

Walk Four – Copsale and Nuthurst

Distance: 8 miles

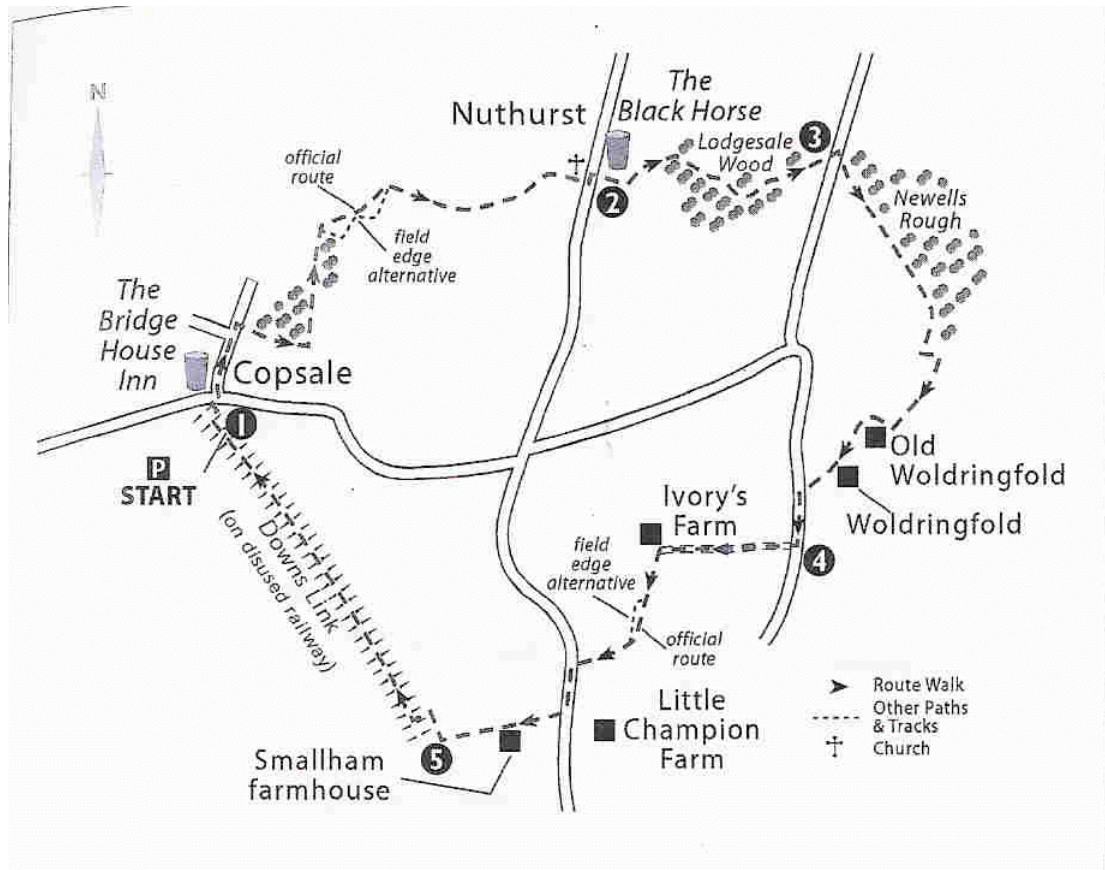
Map: OS Explorer 134 Crawley and Horsham

Starting point: The Downs Link car park at Copsale.

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How to get there: Copsale can be approached either from the southbound carriageway of the A24 about a mile south of Southwater or northwards from the A272 about halfway between Cowfold and the A24/A272 junction, turning left at Maplehurst. The car park is on the south side of the lane opposite the Bridge House Inn.

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1. From the car park turn right and shortly left along Broadwater Lane. At a road junction go ahead, sign posted to Sedgwick and Horsham. After 100 yards, just short of a bungalow called Komani, turn right along a left field edge and continue for a while within the right-hand margin of a wood before emerging to follow the right wood edge.

At the end of the wood go left through a bridle gate and follow a path northwards along the left edge of two paddocks and through more woodland, ignoring the first signed path off to the right. After crossing two footbridges leave the wood and veer half right across a field, aiming for a prominent tree at a corner of woodland protruding into the field from the right. From the corner of woodland, continue across the field veering slightly right to reach the far right corner. (If this path is blocked by a growing crop, after leaving the wood you may find it easier to use the zigzag right field edge to reach the same point.)

