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## **DAY WALKS ON THE SOUTH DOWNS**

Written by **Deirdre Huston**

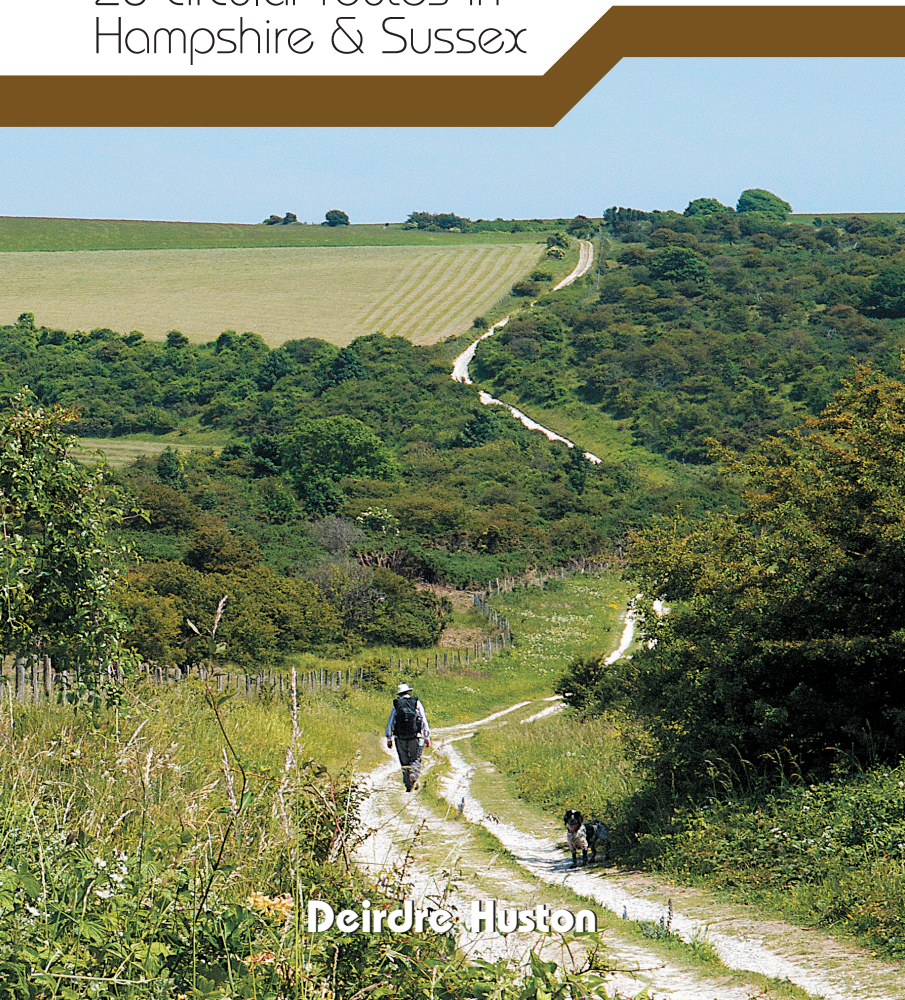
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# Day Walks on the South Downs

20 circular routes in  
Hampshire & Sussex



Deirdre Huston

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Cover photo: Lullington Heath (route 19).

Back cover: View towards Arundel Castle from the Downs.

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PHOTO: TEGAN RAYLAND

## Introduction

*Day Walks on the South Downs* details 20 circular walks which will help you explore the South Downs National Park. Sections of deservedly popular trails such as the South Downs Way combine with lesser-known paths. These loops lead you past viewpoints and points of interest to convivial pubs and cafes, so that as you walk and relax, you can also discover history and observe nature.

Back in 2011, around the time it became a national park, I explored the South Downs for the first edition of this guidebook. I marched along ridges and clifftops, each new mile allowing expansive views to unfold. I persevered up chalk escarpments to claim forgotten ruins, desolate battlefields and quiet dewponds as my own. I navigated tree-covered slopes and tiptoed through grazing fields, as much watched as watching.

Through making short films, I have since explored the local history of Saddlescombe Farm (see Route 14, The Heart of the Historic Downlands) and wider areas of National Trust estates such as Cissbury Ring. Many rights of way which criss-cross the Downs are ancient routeways, and whether it is chalk, cobblestone or flattened grass underfoot, we can be certain of one thing – others have passed this way before us.

This year I returned to these trails and, once again, was struck by how spectacular the South Downs can be: the flicker of an adonis or chalkhill blue butterfly, shimmering grasses on a sunny day, chalky streams tumbling through ancient woodland, a heath where fragrant thyme and chalk flowers such as purple orchids grow among pink heathers.

Walking is about having the wind in your face, the sun in your eyes or the rain at your back. Enjoy reflective solitude amidst the peaceful South Downs or relish the simple pleasure of a walk with friends or family. Make time to stop at a friendly pub, choose a slice of cake at a cafe or picnic at a viewpoint.

Whatever walking means to you, I hope that you enjoy the walks in this guidebook and share my excitement in exploring the South Downs National Park.

It's all out there waiting for you! Who knows what you may discover?

## Deirdre Huston





## Acknowledgements

With love and thanks to Ian Rayland, for his unceasing support, unfailing sense of direction and boundless energy through many miles. Thanks to my father, Bob Huston, for continuing to share his love of the outdoors with all our family. I would also like to thank fellow walkers, friends and family who have accompanied me on days out to explore the South Downs: Carol Turner, Melody Staff, Sally Freeman and my children, Sean, Tegan and Rory xx.

## About the walks

Most of the walks described here are between 6 and 14 miles and take about four to six hours to complete.

As with all walking keeping a close eye on the weather forecast will pay dividends, especially regarding cloud levels – the views and scenery are spectacular, but the going will sink into the ‘Grey Gym’ should the cloud come down. Apropos mist, most of the navigation here is simple, often following tracks, walls and fences, but a bit of map and compass work could be required at times, but this is flagged up in the walks.

The **summary** and route **description** for each walk should be studied carefully before setting out on a walk. Together they describe the terrain involved, the amount of ascent and the level of navigation skills required.

All the walks in this guide follow public rights of way or other routes with public access, including *permitted* or *concession* footpaths.

## Walk times

The time given for each walk is on the generous side and based on a pace of around 4km per hour or 2 1/2 miles per hour, with time allowed for ascent and difficulty of terrain. There is some allowance for snack breaks and photo stops, but prolonged lunches should be added in.

