




WILMINGTON & SUTTON-AT-HONE



SHORTER CIRCUIT - Sheet 1 (first and last sections)

- F** Open fields (see 'Introductory Notes')
- 88** Direction label (as in the walk notes)

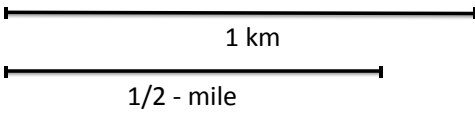
ROADS:

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

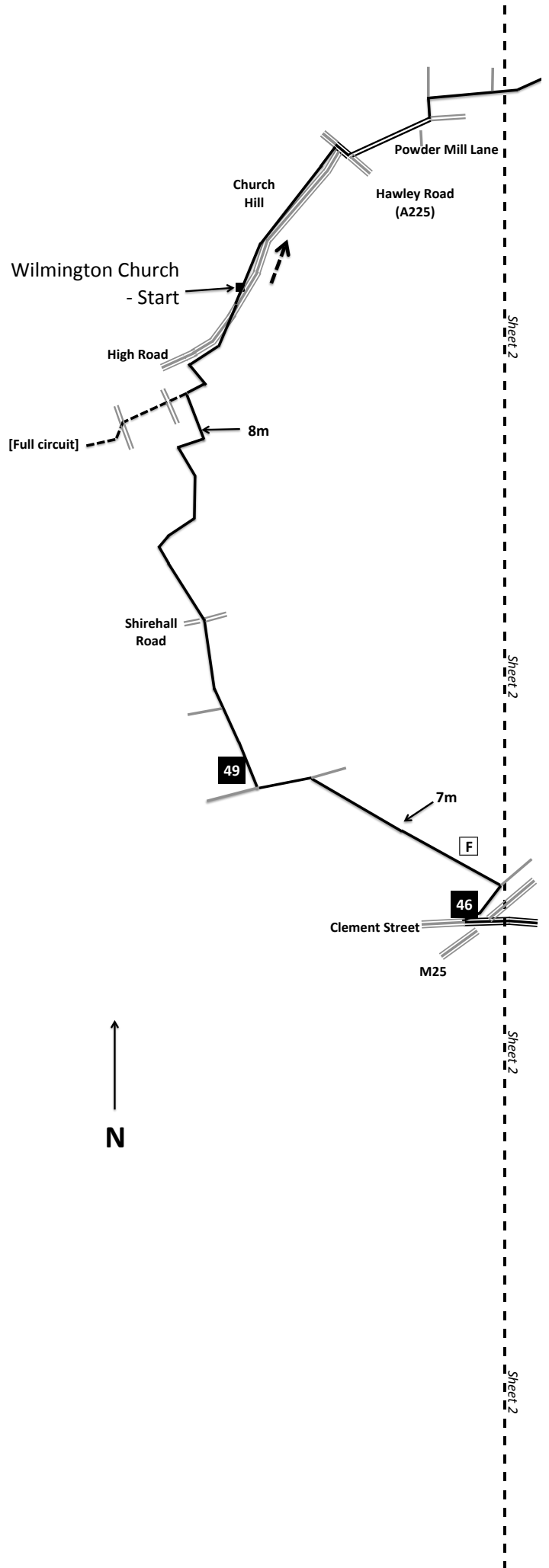
PATHS:

-  On route
-  Adjoining

Scale (approx.):



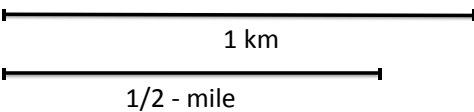
 Starting direction



WILMINGTON & SUTTON-AT-HONE

SHORTER CIRCUIT - Sheet 2 (middle section)

Scale (approx.):



---> Cont. from Sheet 1

F Open fields (see 'Introductory Notes')

