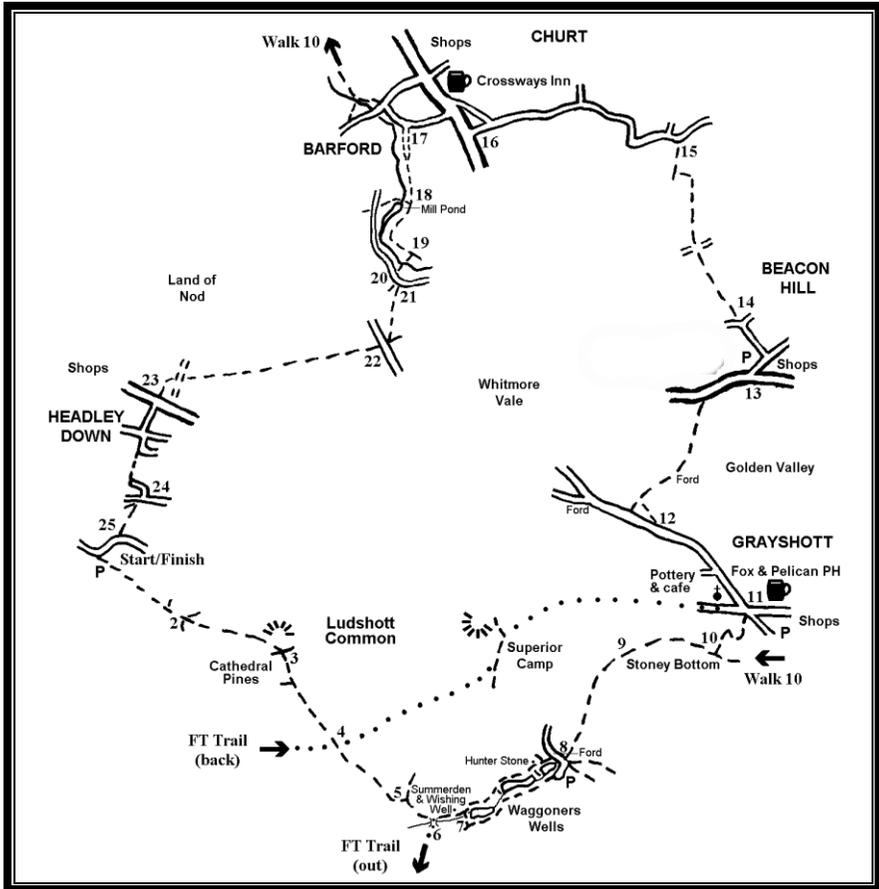


## Walk 9 – Three ‘new’ villages

Distance approximately 8½ miles/13.5km

This walk starts and ends at the National Trust car park in Pond Road and is an extension of Walk 8, visiting the three villages of Grayshott, Beacon Hill and Churt. They are ‘new’ in so far as before the 1850s there was virtually nothing other than heathland where their centres now stand.

*A number of gradients to climb – will take longer than average to complete.*



*For notes and illustrations up to point 12, see Walk 8.*

- 1 From the car park, follow the track up the valley to Ludshott Common.
- 2 At a junction of several tracks (see photo p.44), continue along the centre path which rises between trees for about half a mile past another junction to a crossroads of tracks at the top of the hill with views in winter across the common to the north. This is known locally as ‘Charing Cross’.

## Walk 9

- 3 Carry straight on, descending to a valley then rising. Keep straight on where the main track bears left, and cross a bridleway to meet the track which runs round the edge of the common.
- 4 Take the footpath straight ahead between holly trees. The path crosses a stile then goes alongside a fence across a field to another stile. Descending sharply through woods, it crosses a private woodland track to meet a bridleway at a stile.
- 5 Turn right down the bridleway, which soon meets the stream flowing from Waggoners Wells.



*Bridge over the stream below Waggoners Wells*

- 6 Do not take the bridge over the stream but follow the path ahead to pass the National Trust's wishing well and the wall of *Summerden* on the left.
- 7 Continue uphill to the gate of *Summerden*, then turn right along the side of the valley to arrive at the dam of the bottom pond. From here you may choose paths on either side of the three ponds, crossing at each dam if you wish. Eventually you arrive at the ford which crosses the stream running into the top pond. *Note: There is a National Trust car park close by.*
- 8 Follow the footpath up Stoney Bottom – *the start to this is not obvious; cross a ditch a few yards to the right of the ford (see photo on p.46).* Keep left as you enter the mature trees, ignoring the more obvious track ahead, to find the path passing through a small gap in a bank and descending into the valley. This soon passes some more, smaller, ponds.
- 9 Passing through a barrier by an electricity substation, the path eventually become a track used by local residents' vehicles.
- 10 A few hundred yards after passing a track leading up to the precipitous end of a road on the left, look for a sharp left turn up a concreted road giving vehicular access to the valley for light vehicles. Take this road which winds uphill between houses. At the top, turn left and proceed towards the silver Millennium memorial at the 'Fiveways' crossroads in Grayshott village.

