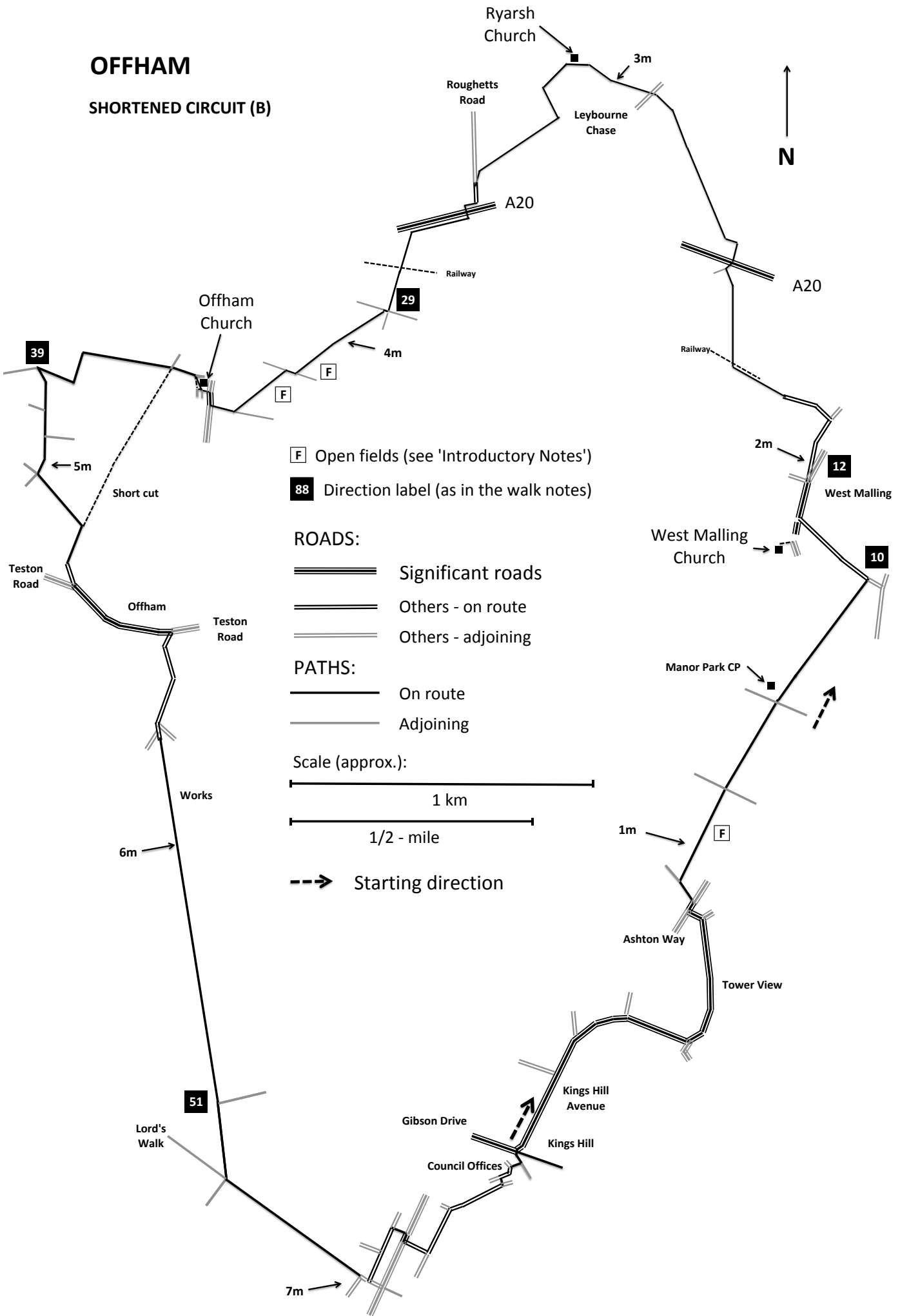


OFFHAM

SHORTENED CIRCUIT (B)



OFFHAM CIRCUIT

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

West Malling (Direction 11B – see Appendix)

Ryarsh (21)

Offham (34)

Associated local circuit

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

Shortened circuit (B): A pleasant enough walk through unspectacular countryside, but with an opening section which links towns new and old and passes through the Manor Park Country Park. It 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 Offham and Lord’s Walk.

Roads and hindrances:

The route crosses the A20 twice. At the first crossing (Direction 17) sightlines are good, and the second (25) should present no particular problems if you use the obvious central refuge. Likewise the refuges in 3 and 56 make the crossings of the A228 tolerable. The main road by Offham Church (33) presents no special difficulties, and the roads within Kings Hill (1-3) and West Malling (11-12) are reasonably civilised. There is a railway crossing (15) which demands due care.

SHORTENED CIRCUIT (B)

(Kings Hill -) West Malling - Ryarsh - Offham (- Kings Hill)

Notes taken: June and July 2015

The start and finish is in Kings Hill, at the roundabout where Gibson Drive meets Kings Hill Avenue (nearby postcode: ME19 4LJ).

