free-draining acid greensand soils, including steeply incised gill woods dominated by Beech and Sweet Chestnut coppiced woods, as well as extensive areas of conifer plantations. Stunning views can be enjoyed over the Rother valley to the south. Snapelands Copse just to the east is designated as a [Site of Special Scientific Interest \(SSSI\)](#), particularly for its interesting species of mosses and ferns. This area is excellent reptile habitat, with Adders, Grass Snakes, Common Lizards and Slow Worms in abundance during summer. Other wildlife is evident year-round, including large numbers of native Roe Deer, as well as the introduced and diminutive Muntjac Deer from Asia - no larger than a Labrador dog. Green Woodpeckers, easily recognizable by their laughing 'yaffle' call and bright colours, are readily heard and seen. In contrast, Pipistrelle, Serotine and Brown Long-eared Bats are also present but somewhat harder to observe. The area is also the last refuge in Sussex for the rare Coral Necklace, a small creeping plant of the Chickweed family which is found on damp, sandy ground.



**Lodsworth** - a village of about 600 inhabitants where the illustrator E H Shepard, most famous for illustrating A A Milne's *Winnie-the-Pooh*, once lived.



The majority of paths are flat, but the walk includes an ascent to higher ground along some rougher sections.

5 km (3 miles)



Start at Lodsworth village, 1 km north of the A272 main road turn-off by Halfway Bridge between Midhurst and Petworth



OS map reference: SU927230  
Nearest Post Code: GU28 9BW  
SatNav Lat/Long: 50.999377, -0.679609



Please park considerably by the small village green at the Hollist Arms pub



Limited services to Lodsworth itself, including the Midhurst Community bus, but regular Stagecoach Service 1 buses along A272 Midhurst to Pulborough road.



From Lodsworth village green walk west towards the village hall and then north along School Lane to find the footpath that ascends up through Vining Copse woodland. On exiting the wood you then proceed beyond Vining Farm to follow a long circuit through diverse woodland all the way up to the small settlement of Bexleyhill, situated up Highstead Lane. The section that runs through Bexleyhill Common itself and Ovis Common to the south is part of the way-marked [Serpent Trail](#) as far as Hoe Hill, from where you retrace your steps to Vining Farm and descend to Lodsworth.



**Lodsworth Larder** community shop, an eco-friendly, not-for-profit enterprise built by well-known local woodsman Ben Law and staffed by volunteers.

**The Hollist Arms**, The Street, Lodsworth, GU28 9BZ 01798 861310.  
Large pretty garden with local food and ales.

The Halfway Bridge Inn



Green Woodpecker



Muntjac



# 3 Black Down, Haslemere

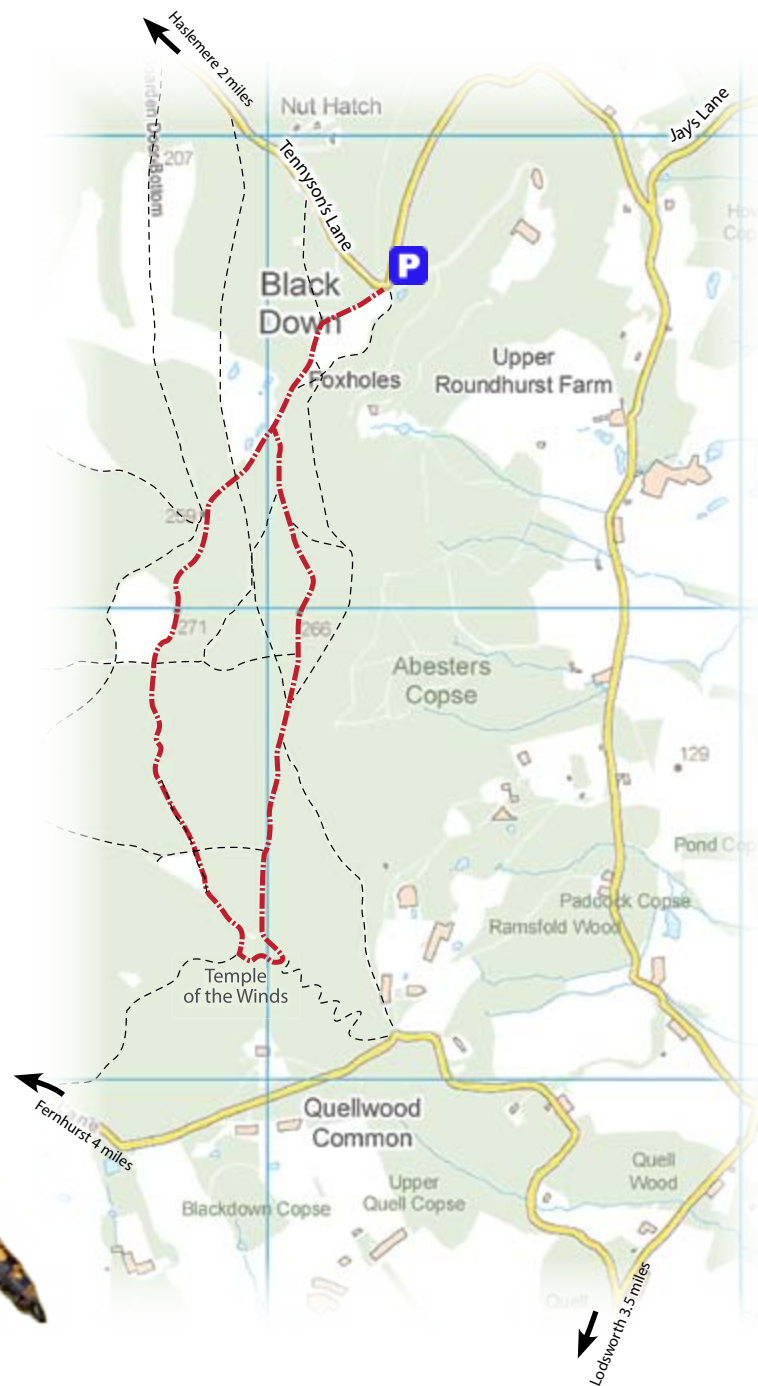
**Stunning views across the well-wooded landscape of the West Weald from the highest point in Sussex, with dark night skies for star-gazing**



Black Down is sited on the Greensand Ridge at 280 metres altitude, with stunning views stretching as far east as Lewes on a clear day. Its slopes are covered by Beech and Oak hanger woodlands, and the plateau is a mixture of Pine woodland and heathland. Historically 'chert' sandstone, a fine building material, was quarried here, but these days the land is managed for public access and nature conservation by the [National Trust](#). They use Aberdeen Angus cattle to graze the recently restored heathland areas, maintaining a vibrant carpet of Heather and Cross-leaved Heath creating a purple haze of flowers in August. The heathland supports a rich variety of wildlife, including Heath Tiger Beetle, a healthy population of Adders, and the elusive, nocturnal Nightjar (listen out for their 'churring' song at dusk on warm summer evenings). The rich bird community also includes abundant Woodlarks, Crossbills, Stonechats, Hobbies and Kestrels. Dark acidic bog ponds support the carnivorous Round-leaved Sundew plant and Hare's-tail Cotton Grass, over which the rare Black Darter dragonfly patrols in late summer - indeed Black Down is one of the best sites in Sussex for this species.



*Black Darter*



Mostly quite flat ground, relatively easy-going with marked paths.

3.1 km (2 miles)



Start point: National Trust car park, reached from Haslemere by Tennyson's Lane (or from Gospel Green by Jay's Lane).



OS map reference: SU921306  
Nearest Post Code: GU27 3BJ  
SatNav Lat/Long: 51.067929, -0.684468



Free car park on Tennyson's Lane



Train - Haslemere Station - 2.5km



A footpath runs southwards through woodland on top of the ridge on the eastern side of Black Down (past dead tree marker, plus pond on left of path) to the signposted Temple of the Winds viewpoint. Return on the west flank of the ridge through the restored heathland with more incredible views (and bog ponds on the left) before heading back through the woods to the car park.



The White Horse Hotel, Haslemere.  
The Red Lion, Fernhurst.



The poet Lord Tennyson was so inspired by this fabulous landscape that he built his house here.

**Marley Common** - this nearby site, just south-west of Haslemere, is also managed by the National Trust using grazing cattle to restore the former heathland.

**Swan Barn Farm** - another National Trust site to visit, just east of Haslemere, comprising 100 acres of traditionally coppiced ancient woodlands, meadows, ponds and streams. A beautiful new roundwood timber-frame building has been constructed here, made of straw bales with chestnut shingle roof tiles.

[Haslemere Educational Museum & Tourist Information](#) - well worth a visit with over 240,000 natural history specimens as well as human history artefacts from around the world.

