

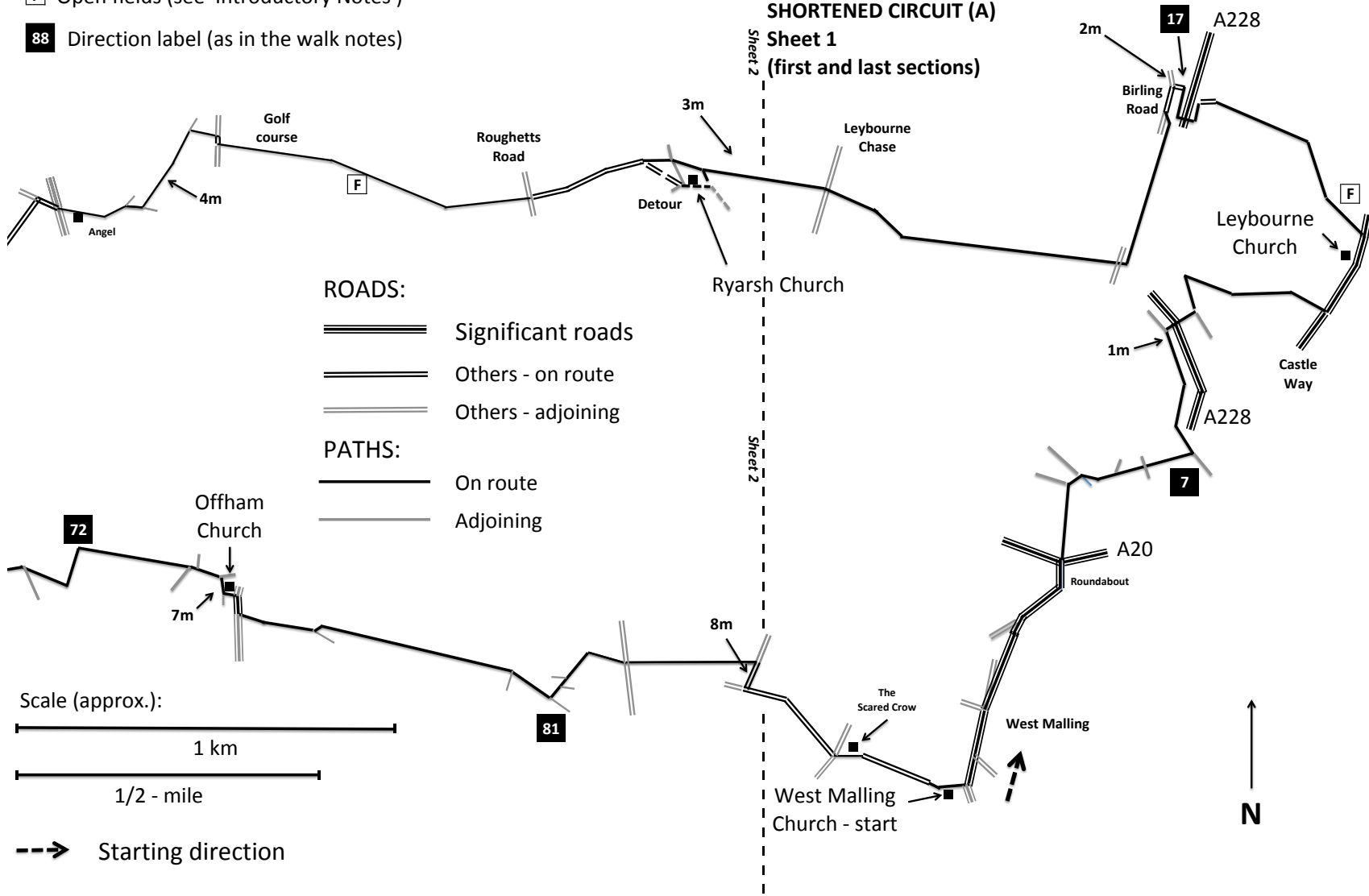
F Open fields (see 'Introductory Notes')

88 Direction label (as in the walk notes)

OFFHAM

SHORTENED CIRCUIT (A)

Sheet 1 (first and last sections)



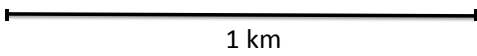
ROADS:

