

HORTON KIRBY & FAWKHAM

FULL 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

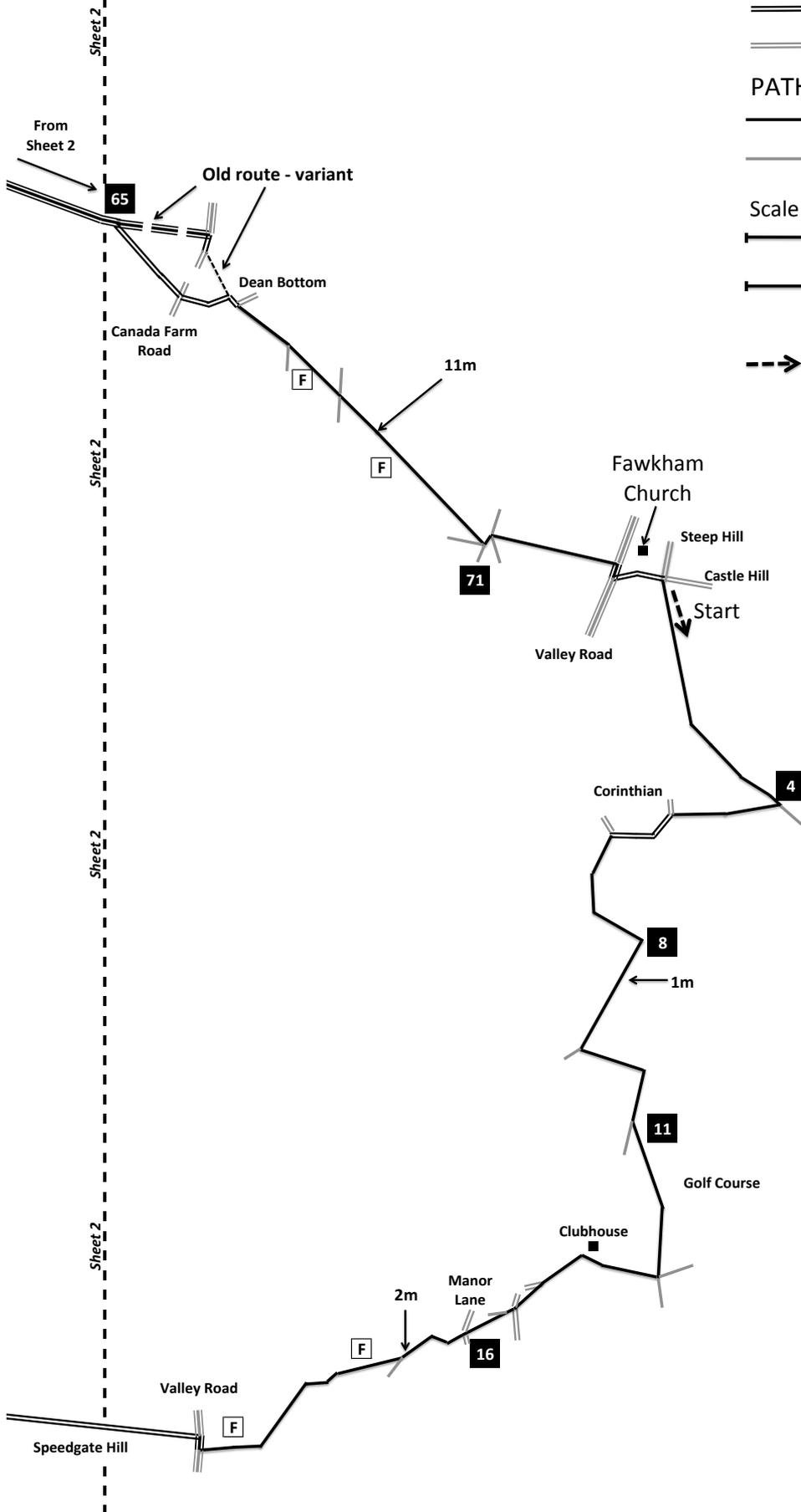
— Adjoining

Scale (approx.):

—————
1 km

—————
1/2 - mile

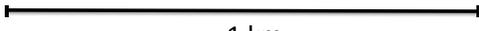
---> Starting direction



HORTON KIRBY & FAWKHAM

FULL CIRCUIT - Sheet 2
(second and fourth sections)