## Navigation

For most walks in this guide, following the route description in combination with the route map provided should be sufficient. However it is recommended you carry with you the appropriate map as a back up. The routes in this book are covered by the following maps:

- Ordnance Survey Explorer OL8 Chichester** (1:25,000)
- Ordnance Survey Explorer OL10 Arundel & Pulborough** (1:25,000)
- Ordnance Survey Explorer OL11 Brighton & Hove** (1:25,000)
- Ordnance Survey Explorer OL25 Eastbourne & Beachy Head** (1:25,000)
- Ordnance Survey Explorer OL32 Winchester** (1:25,000)
- Ordnance Survey Explorer OL33 Haslemere & Petersfield** (1:25,000)

A reasonable level of map reading ability and competence in the use of a compass is advised although not essential. If you possess a GPS (Global Positioning System) this can be a useful navigational aid in locating your position. However it is not a remedy for poor navigational skills.

## Refreshments

A little research in advance of your walk can pay dividends. Tea rooms and kiosks may be seasonal or offer reduced opening hours. Rural pubs are usually not open all day and may only serve food at set times. At weekends, popular pubs increasingly require booking – worth doing even if your time is approximate. Take a back-up of sandwiches and plenty of water if unsure. Most pubs welcome muddy boots into bar areas.

## South Downs National Park

The South Downs National Park came fully into being in 2011, the same year as the first edition of *Day Walks on the South Downs* was published. It covers a whopping 1,627 square kilometres (628 square miles) in southern England and takes in parts of Hampshire, West Sussex and East Sussex. The much-loved chalk hills of the South Downs, including the iconic white cliffs of the Seven Sisters and Beachy Head along the English Channel coast, are a well-known part of this national park but it also includes the western Weald, which is characterised by heavily wooded sandstone and clay hills and vales. The South Downs Way stretches all the way from Winchester to Eastbourne and is the only national trail to lie wholly within a national park. The walks in this guidebook often take in sections of the South Downs Way but also incorporate other less obvious but equally interesting places to explore.



## Safety

It is strongly advised that appropriate footwear is used – walking boots or approach shoes designed to provide stability and security on uneven and slippery terrain. A waterproof, windproof jacket is essential and waterproof overtrousers or trousers are strongly recommended. Sufficient insulating clothing should also be worn or carried, that is appropriate to the type of walk planned and the time of year. Carry lots of food and drink, including an emergency supply. It's surprising how quickly you can become depleted and/or dehydrated, especially at the end of the day.

## Rescue

In case of an emergency dial **999** and ask for **Police** and then **Search and Rescue**. If you need the Coastguard, dial **999** or **112** and ask for the **Coastguard**. Where possible give a six-figure grid reference of your location or that of your casualty. If you don't have mobile reception try to attract the attention of others nearby. The standard distress signal is six short blasts on a whistle every minute.

## Emergency rescue by SMS text

In the UK you can also contact the emergency services by SMS text – useful if you have low battery or intermittent signal. You need to register your phone first by texting 'register' to **999** and then following the instructions in the reply. **Do it now** – it could save yours or someone else's life. [www.emergencysms.org.uk](http://www.emergencysms.org.uk)

## Lyme disease

An increasing problem, particularly bad in South-East England, and other areas populated by deer. It can affect a small number of people very seriously. Lyme disease is a bacterial infection that is spread to humans by infected ticks. Ticks are small, spider-shaped insects that feed on the blood of mammals, including humans. The most common symptom of Lyme disease is a red skin rash that looks similar to a bullseye on a dart board. Left untreated, other symptoms can develop, including: a high temperature (fever); muscle pain; joint pain and swelling; neurological symptoms, such as temporary paralysis of the facial muscles. A person with Lyme disease is not contagious because the infection can only be spread by the ticks. It's important to visit your doctor if you have been bitten by tick and you have flu-like symptoms: you are at risk as it can be difficult to diagnose it correctly. Visit [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) for more information.

## The Countryside Code

### Respect other people

**Please respect the local community and other people using the outdoors. Remember your actions can affect people's lives and livelihoods.**

#### Consider the local community and other people enjoying the outdoors

- » Respect the needs of local people and visitors alike – for example, don't block gateways, driveways or other paths with your vehicle.
- » When riding a bike or driving a vehicle, slow down or stop for horses, walkers and farm animals and give them plenty of room. By law, cyclists must give way to walkers and horse riders on bridleways.
- » Co-operate with people at work in the countryside. For example, keep out of the way when farm animals are being gathered or moved and follow directions from the farmer.
- » Busy traffic on small country roads can be unpleasant and dangerous to local people, visitors and wildlife – so slow down and where possible, leave your vehicle at home, consider sharing lifts and use alternatives such as public transport or cycling. For public transport information, phone Traveline on 0871 200 22 33 or visit [www.traveline.info](http://www.traveline.info)

#### Leave gates and property as you find them and follow paths unless wider access is available

- » A farmer will normally close gates to keep farm animals in, but may sometimes leave them open so the animals can reach food and water. Leave gates as you find them or follow instructions on signs. When in a group, make sure the last person knows how to leave the gates.
- » Follow paths unless wider access is available, such as on open country or registered common land (known as 'open access land').
- » If you think a sign is illegal or misleading such as a *Private – No Entry* sign on a public path, contact the local authority.
- » Leave machinery and farm animals alone – don't interfere with animals even if you think they're in distress. Try to alert the farmer instead.
- » Use gates, stiles or gaps in field boundaries if you can – climbing over walls, hedges and fences can damage them and increase the risk of farm animals escaping.
- » Our heritage matters to all of us – be careful not to disturb ruins and historic sites.



## Protect the natural environment

We all have a responsibility to protect the countryside now and for future generations, so make sure you don't harm animals, birds, plants or trees and try to leave no trace of your visit. When out with your dog make sure it is not a danger or nuisance to farm animals, horses, wildlife or other people.

### Leave no trace of your visit and take your litter home

- » Protecting the natural environment means taking special care not to damage, destroy or remove features such as rocks, plants and trees. They provide homes and food for wildlife, and add to everybody's enjoyment of the countryside.
- » Litter and leftover food doesn't just spoil the beauty of the countryside, it can be dangerous to wildlife and farm animals – so take your litter home with you. Dropping litter and dumping rubbish are criminal offences.
- » Fires can be as devastating to wildlife and habitats as they are to people and property – so be careful with naked flames and cigarettes at any time of the year. Sometimes, controlled fires are used to manage vegetation, particularly on heaths and moors between 1 October and 15 April, but if a fire appears to be unattended then report it by calling 999.

