

Cowfold Walks



SAFE WALK WITH CHILDREN NO. 1 THREE VISITS TO THE COWFOLD STREAM

Approximately 4km (2.5 miles); mostly flat; not suitable for buggies unless you are feeling strong enough to lift them over stiles. Cowfold Parish has many beautiful paths and bridleways and has made many appearances in books of walks in Sussex. This circular walk from the village centre is mostly away from traffic apart from the start, and is safe to walk with children and even safe enough to let them off the lead occasionally.

At the start of this walk, hold on tightly to children.

1. Start with the door to the Village Hall behind you. Turn right and walk along the pavement towards the East along the Bolney Road. The Playing Field should be on your left on the other side of the road. Go past the entrance to Oakfield Road and continue past the bungalows on your right. (Scene of the infamous 'yellow box' scandal!)
2. At a two-way footpath sign, turn right up the drive of Eastlands House; this is about 200 metres long. With the house on your left, at a two-way footpath sign, turn right. In front of you is a five-barred gate with a stile on the right hand side.
3. Climb over this stile and follow the lane. Another lane will come in from the right, go past this junction and almost immediately on your left at a three way sign, go over the stile and into the field.
4. In front of you, across the field is another stile and a two-way sign. Cross over it and continue in a straight line across the second field. Cross the stile out of this field and follow the line of the hedge in the following field with the hedge on your left. **Look out for rabbits and rabbit holes in this field along the bottom of the hedge.**
5. At the bottom of the field is a bridge made from a cast iron girder across the Cowfold stream. We discovered that this makes a lovely booming noise if you stamp across it with wellies on! Across this bridge make a half turn and go through the next field with the hedge on your right.
6. **(Warning: Look out for lots of different types of animal poo on this walk! By this stage our child testers were obsessed with the different kinds we had found!)** After about 150 metres, cross a stile in front of you, don't go through the gate on your left. At the two-way sign, bear half right and follow the path diagonally across the field. There are some lovely oak trees in this field and we enjoyed picking up acorns and talking about the different creatures that live on or near the trees.
7. Cross the stile in front of you and emerge into Moatfield Lane. I have never seen a motor vehicle on this lane but, as there are houses along the lane, it would be best to keep an eye on children. Turn right along the lane. Rachel and Jamie enjoyed looking at and talking about the horses in the field on the left. Follow the bend in the lane and look out for a footpath sign on the right just past Lower Barn Farmhouse.
8. Turn right into the field and look for a small concrete bridge over the Cowfold stream, our second visit to the stream. There are some horse footprints in the concrete of the bridge, which the children enjoyed looking at. There are also lots of different water plants in the

stream to identify if you have plant books with you. Cross the stream and go through the gate in front of you. This is a bridleway so look out for oncoming horses.

9. After approximately 250 metres, at a three-way sign, cross over a stile on your right. Across the field you can see a five-barred gate. The footpath goes to the right of this and the sign is a little difficult to see. Keep going and it will appear with a short portion of hedge on your right. Go through the gap and turn left at the footpath sign.
10. Cross the stile in front of you and turn right on to the track. You will soon find yourself on a tarmac lane. This lane also carries very little traffic but it is worth keeping an eye out. Along this road we make our third crossing of the Cowfold stream. Follow the lane past the dip down to the stream and, as you come out of the dip, you are met with the attractive sight of a thatched converted barn.
11. In front of you is the lane you walked down at the beginning of the walk. Turn left at the house. You now have a choice of your route back to the Village Hall, (a) After 100 metres there is a footpath to the right that will take you up through Eastlands Wood along the rear of the houses in Acorn Avenue. Follow the path to the end of the woods and emerge into Holm Oaks. Turn left and then right into Oakfield Road. In front of you is the Bolney Road (A272). Turn left and the village hall is a short walk along the pavement. (b) Alternatively, having turned left at the farmhouse, continue on the lane past the allotments on the left (**rented from the Parish Council at very reasonable rates**) and you emerge on the A281 Henfield Road by the side of the Hare and Hounds Public House. Turn right and walk carefully (lots of traffic!) along the pavement to the village hall at the top of the hill.