## 4 Chiddingfold Green to Dunsfold Common

### Wooded stream valleys linking two charming Surrey parishes with an old green and common



This is an area of extensive ancient woods and deep stream valleys ("gills") etched into the underlying Low Weald clay geology, and falls largely within the [Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty \(AONB\)](#). The walk follows the upper reaches of the Loxwood Stream in parts, which flows in to the Upper Arun River further east. The woods include Pockford Woods, by Highstreet Green, one of several steep-sided hanger woodlands and part of the larger [Chiddingfold Forest Site of Special Scientific Interest](#), important for its ancient woods and associated wildlife of breeding birds and rare butterflies and moths. More than a hundred moss species have been recorded here, including rare species such as Rusty Feather Moss which grows on tree-bases in running water. The diverse bird community features Sparrowhawk, Marsh Tit, Willow Warbler and numerous Nightingales singing their ethereal song in April and May. The woodland from Duns Copse to Millhanger is particularly stunning in spring time, with swathes of Wild Garlic, the iconic Bluebell and the very attractive Solomon's Seal growing along woodland rides. Dunsfold Common to the east is an attractive mosaic of broadleaved woodland and interesting grassland, with individual large standard trees including a large veteran oak tree (by Mill Lane) estimated to be about 500 years old. At least ten ponds are present on the common, some of which host the rare Great Crested Newt. It covers over 30 hectares in and around Dunsfold village and is remarkably diverse for its plant life, with 269 plant species recorded including the (now very) scarce Chamomile growing on the cricket green, and Violet Helleborine orchid in the woods. The common is designated as a Site of Nature Conservation Interest.



**Dunsfold** - a village of just over 1,000 people and historic centre of iron-working, with a thirteenth century church and old houses mostly dating from the seventeenth century.

**Holy Well** (near Dunsfold) - formerly a site of pilgrimage and believed to be a man-made hill of pre-Christian origin; its waters were thought to cure diseases of the eye.

**Chiddingfold** (formerly Chadynge's Fold) - a village of 3,500 people and an Area of High Archaeological Importance, it was a historic centre of medieval glassmaking with working forges until 1615. It has had a Green at its heart for at least 700 years, with a blacksmith's Old Forge (Smithy) building, pond and a historic Midland Hawthorn tree.



Footpaths that are mostly flat, but include woodland slopes and numerous stiles; some short road sections are included.

12 km (7.5 miles)



Start at a) Chiddingfold village green, on the A283 between Petworth and Wormley;  
b) Dunsfold village common, located south of the B2130, reached from the Cranleigh crossroads on the A281 Horsham-Guildford Road.



OS map reference: a) SU961354; b) TQ006360  
Nearest Post Code: a) GU8 4TX; b) GU8 4LE  
SatNav Lat/Long: a) 51.110290, -0.627880  
b) 51.114912, -0.563452



a) By Chiddingfold village green;  
b) By Dunsfold village common



a) Bus – Stagecoach Service 71, Guildford to Haslemere via Witley and Chiddingfold.  
Train – Witley station 3 ½ km  
b) Bus – Arriva Service 42/44 from Guildford, Godalming and Cranleigh.



This long circular walk can be started from either Chiddingfold or Dunsfold villages. Follow the east side of Chiddingfold village green and then pass the post office on Vann Lane. On reaching the footpath, descend diagonally to the south-east through fields and Lions Copse woodland right down to the river valley bottom. Head eastwards along the river until you cross over a wooden bridge and head southwards through more woods to reach High Street lane. Walk along the road north-eastwards until you reach White Beech Lane, beyond which the woodland path continues down through the wooded river valley again to eventually reach Millhanger House. Follow the lanes eastward past Holy Well to arrive at Dunsfold Common and village. From the north part of Dunsfold Common, walk along Hookhouse Road and the Church Road to Dunsfold Church, then head north-west up to a public bridleway. Follow this west past Field Place House and Duns Farm to finally reach Pockford Farm and Vann Lane. The bridleway then continues west beyond here through Stonehurst Hanger wooded stream valley to eventually come out by The Winton Arms pub on the A283 main road. Heading south along this road you cross Skinners Lane until you reach the public footpath by Spring Copse that runs south to Vann Lane once more and then on to Chiddingfold village green.



Chiddingfold:  
Forest Stores  
Post Office  
The Green Room café

**The Winton Arms** Petworth Road, Chiddingfold, GU8 4UU 01428 683221  
Large car park, beer garden and full menu.

**The Crown Inn** The Green, Petworth Road, Chiddingfold, GU8 4TX 01428 682255.  
One of the oldest licensed houses in England, this relaxing hotel offers 8 rooms and excellent food.

Dunsfold:  
The Old Post Office – now a thriving community shop.

**The Sun Inn**, Dunsfold, GU8 4LE 01483 200242.  
Gold Award traditional family pub, welcomes walkers and dogs.



# 5 Cowdray Park, Midhurst

**Historic market town at the centre of the South Downs National Park, with castle ruins leading to a medieval deer park with giant veteran trees**

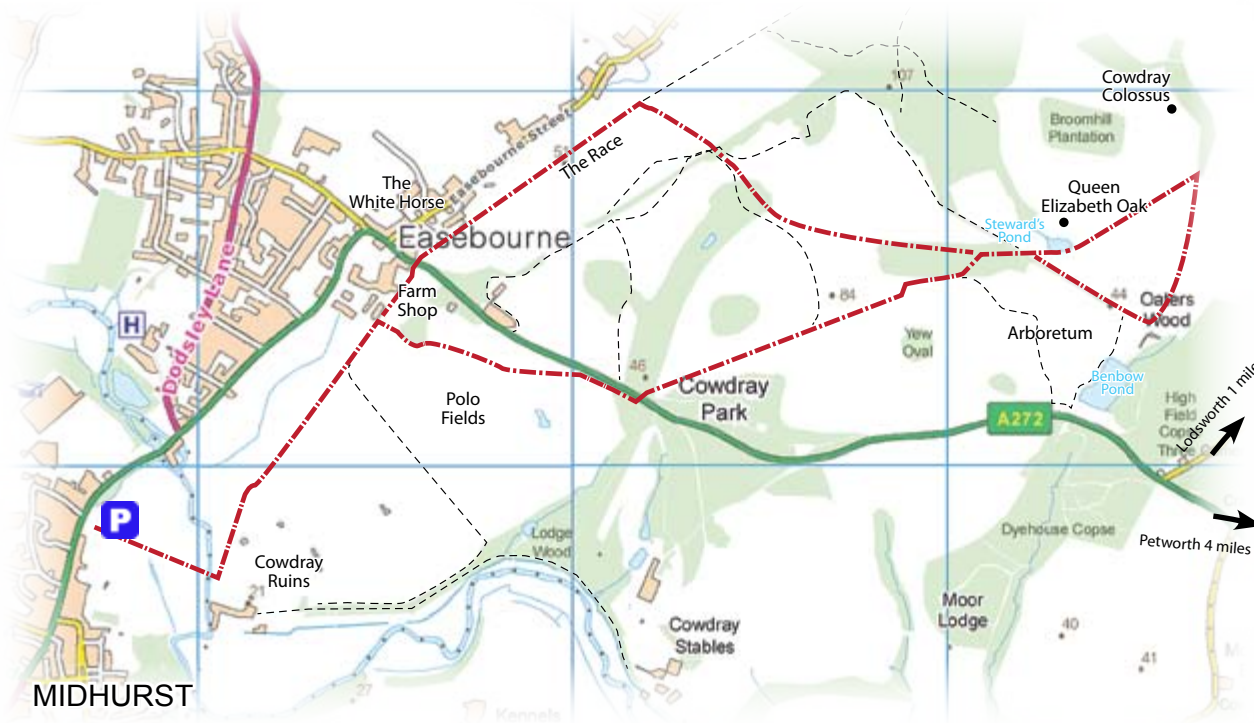


Cowdray Park is a large area of 150 acres that was a 'deer camp' during medieval times, attached to the impressive Tudor Cowdray House whose ruins lie nearby. Part of the park was reportedly landscaped by Lancelot 'Capability' Brown in the 18th century. The park formerly hosted introduced Fallow Deer herds, although captive deer have not been kept here for over a century. The park (including the golf course) contains many **large and ancient Oak, Beech and Sweet Chestnut trees**. The Queen Elizabeth Oak is a huge hollow Sessile Oak estimated to be 850-1000 years old, with a girth of 12.6 metres making it the second largest tree of its kind in Europe! Queen Elizabeth I reportedly sheltered under this tree on a visit to Midhurst in 1591. It was formerly subject to pollarding which explains the very low crown shape. Furthermore, the largest Sweet Chestnut in the country can be found just north of the easterly corner of the walk - this fast growing giant nicknamed the "Cowdray Colossus" has grown to a magnificent girth of 12 metres. The tree-lined avenue of 'The Race' in the west also boasts many impressive veteran Sweet Chestnut trees. Some fine patches of acid grassland occur on the dry free-draining sandy soils of Cowdray Park, displaying bright red carpets of the low-growing plant Sheep's Sorrel in the summer months along with rare arable weeds such as Shepherd's Cress and Small Cudweed.



**Cowdray Ruins** – this Historic Tudor House dates back to 1550, although the original house was gutted by fire in 1793, leaving just the ruins which were restored by the Cowdray Heritage Trust and were re-opened to the public in 2007. The site includes a coffee house by the reconstructed walled gardens and runs special historic event days.

**Cowdray Model Farm** – covering 35 acres of Cowdray Park, this mixture of animals, arable crops, pond and conservation area is open at weekends to the public.



Level paths at the beginning and end of the walk, rising to an undulating hill at Cowdray Park.

6.5 km (4 miles)



Start point: Midhurst town, located on the A272 between Petworth and Petersfield, and the A286 between Haslemere and Chichester



OS map reference: SU887217  
Nearest Post Code: GU29 9DW  
SatNav Lat/Long: 50.988587, -0.737463



North Street car park (behind the bus terminal). Pay and display.



Bus - Stagecoach Services 1 Worthing-Petworth-Midhurst, 60 Chichester-Midhurst, 70 Haslemere-Midhurst.

