Independent Hostel Guide

INTER-HOSTEL WALKING ROUTE

Hurtwood Hideout to Puttenham Barn

Along the Greensand Way and the Wey valley, Surrey Hills

By Simon Gibbs for Independent Hostels UK · independenthostels.co.uk







HURTWOOD HIDEOUT



PUTTENHAM BARN

26.3 KM · 16.4 MILES

ABOUT 330 M · 1,080 FT ASCENT

APPROX 6 HOURS

Out of the Hurtwood, along the Greensand Way, and by the River Wey to Puttenham.

The route leaves Hurtwood Hideout on the Greensand ridge and crosses the Hurtwood, a large area of woodland and heath, and climbs Pitch Hill on the way, before dropping to Chilworth and the Tillingbourne valley. From there it follows the water meadows and the River Wey Navigation, climbs briefly to Compton, and finishes on the North Downs Way at Puttenham Barn Bunkhouse, where the first walk began.

It is the third of three walks that join Puttenham Barn, Tanners Hatch Hostel and Hurtwood Hideout in a loop, and it crosses three kinds of country in a day: sandy heath, river meadow and chalk. The route follows a planned line along rights of way, so waymarks may differ slightly from the map.

History · The River Wey Navigation

The Wey Navigation, which you meet below St Catherine's Hill, was cut in the seventeenth century to carry goods between Guildford and the Thames. It is now a National Trust waterway, and its locks and towpath make an easy, level end to a hilly day.

