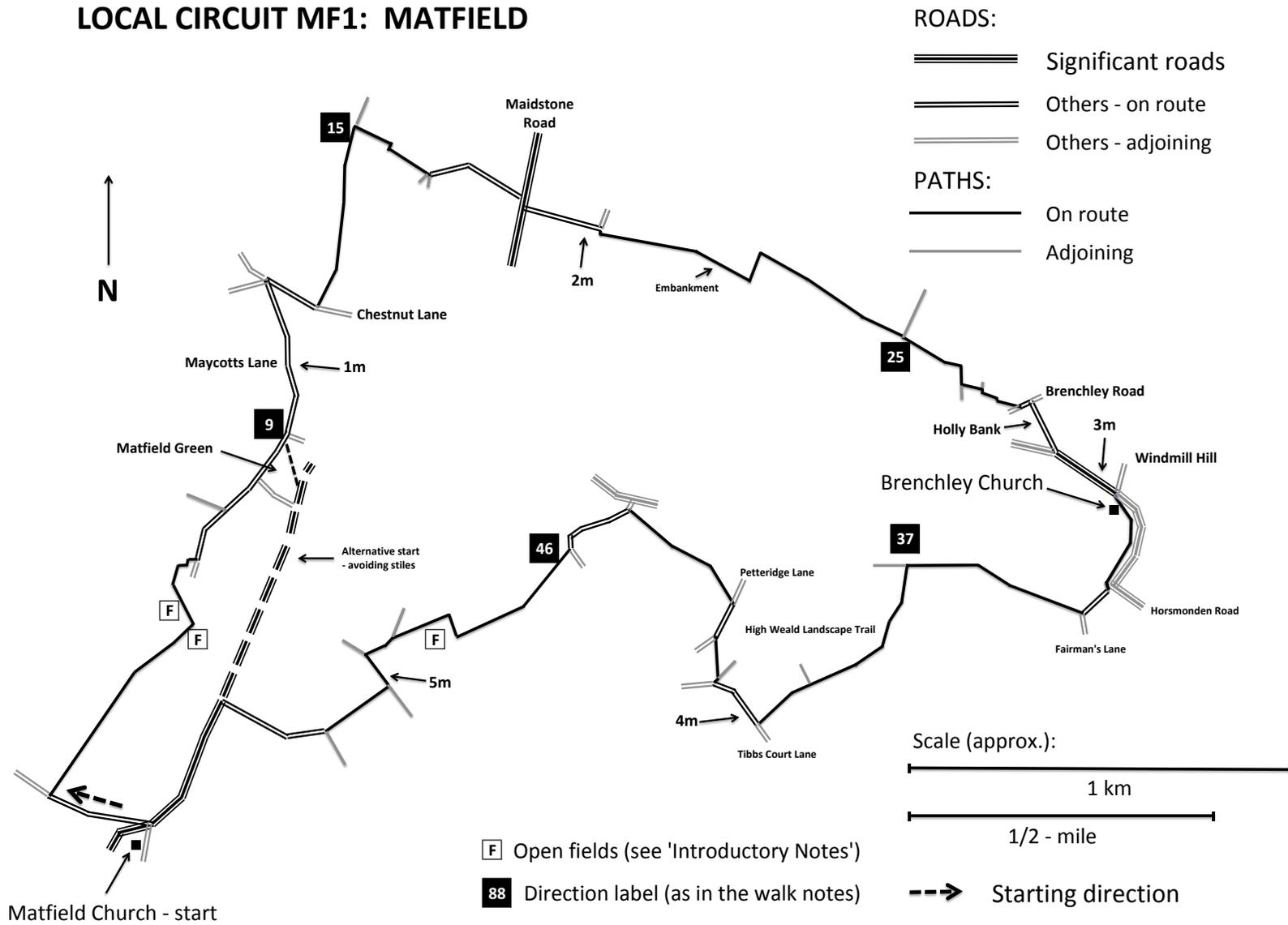


LOCAL CIRCUIT MF1: MATFIELD



LOCAL CIRCUIT MF1: MATFIELD

Linked churches:

Matfield (start and finish)

Brenchley (Direction 31)

Roads and hindrances:

The crossing of the main Maidstone Road (Direction 1) is not easy, but becomes reasonable through a few yards' detour as described in the note. Crossing back over it later on (18) is an easier proposition, with good sightlines.

The stile in Direction 2 can be a challenge, if overgrown as at present; but not an insuperable one. (See the note.)

