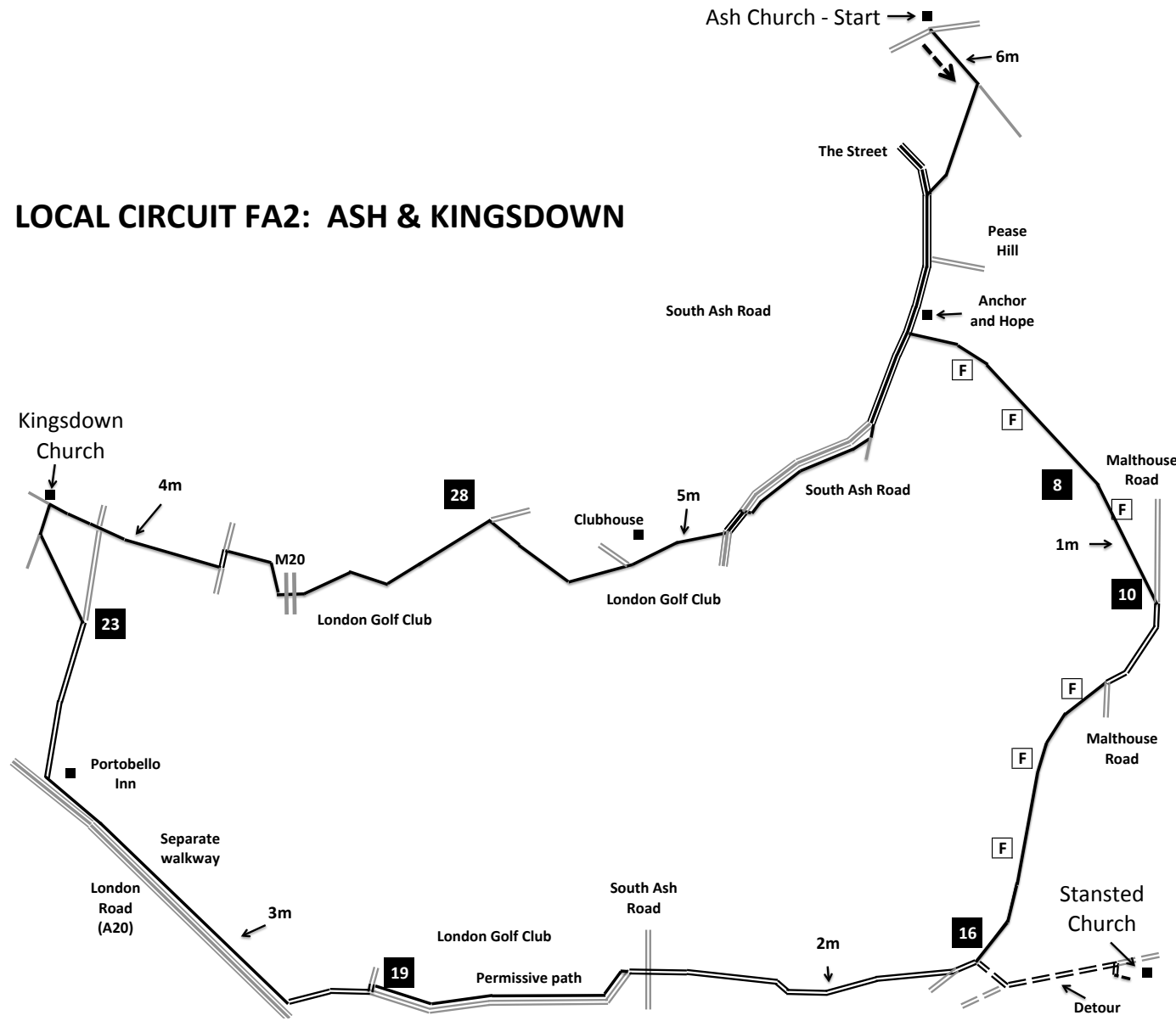


LOCAL CIRCUIT FA2: ASH & KINGSDOWN



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



LOCAL CIRCUIT FA2: ASH AND KINGSDOWN - 6.06 miles

Linked churches:

Ash (start and finish)

Stansted (Direction 16C: Detour – see Appendix)

Kingsdown (24)

Roads and hindrances:

The short stretch of road near the start (5-6), retraced at greater length (7 minutes) towards the end (32-33B), is borderline acceptable, I think. Here there will at most times be the tedious necessity to take account of oncoming traffic, and having to think about this will not allow much energy for enjoyment. At least it is reasonably safe, in that there is plenty of scope to stop and snuggle up to the right-hand hedge. The trouble is, you may need to do this rather more often than you would like.

The other road sections are relatively harmless. The section after Stansted (16-17) is quiet and pleasant, though the permissive path at 18 makes a welcome change. Walking alongside the A20 (20-21) is not wonderful, but not particularly distressing either (and perfectly safe). The shorter section of South Ash Road (29) is probably too short to matter (and I understand, for what it is worth, that there has been discussion of rerouting footpaths around here to make even this unnecessary.)

There are no significant hindrances, though at some times of year it can be tiresome working out the route across the fields at 8 and 9.

