

13.75km/8½ miles

4hrs

moderate

## ASHDOWN FOREST

A A Milne, who wrote the Winnie-the-Pooh stories in the 1920s to entertain his son Christopher Robin, lived near the attractive village of Hartfield, and this part of Ashdown Forest is the setting for many of his stories. By Fiona Barltrop.

### The walk

- From Anchor Inn on main street, walk along Church Street and when opposite church porch, climb over stile and turn L along edge of field. Continue following High Weald Landscape Trail signs until you reach private road where you join route of Wealdway.
- Turn R (south) and walk along road for a mile as far as gate where – as signs direct – you turn L to bypass buildings. On reaching junction of drives beyond, keep following Wealdway signs. Now in Five Hundred Acre Wood, the 'One Hundred Acre Wood' of the Winnie-the-Pooh stories, surfaced drive leads to Kovacs Lodge beyond which route becomes a track, which heads south through woods. After about 1.5km you emerge into open with ever-increasing views. Route continues to ascend gradually to reach Greenwood Gate Clump – one of number of stands of tall pines which are characteristic of this high heathland, and provide very useful landmarks for walkers. Not far beyond, just before road (B2026), turn R.
- Leave Wealdway route and follow a short stretch of Vanguard Way (for which I saw no signpost), running parallel to B2026, up to its
- junction with another road and the Gills Lap car park. Cross road to car park, where there's an information plaque.
- Gills Lap Clump is one of highest points in forest at 671ft (204m) and a fine viewpoint, especially looking northwards across Weald. This is the 'Galleon's Lap' of The House at Pooch Corner. Head north along broad track, again in line with the B2026, to pass trig point and quarry, immediately beyond which, R, in fenced enclosure, is a memorial plaque to A A Milne and E H Shepard. Continue north, steadily descending, still parallel to road, until you reach woodland. Carry straight on, past houses, out on to road.
- Turn L and at next road fork bear R. Just after bend in road turn R along public bridleway, signed for 'Pooch Bridge'. Path heads downhill to famous bridge, where Winnie-the-Pooh and his friends played Poohsticks (as does every visitor!)
- Cross bridge and carry straight on, forking L at next junction and then R along footpath signed for Hartfield. At next fork bear L to reach B2110, then L along pavement back to Hartfield, passing Pooch Corner Shop as you enter village.

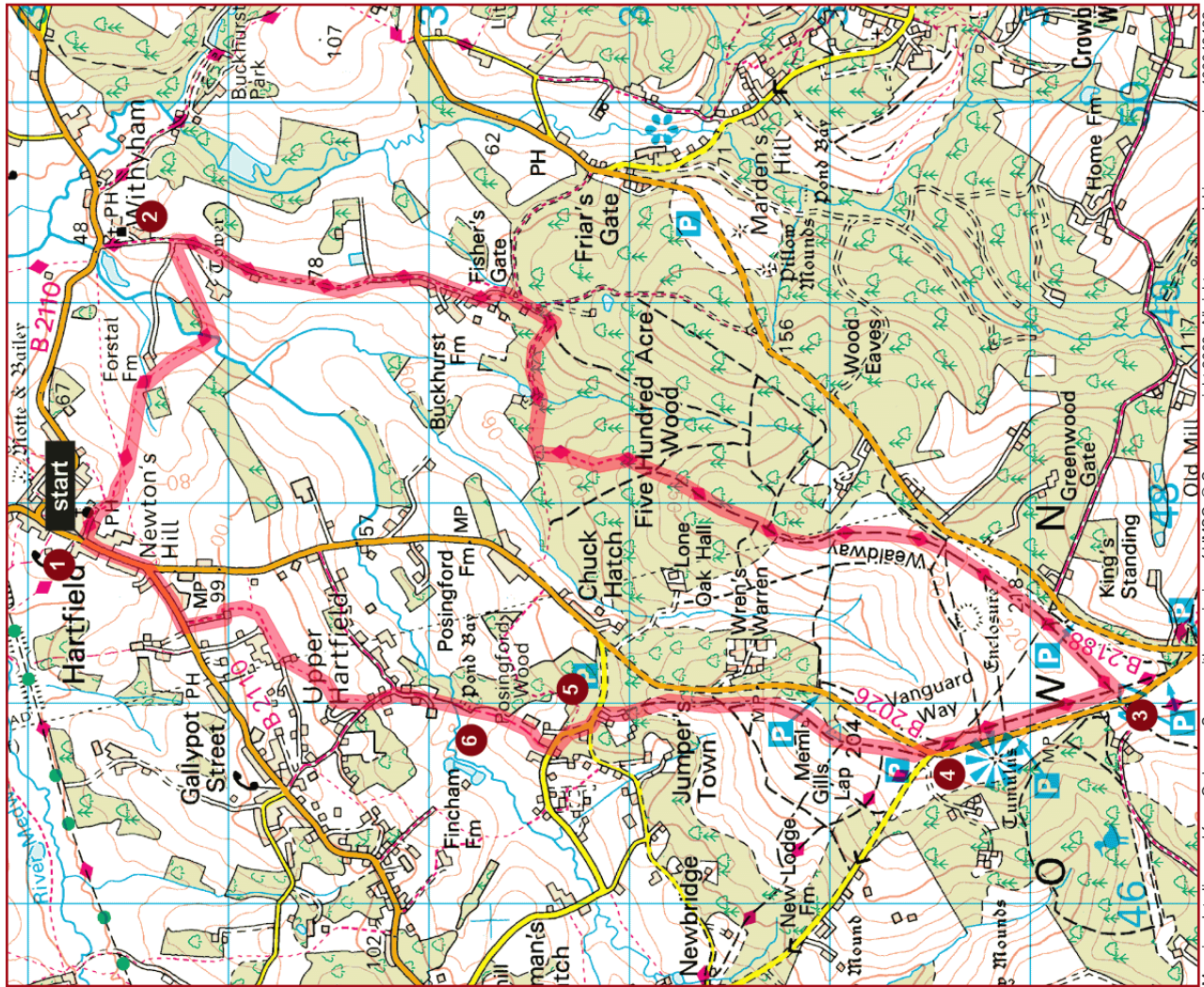
**DETAILS**  
Country Walking ID  
2707  
Mag Route 2,  
December 2006  
Region South East  
Area East Sussex  
Length of walk  
13.75km/8½ miles  
Time needed 4hrs  
Difficulty Moderate

**IS THIS WALK FOR YOU?**  
Terrain Woodland, heathland, fields, private road and surfaced tracks. Short stretch on pavement along main road at end  
Stiles 9  
Suitable for children, dogs

**PLANNING**  
Parking Anchor Inn, Hartfield, grid ref TQ478357  
Start grid ref TQ478357  
Nearest town East Grinstead  
Refreshments In Hartfield, possibly ice-cream van at car park on route.  
Recommended Tea Gardens (St Ives) north of Hartfield  
Public toilets In Hartfield  
Public transport Buses connecting with Crawley, East Grinstead and Tunbridge Wells

**MAPS**  
Ordnance Survey Explorer 135

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