The Founders' Footpaths

A 26 mile Anytime Challenge walk in the Surrey Hills, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, passing points of historic interest.

Please note: MOST OF THE ROUTE IS ON ROUGH OR UNEVEN TERRAIN. SOME OF THE PATHS ARE BADLY ERODED IN PLACES, WITH LOOSE ROCKS & EXPOSED TREE ROOTS. SOME DESCENTS ARE STEEP. THE ROUTE CROSSES MAJOR AND MINOR ROADS, AND FOLLOWS NARROW ROADS FOR SHORT SECTIONS. IN WET WEATHER, TERRAIN AND STILES BECOME MORE SLIPPERY. COMPASS AND MAP-READING SKILLS ARE ESSENTIAL.

Please take care at all times - you undertake this walk at your own risk. If you take a dog, please check fields ahead for cattle and sheep, and put your dog on a lead where appropriate.

Abbreviations: R=right, L=left, T=turn, F=fork, B=bear, Cont=continue, BW=bridleway, FP=footpath, KG=kissing gate, NDW=North Downs Way, GW=Greensand Way, m=metres.

The term *'track'* is somewhat flexible, covering wide footpaths and horse rides as well as vehicle tracks (as one sometimes becomes the other). An *'enclosed footpath'* is one that has fences or hedges on both sides.
Compass bearings are in degrees magnetic, to the nearest 5°.
Distances are given in metres, but for our purposes may be treated as equivalent to yards if so preferred. Distances, while believed to be accurate, should be regarded as approximate, and intended to indicate proximity: 40m is quite close, 100m a bit further (the length of a football field), 800m a long way (half a mile). A rough and ready reckoner relating distance to time is one minute for every hundred metres or yards for brisk walking (3.75mph, 6km/h). So if the route description says 'TL after 800m', you should reach the left turn after about 8 minutes brisk walking. So start looking after 7 minutes, and if you haven't seen it after 12 minutes you've probably missed it. Don't use this for distances greater than a 1000m (1km) as it becomes too inaccurate.
The names of roads and other landmarks in CAPITALS are on the Explorer (1:25,000) OS maps.

Grid references are accurate to the nearest 100m: So when the reference given is TQ035482, your reading may be TQ035483. This is due to the differences of paper and on-line maps, different ways of rounding up, and vagaries of mapreaders. Expect it and don't worry about it.
The route description starts at Denbies Hillside on Ranmore Common, Steer's Field National Trust car park (TQ 141504), but this circular route can be started anywhere. As footpath signs, gates and other route markers change over the years, this route description should be used in conjunction with OS maps. Explorer 145 and 146 (1:25,000) cover the walk area. A compass is essential.

Route Description

From the carpark on Ranmore Common (National Trust Denbies Hillside, Steer's Field: Pay and Display) (TQ 141504), go through gate on bearing 170°, past the National Trust sign to corner of hedge and waymark post.

You are now on Steer's Field, named after the co-founder of the LDWA, Chris Steer, at a good viewpoint. Across the valley lies the Greensand Ridge. Leith Hill Tower (built 1765-6) is in a clearing on the skyline, due south and over the village of Westcott. It is the second highest point (294m/965ft) in SE England.

Continue ahead due south (180°) down Steer's Field. At Steer's Field NT sign go through gate and very steeply down through wood (known informally as Spectacles Wood from its shape), crossing broad track, through another gate and ahead over field to cross railway. Cont ahead over two fields, go over stile and BL beside wood on enclosed path. Cross plank bridge beside gate and ahead along track. Ignore L and R turns and continue ahead downhill on FP. Through two KGs, then TL along metalled track (*not*

shown in current position on OS maps). In 300m at junction, TR on BW and ahead to pass through gate. Cross PIPP BROOK on footbridge and cont, soon joining rough drive from R. Ahead to major road A25, cross and ahead down Milton Street. Where tarmac ends go ahead through KG. In 70m TR over footbridge and cont on enclosed FP. TR over stile, cross footbridge, through KG and cross field (235°) to corner of MAD HORSE COPSE. Cross stile and ahead beside copse on enclosed FP. Ahead to cross stile, over plank bridge, through KG to join track from R, ahead to road. TQ 144473 LOGMORE LANE 2.6 miles, 4.2km.