Scale (approx.):

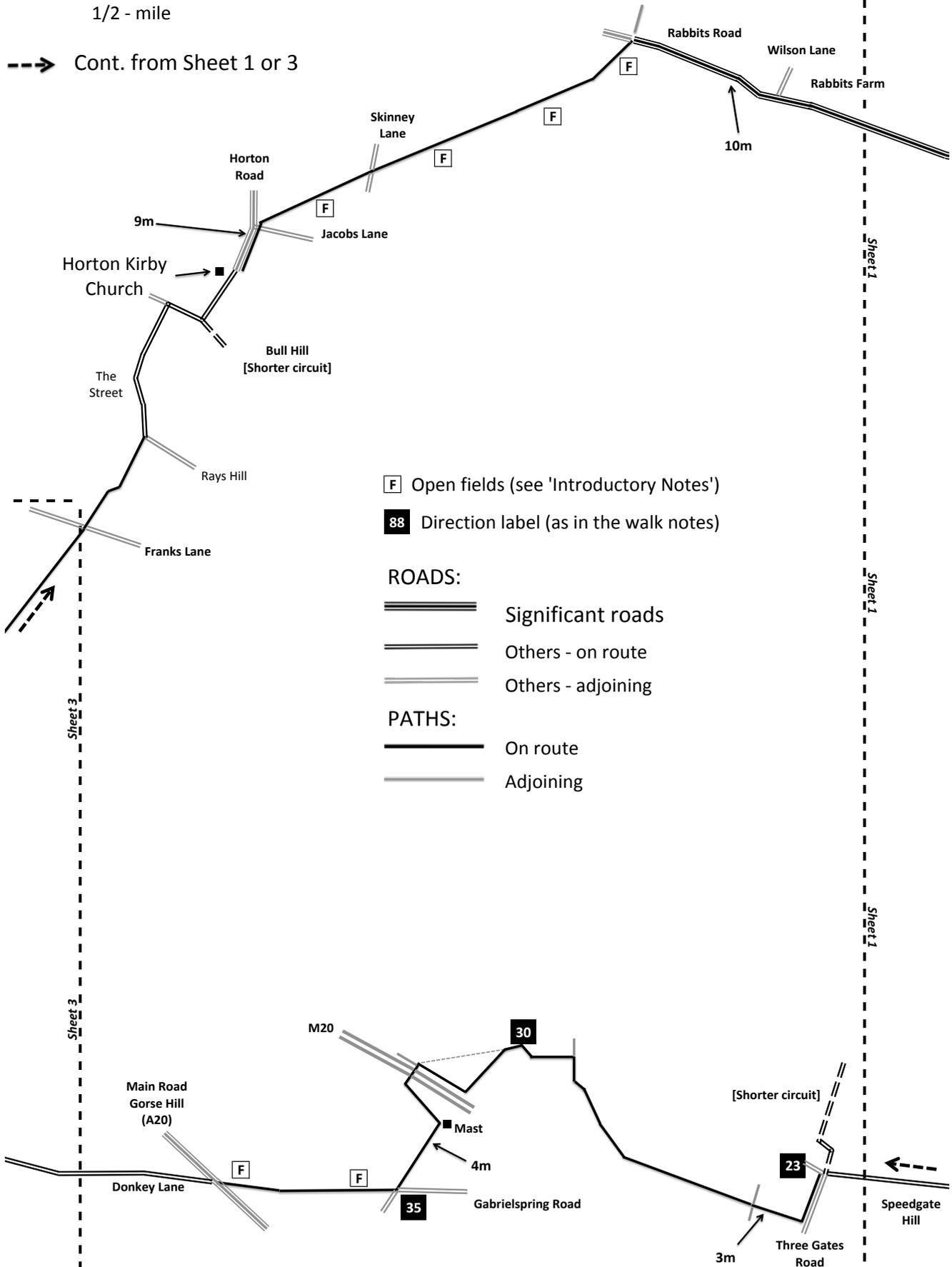


1 km



1/2 - mile

---> Cont. from Sheet 1 or 3



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

HORTON KIRBY & FAWKHAM

FULL CIRCUIT - Sheet 3
(middle section)