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
1		From the roundabout go north along Kings Hill Avenue, and follow it as it swings round to the right: make your own decision whether to cut the distance by crossing the road to the right-hand side (the inside). If you do you will need to cross back before the end, but that is not likely to be troublesome.	671 555	
2	10	Turn left at the roundabout into Tower View.		
3	15	Reach another roundabout, and skirt around its left-hand side, crossing Ashton Way via a central refuge.		

* ***“Mins.” is very approximate!*** See ‘Introductory Notes’ for an explanation of how this column is used.

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
4	16	After passing the first lamp-post on your clockwise progress round the roundabout, turn left, away from the road, down a narrow metalled path. After a few yards ignore a footpath on the right and continue gently downhill along a track enclosed by trees on either side.		
5	17	[!!F!!] Turn right between trees, through a narrow gap which is well hidden and marked only by a ground-level stone. Emerge at the edge of a huge field and set out ahead across it. If the path is not clear, aim along a line slightly to the right of West Malling Church visible in the distance, and very slightly to the left of the row of trees in the middle distance.		0.90
6	26	Go through a spring gate, and ahead as waymarked.		
7	27	Pass the buildings of Manor Park Country Park over to the left beyond the overflow car park (or go across to make use of the restaurant and toilets).		
8	28	Emerge into a big open field and go across, slightly to the right. Aim just to the right of a litter bin which itself is just to the right of a picnic table.		
9	31	Go through the kissing gate, and be guided through the next field, slightly leftwards, by the line of trees on your left.		
10	34	[Map point] Reach the bottom, far left-hand, corner, go through the gates, and turn left on to the road (Water Lane).		
11		<i>[To visit West Malling Church, now divert instead to the Detour in the Appendix.]</i>		
	38	Main route: Turn right into West Malling's High Street.		1.83
12	41	[Map point] As the High Street narrows, just after the bus stop outside Arundel House, leave it, by means of a left fork (King Street), to go parallel to it (past toilets on the left, currently open).		
13	43	Turn left along Ryarsh Lane.	681 579	
14	45	Go ahead as the metalled road becomes a rough track.		
15	48	Turn half-right at the end to cross the railway, with stiles before and after the crossing. After the second stile follow the waymarked footpath which goes straight ahead.		
16	52	At the end turn right into Brickfields.		
17	53	Cross the main road, and follow the path opposite (between The Wheatsheaf on the left and a field gate on the right).		
18	54	Follow the path, guided by railings, as it swings to the left after the first of a series of footbridges, and continue ahead along a woodland path with a stream to the left.		
19	61	After a final footbridge, followed by a wooden swing-gate, cross the Leybourne Chase access road on to the driveway opposite. After a few yards along this go a little to the left, and then ahead along an enclosed footpath.	675 590	
20	63	Go ahead through a wooden kissing gate and along a narrow metalled footpath.		

* "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
21	65	Turn left through the gate into the churchyard of Ryarsh Church . Then follow the path to the other (west) side of the churchyard, go out of the gate there, and, ignoring the metalled roadways, go ahead along a grassy path alongside a field.		3.10
22	67	Follow the hedge and the field-edge as they swing to the left.	671 591	
23	68	Just before a stream keep right over a footbridge, and go into trees, then turn right over a stile and go along the right-hand side of a long field.		
24	73	Swing briefly to the left with the field edge, then after a few yards turn back to the right to cross a pair of stiles, the second of which is currently easy to by-pass if you are prepared to step over the remains of a collapsed barbed-wire fence. Then turn left up the road (Roughetts Road) and stay on the left-hand side until you reach the main road at the top.		
25	75	Cross Roughetts Road at the top, and walk along the walkway next to the A20. Cross when convenient (best, perhaps, quite soon, using the central refuge – good sightlines in both directions) and continue along the left-hand side (again with the benefit of a walkway).		
26	78	Next to the 'Addington' road sign, and just before a house and its garden on the left, turn left up a steep enclosed path.		
27	80	Go over the railway and up the steep steps beyond.		
28	81	Cross an awkwardly fragmentary stile, then go through a MKG and along the right-hand side of a field.		
29	83	[Map point] Go through another MKG, then turn right along a crossing path into trees. After a few yards fork left.		
30	86	[!!F!!] Emerge at the side of a field, and cross it diagonally to the right, making for the far end of the trees on the right.		
31	89	[!!F!!] Turn right into a broad path. After about 20 yds. turn off half-left, diagonally across the field.	663 581	
32	92	Turn half-right on to a crossing broad track.		
33	93	Turn right on to the main road.		
34	94	After about 100 yds. go through the churchyard gates to the left, and on to the south door of Offham Church . Continue along the churchyard path and turn right at the road which leads through the farmyard.		4.36
35	95	Beyond the farmyard turn left, along a broad track.		
36	96	<i>At this point the main route makes a little detour to pick up the spine route from the point at which 'Shortened Circuit (A)' departed from it. If not troubled by a wish to complete the spine route strictly, you could now divert instead to the short cut in the Appendix.]</i> Main route: At the path-junction beyond the farmyard go straight ahead, parallel to the railway over to the right.		
37	100	Follow the track as it turns left.		
38	101	Turn right just before the line of trees, and go alongside them.		
39	103	[Map point] Just before this line curves slightly to the left, look for a sharp left-turn into the trees. The path is waymarked but well concealed and easily missed. Once in the wood, climb a gentle ridge and follow the path as it swings left, then right.	654 581	