- Significant roads
- Others - on route
- Others - adjoining

PATHS:

- On route
- Adjoining

Scale (approx.):

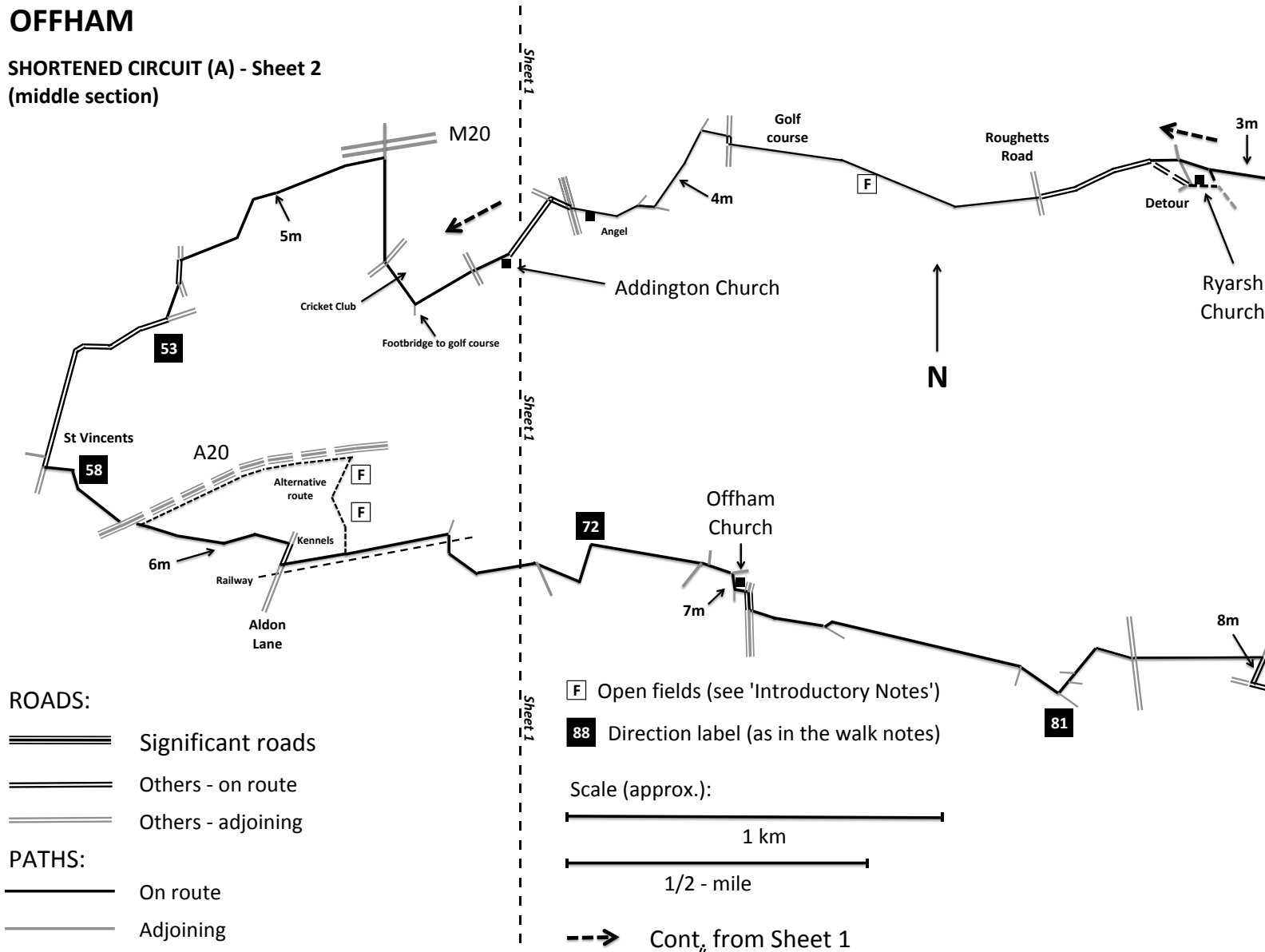


1/2 - mile




Starting direction

OFFHAM



SHORTENED CIRCUIT (A) - Sheet 2 (middle section)





ROADS:

-  Significant roads
-  Others - on route
-  Others - adjoining


PATHS:


-  On route
-  Adjoining


 Open fields (see 'Introductory Notes')

 Direction label (as in the walk notes)

Scale (approx.):

 1 km

 1/2 - mile

 Cont., from Sheet 1

OFFHAM CIRCUIT

Churches in this version of the shortened circuit (version A):

West Malling (Start and finish)

Leybourne (12)

Ryarsh (25A: Detour - see Appendix)

Addington (41)

Offham (76)

Associated local circuits

- AV3: Addington – Ryarsh – West Malling – Offham - Addington
- AV2: Addington – Trottiscliffe – Ryarsh - Addington

Shortened circuit (A): A varied ramble through fields, heathland, golf courses, and the pleasant centre of West Malling. This is one of a pair of alternative 'shortened circuits' linked to the long stretch of the spine route between St Vincents and the southern end of Lord's Walk, for those who find the main shortened circuit (see separate link) not shortened enough! This walk covers the section between St Vincents and Offham.

Roads and hindrances:

The route begins in the gently busy town of West Malling. It crosses the A20 twice (Directions 2 and 60): both crossings are manageable with reasonable care. The crossing of the A228 (16) will probably require the use of the central refuge which will take you a few yards out of your way; and the main roads at Addington (39) and by Offham Church (77) present no special difficulties.

In developing the route I was met, after turning off Aldon Lane at Direction 66, by a number of noisy, fierce-looking but kennelled dogs; and I was glad they were not loose. But then I was greeted by one which was! The dog let me go along my intended path, but escorted me away noisily and rather worryingly. Probably a case of bark-worse-than-bite. (There was no bite.) I shall in time revisit the scene to try to establish whether this was an isolated instance, so if dogs with attitude are a concern to you, look out for updates. Meanwhile I have added, in the appendix, an alternative route which avoids that place. It is only a few minutes longer, but sadly goes for a while alongside the busy and unlovely A20 and misses out a pretty stretch through gardens and fruit trees.

SHORTENED CIRCUIT (A)

West Malling – Leybourne – Ryarsh – Addington – Offham – West Malling

Notes taken: June and July 2015

The start and finish is at West Malling Church (ME19 6ND)

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
1		With your back to the main north door of West Malling Church , go down the path which goes diagonally to the exit in the far right-hand corner, and turn left down the road (High Street). Follow the main road all the way until it ends at the A20 roundabout. (For a while it will be worth crossing to the right-hand side where there is no pavement on the left, but return to the left as you approach the roundabout.)	679 575	
2	6	Cross the A20 on the left of the roundabout (reasonable sightlines) and continue on the footpath opposite, down steps and then across a grassy space to a stone footbridge ahead and a little to the right.		
3	8	Go over the bridge and straight on up the steps. Follow the track as it bends to the right.	682 584	
4	9	Merge rightwards into another track.		
5	10	At a fork keep straight on (not left).		
6	11	Keep straight ahead at the cross-paths.		
7	13	[Map point] At the T-junction at the end turn left. This path now goes uphill, audibly (but not visibly) parallel to the A228 down on your right.		
8	18	Turn right to cross the bridge over the main road.		1.02
9	19	Turn left after crossing the bridge and carry on, ignoring the MKG on the right.		
10	20	Turn sharp right, as signposted, along an enclosed track.		
11	25	Turn left along the road.		
12	26	Reach the entrance gates to Leybourne Church , and continue ahead.		1.46
13	27	[!!F!!] Look for a metal gate on the left, just after the entrance to Leybourne Castle. Turn left through it, then go, not straight ahead across the field as currently suggested by the signpost, but diagonally to the right towards the point where a fence has its own corner. Then continue ahead in the same direction.		
14	31	Go through a MKG, and turn half-left along a road.	688 593	
15	34	Continue ahead past the 'No Entry' sign (for vehicles).		
16	35	Reach a roundabout. The route is straight ahead, but to achieve this you are likely to make use of the light-controlled crossing over to your left.		
17	36	[Map point] Having negotiated the roundabout, turn left away from it, going very briefly along a minor road signposted 'Birling, Unsuitable for HGVs'. Then immediately turn left again, southwards, along a minor road, soon using the walkway up alongside on the left.		
18	44	At the end of the walkway turn right to go towards and across the road, and on up the steps opposite and ahead between fences.	684 589	
19	47	Go through a little gate and straight on at cross-paths.		
20	48	And straight on again at cross-paths.		
21	50	Keep along the right-hand side of the playing field.		
22	52	At the corner at the end go ahead through a gap next to a wooden gate.		