We did this walk with a three year old and an eight year old. Everyone survived!

Mig Cutbush

Cowfold Walks



SAFE WALK WITH CHILDREN

NO. 2 WOODS AND BLUEBELLS

About one and a quarter hours, approximately 4km. This walk can be very muddy at times, so is probably a wellie boot outing in anything but very dry weather. There are many wild flowers to see along the way especially in spring but remember that picking wild flowers is illegal. Taking photographs isn't though and photos last much longer than bunches of flowers in water. Not really suitable for buggies.

The walk starts from the car park beside the Playing Field. **If you are coming from other parts of the village be very careful about crossing the roads to get there. Keep a tight hold of children and try to look in all directions at once!**

1. Standing in the car park with the Playing Field behind you, turn right and walk up Fairfield Cottages along the side of the hedge between the Playing Field and the verge. After about 100 metres on the right are a footpath sign and a kissing gate into the field itself.
2. Go through the gate and walk along the edge of the field with the hedge on your left until you come to another stile on your right. Cross the stile and continue walking ahead with a very flimsy fence on your left for about 50 metres. At the end of the fence, a little to your right, you will see a two-way sign. Follow the arm of the sign that points diagonally to the left across a small field. (Don't go through the gap on the right into the larger field!) Look for a break in the brambles and follow the path through the break.
3. On your left you should see a green chain-link fence. With the fence on your left, follow a narrow path through trees along the back of large gardens belonging to Brookhill House. Look out for bluebells, wood anemones and primroses. Continue on the path passing a pond on your left close to the fence.
4. Go down a slight gradient at the end of the wood and bear towards the right. Go down some steps and follow a wire fence on your left along the edge of the field. There is a nice view across the field towards Littlebrook. Look for lots of rabbit holes on the right of the path.
5. At the end of the field, cross a plank bridge over a dry ditch and bear left at a two-way sign. Walk along the side of the field with the hedge on your left. At the corner of the field, the path dips down to a stream. This is a tributary of the Cowfold stream and is not named on the map. It runs into the Cowfold stream further South.
6. Cross the stream on a plank bridge and go into the field. There is a sign that says "Bull in Field". There are sometimes cattle in the field and there are certain categories of bull that can safely and legally be left in fields that walkers use but it is a good idea to give cattle in fields a wide berth when walking with children, It is also a good idea to keep dogs on a lead.
7. Head across the field towards the pylon to the right of the house. Go down the slope in front of you (which is covered in snowdrops at the right time of the year) to another plank bridge across what is now definitely the Cowfold stream. Across the bridge is a large patch

of wild garlic. This has wide green leaves and a not unpleasant mild garlic smell. It looks very beautiful in spring when it is covered in small white flowers. Go across the bridge and turn left at a four-way sign through a gap in the hedge. Follow the path until you reach a two-way sign. The stream should be on your left. Go round the field keeping the hedge on your left (more bluebells and sweet chestnut trees).

