

Black Down & Hindhead Supporters of the National Trust

Four Walking Trails Starting at The Devil's Punchbowl Car Park

4) Roam 639 Trail

A great but demanding walk with varied terrain that takes in the base of the Punchbowl, Gibbet Hill and The Temple of the Four Winds the latter two features affording superb views. If wet some muddy sections to be expected.

The trail has been created as a permanent reminder to those of us who are able to enjoy physical exercise of how fortunate we are. The trail name, Roam 639, is derived from the initials of Richard Overall, a local man who died from muscular dystrophy and the shared initials of two local young brothers, Alfie and Arthur Marchant whose lives were also affected by this condition. '639' represents the number of muscles in the human body and the title also signifies the length of the walk.

This walk is through rare ground-nesting bird habitat. Please keep dogs on a short lead during the nesting season (March to September)

Demanding

Good footwear / walking boots recommended

2 1/2 Hours

6.39 Miles (10.3 km)

OS Explorer OL 33

Start: Devil's Punchbowl Car Park GR 890357

1. *From the car-park proceed northwards towards the view-point overlooking the Punchbowl. Turn left and follow the obvious footpath through the trees. The path, identified by **white** Roam 639 disc signage, is skirting the southwest edge of the Punchbowl. After 10.00 minutes reach a major junction with an electricity substation diagonally on the left. At this junction turn right entering Highcombe Ledge via the gateway /cattle-grid.*
2. *After 15 minutes reach a split in the path; here leave the main path and take the less obvious smaller right hand path and pass by the Robertson Memorial.*

The Robertson Memorial

William Robertson (d.1937) left a bequest to the National Trust to acquire property 'within reasonably easy access of London as a memorial to his two younger brothers who died during the First World War. Second Lieutenant Laurence Robertson (36), King's Own Scottish Borderers, was killed in action during the Battle of the Somme on 30 July 1916. His name is recorded on the Thiepval Memorial. Captain Norman Robertson (40) of 2nd Battalion, Hampshire Regiment, died on 20 June 1917. He is buried in a Hamburg cemetery.

Nine memorial properties were purchased with William Robertson's bequest. With the exception of Sutton House, each memorial property incorporates high ground in accordance with William Robertson's wishes. A marker records the details of each bequest: eight markers are obelisks with dedicatory plaques, the ninth is a wall plaque. Highcombe Copse, incorporating an obelisk, was purchased in December 1938, includes c84 hectares of heath, farmland and coppice woodland with two cottages on the western side of the Devil's Punch Bowl.

3. *Continue past the obelisk and rejoin the main gravel surfaced path on a gentle downward incline arriving, after 30 minutes, at a major intersection.*
4. *Turn hard right and continue downhill; after 300 metres arrive at a junction and turn left following the path downhill with Keepers Cottage on the right. Keep on the track crossing the ford and then proceed uphill on a muddy path passing through a gateway and then bearing immediately right. Follow this roughish track uphill to an intersection; bear right going slightly downhill. Follow the track through open ground to reach, after 45 minutes, a gateway and cattle grid. Bear slightly right keeping on the gravel roadway passing Gnome Cottage on the left walking uphill to another junction. Turn left carrying on uphill, ignoring a residence on the right to arrive at a tarmac roadway. Keep going uphill for a further 30 metres to a junction on the right. Go right onto the muddy pathway and in 25 metres pass through a gate taking you into the Punchbowl. Follow this sandy path for about 400 metres ignoring any paths off to the left or right to arrive at a 'y' junction; take the signposted left hand fork slightly uphill. Continue on this undulating path eventually crossing a spring and coming into some open ground. Here bear half right (taking the middle of the three options) and commence a climb on a relatively narrow pathway which, after 200 metres, opens out into a challenging climb up the face of the Punchbowl. At the top bear right contouring around to arrive, after 75 minutes, at a gate.*

Note: *You are about half-way through the walk. Should you wish to end your walk at this point then once through the gate go straight ahead towards the trig-point to find the Punchbowl Car Park (and Cafe) away to your left. If you wish to continue allow another 1 ¼ hours.*

Once through the gate and after a few metres turn sharply to the left eventually crossing the grass track (the old A3) to meet the paved road; bear left and commence your walk up to Gibbett Hill. On the way you will pass the Sailor's Stone on the left.

Sailor's Stone

In 1786 a sailor was brutally murdered by three men whilst walking between London and Portsmouth. The stone was erected to mark the spot where this poor sailor met his death.

After 15 minutes bear right through the gateway and onto the wide grassy path that leads to the trig point on Gibbett Hill. Take a rest and enjoy the glorious views.

Gibbett Hill

The Celtic Cross marks the spot where three rogues were hanged for the murder of a sailor on the old Portsmouth Road. Gibbett Hill (272 m) located above the Devil's Punchbowl is the second highest point in Surrey.

From the trig point bear right proceeding down a narrow and steepish muddy path to a major junction. Go straight ahead uphill following this wide tree-lined track to arrive, after 25 minutes, at The Temple of the Four Winds. Again have a rest and enjoy the views.

The Temple of the Four Winds

The Temple of the Four Winds was built c. 1910 by Viscount Pirrie, a chairman of Harland and Wolff the builders of the ill-fated Titanic. The Viscount's Witley Park estate included a deer park and many elaborate lunches were held at the Lodge for his hunting friends. The actual temple fell into disrepair and was demolished in 1966.

Now turn right and after 25 metres bear right commencing a downhill segment on a muddy track lined with beech trees. Continue on this track to reach a 'T' Junction with a small lake on the right. Turn right and proceed straight ahead to reach a gateway and then into some open ground. Follow the grassy path uphill bearing left at the 'Y' junction and after 30 metres bear left following the path downhill to reach, after 45 minutes, a galvanised gate. Once through the gateway turn right and proceed uphill on an unpaved roadway. At the top of the climb ignore the first gateway on the right walking a further 30 metres where the signage directs you through a galvanised gate onto Hindhead Common. Follow the rough track (The Greensand Way) uphill adhering to the signage at the junctions with the route eventually breaking away, half right, from the more obvious trail and taking a rocky path through a gulley that emerges onto a gravel covered track which you follow to the gateway. Once through the gate proceed to the paved road; here turn left following the paved road for 300 metres to arrive at the sculpture at the south side of the Punchbowl car-park.

After this challenging walk why not treat yourself to some well-earned refreshment at the Punchbowl cafe!

The Black Down & Hindhead Supporters of the National Trust would like to thank Philip Currie for compiling these guides

The solid black line shows the route of the ROAM 639 trail.