* "*Mins.*" is very approximate! See 'Introductory Notes' for an explanation of how this column is used.

!!F!! : Field crossing might be unmarked. See 'Open Fields' in 'Introductory Notes' for some thoughts about dealing with this.

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
23	54	Cross the Leybourne Chase access road and continue ahead (along the Trim Trail).		
24	58	Go straight on, ignoring the path to the right.		
25	59	[To visit Ryarsh Church , now divert instead to the Detour in the Appendix.] Pass between railings, then go to the right, merging with the path coming from your left.		3.04
26	60	Go straight ahead at the cross-paths.		
27	61	Go ahead along the roadway as it merges from the left.		
28	65	Cross the road and continue ahead along the footpath opposite.		
29	66	Go through the kissing gate and continue ahead along the left-hand edge of a field.		
30	68	!!!F!!! At the far corner, go through the MKG and embark on the crossing of a stretch of open heathland, guided, if it is visible, by a faint track. To begin with head across very slightly to the right, not quite parallel to the fence on the right but edging towards it (though it will turn away before you reach it).		
31	70	!!!F!!! At the top of the ridge, such as it is, merge with another faint track, to go slightly further to the right. (If this track is not visible, take your direction from a newly appeared fence on the right. On this occasion you will be converging on this, just to the right of a clump of trees ahead.)		
32	71	Continue ahead through the right-hand fringe of those trees, and finally converge on the fence to the right, at a MKG.	663 592	
33	72	Go through the MKG and across the golf course (more or less parallel to the motorway on the right), aiming about 50 yds. to right of a dark brown building with a red-tiled roof.		
34	76	Passing the building, leave the golf course through a gap in the undergrowth, alongside a fence to left.		
35	77	Turn briefly right along a road, then immediately left along a footpath by a marker-stone.		
36	79	Turn half-left through a wooden kissing gate.		
37	81	Turn right with the path at an angled T-junction.		
38	82	Turn left up a metalled roadway.		
39	84	After passing The Angel on the left, cross the main road and go straight on opposite along Park Road.		
40	85	Turn left along the quiet roadway to the church, keeping alongside the brick wall on the right.	655 591	
41	88	Arrive at the gate of Addington Church , then turn right and go down the narrow track. When you reach a metalled driveway, continue straight across it.		4.38
42	90	Reach the cricket field and turn left to walk, clockwise, around it.		
43	91	Ignore the footbridge on the left and continue around the cricket boundary.		

* **"Mins."** is very approximate! See 'Introductory Notes' for an explanation of how this column is used.

!!!F!!! : Field crossing might be unmarked. See 'Open Fields' in 'Introductory Notes' for some thoughts about dealing with this.

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
44	93	Go left away from the cricket boundary, keeping the Village Hall (and beyond it the cricket pavilion) to your right and a store building to your left, pass a green gate, and continue along the left-hand edge of the car park towards the road.		
45	94	Cross the road and take the footpath immediately opposite. (There is a warning sign which implies that you should not, but it is presumably aimed not at you, but at people who might behave irresponsibly around the works ahead: the path, though sometimes overgrown and tricky, is clearly a signposted right of way.)		
46	95	Go straight on, towards the motorway, along a narrow path with a barbed-wire fence on your right.		
47	97	Continue ahead as the works access road comes in from the left.		
48	98	About 40 yds. before the motorway, turn left, briefly up a steep bank (now Wealdway), and continue ahead along the track, at first parallel to the motorway, then diverging from it a little.		
49	103	Carry on ahead, still with a fence to your left, as woodland opens out to the right.		
50	106	Follow the path as it swings to the left in front of a house.		
51	107	Pass a redundant stile and turn left on to a quiet road.		
52	108	Turn off to the right on a waymarked path through woodland.		
53	109	[Map point] Turn right on to the road.	645 588	
54	113	Continue along the road as it swings to the left.		
55	115	Cross a stream over a bridge.		
56	116	START OF THE SPINE SECTION Passing a tudor-style house on the right, carry straight on along the road (as the Wealdway turns away, up steps to the right).		5.65
57	117	After about 50 yds., turn left off the road and into trees over a small footbridge.		
58	118	[Map point] Emerge from the wood and turn half-right across the golf course. Aim initially for the highest point on the gentle ridge up in that direction.		
59	119	Go just to the left of a green, and cross the track which would lead (over to the right) to both levels of the 5 th tee. Now head a little further to the left, towards the boundary wall of the golf course, darkly hidden amid the trees and undergrowth ahead. The angle, as you cross a fairway, is roughly towards a point near a pole carrying power cables. Following this line you will be converging on the boundary wall to your right: look for a small gap in it, beyond the undergrowth, probably (depending on the exact angle you have taken) a little further to the left. <i>If you get close to buildings and golf-course roadways to the left you have gone (quite a bit) too far: come back in the undergrowth within sight of the wall, until you spot the gap.</i>		