Train - Haslemere station 5 miles.



Walk along the causeway from the public car park to cross the River Rother, heading north along the footpath past Cowdray Ruins and along the polo fields. Head east on the footpath parallel to the busy A272 main road, before crossing it amongst woodland up on to the golf course of Cowdray Park. Descending through a woodland belt you pass through a gate to reach Steward's Pond, from where you can reach the remarkable Queen Elizabeth Oak. Continue along the diagonal footpath up past massive Sweet Chestnut trees to the top north-east corner of this field, before looping back round the lower edges and back past the pond on to the golf course once more. Follow the other public footpath over the golf course to 'The Race' tree-lined avenue at the west side, from where you head south back across the A272 towards Cowdray House and Midhurst, passing the Cowdray Farm Shop and Café.



**Tourist Information Centre** – North Street, Midhurst.

Public toilets - in Midhurst at North Street car park.

**Cowdray Farm Shop** - fresh produce from the Cowdray Estate.

The Priory Café – cooked meals all day.

Bicycle hire is also available nearby.

**The White Horse** Easebourne Street, Easebourne, GU29 0AL.  
01730 813521. Large beer garden, very dog friendly.

The Wheatsheaf, Midhurst.



Cowdray Colossus



# 6 Ebernoe Common

**A stunning and internationally important ancient pasture woodland, augmented by the “re-wilding” of adjacent former farm**



Ebernoe Common is an ancient pasture woodland with a long history of traditional grazing by commoners, which has resulted in a shifting mosaic of woodland and open glades. Its importance for wildlife is reflected in its many conservation designations, including the internationally important **Special Area of Conservation (SAC)**. The Sussex Wildlife Trust owns and manages a 160 hectare **nature reserve** here. Ebernoe Common is noted for its acid Oak and Beech woodland, punctuated by old diverse grassland glades, and contains many large veteran trees and several old ponds and shallow pools created by early industry and livestock graziers. The exceptional diversity of woodland plants is augmented by a similar wealth of rare fungi and lichens. Considered the best site for bats in Western Europe, fourteen of the eighteen species of British bats have been recorded here, at least nine of which have maternity roosts including the rare Barbastelle and Bechstein's bats. Other wildlife includes Dormice, Nightingales, Silver-washed Fritillary butterflies and rare deadwood beetles. Neighbouring Butcherland Fields, formerly cultivated farm fields until 2001 when Sussex Wildlife Trust acquired the land, is progressively developing into a new mosaic of young woodland, scrub and rough grassland.



**Ebernoe Church** (1865) and Old School House (1874) - the tiny school closed in 1951 and became a private dwelling.

**Furnace Pond** - created in the late 1500s by damming a stream valley for a waterwheel to power the bellows of a blast furnace for glass and iron production.

**Brick Kiln** - a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) that operated from the 1700s until the 1930s to manufacture bricks from the Low Weald clay.



Mostly flat, following a vehicle track initially towards Sibland Farm. The woodland paths can be muddy in the winter months and the route crosses rough scrubby grassland at Butcherland.

Distance 3.3 km (2 miles)



Start at Ebernoe Church - off Streele's Lane which is 4 miles north of Petworth and runs between the A283 and Ebernoe hamlet. Entrance near the 'phone box.



OS map reference: SU974278

Post code: GU28 9LD

SatNav Lat/Long: 51.041751, -0.611362



Free car park at Ebernoe Church



Bus - Compass Service 75/76, Petworth to Billingshurst via Balls Cross.



A circular route indicated by waymarker arrows and posts on this Sussex Wildlife Trust nature reserve trail, which is described in detail in the leaflet '**Ebernoe Common Heritage Trail**', available from the Trust. The varied route takes in both natural and cultural features of interest in an anti-clockwise loop that runs through the northern half of Ebernoe Common's woodland. The eastern part in contrast runs through Butcherland Fields and past the farm of the same name.



The Stag Inn, Balls Cross.



*Silver-washed Fritillary*

# 7 Frith Wood, Northchapel

**Ancient managed woodland on a hill with attractive views, descending to a lake of importance for its wildlife**



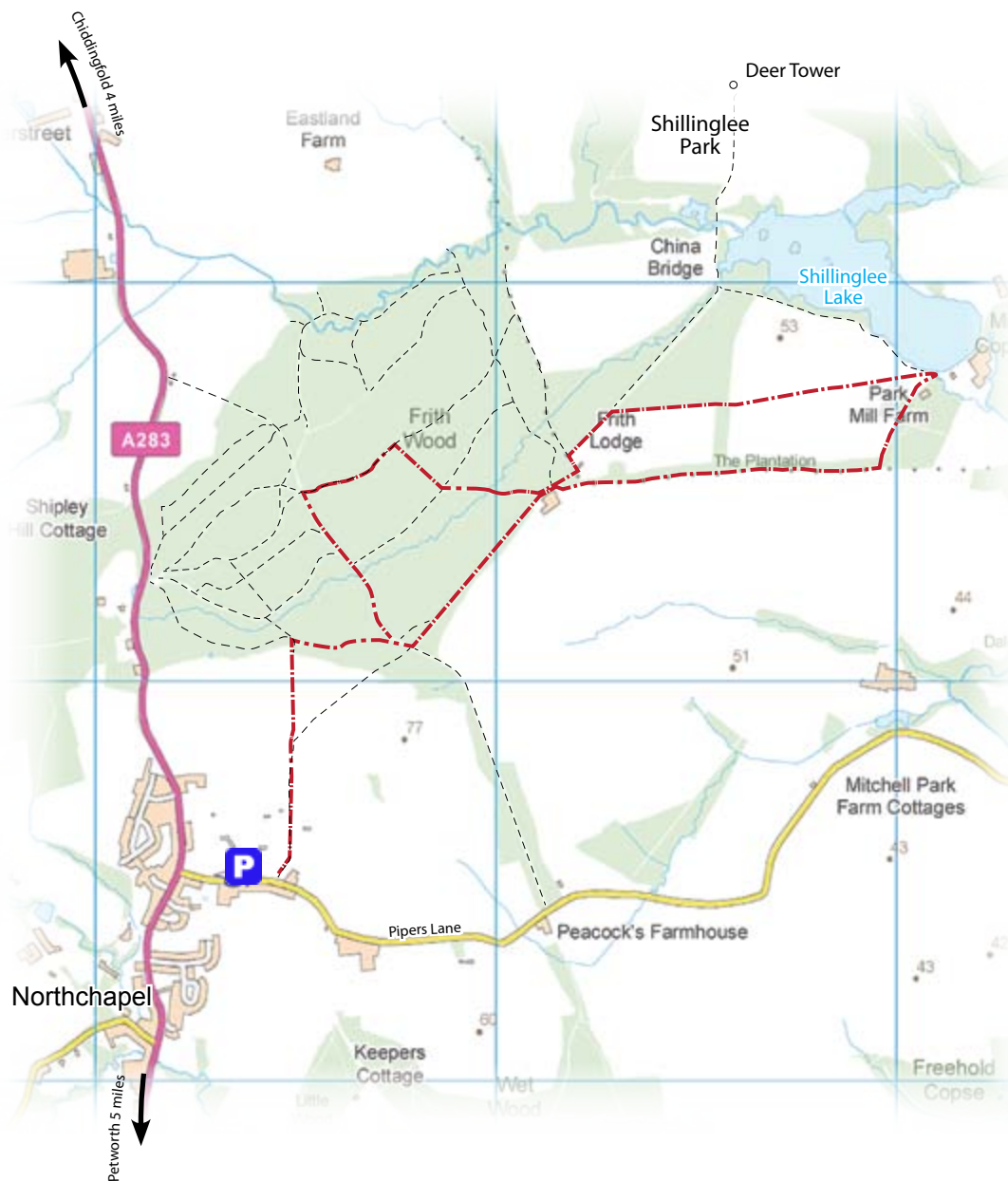
Frith Wood is a beautiful large Oak woodland with an understorey of Sweet Chestnut and Hazel coppice, and some Birch and Alder trees in the drier high ground and wetter stream-sides respectively. All of the woods are sustainably managed for timber by the **Leconfield Estate**. Impressive views to the south and east can be enjoyed from the woodland edges. A great walk in any season, the autumn leaf colours can be spectacular and the spring flora is similarly attractive and diverse with patches of Bilberry and Cow-wheat on the sandier soils. A large diversity of birds are found, with birds of prey such as Buzzards, Sparrowhawks and Kestrels being common here, along with woodland birds including Nightingales and Blackcaps in the spring. The beautiful White Admiral butterfly can be observed flying here in high summer, whose caterpillars feed on the abundant climbing Honeysuckle. Shillinglee Lake is designated as a national **Site of Special Scientific Interest** for the four nationally rare aquatic plants recorded from the muddy lake margins, including Cut-grass and Mudwort. The waterbody also hosts Herons and Grebes, as well as attractive Common Terns and rare Downy Emerald dragonflies in the summer months.



**Northchapel village** - a village of 800 people with Saxon origins. Named because its church was once a chapelry. It has many listed buildings, especially vernacular timber-framed houses with traditional Sussex brick and tile cladding.

**Frith Wood iron works** - a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) site from the 16th Century is located on the north side of the wood, the old pond bay of which can be seen from the public footpath.

**Shillinglee Park** - an 18th Century house and estate, used until recently as a golf course but now private residences.



Nightingale



A mixture of footpaths and some wider tracks. One stile to cross near to Shillinglee Lake.

