

10 Leisure Walks of Discovery A Boot Up THE SURREY HILLS

Mike Cope

The Surrey Hills was one of the first areas in England to be designated an Area of Outstanding National Beauty (AONB) in 1958. It stretches across a quarter of the county and includes the chalk slopes of the North Downs, which run from Farnham to Oxted, and the deeply-forested Greensand Hills.

The North Downs sweep into Surrey from the east and terminate at the end of the Hog's Back. They have a distinctive topography with a steep, south-facing scarp slope and a shallow, north-facing dip slope with the valleys of the Wey and Mole being important corridors through them.

Of the ten selected walks in this book, seven of the routes are along the North Downs Way between Compton and Reigate, and the remaining three are at prominent locations along the Greensand ridge, including Leith Hill, the highest point in south-east England. They range from 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ - 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles and suit the needs of families, groups of friends or individuals looking for a gentle stroll or a longer walk, and reflect the many varied facets of the area – its people, its history, and its landscape and will help first time visitors to experience some of the great scenery the area has to offer. Many of the walks feature a pub along the route.

Halsgrove's new-format guidebook, containing maps, photographs and useful information will ensure a great walking experience. Packed with colour, the book is an ideal reminder of a visit to the Surrey Hills.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mike Cope lives in Woking, Surrey and has been walking the Surrey countryside on a regular basis with local and national walking groups for over 20 years. He is a freelance writer for *Country Walking* magazine, and has published over 30 walking routes for Surrey, Hampshire and Staffordshire. He has a Ph.D. in analytical chemistry, and when he isn't walking or writing, works as a lab manager for a multinational pharmaceutical company.

HALSGROVE CATALOGUE

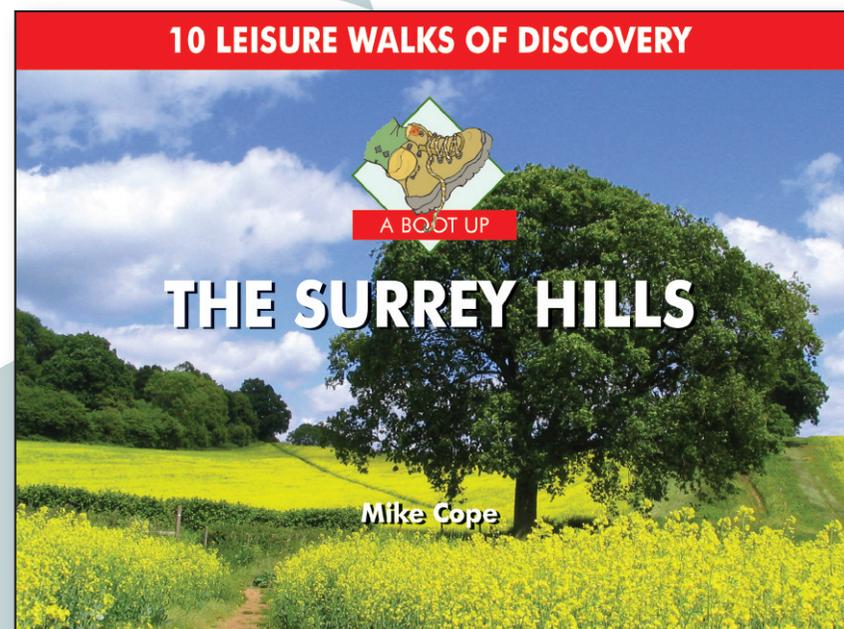
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A BOOT UP THE SURREY HILLS



Classical pavilion on Colley Hill



St Catherine's chapel



The view south from Pitch Hill



Right: Crossing the River Mole at the Stepping Stones



Leith Hill tower

1 Compton and Guildford

Go straight across, at the main road, into The Mount and walk uphill for a strenuous 1km. Some relief may be had by a short detour into Guildford Cemetery (left), to visit the grave of Lewis Carroll. Magnificent views of Guildford Cathedral open up, across the valley, as you ascend the 'Hill Difficulty' back to the starting point.

Lewis Carroll, the author of Alice in Wonderland, never actually lived in Guildford, but the house where his six unmarried sisters lived (The Chestnuts) was rented in his name. He lived and worked in Oxford as a mathematics lecturer, but made frequent trips to Guildford to visit his sisters.

Guildford cathedral

2 Chilworth and St Martha's Hill

A 7 mile circuit that combines remnants of former gunpowder mills with a hilltop chapel

The gunpowder mills at Chilworth were one of the most important centres for gunpowder production in Britain during the early nineteenth century. Saltpetre sulphur and charcoal were carefully blended together and granulated by mill wheels, powered by the waters of the Tillingbourne stream. William Crompton visited the place in 1822 and condemned the making of gunpowder as 'the most damnable invention that ever sprung from the minds of man, under the influence of the devil'. His remarks went unheeded for the next hundred years, until the massive downturn in demand for explosives at the end of the First World War. War caused the factory to close in 1920, but farms and mess hives now reclaimed what's left of the production buildings and incorporating mills.

Level: 100m
Length: 7 miles (11.4km)
Terrain: Very mixed terrain along field paths, heathland, and woodland. Steep, precarious descent from St Martha's Hill, towards end of walk.
Pack and gear: The heavy keys put on pack (optional use)
Start ref: TD 020473
Postcode: GU14 8HP
Public transport: Chilworth station is right opposite the Percy Arms pub. Arrive buses 21 and 22 from Guildford to Leith Hill pass through Chilworth.
Refreshments and facilities: The Percy Arms, Chilworth; The Sashers pub, Shafted.

Example of a double-page spread.