8. If you look through the trees on your left you will see a little waterfall on the stream. The Cowfold stream runs down to us from the lakes and waterfalls from the Leonardslee Estate to the North. Ignore the unmarked track on your left and continue round the field keeping the hedge on your left until you reach a two-way sign. Turn left into the woods and then right following the path through the trees. (Look out for honeysuckle.)
9. Hang on to small children at this point because there is a steep drop to the left of the path for a short distance. Follow the path until you see two large holly bushes either side of the path. Follow the path between them to a three way sign. Go straight on with a small tree plantation on your left. Horses use this path so keep ears and eyes open. Continue with the hedge on your right and a view across the valley on your left.
10. In front of you should be a five-barred gate with a two-way sign. Go through the gate remembering to shut it. Immediately in front of you across a tarmac drive is a stile with a two-way sign. Go over the stile into a small field. Walk up the field with the fence on your right to another stile with a two-way sign. Go over the stile and carry straight on with the fence on your left towards a gap in the hedge. Go through the gap and turn right into Picts Lane.
11. Walk along the lane carefully as vehicles sometimes travel quite fast along it. After about 100 metres, at Aglands farm there is a way sign to the right. Follow this sign down the track passing the house on your left. The track curves to the right when it is past the house. Keep going for about 500 metres. At the end of the track, go through a gateway with a four-way sign. Turn right and follow the line of the fence, keeping the fence on your right. Ignore an unmarked gap and the first stile. Walk on to the second stile with a two-way sign. Go over the stile and walk through the woods to a plank bridge.
12. Cross the plank bridge and go into a very muddy field. Squelch across this field to a four-way sign and the second of the plank bridges we crossed earlier. Re-cross the bridge and walk straight across the field to the first plank bridge we saw. Cross the bridge and walk up the field with the hedge on your right until you reach a footpath sign. Turn right into the woods and retrace your steps back to the Playing Field.

Mig Cutbush

Cowfold Walks



WALKING TO THE PUB

NO. 3 THE WINDMILL, LITTLEWORTH

This walk will take you from Cowfold to the Windmill Inn in Littleworth. It is about 3 miles (5km) each way so not really suitable for children. Also, as it's a walk to a pub its likely to be more difficult on the way back! The landscape you will be walking through is quite varied and some bits of it are not as pretty as some of the walks round Cowfold. This is made up for by other parts being very interesting and attractive. You will find some sections of this walk muddy. Pay particular attentions to the directions as some parts could be confusing.

The Landlord of the pub said he would be delighted for his pub to be the end point of a walk. The pub has interesting local beers and serves lunch and dinner most days of the week.

This walk starts from the old Co-op village shop.

1. Start with your back to the old Co-op shop and turn sharp left. Take the path that runs between the old shop and the Cowfold Cottage Tandoori restaurant. Walk along the Horsham stone path until you get to the door of the church. Take the left fork of the path and walk round to the back of the church.
2. Here the path turns right and dives through a gap in the hedge and continues between high hedges to left and right. Don't be tempted to turn left into the churchyard extension. Follow this path for about 100 metres until you reach a stile. Go over the stile and follow the path with a hedge to your right and a fence to your left along the back of the school. Turn left at a two-way sign and continue down the path to another two-way sign.
3. Turn right over a plank bridge and walk for 50 metres between the fence and the hedge to a stile you should see in front of you. Cross the stile and walk along the edge of the next field with the hedge on your right. Go past a pond on your right and you will see a way sign; turn left at this sign and you will see a stile, cross this and follow the path between two hedges past Gervase Cottage for about 100 metres. On your right you will find a stile and a plank bridge. Cross the stile and study the way sign closely.
4. This is a three-way sign, follow the middle of the three arms and cut diagonally across the field. You won't be able to see a sign to head for so steer to the left of the large dead tree in the middle of the field. As you make your way across the field, a dip in the ground comes into view on the left. Make for this avoiding cow pats. Go down the dip to the stream. This is marked on the map as the Cowfold stream but I am beginning to think there must be several different branches all called Cowfold stream. It seems to make an appearance at different spots all round the village. A plank bridge goes across the stream to a way sign. Go across the bridge, straight across the field and make for the stile in front of you.
5. Cross the stile and walk up the field with the fence on your right to a gate on the right into a bridleway. When we walked this, the field was full of brown and orange butterflies. We think they might be called Small Coppers but we're not experts. Look out for horses and make sure you shut the gate. Walk up the path between the fences. Go through the gate at the other end and turn right. Walk along with the fence on your right. This area can be very muddy so don't expect to arrive at the pub

looking glamorous. To the left, across the fields, you can see the monastery, (which my grandson calls the space rocket church for obvious reasons!).