BL across road and BR on gravel track to LOGMORE GREEN. In 500m pass metalled drive to Logmore Green Farm on your R and cont on 'Private Road to Logmore Farm only'. In 150m after timber clad house on R cont ahead through gate on enclosed BW and in 100m, just past field corner on L, TL on FP uphill. Where path turns L, ahead on overgrown path through wooden barrier, uphill. Around staggered fence, cross path, ahead across stile and through young plantation. Cross stile, cross path, ahead 20m on overgrown path to cross second stile to reach heavily rutted track (WOLVENS LANE) TQ 137465. Cross track and BR downhill for 20m to TL over (broken) stile. Ahead downhill on enclosed rutted FP beside STABLE COPSE. At bottom cross stile and TL on wide track (GW). After 120m TR over stile onto FP to cross bridge over the TILLING BOURNE between fishponds. Cross stile and follow enclosed FP, ascending very

steeply. Ahead through KG and across road (SHEEPHOUSE LANE) TQ131462.

Through KG and ahead on FP. In 150m at track junction, ahead with fence on your R. After 350m path descends steeply. At bottom through KG, ahead across track and then bridge over the FRIDAY STREET stream. Through KG, ahead 80m, then TL on tarmac drive. At road cross to FP. *(This path and the next are shown in black on the OS maps). On this path you will pass through grid reference point TQ 123456.* In 300m, at junction of five FPs (TQ 124455), TR on winding FP (260° initially, 265° generally overall). In 400m cross road (HOLLOW LANE) to FP and cross green. TQ 119454

ABINGER LANE 4.9 miles, 7.9km

Cross road and ahead on enclosed FP beside Pasturewood Cottage. Keep ahead on main track for 900m. At top of steep descent, ignore RF and ahead down rutted path. Through KG at bottom, across track and ahead to road (HORSHAM ROAD). TL on pavement. After 100m, at house with black iron gates (chest height) cross road to narrow FP. Bear L with FP, climbing gently. In 100m, just before FP reaches corner of back gardens, TR (310°) to go steeply up indistinct and narrow FP through trees to meet wide FP/track. TR. Track descends to cross broad ride and then ascends bearing slightly R. At top keep ahead, bearing slightly L (300°). Path descends slightly, then levels out and swings L to pass car park (Hurtwood Control noticeboard, facing away), with HOLMBURY ST MARY YOUTH

HOSTEL away on the R. Keep ahead (280°) and in 100m ignore L fork. In 40m, ignore waymarked FP to R, and cont 5m to sandy track. TR down sandy track. Follow track downhill, between ponds, over cross tracks and uphill (270°) ascending briefly in a gully. Ahead downhill, then uphill to cross waymarked FPs. At next junction (waymarked), cross and BR (300°) on waymarked FP. This approaches then runs parallel to fence on your R with paddocks and Neo-Georgian House beyond. Cont on main FP with fence on your R until fence ends as FP descends to RIDING BOTTOM. Cross BW and ascend wide FP opposite. Keep ahead uphill, over cross paths and soon pass through barriers onto enclosed FP. Pass through more barriers and go ahead along drive. Cross lane and go through yet more barriers to descend steeply to RADNOR ROAD. TR and cross EWHURST ROAD to Walking Bottom, on which BL between the Hurtwood Inn on your R & a small white building (currently a cycle shop) on your L. *This was the Old Post Office, Peaslake, the birthplace of the LDWA in 1972.*

TQ 086447 7.5 miles, 12.1km

Just beyond, at BW, TL up drive. Just after church on your R, FL (ahead) up eroded FP (signposted). In 200m rejoin BW and pass graveyard on your R. Ascend gently on broad sandy track for 600m then, at junction with large pile of stones, FR (220°). Cont gentle ascent on track. In 150m, cross track. In 600m, cross wide track. Continue on winding track. At next cross track keep ahead. Follow track as it bears round edge of PITCH HILL passing a

metal seat at a viewpoint. In 50m FL through barrier and cont round edge of hill. At next GW waymark post keep ahead (L) for 20m to seat and Pitch Hill Memorial Toposcope. Retrace steps to waymark post and BL to trig point. Pass Hurtwood Control collecting box on your L and follow track (320°) 400m down to car park.