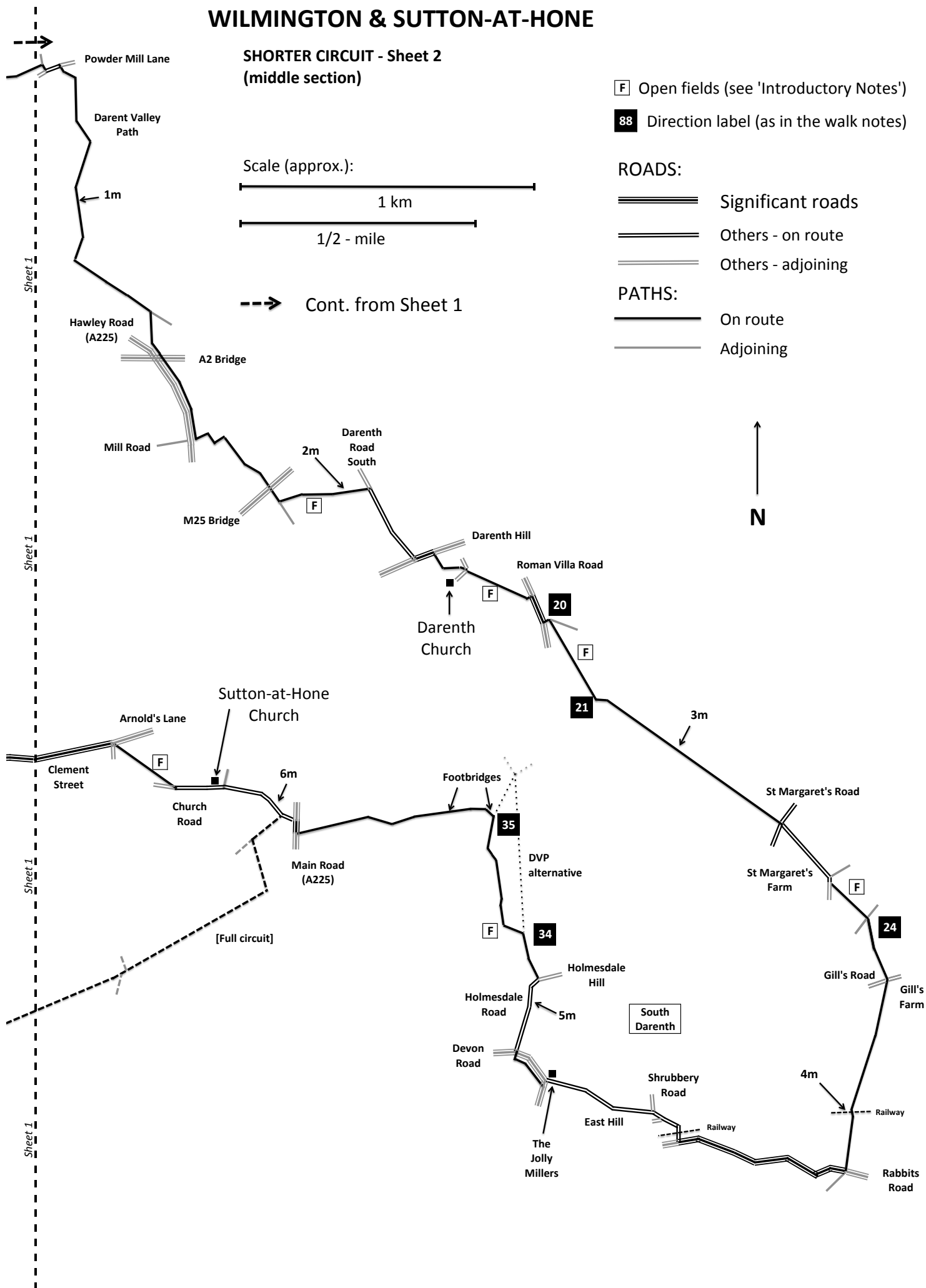
88 Direction label (as in the walk notes)

ROADS:

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

PATHS:

- On route
- Adjoining



WILMINGTON & SUTTON-AT-HONE CIRCUIT - shorter: 8.33 miles

Churches in the shorter circuit:

Wilmington (start and finish)

Darenth (Direction 17)

Sutton-at-Hone (42)

Associated local circuits

- HF1: Horton Kirby - Sutton-at-Hone - Darenth - Horton Kirby
- WS1: Wilmington - Swanley St Paul - Hextable - Wilmington

Shorter circuit: This includes a pleasant 1.7-mile section of the Darent Valley Path, though not the best landscapes of the full circuit.

Roads and hindrances:

There is a little road walking, ranging from tolerable to quite pleasant.

Navigation at 20 needs a bit of thought.

(The railings at 36 - noted as a problem in earlier versions - have now disappeared.)

SHORTER CIRCUIT - Wilmington - Darenth - Sutton-at-Hone - Wilmington

Notes taken: January/February 2012; revised October 2014. Updated December 2016.

The start and finish is at Wilmington Church (DA2 7EH).