6. Follow the fence and turn left at a three way sign. Turn left and with the hedge on your right head for a huge pile of chalk you can see on the horizon. Walk past the chalk pile making sure it is on your left and turn right through a five-barred gate. (Make sure you close it.) Walk with the hedge on your left for 20 metres to a stile with a three-way sign on your left. If you are feeling romantic at this point, you can look back and see Cowfold nestling in its surrounding of trees. Cross the stile and go straight across the field to a way sign and stile just to the right of the trees.
7. Go over the stile and follow the path with the trees and hedge on your left for about 50 metres. Then head for a line of four oaks on the near horizon. The path was difficult to see at the time of writing as the field had oil seed rape in it. So keep going. When you reach the trees you will find a way sign. Follow the sign that points you slightly downhill keeping the cottage you can see on your left. Look to your left; on the skyline is what appears to be a spiral staircase, although it is marked on the map as a wind pump. In front of you should be a four-way sign with a rather rickety stile.
8. Cross the stile into the field beyond. When we did this walk the field was also planted with rape so it was difficult to see the path but essentially it is a straight path, keeping the trees you can see on your right. As you walk down the field a gap in the hedge ahead of you should come in to view. This leads on to a track with a four-way sign.
9. Turn right on to the track and walk along with the hedge on your right. At a three-way sign continue to follow the track. As you pass this sign you are leaving Cowfold Parish so look out for dragons! Continue up the track and cross the stile beside a five-barred gate. Go out into Littleworth Lane and turn right. The Windmill pub is a short distance up the lane on the opposite side.
10. To get home from the pub, simply retrace your steps, but don't try doing it in the dark!

Mig Cutbush

Cowfold Walks



WALKING TO THE PUB

NO. 4 THE CRABTREE, LOWER BEEDING

The Crabtree is a pleasant country pub serving food of a high standard. It also has an attractive garden with good views over the Downs. Telephone them on 01403 891273 to book a table for lunch or evening meals.

This is another walk that starts from the car park beside the Playing Field. The first part uses the same paths as the bluebell walk for children (Cowfold walk number 2). This walk is about 3 miles (5km) each way.

1. Standing in the car park with the Playing Field behind you, turn right and walk up Fairfield Cottages along the side of the hedge between the playing field and the verge. After about 100 metres on the right are a footpath sign and a kissing gate into the field itself.
2. Go through the gate and walk along the edge of the field with the hedge on your left until you come to another stile on your left. Cross the stile and continue walking ahead with a very flimsy fence on your right for about 50 metres. At the end of the fence a little to your right you will see a two-way sign. Follow the arm of the sign that points diagonally to the left across a small field. (Don't go through the gap on the right into the larger field!) Look for a break in the brambles and follow the path through the break.
3. On your left you should see a green chain link fence. With the fence on your left, follow a path through trees along the back of large gardens belonging to Brookhill House. Continue on the path passing a pond on your left close to the fence.
4. Go down a slight gradient at the end of the wood and bear towards the right. Go down some steps and follow a wire fence on your left along the edge of the field. There is a nice view across the field towards Littlebrook.
5. At the end of the field, cross a plank bridge over a dry ditch and turn left at a two-way sign. Walk along the side of the field with the hedge on your left. At the corner of the field, the path dips down to a stream. This is a tributary of the Cowfold stream.
6. Cross the stream on a plank bridge and head across the field towards the pylon to the right of the house. Go down the slope in front of you (which is covered in snowdrops at the right time of the year) to another plank bridge across what is now the Cowfold stream. Across the bridge is a large patch of wild garlic. This has wide green leaves and a not unpleasant mild garlic smell. It looks very beautiful in spring when it is covered in small white flowers. Go across the bridge and immediately turn left at a four-way sign through a gap in the hedge. Follow the path until you reach a two-way sign. The stream should be on your left. Go round the field keeping the hedge on your left.
7. If you look through the trees on your left you will see a little waterfall on the stream. The Cowfold stream runs down to us from the lakes and waterfalls of Leonardslee Gardens to the North. Ignore the unmarked track on your left and continue round the field keeping the hedge on your left until you reach a two-way sign. Turn left into the woods and then right following the path through the trees.
8. Follow the path until you see two large holly bushes on either side. Walk between

them to a three way sign. Go straight on with a small tree plantation on your left. Continue with the hedge on your right and a view across the valley on your left.