START
Hurtwood Hideout

FINISH
Puttenham Barn Bunkhouse

DISTANCE
26.3 km, 16.4 miles

ASCENT
about 330 m, 1,080 ft

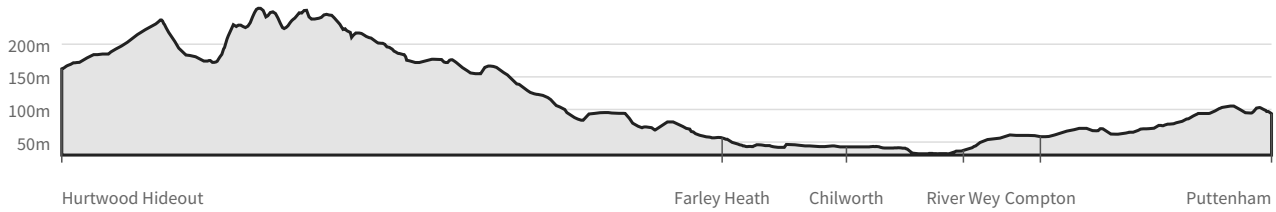
TIME
approx 6 hours without stops

TRAIL
Greensand Way, River Wey Navigation

HIGHEST POINT
about 257 m, on Pitch Hill

LOWEST POINT
about 32 m, by the Wey

THE PROFILE

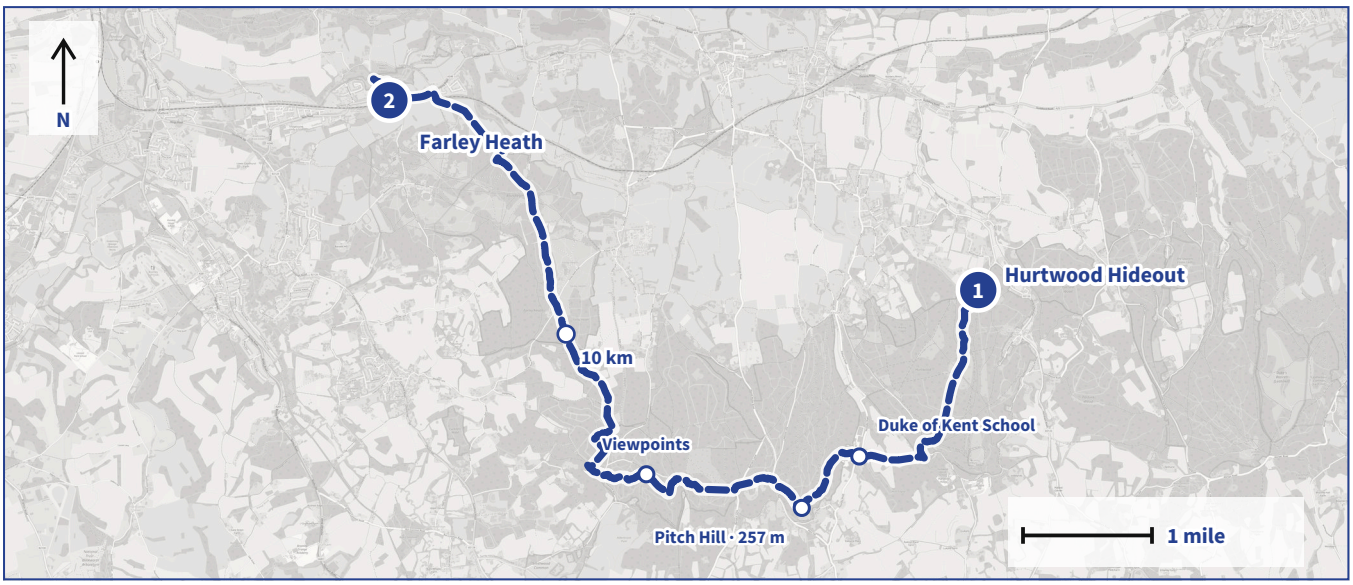


ON THE WAY

1	Hurtwood Hideout	start
2	Farley Heath	km 14.4
3	Chilworth	km 17.1
4	The River Wey	km 19.6
5	Compton	km 21.3
6	Puttenham Barn Bunkhouse	km 26.3

STAGE 1 · KILOMETRES 0 TO 14.4 · ACROSS THE HURTWOOD

Hurtwood Hideout to Farley Heath



Map: © OpenStreetMap contributors. Planned route; check for path diversions before you go.



An old oak on the Hurtwood.



A bench with a view.

From the café and cycle hub the way leads into the Hurtwood, a large area of heath and woodland on the Greensand ridge. The Greensand Way joins at 2.1 km, the Duke of Kent School is passed at 3.3 km. At 4.4 km the Greensand Way climbs Pitch Hill, at about 257 m the highest point of the day. There are viewpoints at 6.9 and 7.4 km, and the sandy bridleway at 9.8 km, at about 250 m, is almost as high. Expect sand and soft ground in places.

History · Pitch Hill

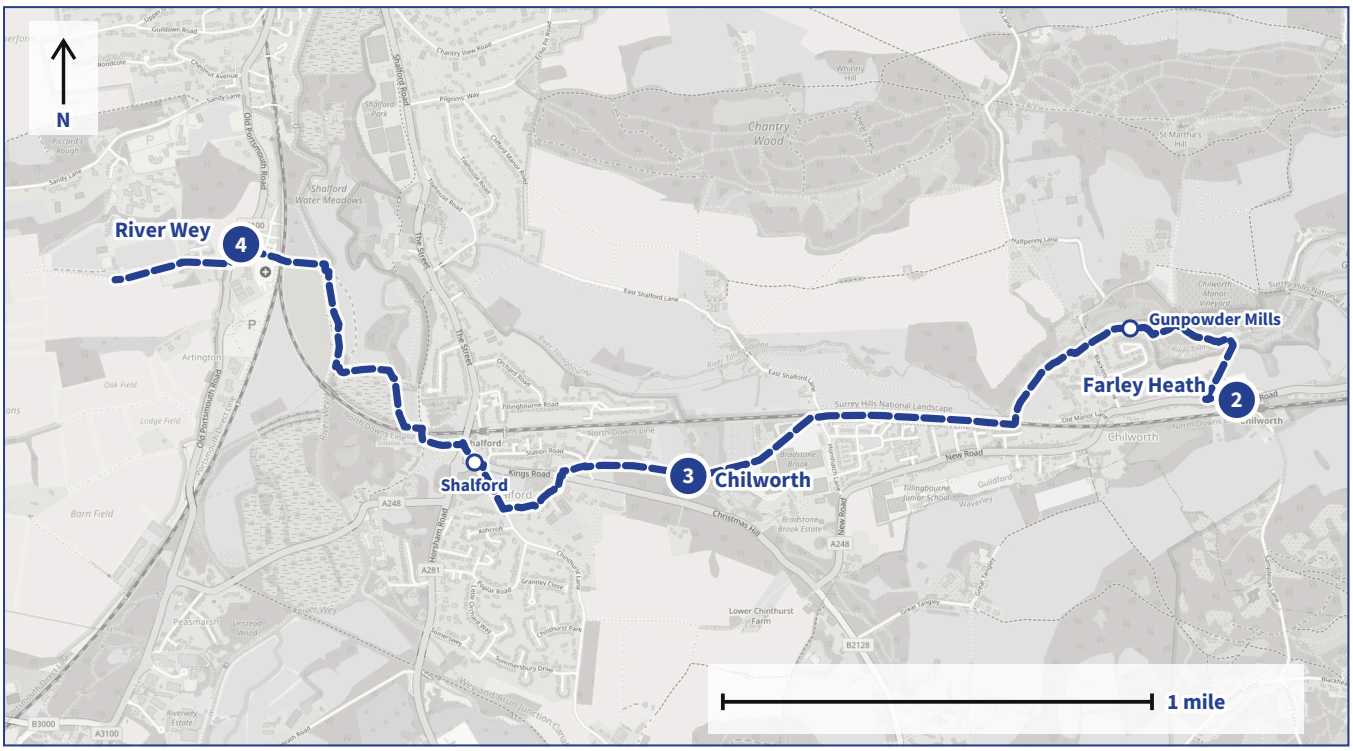
The viewpoint on Pitch Hill has a toposcope in memory of Alan Blatchford and Chris Steer, founders of the Long Distance Walkers Association. The association held its first official gathering of members at Tanners Hatch Youth Hostel in January 1973.