- 11 You might like to visit the *Fox & Pelican* pub, seen from the crossroads. There are also Public Conveniences near here. To continue the walk, go down Whitmore Vale Road leaving St Luke's church to your left. Follow the road out of Grayshott, descending into a tree-shaded valley with a stream.
- 12 Immediately after crossing the stream (by the Hampshire/Grayshott road sign), take a fairly indistinct path on the right which rises through woodland keeping the road in view to the left – this joins a track which in turn passes through a metal gate to join a 'byway open to all traffic'. *This byway is deeply rutted by wheeled vehicles and makes very difficult walking. Instead of using it you are recommended to find a path through the trees to its right and follow this over the brow of the hill to rejoin the byway at the ford in the next valley.*



*Ford and footbridge where the byway crosses the stream*

Follow the byway uphill from the ford for about a third of a mile (there are views to the right across Golden Valley) to meet the A287. Cross the road and turn right along the pavement. Turn left along Beacon Hill Road into the village centre.

The area known as Beacon Hill was, like Grayshott, developed during the second half of the 19th century to service the growing desire of people at that time to come and live in the pure air of the uplands around Hindhead.

- 13 Pass a parade of shops and turn left down Hill Road. Where the road splits at the bottom take a footpath straight ahead.
- 14 Follow the footpath downhill (in wet periods it can become a stream) crossing over a forest road and going straight ahead down the valley. This path follows the left side of the valley eventually turning sharp left to meet another footpath – turn right here to descend through a gate to meet a road (Green Lane).

## Walk 9



*There are several old farmhouses along Green Lane*

“All of Churt’s old farms are located on the better soils and lie along the Bargate strip from Headley in the west to Thursley in the east. The daunting, hostile areas on either side of the fertile stretch created a natural barrier to development so that Churt remained isolated for centuries.” *Olivia Cotton*

- 15 Turn left and follow Green Lane for about  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile to its junction with the A287. *Note: A right-hand turn here takes you to the centre of Churt village, its shops and pub. Otherwise...*
- 16 Cross the main road, turn right along the verge then left down Kitts Lane passing old Kitts Farm.
- 17 At the right-hand bend near the bottom of the hill, turn left to take the track (and public bridleway) serving Barford Mill and the Barracks Cottages.



*Barford Upper Mill Pond (Power’s Pond) from Barracks Cottages*

There used to be three watermills on the small stream running down this valley: the upper and lower mills made paper, and the middle one (far older, and generally known as *Barford Mill*) ground corn. The structure of the upper mill no longer exists – the Barracks Cottages were built from its stones.

- 18 Follow the track past Barford Mill to the upper mill pond.

*Note: You may cross the dam here and take the public footpath on the other side which links to Whitmore Vale Road – follow this along the other side of the valley to meet up at point 20. Otherwise...*

- 19 Carry on up the track and after passing a house on the right (*Easedale*, which used to belong to John Noakes of ‘Blue Peter’ fame) take the footpath which drops steeply down steps and through a garden gate to cross the stream on a bridge made of railway sleepers. This is the county boundary between Surrey and Hampshire.



*Cross the county boundary through a private garden*

Carry on upwards through a landscaped area to meet Whitmore Vale Road.

- 20 Turn left along the road then, where the road bends left, take the drive to *Walnut Well* on the right.
- 21 Two footpaths lead off the drive – take the one to the left of the property. This passes along the garden boundary before rising through woods to meet a road (*Hammer Lane*).
- 22 Go across *Hammer Lane* and take the footpath opposite. This leads in a generally straight line through woods, crossing a steep-sided valley and in another half mile or so a tarmac drive (to the *Land of Nod*). After crossing the drive, go straight ahead and shortly turn left through a gap in a fence by a house wall. Cross the end of a cul-de-sac and some open land inside the boundary of the housing estate to reach the main road (B3002).
- 23 Cross the main road and take *Wilson's Road* opposite. This leads downhill to *Honeysuckle Lane*.

## *Walk 9*

Wilson's Road is named after the family who ran the first post office and telephone exchange in Headley Down from their shop, now a private house *The Village Store* at the junction with Fairview Road.

Turn left at the bottom of the hill, and shortly right up Linden Road – at the bend take the footpath straight ahead sharply uphill between a fence and a hedge to arrive at the end of the unsurfaced Oakhill Road. Turn left and follow this as it bears right to meet Furze Vale Road.

24 Go straight ahead here onto a track through the wood.

Note the plaque in the ground to the left of the track as you enter the wood. The 10 acres of 'Openlands' was bought by Dr Elizabeth Wilks (who died in 1953) and is managed for the benefit of local residents by the Headley Public Utility Society.



*Path down from Openlands to Furze Hill Road*

25 Follow the track as it descends, deeply rutted in places, joining Furze Hill Road to arrive back at your starting point.