TL, cross road, up drive for 20m, ahead through gap in fence and uphill on eroded FP. At top BL on drive (250°) to pass windmill on your L. In 60m keep ahead to descend on track crossing 2 drives to road. Cross road (blind bends nearby) and FL through car park to leave it on GW between Hurtwood Control notices. Follow FP round edge of hill. As FP curves R, a bench (Lord Justice James' seat) 30m to your L, on a rise, marks a viewpoint. TQ 073423 REYNARDS HILL 10.0 miles, 16.1km

Cont on FP. In 200m, ignore path on left. In 30m FL (290°) on path and follow undulating path round edge of hill. 10m before road, BL down path with road on R. In 40m meet road at head of JELLEYS HOLLOW. Cross road (leaving GW) and follow eroded BW (340°). At fork keep ahead (L). At junction of tracks 15m before field gate, BL, cross tracks and FR (290°) on BW, descending to join path from your L with house on your L (WINTERFOLD COTTAGE) (TQ 064431). Follow fence/hedge on your L to join drive and FR. At grassy triangle FL, cross road and cont on BW opposite. After 170m ignore path on your R and cross sunken track, straight on up bank on FP *(not shown on 1:50K map; shown as black dotted line on*

1:25K map). In 30m TL (200°) on track and in 70m at T-junction TR (310°) on track. Pass house and stables to your R. At end of paddock on R, BR (ahead). Cross track (red waymark, *Bridleway open to all traffic*) and ahead (10°) on FP. Pass to R of permissive BW sign and cont over stile. Cont along L edge of field, ascending to cross stile (or through field gate if open). Ignore stile on L and cont to top of rise. 20m over the ridge, TL over stile next to metal gate. Cont with fence, and view, on your R. (*This path is shown as a black dotted line on the 1:25000 maps*).

To the north the view extends to Blatchford Down and Steer's Field (below Ranmore Church spire on the skyline) and beyond.

At meeting of grassy and sandy tracks, TR (330°) down sandy path between plantations, fence on your R. At cross tracks soon after fence ends, BL then R to take wide BW ahead (330°). At next cross track keep ahead (340°) down sandy path to road (FARLEY HEATH ROAD). Cross and TR to go parallel to road for 120m to site of Romano-Celtic Temple with information board. TQ 051449 FARLEY HEATH 12.5 miles, 20.1 km.

Retrace steps for 45m, TR into car park and bear R to Hurtwood Control notice board. Take second path to the right of notice board, initially 330°, soon due N. (*Path is waymarked BW, but waymark post may be hidden in trees.*) In 400m, join track from L. Ahead (generally north) for 700m, ignoring cross paths and tracks. At path junction (post with 5 waymarks), ahead and up deeply eroded sandy path. In a further 80m continue over