F Open fields (see 'Introductory Notes')

88 Direction label (as in the walk notes)

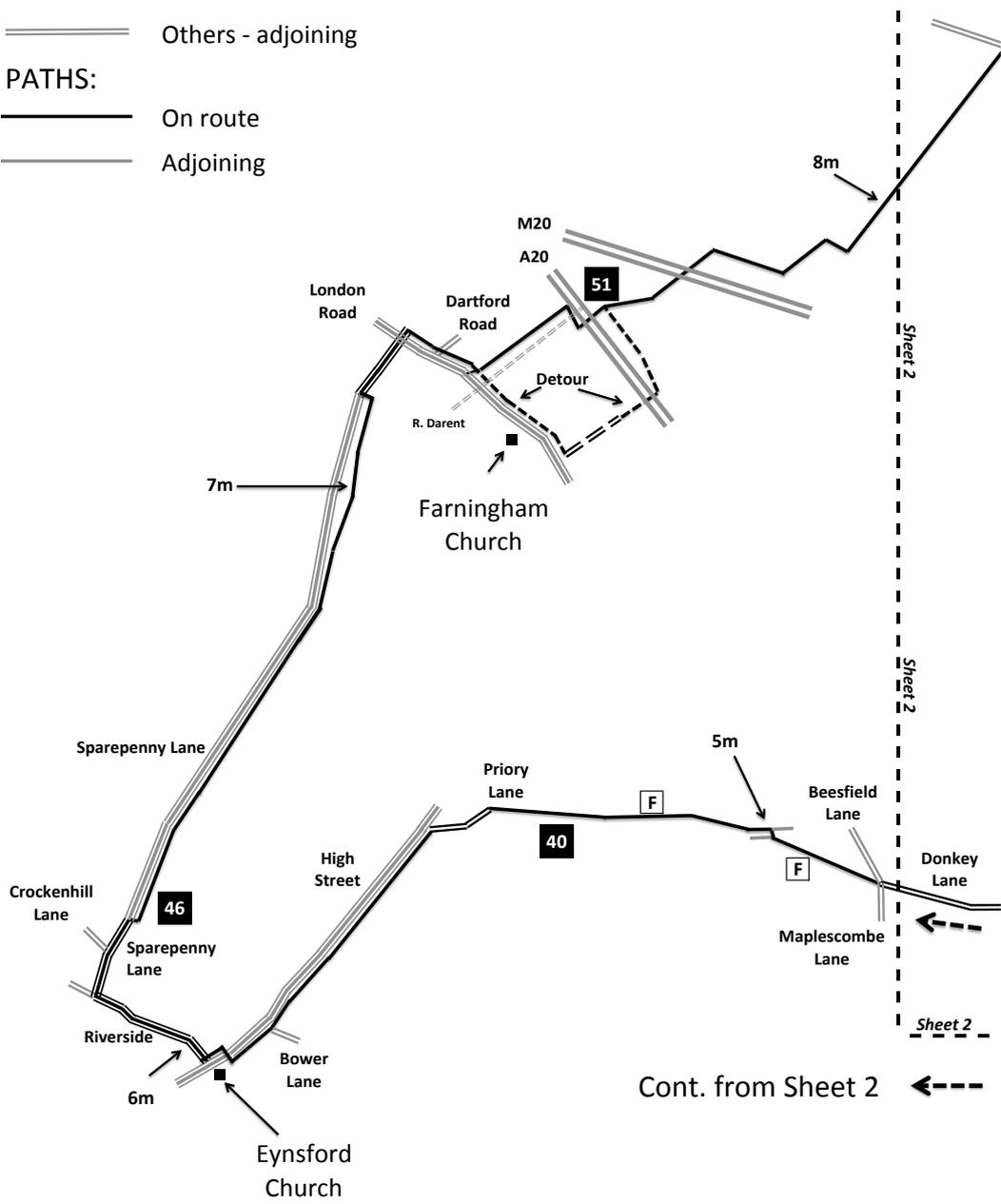
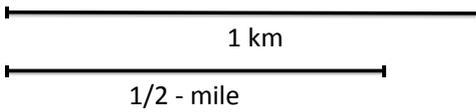
ROADS:

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

PATHS:

-  On route
-  Adjoining

Scale (approx.):



HORTON KIRBY & FAWKHAM CIRCUIT - 11.62 miles

Churches in the full circuit

Eynsford (Direction 44)

Farningham (49B: Detour - see Appendix)

Horton Kirby (58)

Fawkham (73)

Associated local circuits

- LH1: Hartley - Longfield - Fawkham - Hartley
- HF2: Eynsford - Lullingstone - Farningham - Eynsford
- HF1: Horton Kirby - Sutton-at-Hone - Darenth - Horton Kirby

Full circuit: A splendidly varied walk: scenic golf course, rolling hills and a stretch of the Darent Valley Path. Some beautiful views.

Roads and hindrances:

There is a fair amount of road walking, but most of it is in pleasant countryside with little traffic. The exceptions are the roads in first Eynsford, then Farningham, both of which have comfortable walkways.

Along the bulk of Sparepenny Lane there is a parallel footpath which separates you from the roads.

The crossing of the A20 (37) has excellent sightlines.

I have reinstated the crossing of the field above Dean Bottom (66) as the dense hawthorn has now (January 2017) been cleared.

I found I had to think about the navigation through the golf course (11-13), at 30-31, and over the fields at 68-71.

The wooden footbridge at 38 required more respect than I gave it (though it is probably fine when dry), but the problem at 62 (mentioned in earlier versions) has been dealt with by the replacement of the offending stile by new gates: thank you, Dartford and Gravesham Ramblers!

FULL CIRCUIT - Fawkham - Eynsford - Farningham - Horton Kirby - Fawkham

Notes taken: December 2011 / January 2012; revised October 2014 and updated January 2017

The start and finish is the road junction of Castle Hill and Steep Hill, not far from Fawkham Church (near DA3 8EQ).

	Mins.		OS	Miles
1		At the junction of Steep Hill and Castle Hill, go up the path opposite Steep Hill, to the right of the entrance to Talbot Lodge.	598 680	

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
2	1	Go to the left of the private entrance to Hillside Cottage, passing between fences on the narrow path.		
3	5	Through a pair of metal gates, and still straight ahead.		
4	10	[Map point] Fork right along the first significant path, following in theory a waymark for SD221 which in earlier versions I described as 'easily missed'. It is currently (January 2017) even more easily missed as the tree bearing it lies fallen on your left. To take this right fork you currently go under a half-fallen tree, and step over another fallen one. Very soon after this another waymark takes SD221 leftwards parallel to the original direction; but instead turn right at this point, down a path (unsignalled at first) through the trees. The path takes you down, and, as it emerges from the wood, through the Corinthian sports complex.		
5	14	Pass along through the car park with the main entrance to your left and the Billings Group offices on your right. Up ahead follow the roadway to the right.		
6	16	Follow the left fork in the road and go up the footpath which is just to the right of Pennis House.		
7	20	Emerge from the trees and turn left along the left-hand edge of a field, keeping the pylon to your right.		0.84
8	22	[Map point] Turn right along the other edge of the same field, to the far-left corner.	597 671	
9	26	After a passing through a small cluster of trees, and just before reaching the corner of Redlibbets golf course turn left down a grassy path.		
10	27	Pass the 11th tee on your right and the 13th tee on your left, and then another green.		
11	28	Swing right with the path. <i>Ultimately you will be passing next to the Redlibbets clubhouse, which (at least in winter) you can just make out straight ahead through the trees, and which could be reached by simply walking ahead. However, the mapped and waymarked right of way does not take this direct line, but goes down to the left across and up the other side of the valley; so this (two sides of an elongated triangle) is the route described.</i> Staying on the high, straight path you soon pass two tall trees on the left, and see a lake coming into view down ahead and slightly to the left. [Map point] Soon after this look for a waymark post to the left a little way down the hill. This direction - perhaps about 40 degrees left of the line of the path you are leaving and the valley and fairways beyond - is the one to follow, down and up, for the next few minutes. Given average luck you will find it confirmed by occasional waymarks. (If not, there are no serious consequences so long as you a) avoid hindering golfers or enabling them to injure you, and b) finish up eventually at the increasingly visible clubhouse.)		