### Keep dogs under effective control

When you take your dog into the outdoors, always ensure it does not disturb wildlife, farm animals, horses or other people by keeping it under effective control. This means that you:

- » keep your dog on a lead, or
- » keep it in sight at all times, be aware of what it's doing and be confident it will return to you promptly on command
- » ensure it does not stray off the path or area where you have a right of access

Special dog rules may apply in particular situations, so always look out for local signs – for example:

- » dogs may be banned from certain areas that people use, or there may be restrictions, byelaws or control orders limiting where they can go
- » the access rights that normally apply to open country and registered common land (known as 'open access' land) require dogs to be kept on a short lead between 1 March and 31 July, to help protect ground nesting birds, and all year round near farm animals

- » at the coast, there may also be some local restrictions to require dogs to be kept on a short lead during the bird breeding season, and to prevent disturbance to flocks of resting and feeding birds during other times of year

It's always good practice (and a legal requirement on 'open access' land) to keep your dog on a lead around farm animals and horses, for your own safety and for the welfare of the animals. A farmer may shoot a dog which is attacking or chasing farm animals without being liable to compensate the dog's owner.

However, if cattle or horses chase you and your dog, it is safer to let your dog off the lead – don't risk getting hurt by trying to protect it. Your dog will be much safer if you let it run away from a farm animal in these circumstances and so will you.

Everyone knows how unpleasant dog mess is and it can cause infections, so always clean up after your dog and get rid of the mess responsibly – 'bag it and bin it'. Make sure your dog is wormed regularly to protect it, other animals and people.

## Enjoy the outdoors

Even when going out locally, it's best to get the latest information about where and when you can go. For example, your rights to go onto some areas of open access land and coastal land may be restricted in particular places at particular times. Find out as much as you can about where you are going, plan ahead and follow advice and local signs.

### Plan ahead and be prepared

You'll get more from your visit if you refer to up-to-date maps or guidebooks and websites before you go. Visit [www.gov.uk/natural-england](http://www.gov.uk/natural-england) or contact local information centres or libraries for a list of outdoor recreation groups offering advice on specialist activities.

You're responsible for your own safety and for others in your care – especially children – so be prepared for natural hazards, changes in weather and other events. Wild animals, farm animals and horses can behave unpredictably if you get too close, especially if they're with their young – so give them plenty of space.



Check weather forecasts before you leave. Conditions can change rapidly especially on mountains and along the coast, so don't be afraid to turn back. When visiting the coast check for tide times on [www.ukho.gov.uk/easytide](http://www.ukho.gov.uk/easytide) – don't risk getting cut off by rising tides and take care on slippery rocks and seaweed.

Part of the appeal of the countryside is that you can get away from it all. You may not see anyone for hours, and there are many places without clear mobile phone signals, so let someone else know where you're going and when you expect to return.

#### Follow advice and local signs

England has about 190,000km (118,000 miles) of public rights of way, providing many opportunities to enjoy the natural environment. Get to know the signs and symbols used in the countryside to show paths and open countryside.

## How to use this book

This book should provide you with all of the information that you need for an enjoyable, trouble free and successful walk. The following tips should also be of help:

1. We strongly recommend that you invest in the maps listed above on page ix. These are essential even if you are familiar with the area – you may need to cut short the walk or take an alternative route.
2. Choose your route. Consider the time you have available and the abilities/level of experience of all of members your party – then read the Safety section of this guide.
3. We recommend that you study the route description carefully before setting off. Cross-reference this to your map so that you've got a good sense of general orientation in case you need an alternative route. Make sure that you are familiar with the symbols used on the maps.
4. Get outdoors and enjoy walking!

## Maps, descriptions, distances

While every effort has been made to maintain accuracy within the maps and descriptions in this guide, we have had to process a vast amount of information and we are unable to guarantee that every single detail is correct. Please exercise caution if a direction appears at odds with the route on the map. If in doubt, a comparison between the route, the description and a quick cross-reference with your map (along with a bit of common sense) should help ensure that you're on the right track.

Note that distances have been measured off the map, and map distances rarely coincide 100% with distances on the ground. Please treat stated distances as a guideline only. Ordnance Survey maps are the most commonly used, are easy to read and many people are happy using them. If you're not familiar with OS maps and are unsure of what the symbols mean, you can download a free OS 1:25,000 map legend from [www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk](http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk)

Here are a few of the symbols and abbreviations we use on the maps and in our directions:



PB = public bridleway; PF = public footpath; GR = grid reference.

### Km/mile conversion chart

#### METRIC TO IMPERIAL

1 kilometre [km]	1000 m	0.6214 mile
1 metre [m]	100 cm	1.0936 yd
1 centimetre [cm]	10 mm	0.3937 in
1 millimetre [mm]		0.03937 in

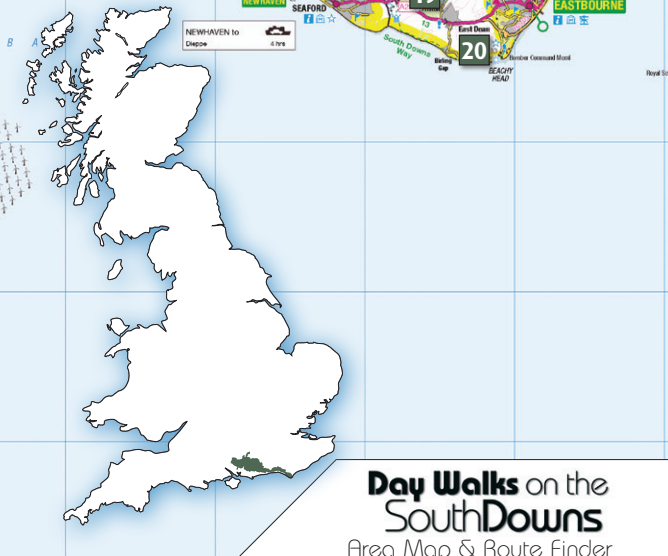
#### IMPERIAL TO METRIC

1 mile	1760 yd	1.6093 km
1 yard [yd]	3 ft	0.9144 m
1 foot [ft]	12 in	0.3048 m
1 inch [in]		2.54 cm



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**Day Walks on the South Downs**  
Area Map & Route Finder

# SECTION 1

## Hampshire

*The serene atmosphere can be deceptive! Look beyond the present and this area is rich in history. Let low-rolling downland and well-trodden paths lead you through valleys and up slopes to hill forts and battlefields. Look out for red kites swooping over peaceful farmland too.*







## CHERITON: WELL-TRODDEN PATHS & CIVIL WAR BATTLEFIELDS

**DISTANCE:** 13.8KM/8.6MILES » **TOTAL ASCENT:** 204M/669FT » **START GR:** SU 583284 » **TIME:** ALLOW 5-6 HOURS  
**SATNAV:** S024 OPZ » **MAP:** OS EXPLORER OL32, WINCHESTER, 1:25,000 » **REFRESHMENTS:** THE FLOWER POTS INN OR THE HINTON ARMS, CHERITON; THE MILBURY'S, BEAUWORTH; THE TUCK SHOP, HOLDEN FARM CAMPSITE (SEASONAL OPENING) » **NAVIGATION:** STRAIGHTFORWARD.

