

## **Grayshott Pottery Walk - from Witley Station.**

**Start:** Witley Railway Station.

**End:** The Grayshott Pottery, School Road, Grayshott. GU26 6LR

**Highlights:** The route, which is strenuous in places, follows the 'Greensand Way' (GW) for 7 miles, through scenery of outstanding natural beauty. There are two tall, iron, pedestrian gates on the route which can be awkward to negotiate and are difficult to avoid. The route passes through the attractive villages of Sandhills and Thursley and climbs, at times quite steeply, to the Devils Punch Bowl (NT) and the expansive viewpoint on Gibbet Hill. Both locations are within the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The route leaves the GW at Gibbet Hill and continues past the Memorial Stone to the 'Unknown Sailor' to the edge of Grayshott village where it continues on footpaths to the important Grayshott Pottery, makers of English stoneware since 1956.

**OS Map:** 133 Explorer is recommended.

**Distance:** 9 miles.

**Toughness:** 8/10

**Estimated time to walk the route:** 4 hours and 10 minutes based on a walking speed of 2.5mph.

**Path accessibility (wheelchair/pushchair friendly):** No.

**Travel information: Train** - South Western Railway - London Waterloo to Portsmouth services. (<https://ojp.nationalrail.co.uk/service/planjourney/search>).

**Car:** Witley Station carpark.

**Bus:** An hourly Stagecoach bus service, route 71, operates between Guildford and Haslemere and calls at Witley Station. Travel information is available from [www.travelinesoutheast.org.uk](http://www.travelinesoutheast.org.uk)

**Refreshment stops:** The Dog and Pheasant Pub in Brook, at 1.7 miles from the start (<http://www.dogandpheasant.com>) The Three Horseshoes Inn, Thursley, at 4.2 miles from the start (<http://threehorseshoesthursley.com>). The Devils Punch Bowl Cafe, at 7.4 miles from the start (<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/hindhead-commons-and-the-devils-punch-bowl>). Cafe Twenty5, an independent cafe on the route in Hindhead, at 7.6 miles from the start. The Kiln Cafe at Grayshott Pottery, is 9 miles from the start (<https://www.grayshottpottery.com/cafe/>)

### **Further information:**

The Hills to Downs on line. (<https://www.hillstodowns.online>)

The Hills to Downs Community Rail Partnership Hub (<https://www.haslemereinfohub.co.uk>)

## Overview.

The route starts at Witley Station and follows the well marked, long distance trail ‘The Greensand Way’ (GW) on footpaths and lanes for 7 miles. It pass through the architecturally interesting villages of Sandhills, and then Thursley, with its attractive pub, The Three Horseshoes and the Church of St Michael and All Angels. The Church has a finely carved Anglo-Saxon font and 2 surviving Anglo-Saxon windows in the chancel. The body of the brutally murdered ‘Unknown Sailor’ is buried in the Church Yard. The route climbs past The Devils Punch Bowl to the Saxon Cross, which in 1851 replaced the original gibbet, and to the view point on Gibbet Hill. On a clear day the Shard and Canary Wharf can be seen to the North. The sculptured bench ‘Xylem” is a few yards to the South East of the trig point. The route leaves the Greensand Way at Gibbet Hill and continues East, past the Memorial Stone to the ‘Unknown Sailor’ from which there are extensive views over The Punch Bowl. It passes the National Trust’s Devils Punch Bowl Cafe where the dramatic statue ‘Portal’ can be seen on the edge of the car park. The route passes Conan Doyle’s former home ‘Undershaw’, now a school, and continues to the edge of Grayshott village, before returning to wooded footpaths and reaching Grayshott Pottery.

## The Route.



1. Leave Witley Station by the exit on Platform 2 and turn left into the car park. Walk 100yds to the top left hand corner of the car park and cross the footbridge over the railway line. You are now on the Greensand Way (GW).