5 km (3.2 miles)



Start at Northchapel village green, just off the A283 Petworth- Milford main road.



OS map reference: SU954295  
Nearest Post Code: GU28 9JA  
SatNav Lat/Long: 51.057010, -0.639515



Park considerably on Pipers Lane next to the village green.



Bus - Countryliner Service 505 Haslemere to Northchapel (limited).



Follow the public bridleway from the east end of Northchapel village green (by the village hall) northwards over fields up to Frith Wood on the hill. Head eastwards in the wood to the track that takes you to Frith Hill house, from where you descend along 'The Plantation' narrow woodland strip to then turn north to reach Shillinglee Lake at Park Mill. Return by a parallel field track westwards to Frith Hill house, from where you enter the wood and take a different anti-clockwise circular route of public footpaths before descending back to Northchapel the same way that you came. Note that you can take an optional extension from Frith Hill northwards to the historic deer tower of Shillinglee Park.



Northchapel Village Stores  
The Deepwell Inn  
The Half Moon Inn



# 8 Hesworth Common, *Fittleworth*

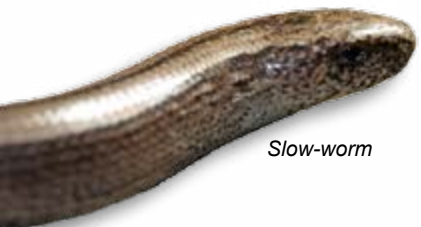
**Wooded common with bogs, heathlands, and stunning views**



Fittleworth Common is a mostly wooded common covering 37 hectares in area situated on the higher ground of the greensand ridge at 70 metres altitude, and is recognised as a county **Site of Nature Conservation Importance**. Stunning views can be had from the heathy hills across the River Rother floodplain valley as far as the South Downs. The young woodland is made up of Birch, Beech, Oak and Scot's Pine, interspersed by areas of remaining heathland on the hill tops. The common is important for reptile species including Sand Lizards, Common Lizards, Slow-worms, and Adders. In summer the purple Heather flowers are alive with the buzzing of Solitary Bees, while Sand Wasps hunt for caterpillars along the path edges. A few patches of remnant wet heath and valley bog can also be found, supporting delicate rare plants amongst the protruding tussocks of Purple Moor Grass such as the carnivorous Round-leaved Sundew, bright yellow-flowered Bog Asphodel and Sphagnum bog mosses.



**Fittleworth** – a village of 900 people dating back to the 12th Century, with two historic stone bridges over the River Rother, and a nearby 14th Century coaching inn.



Slow-worm



On a hill with moderate slopes and marked paths, some of which can get muddy after wet weather.

2 km (1.25 miles)



Start at the car park just off the A283 Pulborough-Petworth road, at the turn-off for the B2138 road (signposted for Bury and Arundel).



OS map reference: TQ007192

Nearest Post Code: RH20 1JF

SatNav Lat/Long: 50.964010, -0.566858



Hesworth Common car park is located immediately on the south side of the A283-B2138 junction.



Bus - Stagecoach Service 1, Pulborough to Petworth, stops in Fittleworth.

Train - Pulborough station 3.5 km



We suggest that you take a clockwise circuit of public footpaths around the wooded common, which are signposted and include sections of the **Serpent Trail** link. Starting from the car park (which has an information board) on higher ground, you descend to the south, before turning back northwards to ascend past a boggy area to reach an open heathland area at the top of the hill with great views. From here you return to the car park through more young woodland and heathland patches. An optional extra walk is to walk down the B2138 through Fittleworth village to the River Rother, from where you can take a riverside footpath to the east.



Jonas's village stores

The Swan Inn



Cross-leaved Heath

# 9 Kirdford Commons

## Old wooded commons surrounded by flowery meadows set amongst lovely ancient countryside

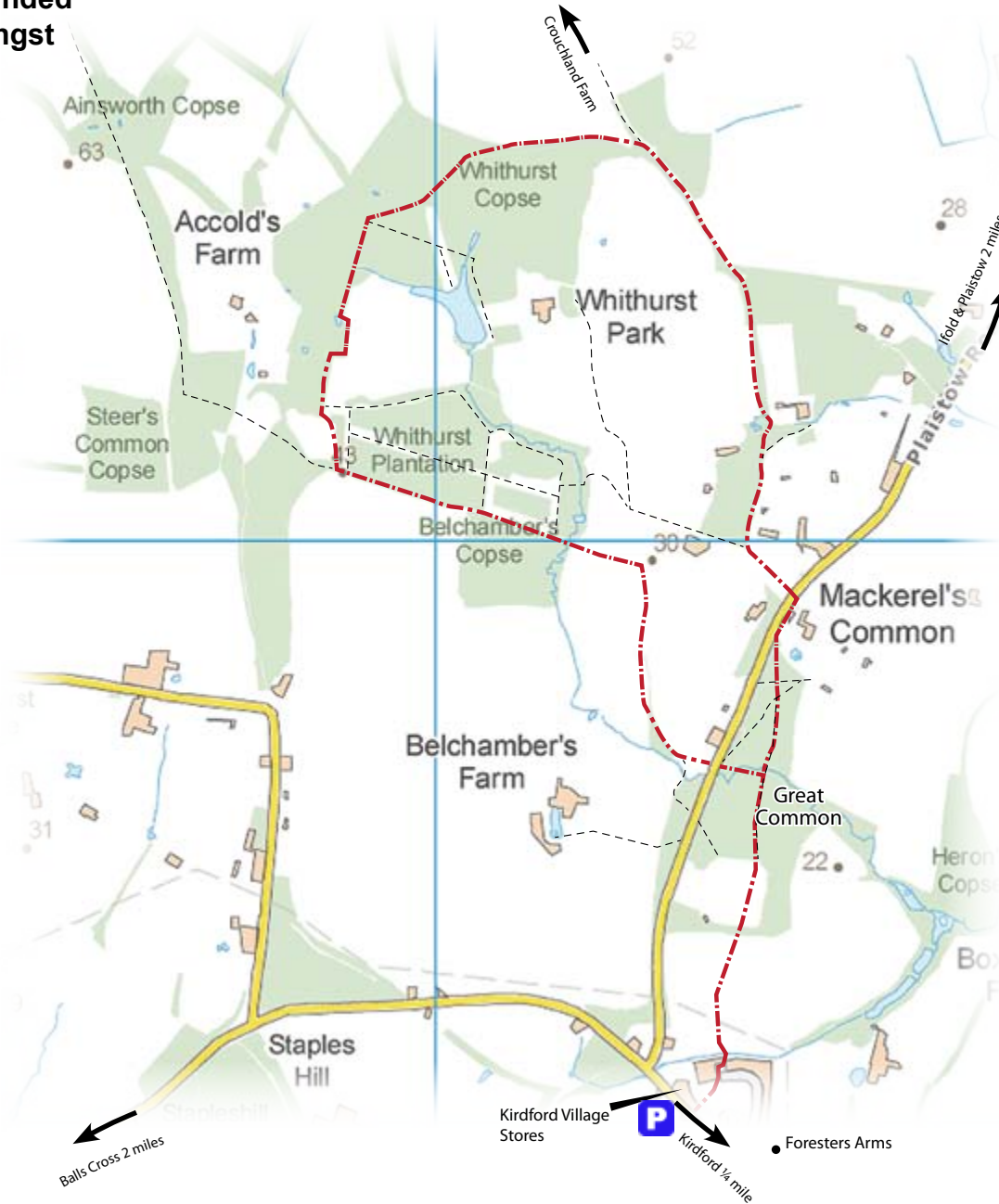


This beautiful area of Low Weald countryside is characterised by the old commons around Kirdford (Great, Mackerel's and Steer's Commons), once grazed by commoners' livestock but these days covered by regenerated woodland. Areas of original ancient woodland also exist, framed by small 'assart' fields created from the original 'wild wood'. Diverse wildflower grasslands remain at Whithurst Park (private), which are managed as traditional hay meadows without the addition of chemical fertilizers. The woods are alive with Bluebells and Primroses in spring, accompanied by the unmistakable call of the Cuckoo. In summer, the meadows are buzzing with Common Blue butterflies nectaring on the abundant Birds-foot Trefoil flowers ("eggs and bacon" colours), along with Small Heath and Grizzled Skipper butterflies. The traditional woodland management, including coppicing of Hazel, benefits butterflies such as the Silver-washed Fritillary which is found here, as is the enigmatic Purple Emperor. The wet woods attract numerous bats, including the rare Barbastelle bat from Ebernoe Common (to the west), and the woodland ponds and streams attract reptiles such as Grass Snakes, and dragonflies including the rare Scarce Chaser in summer time.



**Kirdford** (Cynered's Ford) – a most attractive village of 900 people, a centre of glass-making in medieval times, with an interesting church and flowery churchyard.

**Kirdford Growers Co-operative** - established in 1934 as the first fruit co-operative in the country, to service the large number of apple orchards that existed here until they were removed from the 1970s onwards for economic reasons. The processing and packing plant closed in 2000.



A gentle route on generally flat terrain, rising gradually to the north-west, with some stiles and potentially mud along the bridleway section in the north.

4 km (2.5 miles)



Start at Kirdford village, located 4 km west of Wisborough Green on the A272.



OS map reference: TQ014270  
Nearest Post Code: RH14 0NW  
SatNav Lat/Long: 51.033660, -0.554471



Park in the lay-by in front of Kirdford village stores.