cross track with a metal field gate away on the left. Continue ahead on a bearing of 350° - 340° swinging round to 310°, going over 7 crossings (1 narrow path and 6 cross tracks/wide paths.) After 7th crossing (6th cross track), ahead (330°) on narrower path, over cross track, then descend on sunken track to reach the valley bottom (GR 044465) (*On 1:25000 maps the route follows black dotted track and path lines from 5th cross track onwards.)* TR (30°) along valley bottom. In 200m at farm buildings, TL on track past POSTFORD FARM COTTAGES. Cross stile, BL and cont for 700m between paddocks. *The Lawbrook valley is on your R.* Pass large house away on your L, through KG and cont on FP (300°) across field. *To the north west is a view of St MARTHA'S HILL with church.* Over stile and ahead to BR on lane at LOCKNER LODGE, following DOWNS LINK signs, over railway bridge. Cross major road A248 and ahead down lane (LOCKNER LANE). In 400m lane crosses bridge. *The watercourse is a leat which served the great Chilworth Gunpowder Works (1625-1920) - information board 10m to your L.* In another 80m the lane crosses the TILLING BOURNE. Cont and ascend on broad track. In 120m at BW junction, TR* and follow the DOWNS LINK on well defined path for 800m at junction with NDW (TQ 032483). TR onto broad sandy track (NDW) and pass World War II pillbox on your L.

**Alternatively for good views to the south and to visit St Martha's Church, cont straight on for 300m and at sign with bench on R, TR up steep hill to St*

Martha's Church, then TR down edge of hill on broad sandy path (NDW east) to rejoin route at TQ 032483: Straight on to pass WWII pillbox noted above. About 700m extra distance.

In 150m FL towards car park, pass to R of barrier and TR with information board on your R, along top edge of car park and follow narrow FP (leaving NDW) to road. TQ 036485 GUILDFORD LANE 15.8 miles, 25.4 km Cross road to follow BW between fences (purple oxhead waymark). In 500m cross track, ahead through gap in hedge and cont on BW up field (110°). In 250m, past oak tree, go through gap (oxhead waymark) to cont ahead on BW which soon descends to track (WATER LANE). TL and in 10m TR on track to pass cottages on your R. Cont ahead to pass to L of field gate. In 600m pass lone cottage (Timbercroft). Keep ahead to pass to R of metal field gate. In 100m FR on FP (130°) (oxhead waymark). Cross concrete access road to sandpit and landfill site and cont on FP. Cross stile and cont ahead with fence on your L. Cross stile, cross stream, cross busy road A248. Ascend track opposite (Fox Way waymark) with church on your R. *The ditch you cross just before the next KG is the remains of an 800m leat which brought water from Sherbourne Pond to the Albury Park terrace. Albury Park is recorded in the Domesday book.)* Keep ahead through KG and in 100m cont with fence on your R and then over through KG beside field gate. Keep ahead through wood (SILVER WOOD). On emerging from wood go through KG and cont (125°) along field edge with fence on R.

Cross drive and cont to KG. Descend to lane (Chantry Lane) and TR. Pass Chantry Lane Cottage and cross TILLING BOURNE on footbridge. TL through KG (Vicky's Gate) and follow FP beside TILLING BOURNE. Pass through another KG and BL on track which in 150m goes through gate to join road. Keep ahead on road (Lower Street) in SHERE.

The Old Prison (the jettied building) is on your right after 70m.

Cross Middle Street and cont on Church Lane. *The war memorial cross and church lychgate are both by Lutyens.* TQ 074478 Shere Church 18.5 miles, 29.8km

Cont with churchyard wall on your left. Just beyond Church Hill, BR (140°) through gate onto enclosed FP. After passing next field gate, BL on BW along field edge and in 190m BR to cont between fences. At T-junction, BL on gravel drive to road junction. Cross junction, then 2nd road, High View, then cont along High View pavement. TR onto Tower Hill, under railway bridge and in 15m TL onto farm track (BW) with TOWERHILL FARM on your R. Cont on path with fence on your L. TR on hard track to pass Twiga Lodge. Where track bends R, BL on BW to cont ahead with SOUTHBROOK(S) FARMHOUSE on your R. Just past house gates on R, BR for 15m then BL, fence on L. In 160m join concrete track from L. Cross the TILLING BOURNE and cont to A25. TR on pavement. In 200m, just after the Abinger Cookery School (once the Abinger Arms) and before the Clockhouse, cross main road, (TQ 095475) and ascend minor road

(HACKHURST LANE). After 550m, having passed BW on your R at top of rise and Hackhurst Farm Cottage on your L, TR on track, passing HACKHURST FARM on your L. Beyond the farm buildings BR (past NT sign) with the track and in 80m FL to go east, parallel with the downs. As the track bears L the steep open area of Blatchford Down lies ahead. Swing L with the track to cross the railway and pass NEW BARN FARM on your R. Cont on track (due N) and in 220m FR.