* "Mins." is very approximate! See 'Introductory Notes' for an explanation of how this column is used.

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
60	121	Go through the gap, and cross the main road. The sightline to the left is excellent, but to improve visibility to the right it might be best to go carefully to the left along the narrow verge alongside the road. If you do this for about 40 yds. before crossing, your sightline will be reasonable, and you will cross directly to the point on the other side where the route will diverge from the road.	644 582	
61	122	<i>[To avoid the Aldon Lane kennels (see 'Roads and Hindrances' on the first page), now divert instead to the alternative route in the Appendix.]</i> Main route: Turn away from the road to the right, as signposted. There is no sign of a path, but simply carry on across beautifully kept estate grounds, at an angle of about 30 degrees to the right of the road you have left (in effect as far to the left as seems sensible).		
62	123	After passing apple trees on the left, go through a gate, and ahead, as waymarked, in the same direction.		
63	124	Go through a gap and straight on along an enclosed path.		
64	126	Cross a stile and go ahead.		
65	127	Turn right along a road.		
66	128	Turn left, just before the railway bridge, along an enclosed path.		
67	129	Go over a stile, and on down the right-hand side of a field.		
68	132	Go through a MKG, and onward, alongside the railway above.		
69	134	Turn right to go under the railway bridge. Then swing gradually leftwards to go around the right-hand edge of a field.		
70	138	Continue ahead, ignoring the track into the woods on the right.	654 581	
71	140	When the main track turns right, instead turn left towards the railway.		
72	141	[Map point] Turn right along a broad track towards farm buildings and the church in the middle distance.		
73	145	Continue ahead between the buildings.	659 581	
74	146	Bear right, just before a grassed area, aiming to the right of the church.		
75		Turn left on a narrow path along the south side of the church.		
76	147	Reach the south door of Offham Church . Then continue down the path towards the main road. Go through the gate and ahead along the road.		7.03
77	148	Turn left on to a broad track.		
78	150	When the roadway swings to the right, instead follow the left fork along a track which goes between farm buildings and ahead on the right-hand side of a field, with a hedge on your right to start with.		
79	153	Go straight across at the cross-paths.		
80	157	Continue ahead as the track swings slightly to the right at a cross-paths, and then back to the left to regain the original direction.		

* *"Mins." is very approximate! See 'Introductory Notes' for an explanation of how this column is used.*

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
81	159	[Map point] Just after another very slight swing to the right, look for a gap in the trees over to the left and go through it along a clear path. Then, ignoring paths on the right and the left, go ahead along the left-hand side of a field.	669 578	
82	161	At the corner turn right, to go along the far edge of the same field.		
83	162	Go down some steps, cross the road, and continue ahead along the path opposite.		
84	164	The path continues ahead, now between fences.		
85	165	Continue ahead, now between houses.		
86	166	Turn right into the road.		
87	167	Turn left at the T-junction.		
88	170	Cross Offham Road to the green opposite, keeping to the right of the side of The Scared Crow.		
89	171	Cross another road and go uphill, along the road or the enclosed walkway to its right.		
90	173	Continue uphill as the roadway comes to an end, past the corner of the St Mary's Centre.		
91	174	Go between railings into the churchyard.		
92	175	Reach the main door of West Malling Church , the starting point of the walk.	679 575	8.39

* "Mins." is *very approximate!* See 'Introductory Notes' for an explanation of how this column is used.