## 01 Cheriton: Well-trodden Paths & Civil War Battlefields

13.8km/8.6miles

An easy walk from the pretty village of Cheriton through rolling downland taking in a historic pub, Hinton Ampner and areas of the Cheriton Civil War Battlefield.

Cheriton » Mill Barrows nr Beauworth » Kilmeston » Hinton Ampner » Upper Lamborough Lane » Cheriton

### Start

The war memorial on the village green in Cheriton. Roadside parking. GR: SU 583284.

### The Walk

The village of Cheriton offers a charming mix of thatched cottages, a village green, a gentle stream and plenty of ducks! Meander out of the village to explore rolling downland on farm tracks. Join the South Downs Way and make the gentle climb to Milbarrow Down and the friendly Milbury's free house. The 400-year-old building sits beside an intersection of historic pathways.

Milbarrow Down was a Bronze Age barrow cemetery and a barrow mound can be seen above the crossroads. Itself unspectacular, the background makes it more than interesting. Bronze Age barrow mounds are primarily burial places for individuals rather than communal burials like earlier long barrows. An important person could have been buried here, kept company by a collection of material possessions to indicate their importance. Alternatively, was this a non-burial barrow, intended to mark territory on the highly visible hilltop horizon where the resulting mound of fresh chalk would be a striking landmark?

Follow the Wayfarers Walk across fields, through Kilmeston and on towards Hinton Ampner (National Trust). We approach the house from the south, a simple way to appreciate the position and outlook of this garden, known for its stunning views. Explore the thirteenth century church or detour to see the elegant interior of the house and wander through its gardens to intimately appraise Ralph Dutton's accomplished mix of formal and informal planting.

Beyond the A272, our route joins a section of the Cheriton Battlefield Walk. On 29 March 1644, the Battle of Cheriton decided the course of the Civil War in Southern England. Signposts have now seen better days but there are boards that point out where skirmishes between Royalists and Parliamentarians bloodied the landscape. We follow part of it, but if you want to divert to explore it more fully, please do so using the information boards and the optional route marked on our map. The sunken paths and lie of the land make it easy to imagine emotions and atmosphere as the battle unfolds.



**01 CHERITON**

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## Directions – Cheriton



**1** From the war memorial, follow the road past the parish hall. Walk along over the stream and **turn left** along Hill Houses Lane. Walk to the very end, past houses, to where the tarmac stops and continue along the mud byway.

**2** At the fork, **continue straight ahead**.

**3** At the wooden waymarker before the barn, **walk left** down the byway (Honey Lane). **Head right** at the signpost and soon pass through a gate.

**4** Go **straight ahead** to take the lower track and join the South Downs Way (SDW). **Go left** through the gate, still following the SDW. Cross the A272 and follow the SDW through Holden Farm. At the barn, join the lane to make gradual climb **straight ahead** along the SDW.

**5** **Walk right** up the lane following the SDW. Pass The Milbury's. **Turn left** at the crossroads following the SDW towards West Meon. (Look right beyond the hedge to see Bronze Age Mill Barrows.) Pass the entrance to Preshaw House. Cross to the left side and join narrow SDW track past the signpost as it runs **parallel** to the road.

**6** **Turn left** leaving the SDW to follow the Wayfarers Walk where the track rejoins the road. Walk down the hill along the edge of the field to the stile. Continue straight ahead across the next field and go through the gap in the hedge, following the path straight ahead through the crop field. At the far side, look for the wooden waymarker on your right to lead you on to a 'hidden' footpath between the hedge and the fence. Pass a kissing gate and continue along the fence. Go through another kissing gate, across the field and through one last kissing gate.


**7** You are now in Kilmeston, opposite the village hall. **Walk across the road and straight ahead**, following the road to Dean House. **Turn left** at the wooden signpost following the Wayfarers Walk. Go through a double gate and walk along a wooded path. Cross another couple of stiles and follow the line of the telegraph poles **straight ahead** to the far side of the field. Pass the church on your left and cross the stile.

**8** **Walk right, and then immediately left, across a stile**, still following the Wayfarers Walk. You are passing Kilmeston Manor, but soon this will be dwarfed by the sight of the National Trust house Hinton Ampner. Walk through the gap and head straight on towards the gate.

**9** **Walk straight ahead** through the gate. This fenced path runs through the grounds of Hinton Ampner. Follow the Wayfarers Walk through the gate. Pass the entrance to the church and the drive to Hinton Ampner. **Head right** through the gates to continue on our walk. Follow the road **straight ahead**.

**10** Cross the A272 and follow the Wayfarers Walk on the concrete byway. See the Cheriton Battlefield Walk notice board (point 2).

**11** **Walk straight ahead** at the crossroads of grassy tracks. Climb the slope. Probably not a welcome hill at this point but at least you're not a soldier at battle.

 **Turn right** at the next crossroads, along the Cheriton Lane track to follow the Cheriton Battle Walk more fully, rejoining at point 12 below.

**12** **Turn left** at Upper Lamborough Lane, still following the Wayfarers Walk. At the next path intersection, **turn left** to head downhill as we stay on the Battlefield Walk. At the signpost, **walk right** along the byway beside the fence, following the 'sunken' path. Don't miss point 4 of the Cheriton Battlefield Walk.

**13** Cross the road and **turn right** to follow the pavement back into Cheriton, walking alongside the River Itchen.



## WINCHESTER HILL FORT & THE MEON VALLEY

**DISTANCE:** 17KM/10.6MILES » **TOTAL ASCENT:** 380M/1,247FT » **START GR:** SU 677222 » **TIME:** ALLOW 5 HOURS  
**SATNAV:** GU32 1PF » **MAP:** OS EXPLORER OL32 WINCHESTER, 1:25,000 » **REFRESHMENTS:** YE OLDE GEORGE INN OR IZAAK WALTON, EAST MEON; SEASONAL CAFÉ, MEON SPRINGS; THOMAS LORD, WEST MEON » **NAVIGATION:** WELL-SIGNED EXCEPT DURING WOODLAND STRETCH BETWEEN WESTBURY AND DRAYTON.

