

CHALDON *THE HAPPY VALLEY*



3 miles (4.8km) 1hr 30min Ascent: 246ft (75m) ▲

Paths: Well maintained and signposted paths, 7 stiles

Suggested map: aqua3 OS Explorer 146 Dorking, Box Hill & Reigate

Grid reference: TQ 301571

Parking: Car park on Farthing Downs, open dawn till dusk

The aptly named Happy Valley leads you through heavenly countryside – to a vision of hell in Chaldon church!

1 Cross Downs Road from car park, turn **R** at information pagoda, and follow waymarked **London Loop** down through **Devilsden Wood**. Beyond woods, **Happy Valley** opens up in front of you. Follow woodland edge on your **R** until path bears slightly **L** and begins to lose height. Now dodge briefly into woods, and follow signposted path towards **Chaldon church**. Soon you'll be back the open and then follow woodland edge as far as wooden footpath sign. Turn **R** here, and walk through thin finger of **Figgs Wood** before crossing large open field.

2 At far side of field, turn **L** on to **Ditches Lane** then, after 40yds (37m), fork **R** at triangle to visit **Chaldon church**. (A travelling monk visited the church in the 12th century and created its greatest treasure – a mural of the Last Judgement. The mural was

whitewashed over sometime in the 17th century and was only recently rediscovered.) Return via triangle to **Ditches Lane**, and continue for few more paces in direction you were going earlier. Now, turn **L** on to public footpath to **Piles Wood**. Cross open field, and keep straight on when you come to corner of **Piles Wood**. At far side of woods you'll come to gravelled bridleway, where you turn **L**.

3 Follow waymarked route of Downlands Circular Walk as it drops down through **Piles Wood** to footpath cross roads. Turn **L**, towards **Farthing Downs**, and continue for 700yds (640m) along bottom of the **Happy Valley**. Should you feel thirsty, take signposted route that crosses valley at this point to **The Fox**. Turn **R**, and follow **London Loop** waymarks to **Coulsdon Common**. Round trip to pub will add 1 mile (1.6km) to your walk. Otherwise, continue for further 70yds (64m), then fork **L** and climb gently up side of valley to rejoin your outward route at corner of **Devilsden Wood**.