At the corner bear right along a dirt track which follows the left edge of a large field generally eastwards. Ignoring a crossing

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bridleway, follow the track along the left edge of several fields. It finally narrows to a path, passing through a belt of woodland. Leave the wood through a makeshift gate and cross a field to pass through a similar gate. Bare half right across pasture to enter a short woodland path. This leads you out through Nuthurst churchyard to join a road.

Turn left. The Black Horse pub is now in sight ahead. (1.75 miles)
a good place to stop for rest and refreshment

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2. To continue the walk, about 100yards south of the pub, turn off along the drive to Cook's Farm and 'Architectural Plants', a garden centre selling exotic trees and shrubs. Follow the drive as it curves round to the left and where it divides, fork right. Pass to the right of a large barn with two wings and, after a few yards, keep straight on, ignoring a left fork. A few yards short of an isolated cottage in a woodland clearing, fork right along a path into woodland, well trodden by horses. Follow this clear track through Lodgesale Wood for over 1/2 mile to join a road past a house called Hop Gardens. (0.75 mile)

3. Go left for a few yards only before turning right along a wide woodland track into Newells Rough. Where the track bears left towards a gate, fork right along a narrower woodland path, which eventually dips to cross a stream. Disregard, in turn, a signed bridleway off to the left and footpath off to the right. After another 50 yards turn left along a second signed bridleway which winds up through the wood, soon between banks.

Just short of a row of cottages on the left, turn sharply right along a narrow signed path. On reaching a bungalow on your right, go ahead along a tarmac drive. At a T-junction, turn right, still on a hard track. Pass to the right of the buildings at Old Woldringfold Cottage and follow the drive round to the left and uphill. Go straight over a crossing drive. At the top of the rise where the continuing drive curves right towards another property, go through a gap at the left end of a post and rail fence and across grass. Cross another drive and go ahead for a few yards soon bearing right to a stile beside a gate. A faint unfenced track continues, skirting to the left of a plantation.

This path offers views southwards between trees to a long stretch of the northern Downs escarpment between Ditchling Beacon and the Adur valley. You should be able to pick out the rounded shape of Wolstonbury Hill and further west, the radio masts on Truleigh Hill.

The firm but grass covered track continues out to a lane past a house called West Lodge. Turn left. (1.5 miles)

4. After about 300 yards turn right between brick gateposts and along a metal led drive. Go forward between buildings, ignoring a signed crossing footpath. Continue along the drive, passing to the right of a large storage shed, and shortly go ahead along a drive labelled as a private drive to Ivory's Farm.

After another 100 yards fork left over a stile and continue ahead, joining and following the right edge of a meadow while skirting to the left of the house and garden of the farm. In the field corner go over a stile beside a gate and turn left along a left field edge. Cross a drive and continue along the left edge of the field beyond. Go into the next field and veer half right across the field, aiming for a fingerpost a few yards to the right of the far corner. If ploughed or planted without reinstatement of the path, you may have to resort to the right field edge.

At the fingerpost go through a gateway and follow a right field edge. Pass to the right of the buildings at Little Champions Farm to join a road and turn left. Just short of the next house on the left, turn right through a gateway, go over a stile and along the right edge of a paddock to another stile. The path now squeezes to the right of a large building not yet marked on O/S maps. Beyond the building. Go ahead for a few yards to find a hidden stile and footbridge and then continue along a left field edge. After about 300 yards, side-step to the left through a gap in the Hedge and immediately go right over a stile to resume your previous direction, now along a right field edge. In the field corner join a drive. (2.25 miles)

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5. Turn right along the drive to Smallham farmhouse. Soon ignoring a left fork. Approaching another group of farm buildings, fork left to go through a gate in a high deer-proof fence. Walk along the left edge of this enclosure to another tall gate in the corner, which provides access onto the old railway track.

A modest diversion to the left along the track bed brings you to the West Grinstead Station site, now developed as a picnic area. A restored railway coach houses a small information display. It is occasionally open at weekends, manned by volunteers. The railway was built in 1861 and closed 100 years later. It has now become the 'Downs Link', a 30 mile route for walkers, horse-riders and cyclists, linking the South Downs Way at Shoreham with the North Downs Way at St Martha's Hill, near Guildford. To complete the walk, turn right along the Downs Link and follow it for a little over a mile back to the start at Copsale. (1.75 miles)