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
1		Start by turning left coming out of the church grounds, north-eastwards along the left-hand side of the B258 (Church Hill).	539 725	
2	5	At the junction at the bottom of the hill (A225, Hawley Road), go across and ahead along the sealed-off road which is a little to the right. At first anonymous, it is in fact Powder Mill Lane. It leads down past some new housing on the right towards an industrial estate.		
3	6	Go ahead past the entrance to the water treatment works.		
4	8	As soon as an open space (currently a building site) opens out to the right, with big industrial buildings beyond it, turn left along a short path. This leads before long to a sign-board, 'Brooklands Lakes'. Go to this board and turn right alongside the water. Keep straight on along the main path next to the railings on the right (not leftwards down to the water's edge).		
5	10	Carry straight on past another sign-board.		
6	12	START OF THE SPINE SECTION At the end of the path, in front of railings, turn right.		0.66

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

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
7	13	Reaching the road, turn left along it over bridges (Darent Valley Path), then right (still DVP) along the footpath immediately beyond them, alongside the river.		
8	16	At a fork, stay alongside the river to your right.		
9	24	Cross the river. A field then opens out to the right which you need to cross (to return to the A225 and go under the A2 bridge which looms above). Do this by cutting across the field at its narrowest point, starting about halfway along its left-hand edge: this short cut, along a bit of a track, is a very temporary departure from the waymarked DVP.		
10	26	Leave the field over a stile, and turn left alongside the A225 and under the bridge. Stay on the left-hand side of the road, passing the water treatment works and then Hawley Mill on the left.	550 721	
11	31	Turn left along the footpath opposite Mill Road, then follow the path right, and then left over the footbridge.		
12	32	Turn right again, so that once again you are alongside the river to your right.		
13	35	Go under the motorway bridge.		
14	36	!!!F!!! About 50 yds. after going under the motorway, use the first opportunity to swing leftwards with the path, slightly uphill, keeping to the left of a tributary of the river. Head towards the red-brick building in the middle distance.		
15	40	Turn right at the top, after a wooden kissing gate, along a road.	558 716	
16	44	After passing The Chequers, turn left up Darent Hill, next to the fruit distribution depot.		2.26
17	45	Soon after the road starts to climb, turn right towards Darent Church (St Margaret's, signposted).	560 713	
18	46	In the churchyard, after about 60 yds. follow the waymark which directs you diagonally leftwards towards the far corner. There go out through the gate, and continue, keeping the same line, across a roadway and alongside a little green, over another roadway, and then, still in the same general direction, into a wide field !!!F!!! angling upwards across it. (If there is no marked path, aim at a point about 60 yds. to the left of the right-hand end of the line of trees up ahead. There is some yellow marking at this target point.)		
19	51	Go up some steps and turn right along Roman Villa Road at the top.		

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

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
20	52	[Map point] Turn off the road up steps to the left. [!!F!!] At the top follow the waymark which goes decisively to the right (i.e. to start with almost parallel to the road you have just left). <i>If there is no marked path this can be a difficult direction to find. Try this: Having gone up the steps, turn to the right and survey the scene. Ahead across the skyline is a modest row of trees running from left to right. The crossing point of these trees is your next target. To your right is Roman Villa Road which you have just crossed. A little way down alongside the road is a pole, possibly slightly masked by a tree. Diagonally to your left and further away is another pole, which might be camouflaged against a cluster of trees. Imagine a line joining these two poles. You need to cross that line about three-quarters of the way from its left to its right. Following that direction you can persuade yourself that there is a bit of a gap in the distant row of trees - as indeed there is: immediately to the left of the one which is (allowing for its lower ground level) probably the tallest of them. Make for this gap, which is at 56606 70843.</i>		
21	57	[Map point] Go between the trees. Follow the path beyond (essentially straight, though at first slightly left, then right, to reach the top of the little rise ahead) and pass the left-hand end of the line of tall trees coming in at right-angles ahead.	566 708	
22	66	Cross the road at St Margaret's Farm, and go ahead along the track opposite and through the farmyard at the end.		3.26
23	70	[!!F!!] Beyond the farmyard start out along the obvious track, but after about 20 yds., as the track goes a little to the right, follow instead a much lesser one (unsigned) diagonally to the left. You are aiming at a waymark post across the field, next to the last (right-hand) of a row of tall trees.		
24	72	[Map point] Turn half-right at this post, along a clear path heading towards white buildings in the middle distance.		
25	75	Cross a road and continue ahead through the farmyard and then along a track.		
26	78	After passing a barrier, continue straight ahead, ignoring the track which goes away to the right.		
27	81	Go slightly left over the railway bridge, then correct back slightly rightwards to the original direction.		
28	83	END OF THE SPINE SECTION Turn right along Rabbits Road.	574 692	4.11
29	90	At the crossroads, turn right over the railway bridge. Follow the main road as it swings down to the left of the grass area. Go downhill alongside this road, using the parallel walkway to the right of it, which then becomes an ordinary pavement.		
30	96	Turn right along the road at the junction by the Jolly Millers.		
31	98	Ignoring the bridge to your left, again continue along the major road as it swings to the right. Keep the stream to your left alongside.		
32	100	The road swings to the right again. Immediately afterwards turn left along the signposted path (Darent Valley Path).		