## 02 Winchester Hill Fort & the Meon Valley

17km/10.6miles

A steady climb to Old Winchester Hill and a leisurely meander through the luscious Meon Valley.

East Meon » Meon Springs » Old Winchester Hill » Meon Valley Trail » West Meon » Westbury Park » Drayton » East Meon

### Start

Car park in East Meon, signed from the village centre. GR: SU 677222.

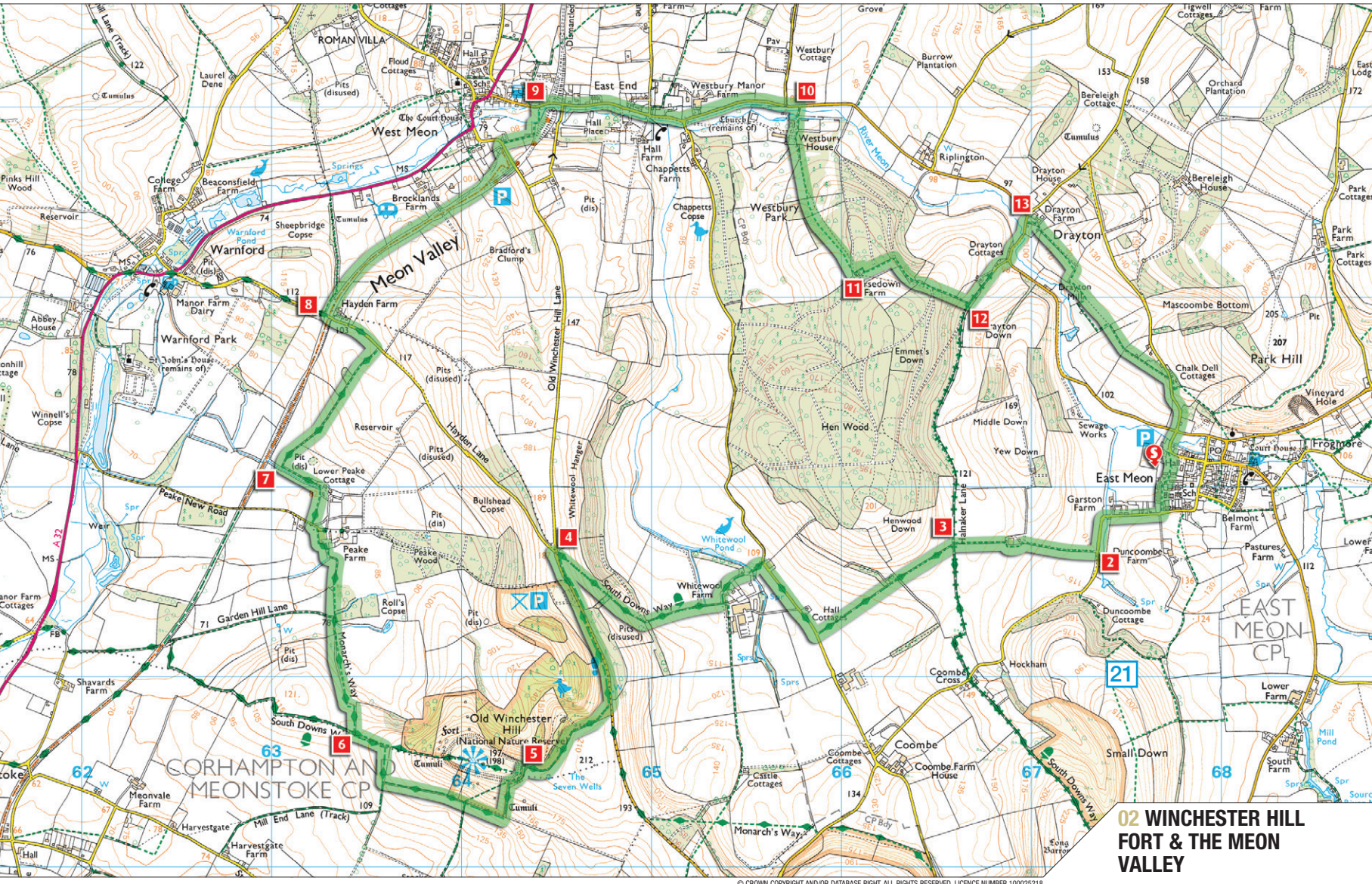
### The Walk

Join the South Downs Way (SDW) to meander through the agricultural valley around East Meon. Look out for red kites swooping and gliding over the crop fields. Pass the fishery at tranquil Meon Springs, where a bacon roll on the cafe balcony might prove tempting.

Begin the steady and not too arduous climb to Old Winchester Hill, a place which retains atmosphere despite attracting 'honeypot' swarms. Most visitors stick to the hill fort trail so the outlying footpaths are surprisingly empty. Approaching on foot is a great way to gain a sense of its importance, topography and history. At the summit, the SDW has been re-routed, but detour to look at the early Bronze Age hill fort, believed to have been the settlement of a Celtic chieftain. Four flint and chalk barrow tumuli are preserved along the top of the ridge. Around 3,800 years ago, they stood out as brilliant white markers on the skyline.

Some smaller hollows date from a WWII mortar firing range. There is a trig point too and the site is a nature reserve, superbly managed by Natural England who encourage banks of wild flowers to flourish. We paused to watch a hunting hawk but you may also want to look out for various orchids, field fleawort and ox-eye daisies. During summer butterflies such as chalkhill blue own the hill.

Descend on Monarch's Way, climbing back up the valley before joining the flat, easy Meon Valley Trail. This runs along the disused railway line to West Meon, where the churchyard boasts occupants such as the spy, Guy Burgess, and Thomas Lord, founder of the cricket ground. You may prefer to visit Thomas Lord, the pub, with its large garden and good reputation for food! A final, contrasting section leads you through broadleaf woodland with a woodpecker soundtrack and some big old trees. Then home across the fields to the thatched village of East Meon and its welcoming pubs.