After half a mile turn right and cross the lane. The path climbs a short steep hill. Turn right at the top, follow the GW marker posts and turn left onto the tarmac lane. At the small island in the road keep right. The lane climbs steeply up Bannacle Hill Road. At the junction at the top turn left. Follow the lane for 90 yards and turn right up wooden steps, hidden in the hedge, onto a footpath beneath the trees. Easy to miss.

After 600 yards reach a T junction and turn left at the GW marker post and follow the sunken track to reach the A286 road at Brook. (The Dog and Pheasant Pub is 400 yards to the left).



2. Cross the A286 road to Bowlhead Green Road opposite. Follow the lane for 600 yards to Pine Lodge on the right and pass through a tall and awkward iron gate. The path climbs a short steep hill through trees. Follow the GW marker posts to reach a second tall awkward iron gate. Cross the driveway of Lower House and continue ahead through fields to reach a tarmac lane. Cross to the gap in the bank opposite, go through the metal gate and cross the field to the stile and gate opposite. Enter the wood and follow the GW marker posts down the hill and bear right at the bottom onto a wide track.



3. Soon the GW turns left down broken stone steps (beware). Climb the hill past Cosford Farm and continue uphill on the tarmac lane to reach the A3. Turn left for 250 yards, pass under the A3 and turn right. Follow the road for 250 yards and turn left at the GW marker post. Cross the field towards Thursley village. At the tarmac lane keep ahead to Thursley Church on the right. Enter the church yard and bear left to reach the finger post.



(The grave of the 'unknown sailor' brutally murdered in 1786, is on the North side of the church yard.)

Turn left at the fingerpost and follow the footpath out of the church yard. Reach a tarmac lane and turn left up hill. Pass the house 'Smallbrook' and continue up hill. The route continues under trees and past paddocks to reach a gravel drive and a tarmac lane by Hedge Farm. Turn right onto the lane and continue uphill. Keep straight ahead at the 4 way junction onto a wide rough track. After 1 mile cross the Old A3 road diagonally to the right and continue up hill on the rough track opposite.



This rough track soon joins a tarmac lane which continues to climb around the impressive Devils Punch Bowl. Continue to the top of the hill where there are extensive views over the Punch Bowl. After a further 200 yards turn left onto a footpath at the GW marker post by a single bar green metal gate. Soon turn right to reach the view point on Gibbet Hill and the Saxon Cross which marks the position of the earlier gibbet. Here the tarred bodies of the 3 men hanged for murdering the unknown sailor were put on display. On a clear day the Shard and Canary Wharf can be seen to the North.



'Xylem' a sculptural oak bench by Walter Bailey can be found a few yards to the South East of the trig point on Gibbet Hill.



4. Walk South from the view point towards a wooden 5 bar gate and turn right to re-join the tarmac lane. (The GW goes straight ahead here). Follow the lane for 120 yards to reach the Memorial Stone to the unknown sailor. Here there are fine views over the Punch Bowl.



Continue along the tarmac lane. Just before the National Trust's Punch Bowl Cafe stands 'Portal' a sculpture by Jon Edgar.

Continue past the cafe on the right hand pavement to the main road and roundabout. Cross at the pedestrian crossing and continue straight ahead along the pavement.



On the lefthand side of the main road, 100 yards from the roundabout, is Conan Doyle's 14 bedroom Victorian house 'Undershaw', now the home of Stepping Stones School.

Further information can be found on The Haslemere Society website. (<http://www.haslemeresociety.org/blue-plaques.html>)



Pass the M&S/BP garage. At the roundabout turn first right into Huntington House Drive and continue for 110 yards to a finger post on the left. Turn left onto the footpath. Bear right at the second junction then immediately left and continue to follow the footpath markers. Pass through a double wooden 5 bar gate and keep left on the track up hill to reach the road. Cross over into School Road and Grayshott Pottery is on the left (Note the Blue Plaque on the wall to the former Grayshott Laundry).

A short history of Grayshott Pottery can be found at:-  
<https://www.grayshottpottery.com/about/>

