

15 SHORT WALKS IN THE

SURREY HILLS



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CICERONE

SHORT WALKS IN THE SURREY HILLS

by Nike Werstroh and Jacint Mig

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The wide paths of the Denbies estate are easy to follow (Walk 11)

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USING THIS GUIDE

Routes in this book

In this book you will find a selection of easy or moderate walks suitable for almost everyone, including casual walkers and families with children, or for when you only have a short time to fill. The routes have been carefully chosen to allow you to explore the area and its attractions. Most routes are circular, although some linear walks may be included that use public transport to get back to the start. Although there may be some climbs there is no challenging terrain, but do bear in mind that conditions can sometimes be wet or muddy underfoot. A route summary table is included on page 6 to help you choose the right walk.

Clothing and footwear

You won't need any special equipment to enjoy these walks. The weather in Britain can be changeable, so choose clothing suitable for the season and wear or carry a waterproof jacket. For footwear, comfortable walking boots or trainers with a good grip are best. A small rucksack for drinks, snacks and spare clothing is useful. See www.adventuresmart.uk.

Walk descriptions

At the beginning of each walk you'll find all the information you need:

- start/finish location, with postcode and a what3words address to help you find it
- parking and transport information, estimated walking time, total distance and climb
- details of public toilets available along the route and where you can get refreshments
- a summary of the key highlights of the walk and what you might see

Timings given are the time to complete the walk at a reasonable walking pace. Allow extra time for extended stops or if walking with children.

The route is described in clear, easy-to-follow directions, with each waypoint marked on an accompanying map extract. It's a good idea to read the whole of the route instructions before setting out, so that you know what to expect.

Maps, GPX files and what3words

Extracts from the OS 1:25,000 map accompany each route. GPX files for all the walks in this book are available to download at www.cicerone.co.uk/1153/gpx.

What3words is a free smartphone app which identifies every 3m square of the globe with a unique three-word address, e.g. [///destiny.cafe.sonic](https://www.what3words.com/products/what3words-app). For more information see <https://what3words.com/products/what3words-app>.

Walking with children

Even young children can be surprisingly strong walkers, but every family is different and you may need to adapt the timings given in this book to take that into account. Make sure you go at the pace of the slowest member and choose a walk with an exciting objective in mind, such as a cave, waterfall or picnic spot. Many of the walks can be shortened to suit – suggestions are included at the end of the route description.

Dogs

Sheep or cattle may be found grazing on a number of these walks. Keep dogs under control at all times so that they don't scare or disturb livestock or wildlife. Cattle, particularly cows with calves, may very occasionally pose a risk to walkers with dogs. If you ever feel threatened by cattle, you should let go of your dog's lead and let it run free.

Enjoying the countryside responsibly

Enjoy the countryside and treat it with respect to protect our natural environments. Stick to footpaths and take your litter home with you. When driving, slow down on rural roads and park considerately, or better still use public transport. For more details check out www.gov.uk/countryside-code.

The Countryside Code

Respect everyone

- be considerate to those living in, working in and enjoying the countryside
 - leave gates and property as you find them
- do not block access to gateways or driveways when parking
 - be nice, say hello, share the space
- follow local signs and keep to marked paths unless wider access is available

Protect the environment

- take your litter home – leave no trace of your visit
- do not light fires and only have BBQs where signs say you can
 - always keep dogs under control and in sight
- dog poo – bag it and bin it – any public waste bin will do
- care for nature – do not cause damage or disturbance

Enjoy the outdoors

- check your route and local conditions
- plan your adventure – know what to expect and what you can do
 - enjoy your visit, have fun, make a memory