History · Hurtwood Hideout

Hurtwood Hideout, formerly YHA Holmbury St Mary, opened in 1935 as England’s first purpose-built youth hostel. It stands in some 4,000 acres of woodland in the Surrey Hills National Landscape.

STAGE 2 · KILOMETRES 14.4 TO 19.6 · DOWN TO THE WATER

Farley Heath to the River Wey



Map: © OpenStreetMap contributors. Planned route; check for path diversions before you go.



The Percy Arms at Chilworth.

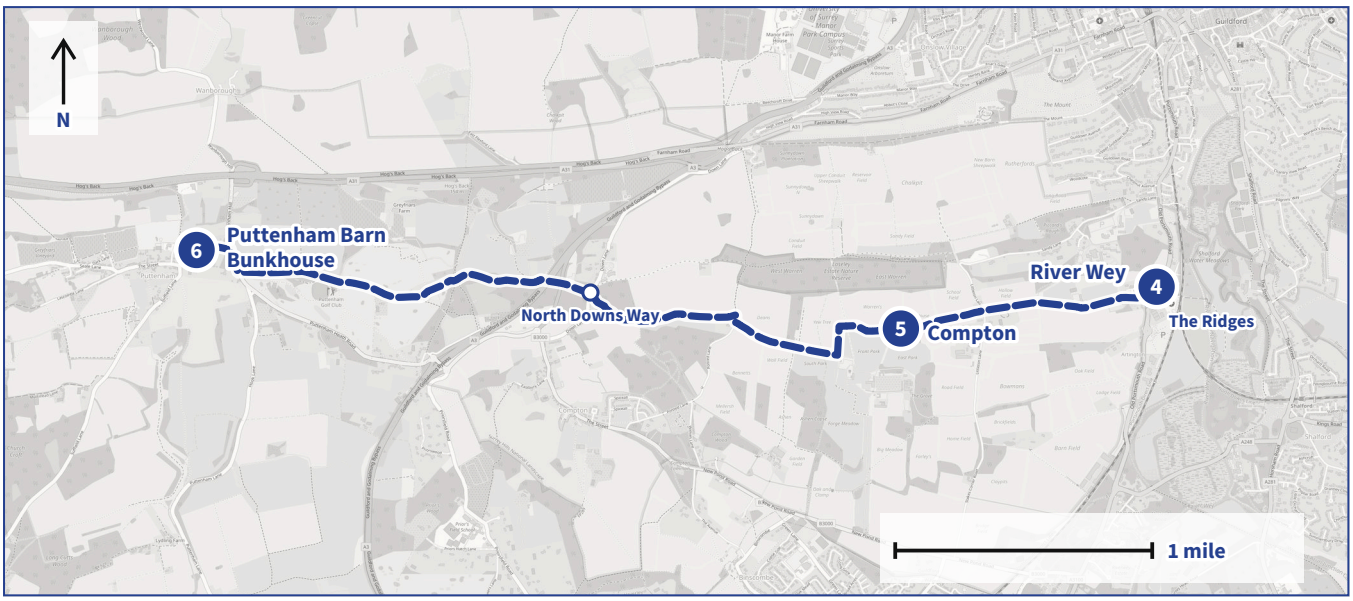


A weir on the Wey.

Much of this stage is on level paths and quiet service roads. Beyond Farley Heath the path passes Chilworth railway station at 14.3 km. Gunpowder was made in the Tillingbourne valley for almost three hundred years, and the old mills have information boards beside the path. The route then goes on through Shalford, past the Snooty Fox and the Swift Tower, to the River Wey at St Catherine's Lock.

STAGE 3 · KILOMETRES 19.6 TO 26.3 · THE WAY HOME

The River Wey to Puttenham Barn



Map: © OpenStreetMap contributors. Planned route; check for path diversions before you go.



St Catherine's Lock on the River Wey Navigation.



The towpath, in the afternoon light.

From the lock, a stretch by the Wey Navigation gives way to the climb through Compton. The route joins the North Downs Way at 23.6 km, passes Puttenham Golf Club at 25.7 km and reaches the Barn by Hook Lane and The Street, the village road you left on the first day. At about 21.5 km, near Compton, the path crosses open parkland with Loseley House in view across the grass. Loseley is privately owned, so please keep to the right of way.

