



## Circular Walk 10: Between Maplehurst and Copsale

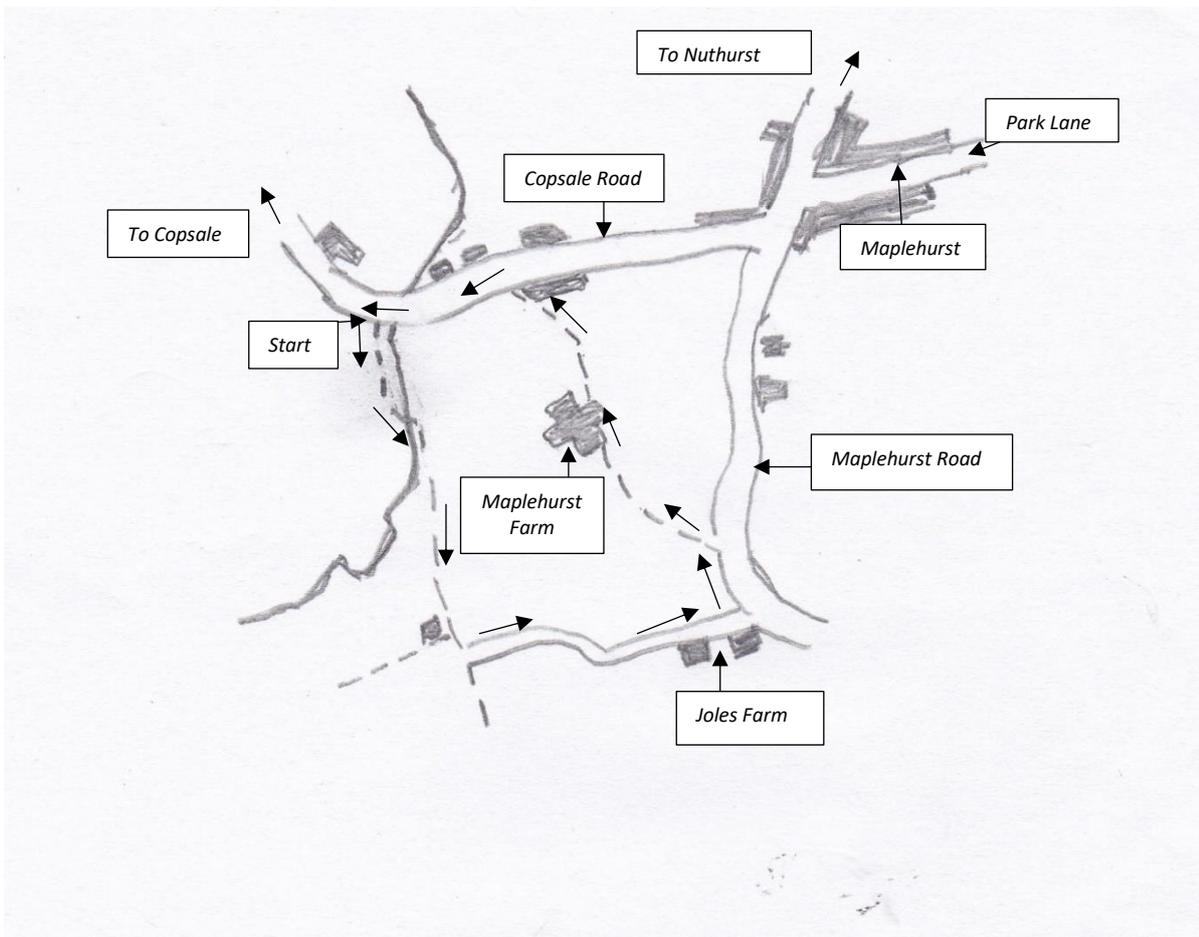
Distance: about 1.5 to 2.0 miles.

Time: about 1.0 hour.

Map: OS Explorer Map OL 34: Crawley and Horsham

Starting Point: Near Shuckers Farm, Copsale Road, Maplehurst

Grid Reference: 244 182



Easy, fairly level walk beside fields with farmed deer, and through woods. Good for seeing birds of prey.

1) From the centre of Maplehurst, drive along Copsale Road over the bridge and after about 20 metres park on left hand side at the entrance to a field, without blocking the gate. Walk back a few metres and take the footpath on the right (sign hidden in group of trees) through a metal kissing gate into a large field. Hug the left hand side of the field. Note the large oak in the centre. There may be caravans in the field as it is a Caravan Club site.

2) In the left hand corner of the field go through a metal gate in the deer fence, cross the track and through another metal gate in the deer fence. After about 15 metres, bear left (footpath sign hidden in tree/hedge) and cross the stream over a grassed bridge. Hug deer fence on the left, cross the wooden bridge over the stream and pass through the scrubland, home to many birds and insects. Take care as you reach the line of trees, because there is a low wire netting structure covered with bracken encroaching the footpath and constituting a trip hazard.

3) Cross a wooden bridge over a stream and walk between the deer fence on the left and the wood on the right, taking care you don't trip on a hidden rabbit hole. At the end of the deer fence, carry straight on over another wooden bridge, noting the small pond. At the 3 way footpath sign, go straight on (right leads to the Downs Link) and at the end of the deer fence, bear right through a 5 barred wooden gate. When you reach the 4 way footpath sign turn left and as you do so, note Chactonbury Ring on the South Downs.

4) Walk between the tree/hedge on your left and the low wire fence and field on your right. This is a good place to see birds of prey, especially buzzards but you may be lucky and see a red kite with its forked tail as the red kites have spread to Sussex in recent years. Continue keeping the buildings of Joles Farm on your right and walk past the left hand side of a 7 barred metal gate and along a metalled track until you reach Maplehurst Road.

5) Turn left along the road towards Maplehurst and after about 20 metres, turn left and then immediately right along the footpath keeping the metal fence on your left. Watch out for rabbit holes in the path. Follow a 90° left bend in the fence, past a pond on your right and just past the pond, bear right away from the fence and enter a mixed deciduous wood. On your left you will come across a fenced off area with a very tall chimney. This seems a very strange place to find such a structure. What do you think it is? Possibly a communication tower? Look for the trees with the parallel markings on their bark – these are old cherry trees. Also notice the coppiced hazel in the wood, which was used for fencing and firewood. There is lots of coppiced hazel in the Parish and the woods must have been very busy in the past.

6) Carry on slightly downhill and at the end of the wood, go through a metal gate in the deer fencing into a field. Hug the right hand side for about 20 metres, then bear right across another part of the same field keeping a large pond on your left. You may see ducks and geese on the pond. In August 2017, this field was being used as a tented wedding venue. Farmers need to diversify these days! Just left of the large oak tree at the end of the pond, cross the wooden bridge over the stream that connects with the pond and bear left onto a stony drive. Walk along the drive, follow it to the right and immediately bear right (before you get to some large wooden gates) and follow the footpath to the left. Hug the line of the trees with the deer fence on your right.

7) Go through the metal gate in the deer fence, cross the track and through another metal gate in the deer fence into a large field. Keep to the right hand side of the field and after about 50 metres, go through a metal kissing gate and walk between the hedge and deer fence. Follow the path and squeeze past a large oak tree in the middle of the path and past a house on your right.

8) Climb over a 3 barred fence, turn right and over a stile onto Copsale Road opposite a white house called "Round Trip". Turn left and walk carefully along Copsale Road, over the bridge and back to your parked car on the left.