**02 WINCHESTER HILL  
FORT & THE MEON  
VALLEY**

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## Directions – Winchester Hill Fort & the Meon Valley



- Take the footpath opposite the car park. Go across the field, through houses and **bear right**, following the road. At the top of Duncombe Road, **go right** along the lane.
- 2 **Turn right** along footpath towards 'Forty Acres'. Keep left at the farm and continue down through the field past a (broken) signpost.
- 3 At path crossroads, go **straight ahead**, joining the South Downs Way (SDW) to Meonstoke. At the lane, **turn right** then at Meon Springs Fishery, **turn left** still following the SDW. **Turn right** after the flint barn. By the disused chalk pit **bear right** on to the steep-ish climb.
- 4 Go through the gate to Old Winchester Hill lay-by. Follow the SDW **left** alongside the lane. Towards the top, cross the road to continue on the SDW.
- 5 Detour to explore Old Winchester Hill Fort, a Bronze Age site, nature reserve and viewpoint. Afterwards **go left** to follow the re-routed SDW as it skirts around the fort. Steep descent. **Turn right**. Ignore the footpath heading right back to the fort and instead **continue straight ahead** and follow path right. After the field, follow the SDW **right and then left** at a junction.
- 6 Follow Monarch's Way **right** where the field slopes downwards (the wooden waymarker is partially obscured). Join a farm track near Roll's Copse and walk **straight ahead**. By the entrance to Peake Farm, follow the footpath **right** round the edge of the field. Go **left** briefly on a lane and then **right**, still following Monarch's Way. Pass the riding school and walk **left** on footpath.
- 7 **Turn right** for a steep, steady climb up the stony lane. At Hayden Lane, **turn left**.
- 8 **Walk right** after the bridge to join the footpath **above** the Meon Valley Trail. The path soon forks: go down **right** to leave the footpath and join the Meon Valley Trail. Go through the car park and along the drive to leave the Meon Valley Trail. **Turn left** at the lane and immediately **right** at the footpath opposite. Follow it round across the footbridge.

- 9 At the road, **walk left** to explore West Meon village and/or pub, or **go right** to continue on route. Short, unavoidable stretch along the road, but there's some pavement. Pass Coombe Lane.
- 10 **Go right** on the signed (obscured) footpath at Westbury House. Follow the footpath **straight ahead** up the slope, past the marker post and through the gate. Follow the unmarked, winding track through the woods. At the small clearing, keep going in the **same direction, heading left through and then along the edge of the trees**.
- 11 At Horsedown Farm, go **left** through the waymarked gate to follow the footpath round. Go straight across a driveway and, at the field, **walk left** at the marker post along the grass track. At the lane, **go right**. The next turn-off is **easy to miss**: where the stony lane curves and begins to climb upwards, leave it to go **straight ahead** on the footpath. Almost immediately, come to a stile. Walk **right**, making the steep descent and crossing several stiles.
- 12 **Walk left** along the flint and mud byway. Join Halnaker Lane **straight ahead**. At the T-junction, **go left** for short way on the lane.
- 13 **Go right** along the signed, narrow footpath before Drayton Farm Barns. Go through the kissing gate and walk **straight ahead** through the metal gate. Grassy climb to a gate. Walk **straight ahead** through a crop field to a waymarked gate. Continue up the hill. Go through a kissing gate. See East Meon ahead and follow path **straight ahead**. Negotiate one last kissing gate and **go right** at the lane for East Meon, **straight ahead** at crossroads and **turn right** into the car park.



# SECTION 2

## West Sussex

*The high drama of the Downs offers small pockets of wildness in the central area with rugged steep-sided escarpments, ridges and valleys. Enjoy too the peace of grazing fields and farmland, chalky woods and riverbanks, marshes and breathtaking nature reserves. Moving westwards, the Downs become much more wooded and there are ancient commons and milk wood waiting to be explored.*







## 03 An Enclave of Tranquility at Harting Downs

15km/9.3miles

A spectacular section of the South Downs Way with an undulating downland loop which leads you straight past the little-known ruins of medieval Monkton Farm and a tucked-away country pub, to return by easy, gently climbing bridleways.

Harting Hill » Beacon Hill » Pen Hill » Philliswood Down » Monkton Farm » Chilgrove » Hooksway » Little Round Down » Bramshott Bottom » Harting Downs » Harting Hill

### Start

Harting Down Car Park on the B2141 between South Harting and Mid Lavant, near Chichester. GR: SU 790181.

As you climb through West Dean Estate, look out for the moving shrine to a young German WWII pilot who crashed towards the top of the wooded hill.

### The Walk

We start high with a beautiful section of the South Downs Way (SDW). The views are spectacular: the green copper spire of South Harting Church stands out against the agricultural backdrop. The ancient chalk downland of Harting Down (National Trust owned, nature reserve and SSSI) boasts a wide variety of plants and invertebrates. Look for evidence of Iron Age land formations: a fort on Beacon Hill and cross-dykes on Harting Down and Pen Hill. The notably steep climb up Beacon Hill can be avoided with a simple detour if necessary but the panorama from the trig and orientation points should tempt you onwards and upwards.

A quick march down farm lanes brings you to The White Horse. Even if you're not planning to stop, the extensive terrace and wafts of the aroma of cooked lunches may tempt you. If you are in time to hit its opening hours, you may prefer to push on to the Royal Oak at Hooksway where you can share the fireplace with the ghost of William 'Shagger' Shepherd, a sheep rustler who was chased here and murdered by angry farmers.

Pleasant bridleways lead you back to the SDW and Harting Hill. It's worth mentioning that South Harting is where Belloc's characters in 'The Four Men: A Farrago' finish their four day, ninety mile trek across Sussex, so you are, perhaps, in good company.

### AN ENCLAVE OF TRANQUILITY AT HARTING DOWNS

**DISTANCE:** 15KM/9.3MILES » **TOTAL ASCENT:** 433M/1,421FT » **START GR:** SU 790181 » **TIME:** ALLOW 6-7 HOURS  
**SATNAV:** GU31 5PN » **MAP:** OS EXPLORER OL8, CHICHESTER, 1:25,000 » **REFRESHMENTS:** THE WHITE HORSE, CHILGROVE, OR ROYAL OAK, HOOKSWAY » **NAVIGATION:** CARE NEEDED AFTER LEAVING SOUTH DOWNS WAY TO CORRECTLY FOLLOW FOOTPATH RIGHT OUT OF FIELD TOWARDS MONKTON FARM.



CROSS-DYKES ON PEN HILL



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**03 AN ENCLAVE OF TRANQUILITY AT HARTING DOWNS**

## Directions – An Enclave of Tranquility at Harting Downs



**1** From the car park, walk up along the bridleway to the five-bar gate. Go through the gate and veer left to join the lower parallel track beside the National Trust sign and follow the path. This is the South Downs Way (SDW). Follow the waymarkers **straight ahead**. **Watch your descent on Harting Down: extremely slippery compacted chalk.**

**2** At Bramshott Bottom, by the five-way marker post, leave the SDW to go **straight ahead** up Beacon Hill.

 To avoid a steep climb, follow the SDW **right** and then **left** again before reaching Telegraph House, rejoining main route at point 3 by the gate in the valley between Beacon Hill and Pen Hill.