* "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
40	105	Ignore the path on the right and continue ahead.		
41	106	Ignore the path on the left and continue ahead.		
42	108	Turn left at the cross-paths.		
43	111	Merge right into another path next to a dog-litter bin.	656 576	
44	113	When you reach the roadway, continue ahead.		
45	114	At the end of Pepinstraw Close, turn left along the main road, staying on the left-hand side.		5.29
46	116	Pass the green opposite, and continue ahead		
47	118	Cross the road and take the right turn along Tower Hill.		
48	122	Having followed the road down and up, keep straight on when it forks, then follow it slightly to the left towards a brown gate and adjacent stile.		
49	123	Cross the stile (at the entrance to Kentfield Farm) and continue ahead.		
50	130	Go through a gate, and go ahead along the broad track, with a field to your right and the quarry boundary to your left.		
51	139	[Map point] As the broad track turns away to the left, abandon it and continue straight on, at the left edge of the field, even though, as you progress, it looks unlikely that there is a way out.		
52	142	At the last moment a gap appears in the far-left corner. END OF THE SPINE SECTION Go through the gap and turn half-left along the crossing path.		6.67
53	148	Emerge on to Beaufighter Road and go straight ahead.		
54	149	Just before reaching the main road, turn left along Mosquito Road parallel to it.	666 551	
55	150	Cross the end of Javelin Road and continue ahead.		
56	151	Turn right through a gap in the fencing, just before the post box. Beyond the grass verge use the central refuge to cross the main road, and then turn right to go alongside it for about 15 yds.		
57	152	Turn left into Typhoon Road.		
58	153	Turn left into Meteor Road.		
59	156	At the end swing right with the walkway and start along Lancaster Way.		
60	157	About 50 yds. before the end of the road turn left through a gate (open from 6.30 a.m. to 10 p.m., except on Christmas Day). Go between the railings and turn right, and continue to the right along the roadway alongside the council offices towards the 'No Entry' sign (for traffic).		
61	158	As the roadway swings to the left, instead turn right through a gap, then left alongside a road, towards a roundabout.		
62	159	Reach the roundabout, the starting point of the walk.	671 555	7.57

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

APPENDIX to Shortened Circuit (B)

Detour to West Malling Church

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
11A	0	Where the main route turns right into West Malling's High Street at Direction 11, instead turn left uphill.		
11B	2	At the top turn right into the churchyard of West Malling Church . To return to the main route simply retrace your steps.		0.09
11C	4	Rejoin the main route at the junction with Water Lane. Go straight on down the High Street and follow the directions of the main walk from 12. Add 4 minutes to subsequent total times and 0.18 miles to cumulative distances.		0.18

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

Short cut near Offham (not completing the spine route – see Direction 36)

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
36A	0	Where the main route goes straight ahead at Direction 36, instead turn left along the roadway alongside the last of the buildings.	659 581	
36B	2	Go ahead as the roadway becomes a path between fields.		
36C	3	Ignore, for now, any minor short-cuts towards the trees on the right.		
36D	6	At the far right-hand corner of the field go into the trees on the right, and immediately turn left so that you are going in more or less the original direction.		
36E	9	Rejoin the main route at Direction 43, by merging left into the path next to a dog-litter bin. Deduct 6 minutes from subsequent total times and 0.30 miles from cumulative distances.	656 576	

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

FOR THOSE WHO WALK WITH THEIR DOGS

See footnote on next page.

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 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	1-3, 10-11, 25, 32-33, 45-46, 56	22
Quiet road \$\$	12-13, 16, 24, 44, 47-49, 53-55, 57-61	20
Open field with livestock		0
Edge of field with livestock		0
Field (or edge) without livestock **	5, 8-9, 21b-23, 28, 30-31, 36-38, 50-51	30
Path (hedged, or otherwise forced)	4, 14-15, 17, 19-21a, 26-27, 34-35, 43	13
Woods	6-7, 18, 29, 39-42, 52	16

** This is not a promise, just a statement of fact - that, having walked these sections perhaps two or three times, I have found no animals or any sign of them.

\$\$ Again, not a promise that there will be no traffic to worry about. Just a personal judgement of conditions as I have found them.

STILES (5) - Details noted in June and July 2015, but subject to frequent change:

All the stiles (the one at Direction 23, the two in 24, and those at 28 and 49) have easy gaps.

At some times of year you are asked to keep your dog on a lead for nearly a mile (Directions 49-51), because of game-birds being reared.