History · Loseley House

Loseley House was built between 1562 and 1568 for Sir William More. Elizabeth I and, later, James I were visitors, and the house is still the home of the More-Molyneux family. It is a Grade I listed building, and a favourite film and television location: it has appeared as Broadlands in The Crown and as Benedict's 'My Cottage' in Bridgerton.



Loseley House across the park, late in the afternoon.

KILOMETRES 0 TO 26.3

Hurtwood Hideout to Puttenham Barn

0.0 km **Hurtwood Hideout**

Leave the hostel by the service track past the cycle hub and toilets, then take the path into the woods.

0.4 km **Dirt track**

Turn left on the dirt track and continue south.

0.9 km **Bridleway**

Join the public bridleway and keep going through the Hurtwood.

2.1 km **Greensand Way**

Join the Greensand Way. For much of the next stretch you can follow its waymarks.

2.6 km **McKinley Gate**

Go through McKinley Gate, a kissing gate.

3.3 km **Duke of Kent School**

Pass the Duke of Kent School and continue on the Greensand Way.

3.8 km **Climb Pitch Hill**

Keep on the Greensand Way as the bridleway becomes a footpath and climbs steadily to the top.

4.4 km **Pitch Hill**

The top, at about 257 m, has a viewpoint, benches and a toposcope, and is the high point of the day. Leave by the footpath heading north-west.

5.0 km **Lift gate**

Go through the lift gate and follow the bridleway west, then the footpath beyond.

5.6 km **Winterfold Heath Road**

Cross Winterfold Heath Road and keep on the Greensand Way.

6.9 km **Viewpoints**

There are viewpoints at 6.9 and 7.4 km.

7.8 km **Turns on the ridge**

A short series of turns follows. Keep to the waymarked path and check the map.

9.8 km **Sandy bridleway**

Follow the sandy bridleway along the high ground, at about 250 m.

12.4 km **Turn right**

Turn right and then left, following the path north.

13.7 km **Downs Link**

Join the Downs Link and cross Dorking Road to a footway beside Lockner Farm.

14.1 km **Memorial**

Pass the memorial. Chilworth railway station is just ahead at 14.3 km.

14.5 km **Gunpowder Mills**

Pass the ‘Welcome to Chilworth Gunpowder Mills’ board and the mills themselves, with information boards, by 15.2 km.

15.4 km **Road and footpath**

Cross the road and follow the footway and then footpath across the Tillingbourne valley.

16.9 km **Service roads**

Follow quiet service roads and a path, then join Chinthurst Lane.

18.1 km **Shalford**

Reach Kings Road at Shalford, passing the Snooty Fox, the Shalford Swift Tower and the village sign. Shalford railway station is at 18.2 km.

19.3 km **St Catherine’s Lock**

Take the footpath to the River Wey Navigation at St Catherine’s Lock.

19.7 km **The Ridges**

Cross The Ridges and take the public footpath beyond.

21.7 km **Turn left**

Turn left, then right, and carry on westwards.

23.6 km **North Downs Way**

Join the bridleway, the North Downs Way, and follow it west.

25.7 km **Puttenham Golf Club**

Pass Puttenham Golf Club and join Hook Lane, then The Street.

26.3 km **Puttenham Barn Bunkhouse**

Follow The Street to Puttenham Barn Bunkhouse. There is drinking water at the Bunkhouse.

Directions are drawn from OpenStreetMap and the planned route along rights of way. Distances are from the start.
Check signs and conditions on the day.

Planning the day

Getting there and away

Gomshall station is 4 km from Hurtwood Hideout, and Wanborough is 3.5 km from Puttenham. Chilworth station (km 14.3) and Shalford station (km 18.2) are on the route, so you can stop early.

Food and water

Hurtwood Hideout has a café on site, and the Percy Arms at Chilworth is on the route.

Light

In October it is dark by about 6.15 pm. Start early and carry a head torch.

Paths

Keep to waymarked rights of way, especially near the start.

THE HOSTELS

Hurtwood Hideout

Holmbury St Mary, Dorking RH5 6NW

Forty-nine beds, family rooms, café. Open all year.

Puttenham Barn Bunkhouse

The Street, Puttenham GU3 1AR

Eleven beds, self-catering, shop on site. Open Easter to October.

Puttenham Barn is where the first walk began, and where the loop closes.



A neighbour on the way.



Open ground near Hurtwood Hideout.



A bench along the way.

Route length 26.3 km (16.4 miles), with about 330 m of ascent, measured from the planned route along rights of way. Times follow Naismith's rule without stops.

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With thanks to Nansi Taylor, whose research on Home Farm Barn is on the Puttenham Barn website.