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

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
33	101	After a short path between hedges and fences, take a right fork, immediately after Garden House, over a small stile and along a narrow path (not towards the more obvious big gate ahead).		
34	103	[Map point] [!F!] At the end of this path, as it opens out into a large field, ignore the waymark and instead turn left along the edge of the field. <i>[This path is not recognised as a right of way on the OS map, but seems harmless enough. And I came across several people routinely walking it. To stay on marked rights of way, go straight ahead with the DVP waymark after all, then double back sharply left to reach the bridge mentioned below: but it seems an unnecessary diversion.]</i> Follow the path along the left of the field, turning right with the field-edge, then swing back and forth, alongside the stream on your left.		
35	109	[Map point] Look out on the left for a waymarked path (easily missed) leading immediately to a footbridge. Cross over the bridge into trees and then follow the path as it winds around through them: the line is generally a little to the left relative to the original direction of the footbridge.	562 704	
36	111	Cross another footbridge and go through the MKG beyond. The route carries on straight ahead: strictly speaking it is along the narrow path between fences, though sometimes the farmer invites you to go the other side of the right-hand fence (temporarily, to avoid mud: he says he often does this).		
37	113	After a metal gate and a very brief right-left, go straight ahead on the main path, which then bends slightly to the right.		
38	115	You can choose between two bridges over the water.		
39	117	Go through a wooden kissing gate on to a driveway, and ahead towards the main road.		
40	118	Turn right along the road, cross at the lights and carry on; then left along Church Road.		5.90
41	119	Follow the road as it goes uphill to the right.		
42	122	Sutton-at-Hone Church is on your right. Carry on ahead.	553 705	
43	124	[!F!] At the end of the trees on your right, turn off the road on to the footpath going diagonally into the field slightly to the right, and aim at the far left-hand corner of the field.		
44	128	When you rejoin the road at its T-junction, take the left turn (Clement Street). There are reasonable verges, sometimes on one side, sometimes on the other. (But stay alongside the road: the tempting pathway up to the right leads nowhere.)		
45	132	Cross the bridge over the motorway.		
46	134	[Map point] At the first opportunity after the motorway turn very sharp right (virtually doubling back) along footpath DR55.		6.70

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

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
47		[!!F!!] Then, as soon as the fence on the left offers a gap, turn left, away from the motorway, to cross the very large field. Currently this turn comes very soon, after about 25 yds., but I have known there to be no way through the fence for 70 or 80 yds. (There is currently no sign or waymark, and there may or may not be a marked path.) Head (at an angle, leftwards going down and up) for the distant end of the line of trees on your left.	545 707	
48	142	At that point turn leftwards along the main path.	540 710	
49	144	[Map point] Swing right with the main path. <i>According to the OS map it should be possible to cut off this corner by going only slightly left at Direction 48. There is currently no such way through the field. I am not sure this is worth making an issue of, as the difference in distance is minimal.</i>		
50	151	Ignoring turnings to the left, you reach a road. Cross it and continue along the path opposite.		
51	153	Go straight ahead, now alongside the trees to your left.		7.68
52	154	Then turn right to keep on this field-edge path alongside fence or hedge.		
53	156	Then left.		
54	158	Then right.		
55	159	Then left. And after a few yards, when the path next turns right, leave the field by going straight ahead instead, along a narrow path between wire fences.	537 720	
56	161	Turn right to join the full circuit.		
57	162	Follow the path as it turns left between fences.		
58	163	When you reach the main road, turn right.		
59	168	After crossing the A2 on a bridge, you arrive back at the starting point, Wilmington Church .	539 725	8.33

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!!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

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!

WILMINGTON & SUTTON -AT-HONE - SHORTER CIRCUIT	Direction numbers	% of walk
Busy road	1, 10, 16, 19, 40, 44-45, 58	14
Quiet road \$\$	2-3, 15, 28-31, 39, 41-42	19
Open field with livestock		0
Edge of field with livestock		0
Field (or edge) without livestock **	9, 14, 18b, 20-21, 23-24, 25b-27, 34, 43, 47-55a	43
Path (hedged, or otherwise forced)	4-8, 11-13, 17-18a, 22, 25a, 32-33, 36-38, 46, 55b-57	23
Woods	35	1

** 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 (2) - Details noted in May 2015, but subject to frequent change:

The stile in Direction **10** has easy gaps.

The one in **33** is low, with rises of about 9 ins. and 9 ins.