APPENDIX to Shortened Circuit (A)

Detour to Ryarsh Church

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
25A	0	After passing between the railings at Direction 25, turn sharp left. Then go through the churchyard gate on your right to reach Ryarsh Church .		
25B	1	On leaving the church go to the gate on the other (west) side of the churchyard, and then turn half-right along the roadway.		
25C	3	Follow the road as it swings leftwards, rejoining the main route as it merges from the right at Direction 27. Add 1 minute to subsequent total times and 0.03 miles to cumulative distances.		0.12

* "Mins." is *very approximate!* See 'Introductory Notes' for an explanation of how this column is used.

Alternative route to avoid the Aldon Lane kennels (see 'Roads and Hindrances' on the first page)

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
61A	0	After crossing the main road continue alongside it on the walkway.		
61B	5	Cross Aldon Lane and continue ahead.		

* "Mins." is *very approximate!* See 'Introductory Notes' for an explanation of how this column is used.

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
61C	8	After the road starts to go downhill, but just before it does so more steeply, look out for a MKG on the right and go through it. Then turn half-right. (A blue and grey building across the dip in the middle distance, which you will be passing near to, gives a general idea of where you are aiming.) The ideal would now be to go alongside the fence which is on your left, but the untamed undergrowth makes this impossible. Instead go down over the clearer ground in that general direction for a couple of minutes, keeping the fence in sight as far as possible.	650 584	
61D	10	!!!F!!! Find a MKG in the fence to your left and go through, across the field towards another MKG.	64939 58311	
61E	12	!!!F!!! Go through, and ahead across the next field, turning left at the far side to go along the top of the field alongside the railway above.		
61F	15	You have now rejoined the main route, going through the MKG at Direction 68. Add 5 minutes to subsequent total times and 0.25 miles to cumulative distances.		

* *"Mins." is very approximate! See 'Introductory Notes' for an explanation of how this column is used.*

!!!F!!! : *Field crossing might be unmarked. See 'Open Fields' in 'Introductory Notes' for some thoughts about dealing with this.*

FOR THOSE WHO WALK WITH THEIR DOGS

I do not venture to give advice about walking with your dog. As well as the joys, you will be well aware of the issues involved, and particularly that relationships between dogs and other countryside animals potentially involve mutual suspicion, or worse.

But what this footnote does try to do, in response to requests, is to give some indication of the nature of the walk from a dog's point of view, to enable you to decide whether it is suitable.

The percentage distances on the right (on the next page) should be self-explanatory.

The information in the middle column may look a bit cluttered, but I think it should enable you (if the detail is of interest) to mark up within a few minutes a print-out of the walk notes, so that you have some idea what might be round the next corner.

The risk in all this is that **things change so quickly** in the agricultural working world; and what I describe might become misleading after subsequent changes. I have done my best, but there is no guarantee that you will find the information up to date!

OFFHAM - SHORTENED CIRCUIT (A)	Direction numbers	% of walk
Busy road	1, 11-12, 16, 60, 76b	10
Quiet road \$\$	14-15, 17a, 27, 38-40, 51, 53-56, 65, 86-89	18
Open field with livestock	13a	1
Edge of field with livestock	13b, 29, 67	4
Field (or edge) without livestock **	2, 7c, 21, 30-31, 69-72, 77-83	20
Path (hedged, or otherwise forced)	7b, 8-10, 17b-20, 25-26, 28, 33-37, 41-48, 50, 58-59, 61-64, 66, 73-76a, 84-85, 90-91	34
Woods	3-7a, 22-24, 32, 49, 52, 57, 68	13

STILES (2) - Details noted in June and July 2015, but **subject to frequent change**:

The stile at Direction 64 has climbs of 1 ft. and 2 ft. The gaps between are narrow (no more than 6 ins.)

The one at 67 has easy gaps.

For those using the alternative at Direction 61, the numbers in the table on the previous page change a little, as follows:

OFFHAM - SHORTENED CIRCUIT (A) via alternative in Direction 61	Direction numbers (not on the main route)	% of walk
Busy road	61A-B	14
Quiet road \$\$		17
Open field with livestock	61D-Ea	2
Edge of field with livestock	61Eb	3
Field (or edge) without livestock **	61C	20
Path (hedged, or otherwise forced)		30
Woods		13