ROUTE SUMMARY TABLE

WALK NAME	START POINT	TIME	DISTANCE
1. Tilford and Frensham Little Pond	Tilford East Bridge	2¼hr	8km (5 miles)
2. Crooksbury Hill and Waverley Abbey	Waverley Abbey House	2hr	6.5km (3¾ miles)
3. Devil's Punch Bowl	Devil's Punch Bowl, Hindhead	2½hr	8km (5 miles)
4. Guildford and the River Wey	Town Bridge, Guildford	2hr	7km (4¼ miles)
5. St Martha's Hill and Chilworth Gunpowder Mills	Chantries car park	3hr	8km (5 miles)
6. Bramley old railway and the River Wey	Bramley	2½hr	8km (5 miles)
7. Newlands Corner and Silent Pool	Newlands Corner	2½hr	8km (5 miles)
8. Shere woodlands	Shere	1¾hr	5km (3 miles)
9. Hurtwood and Holmbury Hill	Peaselake	2½hr	8km (5 miles)
10. The Lovelace Bridges	Green Dene car park	2hr	6.5km (4 miles)
11. Denbies Hillside and vineyard	Dorking railway station	2hr	6km (3¾ miles)
12. Box Hill and the Stepping Stones	Box Hill and Westhumble railway station	1½hr	4.5km (2¾ miles)
13. Box Hill Hike	Box Hill	4hr	12.5km (7¾ miles)
14. Leith Hill	Coldharbour	2hr	6km (3¾ miles)
15. Reigate Fort	Reigate railway station	2½hr	8km (5 miles)

HIGHLIGHTS
Medieval bridge and pond, river
Views and ruined abbey
Views and history
Views and chapel ruins, river
Views and remains of mill
River and woodlands
Views, pond and gin distillery
Charming village, woodlands
Views and iron age fort
Historic bridges and woodlands
Views and vineyard
Views, history
Views, history, woodlands
Tower and views, woodlands
Views and fort

SYMBOLS USED ON ROUTE MAPS



Start point



Finish point



Start and finish at the same place

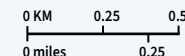


Waypoint



Route line

MAPPING IS SHOWN
AT A SCALE OF 1:25,000



DOWNLOADED THE GPX
FILES FOR FREE AT
www.cicerone.co.uk/1153/GPX



Find a charming pub for a lunch or refreshment

INTRODUCTION



The south-facing slopes of the Surrey Hills are ideal for growing grapes (Walk 11)

Less than an hour from the bustle of London you will find England's most densely wooded county, Surrey. A rich mosaic of farmland, woodland, heathland, downs, commons and rivers make up this diverse landscape. The rolling Surrey Hills that cover a quarter of the county have been designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) since 1958. Not surprisingly, writers such as Jane Austen, CS Lewis, Charles Dickens and Lewis Carroll were all inspired by the beautiful scenery of Surrey. The landscape has also provided a backdrop for many scenes in numerous movies.

This relatively small area has lots to offer for outdoor lovers. The narrow roads that connect the villages attract cyclists, and mountain bikers use some of the bridleways in the

woodlands. Narrowboats slowly navigate through the locks and kayakers enjoy the River Wey all year round. Meanwhile the extensive network of paths in the dense woodland provides endless routes for walking and running. The Surrey Hills may not be high, but numerous vantage points offer some surprisingly fine views.

The wooded slopes and the heathlands are important habitat for a variety of wildlife, but it is the human hand that has shaped and used the landscape for thousands of years. There is evidence of iron age forts and as you follow the trails, you will sooner or later stumble upon a WW2 pillbox or a fort that was part of the 19th-century defence line. Other historical sights to be seen as you follow the walks in this book include old chapels, medieval

SHORT WALKS IN THE SURREY HILLS

bridges, a disused railway line, and an historic gunpowder mill. More modern features include vineyards and a gin distillery.

Walking in the Surrey Hills

From leisurely riverside walks to afternoon strolls in leafy woodlands, from panoramic views to hidden history, walking is the best way to explore the Surrey Hills. The walks in this book can be enjoyed all year round through the changing seasons. In spring bluebells carpet the forest floor and during the summer months the woodland is myriad shades of green. Autumn dresses the trees in spectacular colours and on crisp winter days, you can enjoy far-reaching views from the hills.

The wooded Surrey Hills are criss-crossed with a network of

bridleways and public footpaths that are used and enjoyed by walkers, runners and dog walkers. Many of the walks described in this book also make use of the long-distance North Downs Way that traverses the rolling chalk hills, heathlands, pastures and woodlands, visiting some of the iconic beauty spots along the way. Allow time to stop for a picnic or finish your walk with a drink in a cosy pub in one of the historic market towns or charming villages.