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

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
12	31	Following this 40-degree line, and having, with due care, crossed a fairway (about 60 yds. from the tee to the left) you reach the valley floor. Continue at the same angle (or very slightly more to the right), through some trees, now upwards. Cross another fairway (with its green about 100 yds. to your left) and then veer a little further to the right to go parallel to it, to meet at right-angles the buggy track coming down from the clubhouse on the right.	598 664	
13	35	Turn right along this track, past the 1st tee, the lake, and the (presumably 18th) green, and go up past the left-hand side of the clubhouse.		
14	37	In the car park follow the metalled driveway leftwards towards the exit.		1.68
15	39	Save a few yards by cutting across the grass, as waymarked (about 15 yds. to the left of a big tree).		
16	40	[Map point] At another waymark post, rejoin and go straight across the driveway, taking the narrow roadway which goes very slightly to your right - not the double (i.e. soon forking) buggy track further to the right, which heads towards the 9 th tee). Go ahead to the road beyond the golf-club grounds.		
17	41	Cross the road (at its junction with the Fawkham Hospital entrance drive) and continue opposite through an unusual red-brown metal gate, along a narrow enclosed path.		
18	43	A long, fairly narrow field opens out to the right. !!!F!!! At the end of the fence on the right, go diagonally across this field and head for the far right-hand corner.	591 660	
19	46	At the corner go slightly left, then (not immediately, but after about 10 yds.) turn right, down through trees.		
20	47	Emerge from the wood and follow the path as it goes leftwards along its edge, and then straight ahead into another bit of woodland, continuing downward and slightly to the right.		
21	49	Pass what was once a stile on your right to leave the trees. !!!F!!! Ignore the waymark pointing to the left. (You need SD225, not SD224.) In front of you is a field, very long from left to right, but narrow ahead. It is across this width, ahead and about 20-30 yds. to the left of straight, that the footpath goes, heading for a gap which is initially quite invisible. I also found (in winter) little indication on the ground of the correct line; but it is easy enough to find the gap as you approach the far side. When you have done so, go through, and down a steep slope (taking special care if wet) and go on between fences to a stile and, via some steps, to the main road beyond.	588 658	
22	52	Turn right along the road for a few yards, then left up Speedgate Hill, for a few minutes' road-walking, steeply uphill.		
23	61	[Map point] At the top you reach the junction with Three Gates Road. Turn left, not along the road itself but through a MKG on to the footpath alongside the road and to the right of it, the other side of the fence.	580 659	2.82

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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
24	63	After two fields' widths, go through into a third and immediately turn right, to go alongside the fence on your right.		
25	66	Through a metal gate and straight across the road to a broad track opposite.		
26	70	After a big barn (on the left) keep ahead along the main track, under power lines, with the fence on your left.		
27	74	Stay on the main track, bending slightly to the right, as it enters the wood.		
28	75	After about 100 yds. turn left into the trees. There used to be a waymark here, but currently (January 2017) the only indication is an orange horseshoe.	572 662	
29	76	Emerge from the trees and follow the path as it goes downhill, with a scrubby piece of land to the left and a fine view to the right.		
30	77	<i>As the route climbs from the bottom, the realistic route (described here) to the far side of the huge field above and the footbridge over the M20 now seems to diverge a little from the strict right-of-way line by going round the field's left-hand edge and not directly across it (a line which used to be cleared and waymarked but – January 2017 – is no longer).</i> Reaching the bottom, turn a little to the left along the field-edge and follow it uphill, bending slightly to the right.		
31	80	Turn right at the corner at the end, and then look out for the gap and waymark to your left leading towards a stile and a footbridge beyond it.		
32	82	Go through the gap, leaving the field behind you, and, via the stile, towards and over the footbridge.	568 662	
33	84	After the footbridge turn left, along the left-hand side of a field.		3.90
34	86	Turn right at the mast, along the other edge of the same field.		
35	89	[Map point] After a house on the left, just before reaching a road, look out for a gate ahead and on the left. (It is simplest - though perhaps not strictly correct - to avoid the gate by continuing along the field-edge for the last 20 yds. or so ahead of the coming right turn, rather than reaching it slightly further left via gate and stile!) !!!F!!! Level with the gate, strike out to the right away from it (about a 60-degree turn) along a path across the field. The path may be barely visible, but aim about 80 yds. to the right of the large round tree - the biggest in the line opposite.		
36	93	!!!F!!! Go through that line of trees and continue down along the same diagonal line, aiming slightly to the left of a distant red-brick building (only its chimneys visible in summer - note these at the outset as they will disappear!). Be careful over this field: it can be very rough underfoot, despite appearances.	564 658	
37	96	Find and go down steep steps, a good 100 yds. to the left of the field corner, to reach the A20. Cross it and go down Donkey Lane opposite. (The A20 is fast and busy, but the crossing perfectly feasible, with care, as the sightlines are excellent.)		