9. In front of you should be a five-barred gate with a two-way sign. Go through the gate remembering to shut it. Immediately in front of you across a tarmac drive is a stile with a two-way sign. Go over the stile into a small field. Walk up the field with the fence on your right to another stile with a two-way sign. Go over the stile and carry straight on with the fence on your left towards a gap in the hedge. Go through the gap and turn left into Picts Lane.

10. Follow Picts Lane downhill and to the left. The lane is quite steeply downhill at this point and should be interesting on the way back from the pub! Pass one footpath sign on your right and walk on to the second sign, which is in the entrance to houses called Hooklands and Gratfield. This is a farm approach track, which passes over a cattle grid after 20 metres. Follow the track uphill and slightly to the right until you reach a footpath sign on your left. This directs you down a slope past a house on your left and to another two way sign. Turn half left at this sign and walk towards and through the five-barred gate in front of you.

11. Once through the gate, follow the track up the rise for 500metres passing Violet Cottage on your left. At the top of the rise you will find a three-way sign, turn left and then almost immediately right at another three-way sign. Walk to the end of the track and out into Mill Lane. Turn left and walk down the lane for about 500 metres to the A281 Cowfold to Lower Beeding road. The Crabtree pub is immediately to your left.

Have fun!

Mig Cutbush

Cowfold Walks



WALKING TO THE PUB

NO. 5 THE WHITE HORSE, MAPLEHURST

The White Horse has a friendly atmosphere and a garden for sitting with children. The pub is a free house and is in the Good Beer Guide. Telephone: 01403 891208.

This walk passes through Highhurst stables, lots of horses to look at and the occasional deer, and is about 5 miles (8 km).

1. Starting from the car park, cross to the old Co-op shop and turn right and then immediately left along Station Road. After 200 metres, just past Thornden Road, turn right at a footpath sign. Continue through a metal gate and follow the path up a rise for 300 metres.
2. Enter a small wood (full of bluebells at the right time of year) and follow the path over the ridge and down to a four-way sign at a small stream bridge. Go straight across the field to a way sign you can see at the entrance to another wood.
3. Enter the wood and follow the path. Leave the wood at a two-way sign and turn right into the field following the hedge on your right. You can often see deer in this field. After about 100 metres, go through a gap in the hedge at a two-way sign. Head diagonally across the field to where you can see two ponds. If the field is ploughed go round the edge.
4. Go between the ponds in to the next field; turn right at the way sign, following the hedge *on* your right for 50 metres to a stile *across* a plank bridge. Go diagonally left (not straight across *as* this is a different path) up the rise to the top left corner of this field.
5. At a four-way sign turn left alongside Northfield Farm and out on to Burnthouse Lane. Turn right on the road for 100 metres and left in to a paved farm drive. Continue for about 400 metres on the drive until you pass a group of farm cottages and open green on your left. At the four-way sign, turn right uphill passing between two black timbered barns. Continue uphill passing under the power lines, past fir trees on your left and into the wooded area at the top of the ridge.
6. After only 50 metres in the wood bear half left at the second way sign. Ignore the path that goes straight on. Follow the path diagonally down hill for 100 metres to a stile at the edge of a field. Follow the way sign finger diagonally left across the field to a metal gate and then climb uphill alongside Orchard Farm. And then on to Park Lane.
7. Turn left on this paved road for about 750 metres and the White Horse will be a welcome sight on your left.

Mig Cutbush