Bus - Service 75/76, Billingshurst to Petworth via Kirdford.



Starting from Kirdford Village Stores, walk along the public footpath through the new housing estate (formerly the site of Kirdford Growers), heading through the woodland of Great Common to the Plaistow Road. Cross over this road at Lakelands Farm, and follow the lane and bridleway opposite until you turn off to the west on the marked 'conservation walk' permissive path loop that leads you around Whithurst Park (private). Passing through woodland, the path skirts an attractive lake and gives you views of colourful wildflower grassland before re-entering managed woodland on the public footpath at Whithurst Plantation. You emerge into fields at the east end, following the signed footpath back to the Plaistow Road and returning to Kirdford village through Great Common wood once more. Note that a longer walking circuit is possible by continuing along the public bridleway north to Crouchland Farm and returning in a loop through Steer's Common and Belchamber's Farm.



**The Village Stores** - community-run shop.

**The Foresters Arms**, Kirdford, RH14 0ND.  
01403 820205. Beer garden with play area; ample parking.



Scarce Chaser



Primroses



# 10 Lod valley, Lurgashall to Lord's Wood

**Quintessential rolling English countryside, following a river course with lakes, wetlands and wildflower grassland to an ancient woodland**

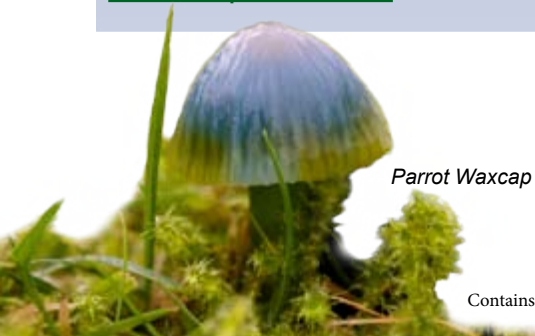


This walk leads you on a very pleasant circuit through typical Sussex countryside, with part of it following the River Lod running south from Mill Pond. This waterbody and the river valley contain many interesting habitats, ranging from wet woodland to reed swamp and wildflower-rich grassland. Mill Pond is reputedly one of the best sites in the county for breeding and wintering waterfowl, with birds including Kingfishers, Yellow Wagtails and Lapwing having been recorded. Diverse river valley grassland fields support the scarce plant Sneezewort and other attractive flowers including Betony, Devil's-bit Scabious and Tormential. Lord's Wood is a managed ancient woodland with diverse plant, insect and bird interest, particularly in the open ride under the electricity pylon line where you may see Orange-Tip and Speckled Wood butterflies in the spring and the Brown Argus butterfly and migrant Silver-Y moths in the summer. Lastly, if you look closely at Lurgashall's cricket green, you can find sweet-smelling patches of Chamomile growing amongst the short turf in summer, or rare and colourful species of Waxcap fungi in the autumn months.

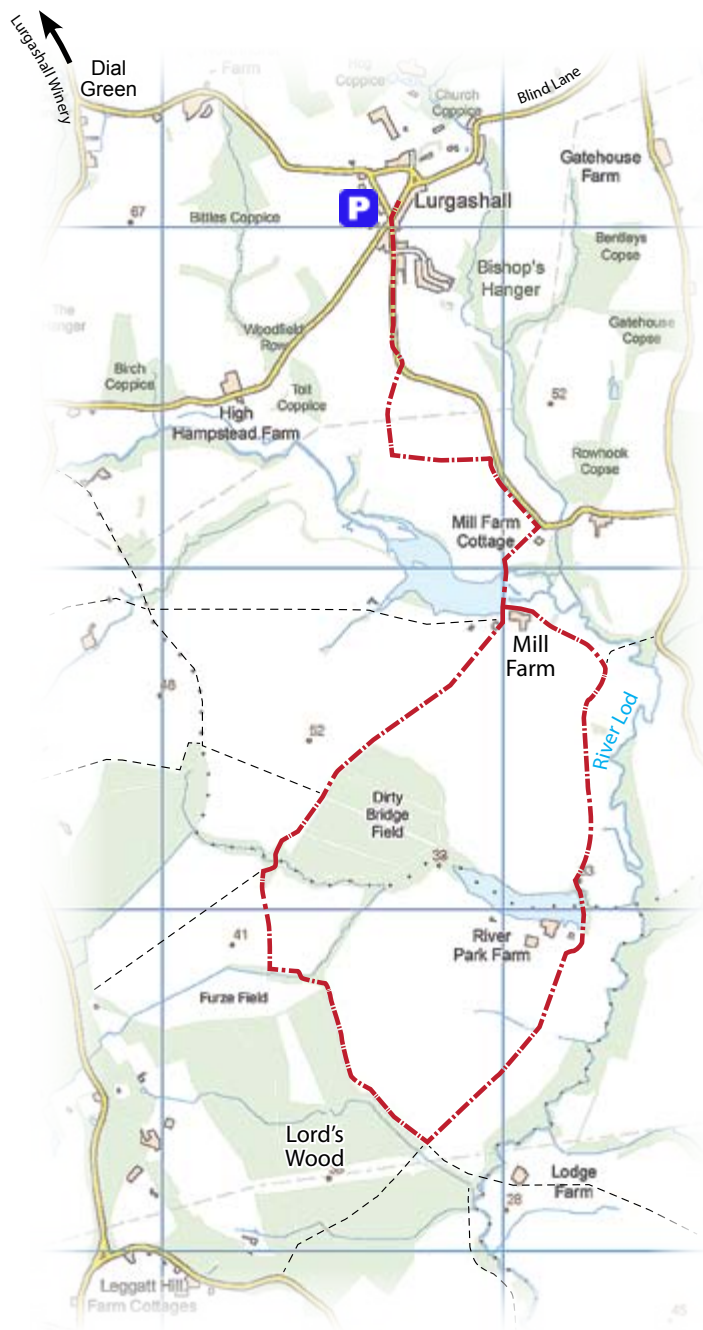


**Lurgashall** - a quintessential English village, of Saxon origin, with a population of 600 based around the village green where cricket is played in the summer months.

**Lurgashall Mill** - the original was built in the 17th century, and is now relocated to the [Weald and Downland open air museum](#) near Chichester.



Parrot Waxcap



Walk is mostly flat and easy-going, but has many stiles.  
6 km (3.7 miles)



Start at Lurgashall village green, located 2 km west of the A283 Petworth-Milford main road at the end of Blind Lane



OS map reference: SU936271  
Nearest Post Code: GU28 9ET  
SatNav Lat/Long: 51.035363, -0.665094



Park considerably around the village green



Bus - AMK Coaches Service 68/68A Loxwood-Chichester, via Lurgashall (very limited).  
Train - Haslemere station 9 km to NW.



Head south along the lane from the village green as far as the stile and public footpath that takes you down through fields to the large lake of Mill Pond, and then over the dam bridge to Lurgashall Mill Farm. A public footpath runs southwards from here, following the course of the River Lod to cross over another dam bridge at the lake at River Park Farm. Continue on the footpath southwards through farm fields to Lord's Wood, where you can choose to explore Lord's Wood along the footpath before doubling back to walk northwards along the eastern wood edge up to a farm lane. Continue north along the footpath to pick up the farm track and bridleway north-eastwards back to Mill Farm, from where you follow your original route back to Lurgashall.



Lurgashall Village Stores - shop and post office.

**Lurgashall Winery** - local fruit liqueurs, honey meads and country wines, plus tea room, 1 km to west at Dial Green. GU28 9HA. 01428 707292

Noahs Ark pub, Lurgashall.