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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
38	104	At the end of Donkey Lane, at the junction with Maplescombe Lane and Beesfield Lane, go straight across the green triangle, across the road, through the undergrowth, and over a wooden footbridge (to the left of the footpath indicator post, and dangerously slippery when wet). Then cross an old but sound stile, and turn diagonally right in the field. !!F!! Head for the funnel at the top right-hand corner.		4.92
39	108	Do not go through the gate at the top, but just before it cross a stile on the right. This leads down to a broad track a few yards below. !!F!! Turn left to follow this track as it goes, only slightly uphill, across the field (not further left still along the field-edge).	553 660	
40	116	[Map point] Go straight on past the mast.		
41	118	Follow the path as it becomes a metalled road and swings left between houses.		
42	119	Past an inviting bench, swing right with the road down to the main road ahead.		
43	120	Turn left into Eynsford High Street. Walk on the left-hand pavement.		5.59
44	129	Eynsford Church is on the left. Here use the zebra crossing and go down the road opposite the church towards the bridge next to the ford, and continue along the road, alongside the river at first.	540 655	
45	133	After diverging from the river you reach the junction with Sparepenny Lane. Turn right here, joining the Darent Valley Path.		
46	136	[Map point] Go through a gate on the right, next to the entrance to Furlongs Farm, on to a field-edge path which runs parallel to Sparepenny Lane for most of the way to Farningham, going alongside several fields separated by wooden gates, and featuring a pleasant cluster of trees halfway along.		6.35
47	153	Follow the path as it goes up to the left to rejoin Sparepenny Lane.		
48	156	Turn right into Farningham High Street.		
49	158	Pass the Lion Hotel on the left with the bridge over the river ahead. <i>To visit Farningham Church, now divert instead to the Detour in the Appendix.</i> Main route: Do not cross the bridge, but turn left immediately before it to go alongside the river through the hotel grounds.	546 671	7.37
50	162	Cross the river on a footbridge next to the A20 above, then go left with the path as it goes under the road bridge and along the right bank of the river.		
51	163	[Map point] Go straight ahead. (The path joining on the right comes from the detour via the church.)	549 672	7.61

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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
52	165	Swing left with the path under the motorway. It now goes on unmistakably, still as the Darent Valley Path, for nearly 15 minutes, winding left and right, largely between fences. First it swings right alongside the river, then accompanies it through its left-hand bend; and then it strikes out on its own course between fields towards Horton Kirby.		
53	178	After passing the cricket ground on your right, cross the road and continue along the path opposite, between fences. (At this point you part company with the Darent Valley Path, which goes leftwards along the road.)		8.33
54	180	Go through a MKG, slightly to the right, then left to regain the original direction: now along the bottom, left-hand edge of a gently sloping field.		
55	182	Reaching the metalled road as it bends, go straight on along The Street.		
56	187	Follow the road as it swings right at Westminster Mill (Millen Court).		
57	189	Swing left with the major road at the junction (Horton Road).	562 684	8.88
58	191	Horton Kirby Church is on the left.		
59	193	!!!F!!! Where Jacobs Lane goes off to the right, go up the footpath rightwards through a kissing gate, bisecting the angle between the roads (i.e. at about 45 degrees). Go up diagonally across this large sloping field in the direction of a large pylon in the distance.		
60	199	!!!F!!! Cross the road beside a pole, and continue ahead on the same diagonal line, through the MKG.	566 689	
61	202	!!!F!!! Through another MKG and onwards, down (to the right of a pylon), then uphill to a MKG about 30 yds. below (i.e. to the right of) the field's top right-hand corner.		
62	207	!!!F!!! Go through this MKG, and two more gates in quick succession, and continue in the same direction as before to another MKG across the field.		
63	209	!!!F!!! Go through it and turn slightly more towards the left to yet another MKG.		
64	211	START OF THE SPINE SECTION (from here to the end) Reaching this final gate, go through it and turn right on to Rabbits Road.	574 692	9.87
65	224	[Map point] After passing Wilson Lane and Rabbits Farm on the left, also ignore an anonymous turning on the right and continue ahead to a T-junction.		