Things to see

With good train and bus links from London it is easy to explore Surrey. Follow one of the well-trodden popular paths to Box Hill (Walks 12 and 13), Leith Hill (Walk 14) or Holmbury Hill (Walk 9) for great views. Stroll the



The Wey and the Mole are the main rivers in Surrey

streets of the charming village of Sheer (Walk 8) or explore the county town of Guildford (Walk 4). Only a short walk from Guildford town centre you find St Catherine's Hill with a 14-century chapel ruin (Walk 4) or St Martha's Hill with a church (Walk 5).

Travel

The attractive towns and villages in Surrey offer a slower pace of life while still remaining well connected with London. There are frequent train services to Guildford and Dorking and most of the trails in the Surrey Hills are easily accessible from the capital for a pleasant day out. The major towns can be reached by train and many of

the villages mentioned in the book are served by buses. The walks in this book are all circular. There are, however, a few that start from a car park outside of towns and villages and if you don't have your own transport you might have to arrange a short taxi or Uber ride to the start.

Where to stay

If you want to spend a couple of days in the area there are places to stay in Guildford, Dorking and Farnham, and there are inns in some of the villages. If you would prefer something different, there are plenty of privately rented rooms and cottages to be found on airbnb.



Far-reaching views from Newlands Corner (Walk 7)



Crossing the River Wey

WALK 1

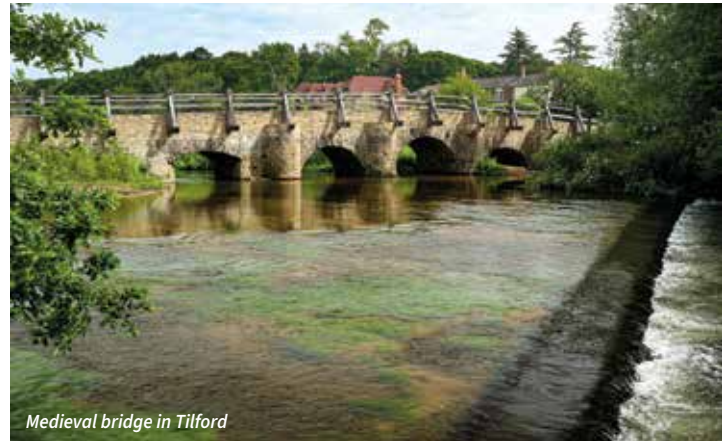
Tilford and Frensham Little Pond

Start/finish	<i>Tilford East Bridge</i>
Locate	<i>GU10 2BU ///cashier.stickler.messaging</i>
Cafes/pubs	<i>Pub in Tilford, cafe by Frensham Little Pond</i>
Transport	<i>Take Tilford Road from Farnham. Bus from Farnham to Charles Hill (B3001) 2km from the start</i>
Parking	<i>Tilford Green car park</i>
Toilets	<i>No public toilets available</i>

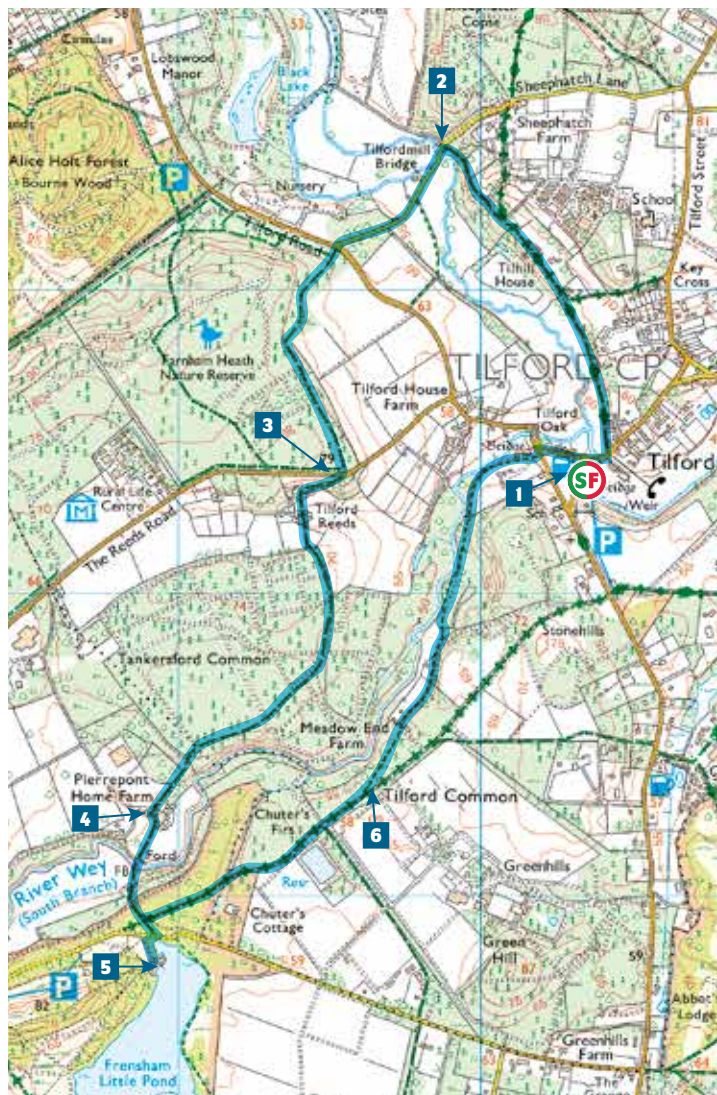
From the medieval bridge in Tilford this walk wanders through woodland to Frensham Little Pond. You can picnic on the sandy shore or extend the trail and walk around the pond. Return to Tilford alongside the river and treat yourself to a drink in the old pub on the village green.