Betony

# 11 The Mens, near Wisborough Green

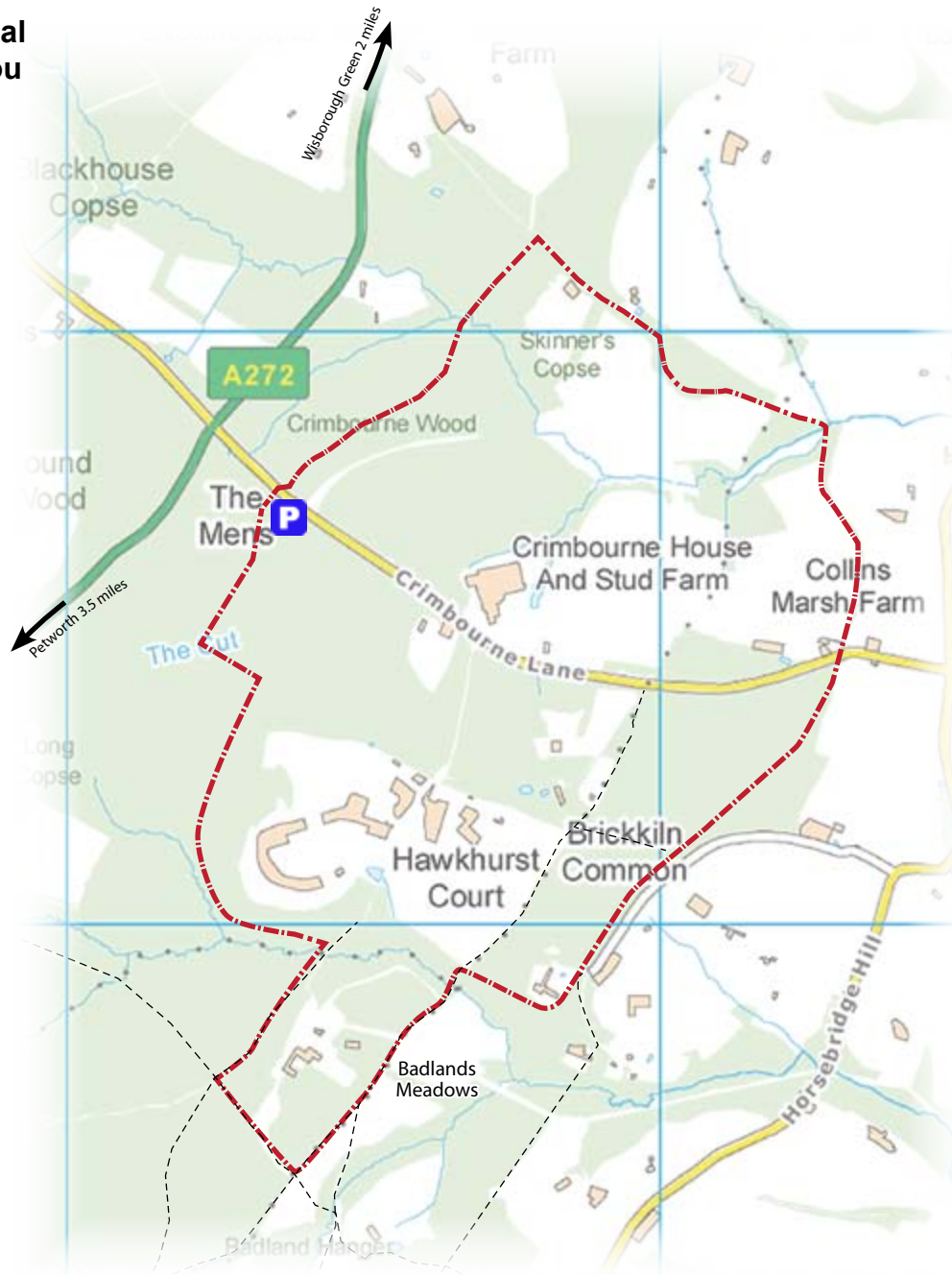
**A large wild wood of international importance for nature, where you can truly lose yourself!**



The Mens is a [Sussex Wildlife Trust nature reserve](#) covering 160 hectares, designated as an international [Special Area of Conservation](#) for its acid Beech and Oak woodland as well as its rare bat communities, notably the Barbastelle bat. Oak dominates to the north on Low Weald clay, giving way to Beech on the higher ground of the greensand at Bedham to the south. Typical ancient woodland trees such as Wild Service and Midland Hawthorn are common here. Its unusual name comes from the Anglo-Saxon word 'ge-mænnes', meaning common land. Formerly a pasture woodland, the wood was subsequently converted to 'high forest' for timber production in the mid-1700s, preventing the commoners from exercising their grazing rights. Since the 1970s the woodland has been subject to a well-studied 'minimum intervention' approach, in which natural processes take their course in the absence of human intervention. Many different types of woodland birds can be heard, if not seen, in the dense wood, including common species such as the Nuthatch, as well as the rare and very elusive Lesser-spotted Woodpecker. Insects thrive here, including the attractive Silver-washed Fritillary and White Admiral butterflies as well as very rare deadwood beetles. Abundant fungi, such as Beefsteak Fungus and Chicken-of-the-Woods, thrive on the large amount of natural dead wood present. The woodland is at its most beautiful in the autumn with the changing leaf colours. Adjacent woodlands and grasslands are also notable for their conservation value, including Brickkiln Common ancient woodland and Badlands Meadows. This latter area is managed by the Sussex Wildlife Trust to conserve its wildflower-rich grasslands, which have never been ploughed or fertilized. These play host to uncommon plants such as Dyer's Greenweed and the green-flowered Lady's-mantle.



**Hawkhurst Court** - lying amongst The Mens woodland. This site was formerly a school and was also the base in World War II for a Canadian army division, from which they mounted the famous Dieppe raid in 1942.



Undulating terrain; the paths can get very muddy in the winter months, and some of the tracks are also bridleways.

4 km (2.5 miles)



Start at Sussex Wildlife Trust reserve car park, located in the woodland on south side of Crimbourne Lane, just off the A272 main road between Petworth and Wisborough Green



OS map reference: TQ023236  
Nearest Post Code: RH14 0HR  
SatNav Lat/Long: 51.003145, -0.542677



Small Sussex Wildlife Trust reserve car park with height barrier (cars only).



Bus - nearest bus stop is Wisborough Green (2 miles distant), on Compass Service 75/76 Billingshurst-Petworth.  
Train - Billingshurst station 4.5 miles; Pulborough station 6.5 miles.



From the car park, cross Crimbourne Lane to pass through Crimbourne Wood to the north, crossing a stream footbridge over Beeches Brook, before looping round on the public bridleway to follow woodland strips and grassland fields to the east. Crossing back over the minor road again, the footpath leads you southwards through Brickkiln Common woodland to emerge at the Badlands wildflower meadows. Re-entering the woodland of The Mens, you head northwards to a small lane, which you leave immediately upon crossing the stream bridge to follow the winding woodland path up a hill and down the other side to end up back at the car park.



The Cricketers, Wisborough Green.





# 12 Petworth Park

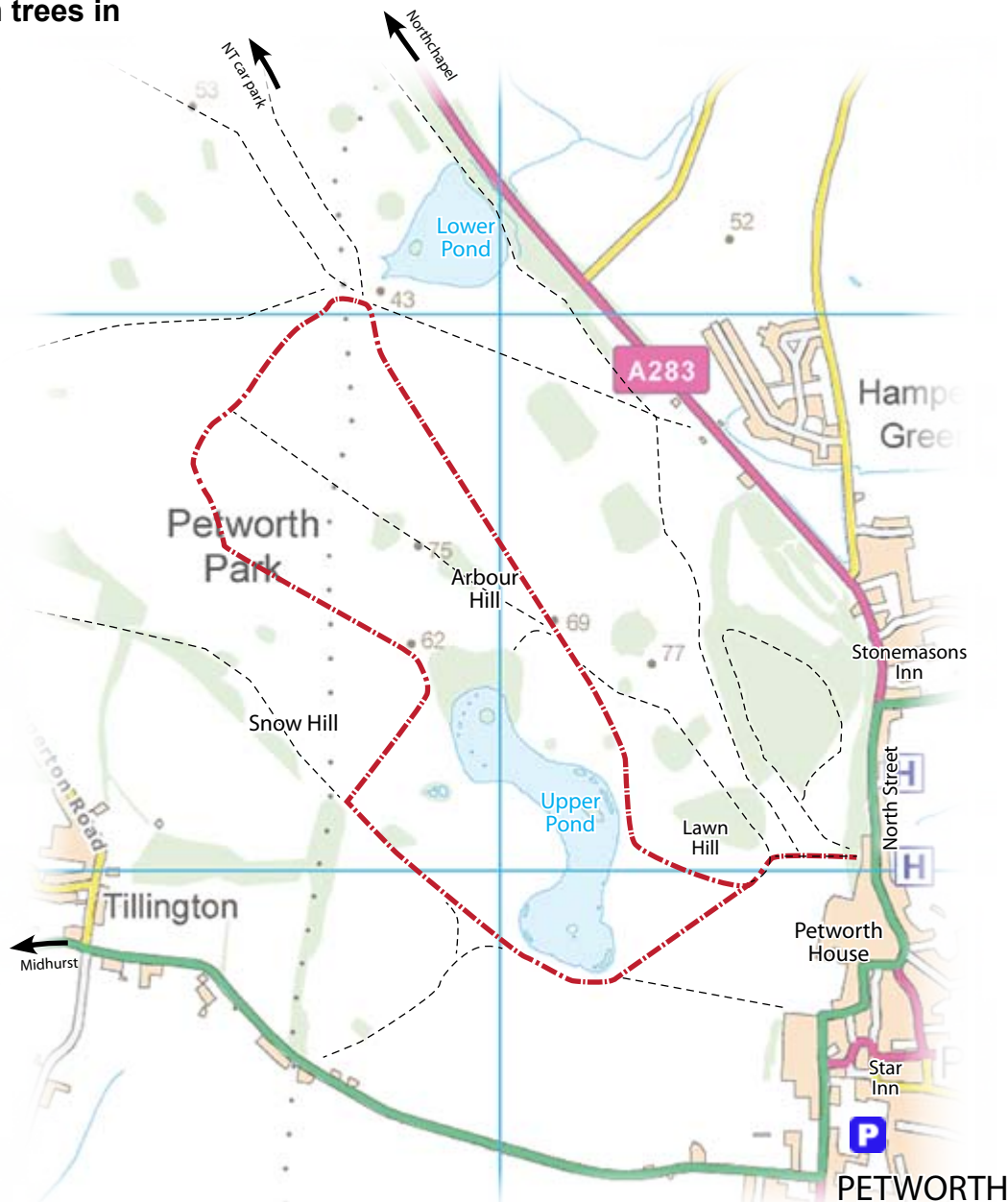
## Ancient deer park with veteran trees in a historic designed landscape



Petworth Park provides extensive walks across its 280 hectares, landscaped from the earlier medieval deer park by Lancelot 'Capability' Brown in 1750 to create what was considered to be a naturalistic landscape. Hills and wooded boundaries were planted with a variety of deciduous trees to create a gentle transition from park to more distant countryside. There are fine views of Petworth House and grounds from various points, including Snow Hill. Petworth Park hosts the oldest herd of Fallow Deer in England. Many older veteran Oak and Sweet Chestnut trees are found around the park, especially on the hills around Upper Pond where they range up to 1000 years old. Indeed, a broad hollow Lime tree that is possibly the largest and oldest such tree in the country is to be found in the west part of the walk. These trees are important for the numerous rare deadwood beetles that they host, as well as for birds and bats: an amazing twelve species of bats have been recorded here, including the very rare Grey Long-eared Bat. Many different species of rare lichens and fungi have been recorded in the Park, including Waxcaps and Boletes. The Lower and Upper Ponds attract an array of waterfowl, such as Coots and Moorhens as well as Kingfishers. Numerous amphibians, fish, dragonflies and damselflies frequent these waterbodies including Toads, Pike and the rare Downy Emerald dragonfly.