* *"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
66	226	<p>[!!F!!] Here the major road turns left, but instead abandon it by turning right. Then, after a further 50 yds. or so, go through a gap on the left** leading to the corner of a field. Go diagonally across this, heading for the right-hand end of the wooden fence opposite, and on reaching that point go down a steep, narrow passageway alongside a house.</p> <p><i>** Long-standing readers of these notes will recognise this as a return to the original descent to Dean Bottom, which I abandoned for a while because of the inhospitably dense hawthorn which made this field virtually impassable. But it is now (January 2017) entirely clear, if still rather rough underfoot. If the obstruction returns it is possible, instead of leaving the road at the gap, to continue along it and turn left at the crossroads ahead, rejoining the route where the steep passageway joins (see above). This detour would cost an additional 1 minute (0.07 miles).</i></p>		10.64
67	229	Turn left at the road at the bottom, but immediately swing right with it. When the road swings back to the left a rather hidden signpost offers two alternative footpaths. Take the one which goes straight on, leading uphill through some trees and then up the left-hand side of a field.	587 687	
68	232	You pass a long hedge which goes off at right-angles to the right. [!!F!!] Here tackle the gentle rise ahead by abandoning the left-hand hedge, and go slightly to the right of the original line towards a relatively small, solitary pylon.	588 686	
69	237	[!!F!!] Pass to right of the pylon, and straight on toward a pole which is slightly to the right of another pylon.	590 684	
70	243	At the pole merge slightly leftwards on to a wide track.	593 681	
71	244	[Map point] Leave the track as it swings away to the right. Instead go slightly to the left and then ahead, down the left-hand side of a field, with a wood on your left.		
72	246	In the corner at the end carry on ahead down the narrow path between fences.		
73	248	The footpath goes alongside a house, and comes out at the main road. Cross it, and go up the road which is opposite and slightly to the right (Castle Hill). On the left is <u>Fawkham Church</u> .	597 680	
74	250	At the junction with Steep Hill on the left, you arrive back at the starting point.	598 680	11.62

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

APPENDIX to Full Circuit

Detour to Farningham Church

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
49A	0	For the detour to Farningham Church : Instead of turning left at Direction 49, continue ahead over the bridge.	546 671	
49B	2	The church is on the right. Beyond it carry straight on along the High Street.		
49C	3	Turn left along Horton Way.		
49D	7	After passing under the A20, turn left at the field-edge.		
49E	10	Turn right to rejoin the main route at Direction 51. Add 5 minutes to subsequent total times and 0.29 miles to cumulative distances.	549 672	0.51

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

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 (on the next page) 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!

HORTON KIRBY & FAWKHAM - FULL CIRCUIT	Direction numbers	% of walk
Busy road	22a, 43, 48	5
Quiet road \$\$	14, 16, 22b, 32, 37, 41-42, 44-45, 47, 55-58, 64-66a, 67a, 73	26
Open field with livestock		0
Edge of field with livestock	23-24	2
Field (or edge) without livestock **	7-8, 21a, 29-31, 33-36, 38-39, 46, 51, 54, 59-63, 66b, 67c-71	37
Path (hedged, or otherwise forced)	1-2, 4b-6, 9-13, 15, 17, 21b, 25-26, 40, 49-50, 52-53, 72	24
Woods	3-4a, 18-20, 27-28, 67b	7

** 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 and May 2015, but **subject to frequent change:**

The stiles in Directions **21, 32 and 39**. have easy gaps.

The one in **38** has climbs of 12 ins. and 2 ft., with a gap of 6 ins. below.