Time: 2¼hr
Distance: 8km
(5 miles)
Climb: 95m

A gentle woodland walk with a visit to a tranquil heathland pond



Medieval bridge in Tilford



1 From the village green cross **Tilford East Bridge** and then take the footpath to the left by the pillbox. Follow this narrow path (alongside a meadow) for a few minutes and upon reaching a tarmac road, go left. Pass a farm (**Tilhill House**) and soon the road becomes a wide footpath. When it splits take the left branch through woodland. Ignoring a track joining from the left, continue straight on as the path drops down.

2 Reach a road (**Sheephatch Lane**), go left to cross over Tilfordmill Bridge and continue along the lane. At the junction cross Tilford Road and enter **Farnham Heath Nature Reserve**. Notice a lime kiln on the right-hand side of the path. There is a network of footpaths in the woodland – follow

the wide well-trodden path straight on, ignoring any paths joining from the right. Walk alongside a fence and reach a road about 10–15min after entering the woodland.

3 Cross the road and continue along a track towards farm buildings. Follow the public bridleway, passing some buildings and then the path runs between fences. Stay on the bridleway through the heathland of **Tankersford Common** to reach **Pierrepont Farm**, which sells cheese and craft beer.

4 Skirt around the farm buildings, ignoring a road on the right, and then continue on a path. Shortly afterwards cross the wooden footbridge over the **River Wey South Branch**. Ignore a path on the right and continue straight



on and a few minutes beyond the bridge reach a track. Go left and then immediately right on a path. When the path splits keep right and follow it through shrubs to a road. Cross the road and head towards the cafe building and **Frensham Little Pond**.

5 The bank of the pond is an ideal place for a picnic. From the pond return to the track and turn right. Shortly after cross a wooden bridge over a stream (bed) and follow the broad track for about 10min.

6 Leave the track to the left through a kissing gate and follow the footpath past a farm building and continue along a track. Leave this track to the

left on a path and walk alongside a fence and soon by the river. This path takes you back to **Tilford** village green.

It is believed that the ford at Tilford was created by the monks of Waverley Abbey in 1128 and the bridge was constructed in 1286. The recently restored medieval bridge connects Rushmoor and Tilford.

+ To lengthen

Follow the path around Frensham Little Pond, adding 2.5km (about 1hr) to the walk.



Frensham Little Pond

Frensham Little Pond was created in the 13th century when William de Raleigh, Bishop of Winchester, ordered ponds to be created at Farnham to supply fresh fish for his visits to Farnham Castle. The pond was drained during WW2 to prevent it being used as a landmark by the enemy, and the area was used as a tank training ground. After the war it was cleared of shrubs, the 13th-century dam was repaired and the pond re-filled. Today it is a sanctuary for wildlife.

15 SHORT WALKS IN THE SURREY HILLS

Get outdoors and discover the best of the area with 15 short walks chosen by experts, for all abilities.

- ▶ Walks under 3 hours plus one challenge route
- ▶ Easy to follow with clear route descriptions
- ▶ Facilities, parking and highlights for every route
- ▶ No specialist gear needed
- ▶ Ordnance Survey mapping



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