**Petworth House** - rebuilt in 1688 around the ancient manor of the Percy family, the Third Earl of Egremont amassed an incredible art collection. Today, the National Trust (NT) has the finest collection of paintings and sculptures in its care here, including works by Turner, Van Dyck, Reynolds and Blake, ancient and Neo-classical sculpture, fine furniture and carvings by Gibbons. NT Infoline 01798 343929.



The parkland paths have some undulating terrain; most of the grass pathways are mown and fairly even. 3.5 km (2.2 miles)



Start at Petworth town - pedestrian access to the Park (entry free, gates close at dusk) is from the north end of the Cowyard (brown gates) off North Street and through the tunnel under the Pleasure Ground.



OS map reference: SU976219  
Nearest Post Code: GU28 0DP  
SatNav Lat/Long: 50.988830, -0.609936



Petworth town centre car park, situated just south of the town square. Pay and display.



Bus - Stagecoach Service 1, Worthing to Midhurst (passes Pulborough train station); Compass Service 75/76, Billingshurst to Petworth  
Train - Pulborough station 5¼ miles



Skirt around Upper Pond and head north past Lawn Hill and Arbour Hill to Lower Pond, before returning in a loop to the west, passing Snow Hill, and back to Petworth House. An optional extension to this walk continues northwards to the farthest car park in a circuit of the whole park (4-mile route), for which the National Trust produce a guide.



Tourist Information - available at Petworth Library.

Public toilets - Petworth town centre car park.

National Trust Tea Room and Shop (free entry to these when house open) - offering home-cooked food in the self-service licensed restaurant, and locally produced goods.

**Star Inn**, Market Square, Petworth, GU28 0AH. 01798 342569. Food & real ales served all day; walker-friendly pub.

**Stonemasons Inn**, North Street, Petworth, GU28 9NL. 01798 342510. Traditional pub with accommodation, real ales and beer garden.



Fallow Deer

# 13 Sidney Wood, Chiddingfold Forest

**Ancient oak wood with diverse wildlife and wetland areas in the disused canal, fringed by attractive farmland**



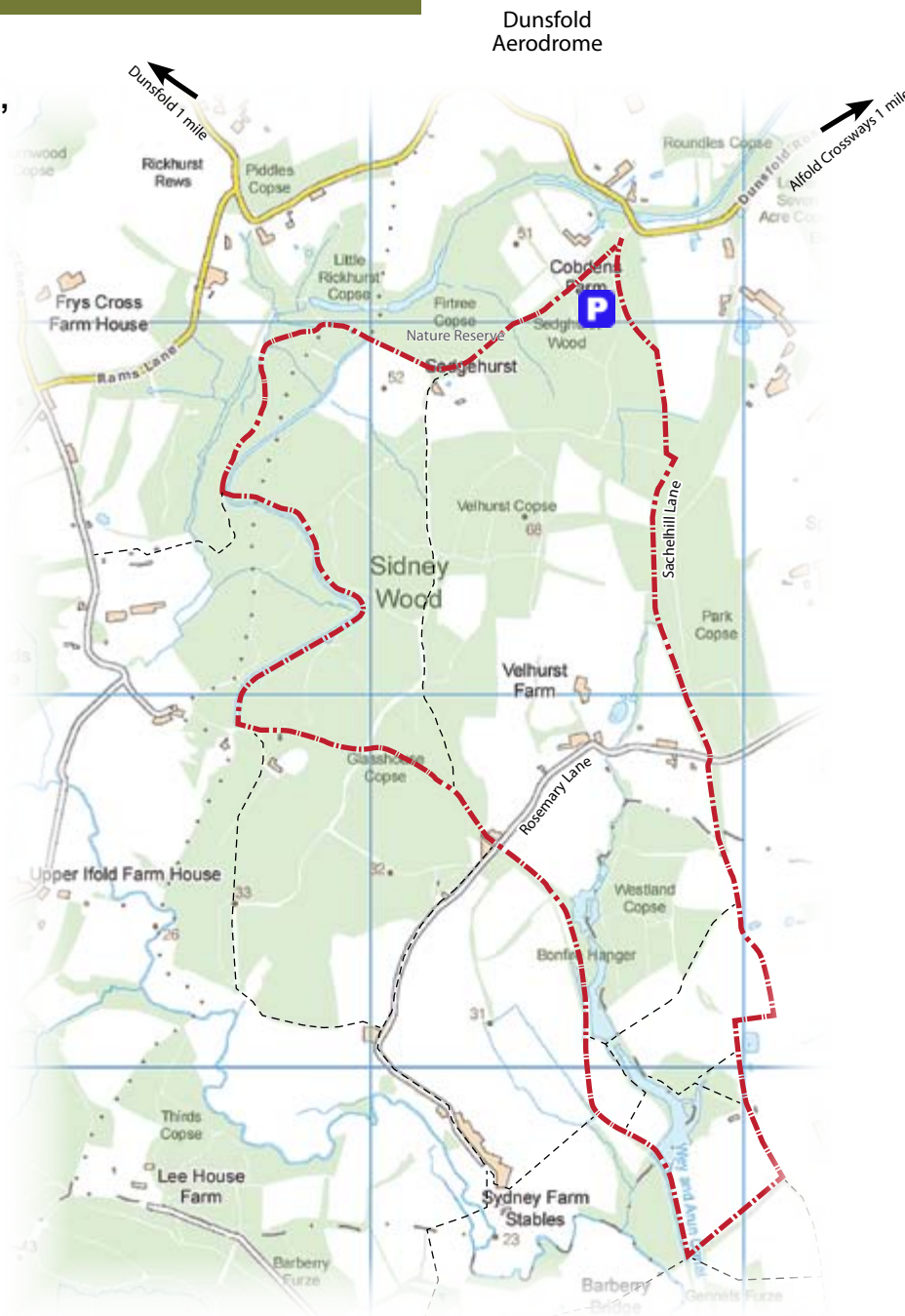
Sidney Wood is a large ancient oak woodland managed by the Forestry Commission for its timber, wildlife and recreational interest, and forms part of the **Chiddingfold Forest Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)**. The nationally important woodland wildlife community comprises valuable bird, butterfly and moth, beetle and bat populations. The rich woodland bird fauna includes Long-eared Owl, Lesser-spotted Woodpecker, Nightingale and Hawfinch. Important butterflies include the Wood White and Grizzled and Dingy Skippers along forest rides, and the rare Common Fan-Foot moth in oak and hazel woodland near the car park. The beautiful but elusive Greater Butterfly Orchid grows in Sidney Wood. The farmland to the south contains important smaller woods and wetland areas, some of which are managed sympathetically for the benefit of wildlife under the **Environmental Stewardship** scheme.



**Fir Tree Copse** - a small Surrey Wildlife Trust nature reserve, close to the car park, with a diverse ground flora and several important moth and fungi species.

**Wey and Arun Canal** - although long-disused here, the canal reaches its maximum elevation ("summit level") northwards from Sidney Wood towards Cranleigh.

**Dunsfold Aerodrome** - rapidly established by the Canadian army to support the war effort in World War II, this large area north of Sidney Wood is presently used for motor sports and by light aircraft and industry.



Sidney Wood itself contains a network of flat forestry tracks, although the Wey-South Path and public bridleways of our walking route can get very muddy. 5 km (3.1 miles)



Start at Sidney Wood car park, located just off Alfold Road, between Dunsfold Common and Alfold Crossways



OS map reference: TQ026351  
Nearest Post Code: GU6 8HU  
SatNav Lat/Long: 51.106468,-0.535145



Large woodland car park provided by the Forestry Commission (free).



Bus - Arriva Service 42/44 from Guildford, Godalming and Cranleigh stops at Alfold Crossways 1.5 km distant.



From the car park, head back up to the road and turn west at the tarmac track to follow the Wey-South Path public bridleway route, which passes Fir Tree Copse Surrey Wildlife Trust nature reserve before crossing over the disused Wey & Arun Canal. From here you can follow the Wey-South Path and parts of the course of the snaking old canal all the way southwards through Sidney Wood to exit the woodland at Rosemary Lane. Continue south across this small road along the way-marked route through fields until you reach the Sussex Border Path bridleway where you turn to the east. Soon after, turn back north along another public bridleway to cross Rosemary Lane once more and continue up Sachelhill Lane woodland path. Near the end, fork westwards to re-enter Sidney Wood and then return north to the car park.