At the top of Beacon Hill, go through the gate and walk **straight ahead** to the trig point and orientation plate. Continue east: **straight ahead** down the hill on the bridleway past the tree plantation.

**3** Re-join the SDW and walk **straight ahead** up the hill. At the top of Pen Hill, go through a gate and walk **straight ahead** curving left as you go down the hill. Near the base of the hill, follow the bridleway marker post left. At the next marker post, where the footpath joins the SDW, **turn right**.

At the junction with the byway, go **straight ahead**. Ignore a gate. Follow the SDW **right** at the fork by the wooden waymarker sign. **Turn left and immediately right** at signed junctions staying on SDW. Stay on the track as it wends its way through the trees.

**4** Follow arrow on marker post **straight ahead** out on to the open grazing field. Walk along this undulating track, **turning right** at a marker post and climbing over a stile.

**5** Reach a flint outbuilding by a three-way signpost and continue **straight on** along this footpath through West Dean Estate as it veers right up the hill. Pass through a gate and coppiced wood. Continue along this flinty track, it certainly has a historic feel.

**6** **Turn right** near the cottage and walk along the lane. Ignore all footpaths and stay on the undulating lane until you reach The White Horse and the B2141.

**7** At the B2141, **turn right** and walk along the grass verge for a short distance only. Follow the footpath through a gap by a signpost and walk roughly parallel with the road along the line of the fence. Go through a kissing gate and walk **straight ahead** along the footpath. Cross a driveway and go through a kissing gate and continue **straight ahead**.

**Go through a kissing gate** and walk **right** along the signed bridleway. This stony track can be muddy. The path becomes more flinty and passes through a gateway. When you come to two gates side-by-side, take the left-hand gate to walk along the bridleway through West Dean Estate. Continue **straight on** past the signpost.

**8** Reach the lane by the Royal Oak pub. **Turn left** up the lane to continue on our route. Towards the top of the hill, leave the lane and **turn right** on to the right-of-way track. This pleasant track gently climbs. **Keep straight ahead** at the signpost, ignoring the footpath. At the fork by several gates, **take the left fork**, following the bridleway sign. Go through the gate by the bungalow. **Turn right** on to the tarmac driveway. After the big house entrance, where the track forks, follow the bridleway marker post **straight ahead** taking the **right fork**. Ignore access to private land (garages and stables) and **keep right** on the bridleway between the fences, passing a marker post. Go through the gate.

**9** Rejoin the SDW, making sure to go **left**. Go through the gate and walk on. Enjoy the scenic descent to Bramshott Bottom. From the five-way stone signpost, **go left** and up through the gate by the edge of the field to climb Harting Hill. **Watch out: slippery chalk track!** Follow the SDW back to the car park.



## 04 Explore Two Sides of a Beautiful Downland Valley

12km/7.5miles

Climb Levin Down, a biodiverse and isolated nature reserve, on a steep slope, meander down the peaceful valley, passing through the flint village of Charlton (or stopping at the pub!) before climbing up to circle Goodwood Racecourse and reach the Trundle, a viewpoint overlooking Sussex and its coastline.

Singleton » Levin Down Nature Reserve » Charlton » Goodwood Race Course » The Trundle » Singleton

### Start

Singleton. Parking near the village hall or roadside. GR: SU 879132.

### The Walk

Levin Down means 'leave-alone hill' and its steep slopes have enabled it to escape the plough and other human intervention. A Sussex Wildlife Trust reserve, it is a Site of Special Scientific Interest. The gorse and scrub changes with the seasons: I found it stunning in summer. There's something unexpected about life flourishing on this rugged chalk hillside: butterflies, such as green and brown hairstreaks, and chalk grassland flowers like the clustered bellflower. On the chalk heath, there's juniper, scrub warblers and finches. It's strangely isolated here given the proximity of Singleton and Charlton but the approach is steep. Keep dogs under close control because hill sheep add their own special something to the atmosphere here and are apt to appear unexpectedly.

Much of this peaceful valley has a rural 'world apart' feeling. You may see a farmer rounding up sheep and sleepy villages

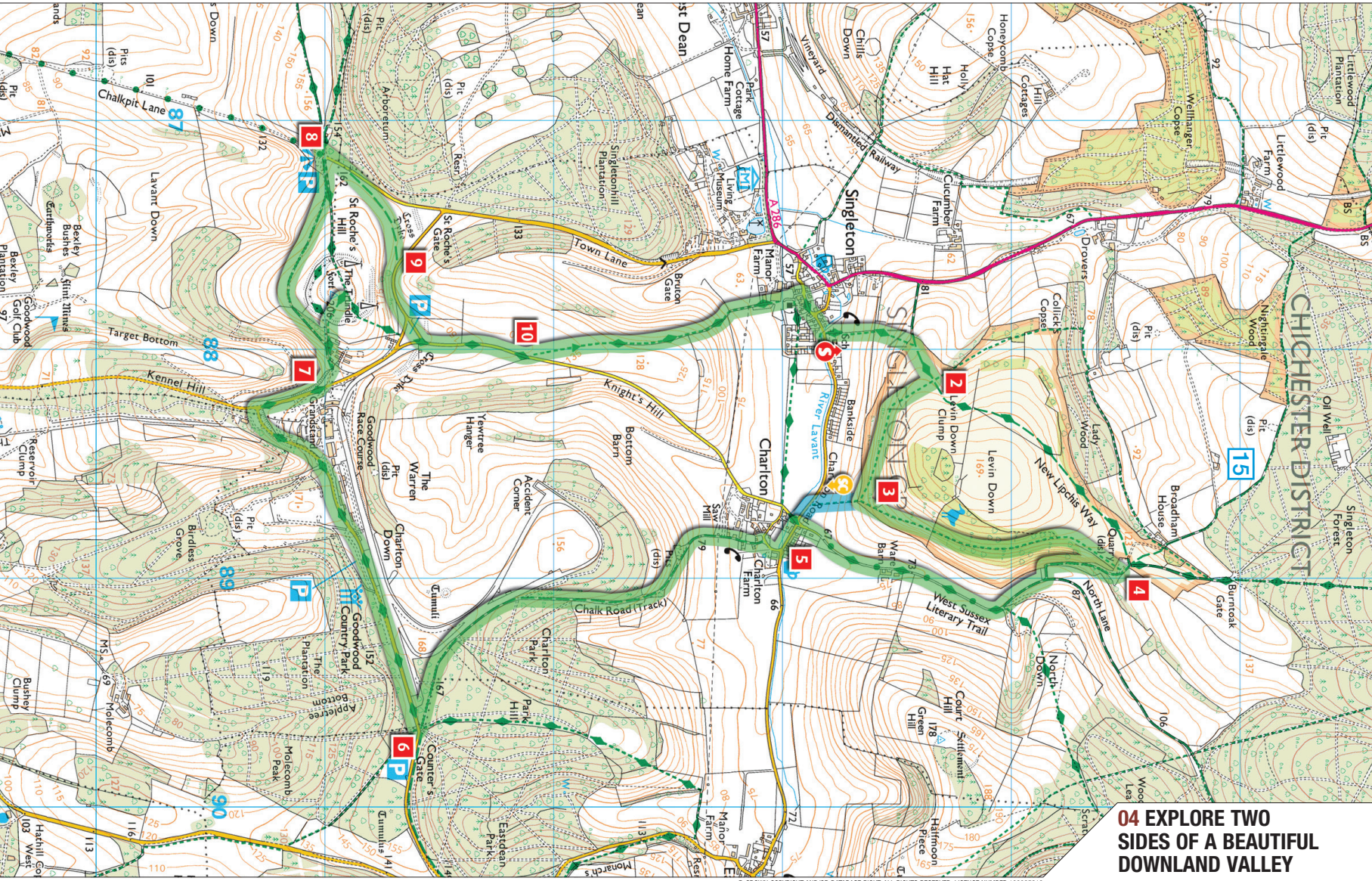
down below but there aren't many roads. Our route leads you through the picturesque flint houses of Charlton, passing The Fox Goes Free pub where you may wish to stop for refreshments. Alternatively, wait and call in at the Partridge in Singleton. It's a hard choice because both pubs are appealing!

