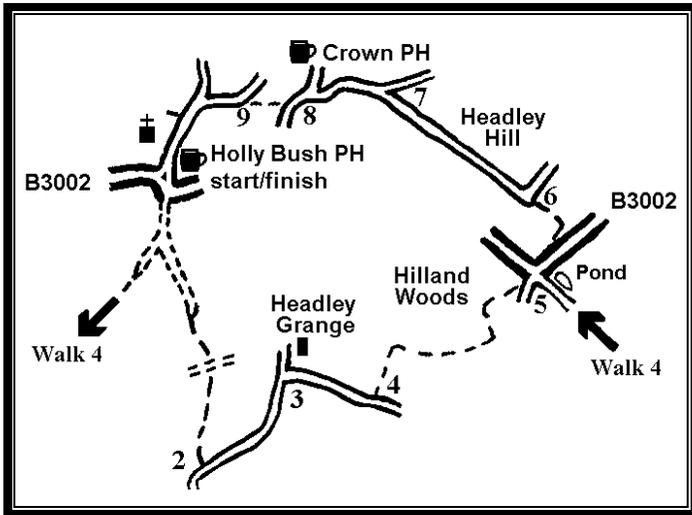


Walk 3 – Around Fuller’s Vale

Distance approximately 2¾ miles/4.5km

This short walk starts and ends in Headley High Street, taking a tour past the old workhouse, through coppice woods behind Hilland, past the restored Fuller’s Vale wildlife pond, over Headley Hill and along ‘The Brae’ footpath.



- 1 From the *Holly Bush*, turn left, cross the road and to the right of *Crabtree House* go along the lane called *Headley Fields*.

Note the concrete surface at the beginning of *Headley Fields* – this was laid for the Canadian armoured regiments which used it during the Second World War as an entrance to a tank servicing facility.

Keep straight ahead at junctions – the lane becomes a footpath between hedges which eventually meets *Liphook Road* near an electricity sub-station.

The bend on *Liphook Road* near where the path emerges was known in the past as ‘*Dirty Hole*’ corner, due to the pond which was there.

- 2 Turn left along the road (taking care of traffic) and in about a quarter of a mile take *Hurland Lane* to the right (3).

Near the junction with *Hurland Lane* is *Headley Grange* which from 1795 to 1871 was the Workhouse of the parishes of *Bramshott*, *Headley* and *Kingsley*. In November 1830 a mob of several hundred sacked the house, an incident for which seven men were transported to *Australia*. In the 1970s it was used as a recording studio, most famously by *Led Zeppelin* who recorded their hit ‘*Stairway to Heaven*’ there.

- 3 Follow *Hurland Lane* up the hill for about two hundred yards to the end of

Walk 3

the field on the left (4).



Coppice-worker's camp in Hilland Woods, 1991

Hilland Woods contains chestnut coppice, a crop which has been cut traditionally on a ten-year cycle to obtain wooden poles. These have many uses in agriculture and the garden, for fences, furniture, etc.

- 4 Take the Public Bridleway which follows the edge of the wood, with the field on the left and coppice wood on the right. At a T-junction, turn right at a guide post and follow the bridleway as it takes a generally 'D-shaped' course through the woods following an earth bank on the left and flanked by rhododendrons in places. About a hundred yards after a usually particularly muddy patch, look for another guide post pointing right and take this track which eventually drops sharply downhill through holly trees to Fullers Vale pond.

The pond was restored in 2003 having been drained thirty years previously during flood-prevention works. It is fed by underground springs and has now been designated a 'wildlife' pond, its plant and animal life being left to develop naturally (see photo on front cover).



Fullers Vale pond before the First World War

- 5 Cross the main road with care at the four-way junction and walk along the left-hand side of Beech Hill to take the bridleway which passes *Oakdene* and climbs straight ahead uphill. Follow the track as it bends to the left and

meets concrete at Headley Hill Road.

As with the concrete found at the start of the walk, this too was laid by the Canadian forces during World War II to prevent track-laying vehicles from tearing up the road surface. Tanks and troops were billeted under trees along the right-hand side of the road during the years before D-Day.

- 6 Continue straight ahead along the road, which becomes more pitted as it descends to meet a surfaced road (Bowcot Hill).

On the left, hidden by shrubs, the land falls away into Fullers Vale. In the past this bank was worked for fuller's earth, used in fulling mills which we know existed locally on the River Wey. Of the houses along here, the history of *Windridge* has been documented in a local book, and *Benifold*, built in 1899, has been both a religious retreat and the home of the pop group Fleetwood Mac – it is now a private house.

- 7 Turn left down Bowcot Hill which crosses the Ar stream then rises to meet Arford Road by the gate to *Arford House*.

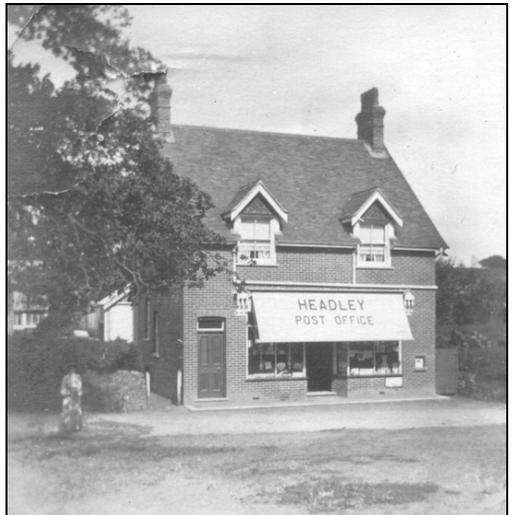
Downstream of the bridge over the Ar there used to be a pond in which troops on manoeuvres from Bordon to Ludshott Common watered their horses.

- 8 Turn left up Arford Road keeping your ears open for traffic approaching round the blind corner, and shortly take the steps up to the right. Follow the footpath across a drive and between properties built in an old gravel quarry on the left and the old Manse on the right to join a road (Long Cross Hill) opposite *Medway* which was once the post office and bank.

The footpath is known as the 'Brae', so-named by American author Brett Harte when he stayed as a visitor at Arford House in the late 19th century.

Just above the steps there used to be a bridge, built in 1921, carrying the drive to *Kirklands* over the path, but it disappeared some years ago.

- 9 Turn left up Long Cross Hill and left again at the top to return to the High Street.



Old post office & bank in Long Cross Hill