Three Compasses pub (by Dunsfold Aerodrome)





# 14 Wey & Arun Canal, Loxwood

## Towpath along a restored canal, passing through farmland and woodland hosting a wealth of wetland wildlife



This restored section of the Wey & Arun Canal runs through woodland and farmland parallel to the Loxwood Stream river course (just to the south), which passes unhindered beneath the canal at the Drungewick Aqueduct. The wet woodlands of Alder and Willow along the canal are brimming with Bluebells and Wood Anemone flowers in the spring. This wetland corridor provides a rich variety of habitats for wildlife, including many species of birds such as Herons, Great-crested Grebes, Moorhens, Swans and Mallard ducks, as well as different bats, such as the Natterer's Bat and Soprano Pipistrelle, and Grass Snakes. Dragonflies and damselflies are abundant among the rich aquatic vegetation, including the beautiful dainty Banded Demoiselle.

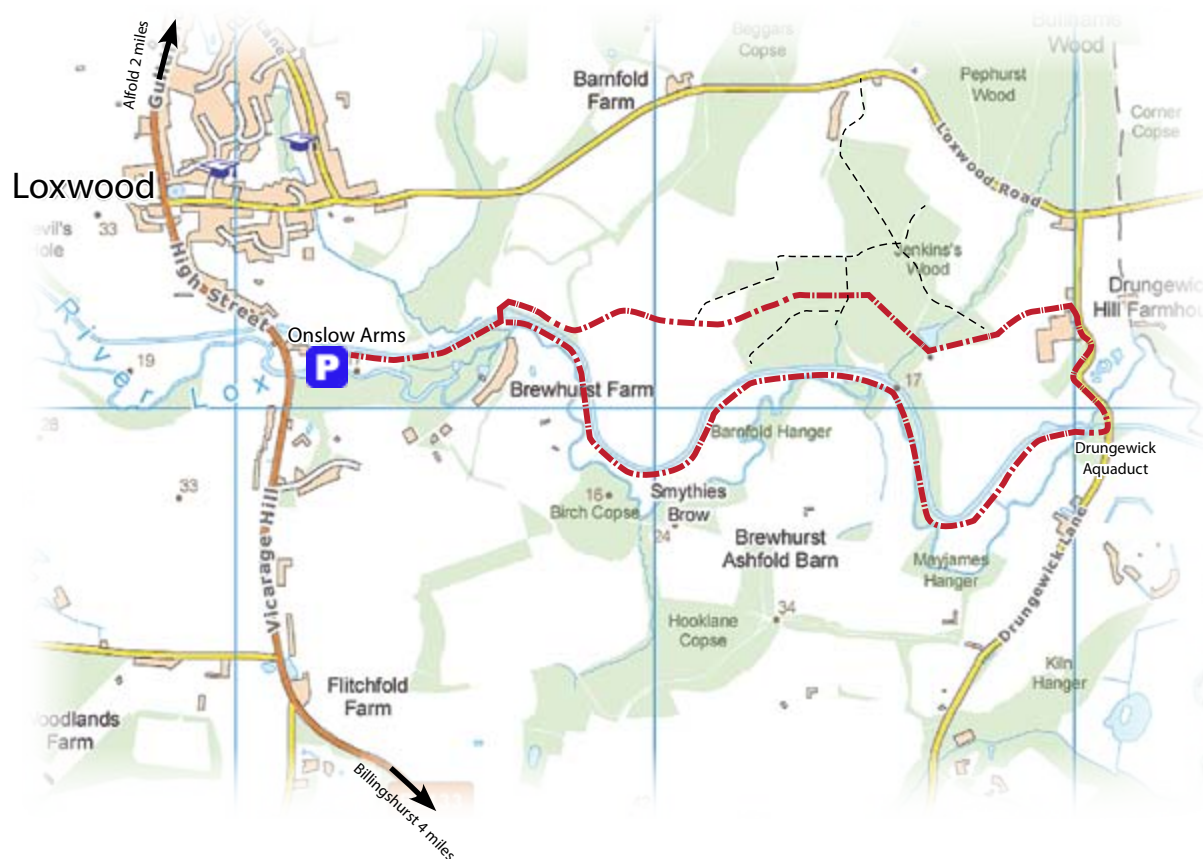


Grey Heron



**Wey & Arun Canal** - this 'Loxwood Link' section of the canal has been lovingly restored by [Wey & Arun Canal Trust \(WACT\)](#) volunteers and contractors, including the construction of Loxwood tunnel and lock (completed in 2009) and restoration of Brewhurst Lock (1994-97), Baldwin's Knob Lock (1991-93) and the impressive Drungewick Aqueduct (2002-3). WACT has been working to restore the 23-mile waterway for public use since the 1970s, and provides information leaflets at the car park and each lock, as well as publishing the Wey-South Path guide.

**Wey-South Path** - mostly follows the original tow path of the disused Wey & Arun Canal - "London's Lost Route to the Sea" - which opened in 1816 to establish a waterborne trading route that connected the River Arun near Pulborough with the River Wey near Guildford for 50 years.



Very gentle and easy walk along the flat canal towpath; the suggested return leg to the north through fields and woods crosses rougher ground. 5 km (3.1 miles)



Start at canal car park behind the Onslow Arms pub, just east of the B2133 road immediately south of Loxwood village



OS map reference: TQ041311  
Nearest Post Code: RH14 0RN  
SatNav Lat/Long: 51.070164,-0.514482



The free car park for the canal is signed next to the Onslow Arms pub.



Bus - Several limited services, including Arriva Service 44 Guildford-Cranleigh.  
Train - Billingshurst station 4½ miles



Walk route: Head east along the canal towpath (the 'Loxwood Link', forming part of the Wey-South Path) for about 2½ kms, passing Brewhurst Lock and Bridge, Baldwin's Knob Lock and Barnsill Bridge until you cross over Drungewick Aqueduct to reach Drungewick Lane canal bridge. You can either head back the way you have just come from here, or for a longer more varied route cross over the bridge and walk up the road to take the footpath westwards from Drungewick Hill Farm down to woodland. Continue west to emerge from the wood to cross fields as far as Brewhurst Lane bridge, which you cross and return along the canal path to the car park.



Village shop and post office.

[Onslow Arms](#), High St., Loxwood, RH14 0RD 01403 752452. Walker-friendly with large car park; Serves good food and welcomes families and dogs.

Canal boat cruises - WACT operate three boats for public excursions at weekends and bank holidays from April to October (01403 752403).







## **The West Weald Landscape Project**

### ***Looking After A 'Living Landscape'***

Now that you have explored some of the West Weald Landscape's natural delights, you will be interested to learn that this area is being cared for and further improved under a pioneering landscape-scale partnership conservation initiative.

The West Weald Landscape Project (WWLP) is one of The Wildlife Trusts' 'Living Landscape' schemes that is building a brighter future for wildlife and people. Across the UK we are working to restore, recreate and reconnect wildlife habitats and species, and people to them. Under this natural recovery plan we aim to address past declines, ensure continued benefits from healthy ecosystems such as clean air and water, and confront future threats, particularly climate change.

The WWLP aims to conserve and enhance a healthy natural environment in the West Weald by promoting joined-up land management that benefits both nature and people. We focus on four 'core forest areas', around Ebernoe Common, The Mens, Chiddingfold Forest, and the Greensand Ridge near Midhurst - to deliver enhancements for key species, expand the area of surrounding natural habitats and encourage their sympathetic management for nature.

In tandem with these special focal areas, we work across the wider landscape to foster a network of ecological connections and wildlife-friendly countryside that allows wildlife to thrive and move around. Working in partnership with private landowners and farmers, we provide free advice and support to them to access funding schemes for conservation management. An extensive programme of environmental surveys and research underpins our land management advice, ensuring that conservation measures are targeted and effective. Ultimately our success will be judged by the restoration of a wildlife-rich countryside, as well as by local people and visitors in terms of their support, understanding, enjoyment, and inspiration from a healthy natural landscape.



This project in the West Weald is one of a suite of 'Living Landscape' areas of activity led by the Sussex Wildlife Trust. All of these projects aim to reconnect our fragmented habitats and see wildlife thrive as well as connecting people to their landscape. Indeed, all of the 47 Wildlife Trusts in the UK are working towards 'A Living Landscape' to foster More-Bigger-Better-Connected nature across the country.

We hope that you enjoy your time outdoors in the West Weald Landscape, and invite you to learn more by visiting our website [www.westweald.org.uk](http://www.westweald.org.uk). Please also consider making a donation, or becoming a member of the Sussex Wildlife Trust to sustain our vital conservation efforts at [www.sussexwildlifetrust.org.uk](http://www.sussexwildlifetrust.org.uk)







The West Weald Landscape Project is a Sussex Wildlife Trust project, run in partnership with other organisations and principally supported by The Tubney Charitable Trust.

This project promotes the integrated management of a viable and enhanced landscape in the West Weald for people and nature.

The Sussex Wildlife Trust works with the following partnership of organisations, which helps to steer and deliver the project: Natural England, Forestry Commission, Environment Agency, Butterfly Conservation, Surrey Wildlife Trust, South Downs National Park Authority, Surrey Hills AONB, Leconfield Estate, Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group, National Trust, Woodland Trust, West Sussex County Council, Surrey County Council, Chichester District Council and Waverley Borough Council.

West Weald Landscape Project  
Sussex Wildlife Trust, Woods Mill, Henfield, West Sussex BN5 9SD  
Tel : 01273 492630 e-mail : [westweald@sussexwt.org.uk](mailto:westweald@sussexwt.org.uk)  
[www.WestWeald.org.uk](http://www.WestWeald.org.uk)