Notes taken: April 2016

The start and finish is at **Matfield Church** (near the junction of Maidstone Road and Sophurst Lane, TN12 7LH)

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
1		From the lych-gate by the north door of Matfield Church , carefully cross the main road and turn left along Bramble Reed Lane opposite. (For a better leftward sightline to cross the road it might be advisable to go a little to the right along the pavement, towards the bus stop, cross, and return those few yards on the other side.)	654 408	
2	3	When you reach the Lodge Farm Cross-Country Course turn right over a stile* which is tucked in at the side of the gate. Then go ahead alongside the hedge on your right. <i>* This stile is currently overgrown, and this, along with its exceptionally tall step (about 30 ins.) makes it a bit tricky. However, I understand it and the next two stiles (Directions 3 and 4) can sometimes be by-passed with the adjacent gates being left open (partly depending on whether there are equestrian events on the course). Even if you have to use the stiles they are not unmanageable, but this first one especially will delay you a little. If you are desperate to avoid them an alternative is provided in the Appendix, but it involves a good ten minutes' walk along a safe but uninviting pavement beside the main road.</i>		
3	5	Cross another stile and continue ahead, now along the right-hand edge of a large grassy field.		
4	8	!!!F!!! Go over the stile next to the gate at the end, and then turn slightly to the right to cross the next field towards a white-topped waymark post. This is in a gap in the thick hedge on the other side (100 yds. or so to the left of the line of the house beyond the fences over on the right).		

* **"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
5	10	!!!F!!! At the gap turn left to cross, diagonally, the next field, aiming towards a stile just visible in the distant hedge beyond - about 100 yds. to the left of the line of the oasthouses beyond the hedge. (The bearing here is about 330.)		
6	12	Cross the stile and go ahead along the narrow track beyond, then following it as it makes a right turn at the end.	655 415	
7	14	After brief left-right turns, meet the roadway at the end, next to the house, and turn left along it.		
8	17	Reach the green and go ahead on the road along its left-hand side.		
9	19	[Map point] At the end swing left with the major road.		
10	24	At the road junction at the end turn sharp right along Chestnut Lane, crossing early to the verge opposite for a good sightline.		1.14
11	26	Immediately after the entrance to Pimms Christmas Tree Farm, turn left away from the road along a track into the trees.		
12	27	Where the track divides, turn left before following it back to the right to go, still in the woods, parallel to their left-hand edge.		
13	28	Leave the woodland through a squeeze-gate and continue ahead along the left-hand edge of a field.		
14	31	At the end go ahead into trees.		
15	32	[Map point] At a junction of paths, turn right down a narrow, enclosed track.	660 427	
16	34	At the top of a gentle rise, merge leftwards into a larger track.		
17	35	Where various tracks converge at a pair of oasthouses, turn slightly left to go ahead along the main roadway.		
18	38	After going through the exit gate, reach the main road. Cross it and go ahead along the roadway slightly to the right opposite, (with the sign 'Foxden').		1.88
19	40	When the main roadway swings to the left, instead turn right, as signposted, through a gap, and then immediately left along a narrow passageway.		
20	41	At the end carry straight on with a screen of trees on your left and fruit trees on your right.		
21	44	Go through the gap at the end, and then up along the top of the small embankment immediately ahead.		
22	46	Drop down at the far end of the embankment and go through the gap which is slightly over to the right. There turn firmly to the left to go along the edge of the field beyond, with a screen of tall trees on your left.		
23	47	At the corner turn right to go along the long left-hand edge of the same field.	670 424	
24	49	Continue ahead through a gap to go along the left-hand edge of another similar field.		
25	53	[Map point] At a waymark post next to the trees on the left, continue straight ahead.	674 422	
26	54	About 30 yds. before reaching a fence at the end, turn right along the field-edge, then after about 30 yds. turn left, away from the field, through a wooden gate, on to a waymarked metalled driveway.		