Over stile, BL and ascend steeply on indistinct FP (40°, later 10°) to meet broad grassy path (NDW) near two benches. *The view south from here of the Greensand Ridge extends westwards to Gibbet Hill and Blackdown, the highest point in Sussex (919 feet, 280m)*. TQ 103487 Blatchford Down

21.1 miles, 33.9km

TR (140°) downhill on grassy track to follow the NDW. The acorn markers are infrequent. After 800m, go through KG beside field gate and cont on NDW for 200m, bearing L and entering an area of scrub. Just after path turns R (to descend to minor road), do not follow to road but FL (70°) on narrow FP *(shown by a black dotted line on the 1:25000 maps)* leaving NDW. Follow FP as it curves L round edge of an ancient pit, ignore narrow FP over bank to R, and cont ahead to leave pit edge on path with another ancient pit soon on your R. In 110m at path Tee junction, BR. Path swings L to pass beside railings of a reservoir. At junction TR on broad track and in 50m TL on track. Ahead, cross track, ahead (340°) to cross another track

(SHEEPWALK LANE). Cont ahead on FP between trees to road (CROCKNORTH ROAD). Cross and go down drive opposite. TQ 111501 DUNLEY HILL FARM. 22.7 miles, 36.5km

In 100m TR at FP sign before gate. Follow track as it bends L then go ahead on narrow FP between fence and building. Over the stile, TR (70°) to go to stile beside field gate at far corner of field. Cont with same bearing (70°) across next field to KG that becomes visible only as you approach it. Though KG and TL on FP winding through wood. At path T junction TR to reach road (CRITTEN LANE). Cross to go through KG and follow faint FP up slope, over stile and then ahead with fence on L. Cross two more stiles, then ahead on drive. Cross road and descend on drive opposite (signed Haneys.) When drive bends R cont ahead ascending on enclosed FP. Cont on track, cross next road and descend on track past garages. In hollow cross track (HOGDEN LANE) (TQ 125504) and ahead (90°) over roots to L of tree to cont on FP. (*From here to Tanners Hatch YH the route follows FPs on Ranmore Common shown with black dashes on the Landranger sheet and, more accurately, with single or double black dotted lines on the 1:25000 Explorer maps*).

Cross grassy track at top and descend to 5-way junction in next bottom. BL to second grassy glade on L (50°) and go through barrier. Keep ahead on grassy glade (40°), bearing L where another broad glade joins from R. Go through barrier and cross drive (TQ 130509) to LONESOME COTTAGE

diagonally (20°) to join grass path which bears R among trees. Pass through barriers each side of crossing track and cont on grassy glade. In 70m BL through another gate and cont ahead on wide track between beech trees descending gently to cottage (Prospect Lodge). Just beyond cottage at finger post '*Yew Tree Farm Walk/Ranmore Common Walk'*, (TQ 134514) TR on track descending more steeply before rising to give view of POLESDEN LACEY on your L. Cont ahead to the Alan Blatchford Memorial bench. *The original bench was replaced by LDWA Surrey Group in 2008. Tanners Hatch Youth Hostel, a cottage on the National Trust's Polesden Lacey Estate, was rescued from dereliction in the middle of last century by volunteers*. TQ 140515 25.1miles, 40.4km

From memorial bench retrace steps for 5m, FL on track and in 20m FL again (yellow arrow waymark). Ascend on track for 1100m to emerge beside Fox Cottages. Through barrier and TL on roadside grass. In 200m TR to cross road to NT car park, Steer's Field, 26 miles, 41.8km. TQ 141504

Congratulations. We hope you enjoyed the walk.
Updated 5th September 2014