

Walk 12

- 2 In about a quarter of a mile, look for a track to the right which then bears left to follow the valley before turning right again and uphill beneath overhead electricity cables. Follow this in a fairly straight line along a fire break over the brow of the hill and down to meet another bridleway in a valley.

At the brow of the hill to the left of the track is an area known as 'Cathedral Pines', where the tallest trees on the common once grew.

- 3 Go almost straight ahead (slightly right) to follow the bridleway (and marked cycleway) which skirts the edge of the common. Turn right at a junction of bridleways to leave the common by a track passing the attractive little North Lodge (4).



North Lodge and the track to Ludshott Manor

The track you are about to join was once a coach road from Bramshott to London used as an alternative to the what is now the A3. Its course continued across Ludshott Common in a straight line, though now largely overgrown, to emerge at Superior Camp.

- 4 Follow the track, which becomes a surfaced road at Ludshott Manor, crosses a stream and eventually meets Rectory Lane in Bramshott (5).

Ludshott Manor was rebuilt c.1825 by Sir James Macdonald, Lord of the Manor of Ludshott, and has since been a Carmelite monastery (1954–1968) a Ramana Health Centre (1974–1981) and a retirement home – now converted into private dwellings.

- 5 *Note: We join **Walk 14** (the Flora Thompson Trail from Grayshott to Griggs Green) here until near point 11.*

Turn right and shortly, where the road bears left, continue through some railings and down the sunken path ahead. Here you can imagine how many of the local lanes would have looked in earlier times. At the bottom, turn left onto a road.



The sunken path at Bramshott

- 6 Go past the terraces of houses on the right. Note also on your left the house aptly named *Roundabout*, wedged between the forks of the road coming down from Bramshott church – this was once the home of actor Boris Karloff. Continue along the road ahead for a few yards, then right at the gate to *Bramshott Vale*.

There was in the past a shop and post office in the terraced properties. Now Bramshott has none.

- 7 Walk up the drive and cross over the River Wey. Shortly afterwards, go left through a kissing gate (see photo on next page), cut across a field and go over two stiles towards an avenue of lime trees.

Don't be alarmed at this point to find yourself in the company of some very docile highland cattle. These and other animals are used in season as part of a natural heathland management scheme for local commons, cropping vegetation such as birch, gorse and grass, and allowing the heather to flourish.



Highland cattle grazing at Bramshott Vale

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Bramshott Vale House was built in 1732 and was the home of John Butler, ironmaster, who made money from operating furnaces at Pophole (in Hammer) and North Park (in Linchmere).



Bramshott Vale house – take the kissing gate to the left

- 8 Follow footpath signs diagonally across the avenue, through a small metal gate, across a farmyard, over a stile by a larger metal gate and then follow a path along the right-hand side of a field. Turn left at a T-junction of paths and over a stile to meet the B3004 Liphook to Bordon road.
- 9 Cross carefully and turn right, going along the pavement for about a hundred yards to where the road bears sharp right.
- 10 Follow the bridleway sign straight ahead down the drive towards *Conford Park House*.

*Note: After slightly more than half a mile **Walk 14** (the Flora Thompson Trail from Grayshott to Griggs Green) leaves us, bearing left at a grass triangle and up the drive of Conford Park House.*

Conford Park House was built by Sir Archibald John Macdonald (who died in 1919), last of the family which held Ludshott Manor for many years. More recently it has been an Ashram.

- 11 Carry straight on through the hamlet of Conford following the road as it bends right, to meet the B3004 again (12).

*Note: A link to **Walk 5** and the ‘Outer Ring’ follows the footpath straight ahead in Conford.*

Edge-tools made in Conford by the Moss family were famous for keeping their sharpness. The local school closed in 1964 and is now the Village Hall, owned by the National Trust. The village bakery continued to use the traditional oven method until it stopped trading, much lamented, in 1989.



Conford Village Hall (old school)

- 12 Turn left along the verge, and very shortly take the surfaced drive on the right for *Waterside*.
- 13 Go down the drive to cross the River Wey at the head of a lake and follow as it curves past the main entrance to a crossroads of tracks. Go straight ahead here along a bridleway.
*Note: **Walk 4** joins us here for the next mile or so.*
- 14 Follow the bridleway to Bramshott Lane.
- 15 Turn left, then shortly right along Gentles Lane which soon becomes a 'sunken lane' climbing uphill. Follow this as it bears left (***Walk 4** leaves us here*). After about half a mile at a three-way junction of roads keep right (with Hilland Woods on your left) and after about two hundred yards, just after a house on the right, take a bridleway into Gentles Copse (National Trust) on the right.
- 16 Follow the bridleway and, where it emerges onto heathland, turn sharp left from the marked way and down a shallow valley to return to the start point.