* **"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
27	55	Just before this roadway meets another at a junction, slip across to the right, as indicated, to follow its line alongside a dividing fence.		
28	56	Go through a wooden gate, and keep left to go along the field-edge.		
29	58	At the end go down a few steps, and turn left along the road. Then after about 20 yds. turn right, down Holly Bank, walking along the raised walkway on the left of the road.		
30	60	Turn left at the bottom and cross the road when convenient.		
31	62	Reach the lych-gate entrance to Brenchley Church . Follow the footpath to the left (east) of the church, which then goes through the churchyard, winding parallel to the road down on the left. (You are now, for a while, on the High Weald Landscape Trail.)		3.05
32	64	At the end of the churchyard continue ahead down a narrow track.		
33	66	Go down steps to the left, then right to join the road.		
34	67	Turn right along a metalled roadway, signposted as a footpath, to pass Wagon Lodge.		
35	68	The roadway becomes an enclosed footpath. Continue ahead.		
36	71	Carry on through a wooden gate and turn slightly left.		
37	73	[Map point] Swing left with the main path, still on the HWLT.		
38	75	Cross a bridge over the stream running out of the fishing lake. Then walk slightly uphill, following the track as it turns right.		
39	79	Continue ahead, ignoring the track to the right.		
40	81	Go through a wooden kissing gate and alongside a private garden to a road, along which you turn right.		3.96
41	84	As the road reaches the middle of a leftward swing, turn right, opposite The Cottage, along a broad, waymarked roadway. Then immediately turn off it to the left along a much narrower (unwaymarked) track among trees.	669 412	
42	86	Turn right on to a road.		
43	87	After passing the entrance to The Branches, turn left up the signposted footpath immediately before the next house.		
44	93	At a junction, about 20 yds. short of reaching a main road, turn sharp left (almost doubling back on yourself, and leaving the HWLT). The new direction is towards oasthouses in the middle distance.	667 417	
45	95	Ignore the turning to Swingle Swangle Farmhouse on the right, but carry on down the main roadway and then bend with it to the left.		4.53
46	96	[Map point] Turn up a waymarked path to the right.		
47	97	Go very slightly left, now alongside fruit trees.		
48	101	<i>In reality not quite the official straight line shown on the OS map!</i> [!!F!!] At the end go through a narrow gap in the facing trees, and find yourself confronted with impermeable ranks of fruit trees. Avoid them by turning right along the field-edge.	662 414	
49		Then turn left at the corner.		

* **“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
50	103	Go ahead as a broader track joins, coming up from the right.		
51	105	Turn left along a broad grassy avenue between fruit trees.		
52	106	Reaching a gap on the right, go through it and start along a clear footpath, keeping the hedge on your right, and more rows of fruit trees on your left.		
53	109	At the end go through a wooden gate and continue ahead along a concrete roadway (which looks private but is a public bridleway). This then swings gently to the right and passes private driveways.	659 411	5.21
54	113	Turn left alongside the main road, staying on the pavement on the left.		
55	117	Go across to the church by crossing the minor road to the lych-gate, which is still on the left of the main road after its bend.		
56	118	Reach the north door of Matfield Church , the starting-point of the walk.	654 408	5.66

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

APPENDIX to Local Circuit MF1

Matfield Church to Pimms Orchard: road alternative (avoiding stiles)

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
	0	For the sole purpose of avoiding stiles on the main route (see the note at Direction 2), start by turning right out of the lych-gate of Matfield Church and walk alongside the main road without crossing it.		0.00
	1	Cross Sophurst Lane and swing left with the main road, still staying on the pavement on its right-hand side.		
	12	When Matfield Green opens out on the other side of the road, go over to cross it, diagonally over to the far left-hand corner.		
	15	From that corner follow the main route from Direction 9. Deduct 4 minutes from subsequent total times and 0.14 miles from cumulative distances.	n.nn	0.35

* *“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!

LOCAL CIRCUIT MF1	Direction numbers	% of walk
Busy road	10, 30, 54-55	9
Quiet road \$\$	1, 7-9, 17-18, 29, 33, 40b, 42, 44-45, 53	26
Open field with livestock		0
Edge of field with livestock		0
Field (or edge) without livestock **	3-5, 13, 21	11
Path (hedged, or otherwise forced)	2, 6, 14-16, 19-20, 22-28, 31-32, 34-36, 38a, 39a, 40a, 43, 46-47, 50-52	43
Woods	11-12, 37, 38b, 39b, 41, 48-49	11

** 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 (4) - Details noted in April 2016, but subject to frequent change:

The stiles in Directions 2, 3 and 4 are all wired down, but can sometimes be by-passed. (See the note at Direction 2). The rises are, roughly:

in 2 - 1 ft. and 30 ins.

in 3 - 18 ins. and 2 ft.

in 4 - 1 ft. and 2 ft.

The stile in 6 has a dog gate.