Goodwood Racecourse has a huge impact on this area so this part of our route is more interesting than beautiful. Surrounding roads will be busier on a race day. Views of the valley are blocked by the course, but never mind, you are heading for the Trundle viewpoint.

From the Trundle, there are magnificent views over the estuary, Sussex countryside and the coastline. Keep your eyes open too as you walk back down into Singleton. Part of the fun of this walk is spotting Levin Down and the ubiquitous racetrack from various different vantage points on the walk. What a contrast!

### EXPLORE TWO SIDES OF A BEAUTIFUL DOWNLAND VALLEY

**DISTANCE:** 12KM/7.5MILES » **TOTAL ASCENT:** 317M/1,040FT » **START GR:** SU 879132 » **TIME:** ALLOW 3.5 HOURS  
**SATNAV:** PO18 OHP » **MAP:** OS EXPLORER OL8, CHICHESTER, 1:25,000 » **REFRESHMENTS:** THE FOX GOES FREE, CHARLTON, OR THE PARTRIDGE INN, SINGLETON » **NAVIGATION:** STRAIGHTFORWARD.



**04 EXPLORE TWO SIDES OF A BEAUTIFUL DOWNLAND VALLEY**

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## Directions – Explore Two Sides of a Beautiful Downland Valley



- S** Roughly opposite the village hall, look for the signed public footpath to the left of the bus shelter and the school. Climb **straight ahead** up the hill. At the top go through the hedge to the gate. Follow the footpath **straight ahead** to join the bridleway at the wooden waymarker signpost. **Turn right** to follow the bridleway towards the next marker post.
- 2** At the next marker post, **turn right** to explore Levin Down via the footpath. Go through the double gate to enter this Sussex Wildlife Trust Nature Reserve. Follow the track **straight ahead**. Go through the gate and follow the footpath as it gently leads you down and across chalk downland. Walk on along the footpath at the first gate and marker post.
- 3** At the gate in the corner, **don't exit** the reserve, but follow the footpath left along the fence.
- SC** Alternatively, at the gate in the corner, **exit right** and follow the footpath down to Charlton Road, where you **turn left** to join our main route at the crossroads to head into Charlton at point 5.

Go through the next gate and follow the signed footpath **diagonally left** back up the slope. Follow the track to the next gate and continue to walk **straight ahead**. Go through a gate and leave the nature reserve. Walk straight ahead, following the track through the trees. It's indistinct but followable. Reach a gate. Go through and follow the signed footpath **right** through the field. Walk along the line of the fence to a partially obscured stile. Cross and follow the path for a short distance through the copse.

- 4** **Turn right** at the chalk and flint bridleway and follow it round the curve, past the entrance back into the reserve. **Turn right** at the T-junction with another bridleway. Keep straight ahead on this easy farm track towards Charlton. At the end of Downs Bridleway/North Lane, come to a crossroads.

- 5** At the crossroads, **turn left** into Charlton. Pass The Fox Goes Free pub. **Turn right**, passing Charlton Barns, following the lane as it curves past the phone box. **Turn left** at the wooden sign along the bridleway or lane. Pass the house and follow the bridleway **straight ahead** as signed on the marker post. The bridleway climbs the hill and is fenced on both sides. At the top, reach the racecourse and follow the bridleway **straight ahead**. Walk up the side of the racecourse. Go to the very end, past the gate across the bridleway.
- 6** **Turn right** at the road. Walk along the grass verge beside the flint wall of the racetrack. Follow the road along past Goodwood Country Park. Pass a playground. Pass the back of the Lennox Enclosure and then the back of the Sussex Grandstand. The road descends. Pass Horseboxes N° 4 Car Park. At the T-junction, **turn right** for a short stretch along this road which may be busy. Pass the main racecourse entrance.
- 7** Just after a wooden fence, leave the tarmac to **go left** on the bridleway, following the wooden waymarker post. Follow the path through the trees past a marker post. At the gate, follow the public byway across the field. This is the Trundle! From the top of the hill, continue in the same direction, heading towards the car park. Go through the gate and follow the bridleway past the car park. You are at Seven Points Car Park.
- 8** **Turn right** out of the gate and on to the lane. **Double back** immediately through the wooden gate to follow the bridleway sign back round the base of the Trundle. You are heading left, initially parallel with a lane and a fence with a pylon on your right. The footpath is not clear but head diagonally across the main road and racecourse. Reach a walkers' gate by the road.
- 9** **Turn right** on to the road (!) for a short distance only. At the bend, **turn left** down the lane, passing the Triangle Car Park. After the junction, **head left again** on to the single track road.
- 10** **Go left** at the signpost and through a gate to follow the fenced footpath. Walk through the gate and continue **straight ahead** past a signpost. Follow the path back down through a gate and farm buildings and into Singleton. Follow a gate and footpath through the churchyard. **Walk left** out of the churchyard and turn right along this small residential lane. Emerge at a crossroads by the Partridge Inn. **Turn right** to return to the village hall and start point.