Notes taken: Between October 2011 and March 2012; updated October 2014

The start and finish is at Ash Church (TN15 7HD).

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
1		Coming out of <u>Ash Church</u> , at the end of the church path cross over the road, go over the lift-and-drop stile and walk along the left-hand edge of the cricket field.	601 645	
2	2	Go through a MKG and continue along the left-hand side of a second field.		
3	3	At the end go through another MKG and turn right alongside a hedge to the right, along the right-hand edge of a field.		
4	6	As soon as the hedge and path swing left, instead go straight on through a small gap in the hedge.		
5	7	Go through the MKG on the right, and turn left to go along the road. This is an uncomfortably busy road at times, with no walkway: choose whichever side seems sensible in prevailing traffic conditions, criss-crossing if necessary.		
6	11	Immediately after the Anchor and Hope and its car parks, turn left along the footpath.	601 637	0.53
7	12	!!!F!!! Go through a MKG and carry straight on across the middle of a field.		

* *"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
8	14	!!!F!!! [Map point] Go through a spring gate, and more or less straight ahead.		
9	20	!!!F!!! The path goes diagonally down to a stile and padlocked gate in the hedge on the right. Cross the stile and go a few yards ahead through trees. When you emerge from them, go diagonally leftwards down across a large field towards a few houses. More precisely, look down to those houses along the road to the left; ignore the nearest, much newer, one; and aim towards the next-nearest one (partially hidden by trees), where you will find (also rather hidden) a sturdy stile. This point is about 100 yds. short of the bottom corner of the field, where there is a gate – but it is firmly (and legitimately) barred.		
10	24	[Map point] When you reach the stile cross it and turn right along the road. Follow it as it passes an enclosure (home to a Water Treatment Works) on the right.	607 630	
11	27	!!!F!!! Beyond this, where the road bends to the left, turn right instead over a stile on to footpath MR201. The footpath is not always clearly visible, but heads up diagonally leftwards towards a MKG in the middle distance, a little to the left of (i.e. below) a clump of trees. ^^^		1.31
12	32	!!!F!!! Go through this MKG, now accompanied by a little stile. It is the first of a series, in a line which starts off about 30 yards to the left of, and parallel to, the edge of the wood.	605 627	
13	34	!!!F!!! Continue along this line through a further pair of MKGs.		
14	36	!!!F!!! And another one.		
15	37	And another. After which you go along the left-hand edge of a field.		
16	40	[To visit <i>Stansted Church</i> , now divert instead to the <i>Detour</i> in the Appendix.] Main route: [Map Point] Go through a final MKG, and emerge on to the road. Turn right along it.	603 621	
17	41	At the fork keep right (not left down Parsons Lane).		
18	51	At the crossroads continue straight ahead. After about 100 yds. you can escape from the road itself by using the permissive footpath (not marked on the OS map) which goes alongside it on the right (along the edge of the golf course).		
19	61	[Map point] The path reaches the entrance road to the London Golf Club, next to the gate. Turn left and then, at the two-stage junction, right, so that you are heading towards the A20.	587 620	
20	63	Turn right on to the walkway alongside the A20.		2.89
21	65	Continue ahead under the motorway.		
22	73	At the corner at the Portobello Inn turn right along Fawkham Road. Use the pavement on the left of the road.	580 626	
23	78	[Map Point] When the pavement comes to an end, about 60 yds. after Warland Road, turn half-left into the trees along the path – where there used to be a sign to the church, but all that remains (February 2017) is its green post.		

* **"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
24	82	After merging right into another path you reach Kingsdown Church . In front of the church turn right and go ahead to the continuation of Fawkham Road.	580 633	3.86
25	84	At the road turn right, then immediately left. After a MKG go ahead along a broad, rough avenue, continuing directly below the power lines until you reach another road.	581 632	
26	88	Turn left along the road, and then immediately right, alongside (not into!) the entrance to Eagles Farm. This takes you over speed ramps alongside some industrial units before swinging right at the end.	584 632	
27	91	The path turns left under the M20, and on to London Golf Club land. Go straight on along the clear path across the course.		
28	100	[Map point] At a choice of road or track, it is probably best to use the latter. (They come together again very soon.) Opposite the clubhouse complex use the raised walkway parallel to the road. Then keep going straight, even at the end, where you cross a golf-course road and the way ahead looks unpromising. It soon emerges (after swinging to the right of a white house) through a MKG to a road.		
29	107	Cross the road and, after passing the end of the hedge, turn left along the bridleway, following it as it swings gently right, parallel to the road on your left.	597 632	5.08
30	113	After turning left at the end, rejoin the road and turn right along it.		
31**	116	Just after the entrance to Barnfield Park, and before the Anchor and Hope, there is a footpath on the right: either, to continue the circuit (if not visiting, or finishing at, Ash Church), turn right along the footpath (the one at Direction 6) and follow Direction 7 and onwards;	601 637	5.53
** or 31A	116	... or, to detour to, or finish at, Ash Church , ignore the footpath, continue ahead along the road (retracing the steps of Directions 1 to 5).	601 637	5.53
31B	120	(After passing the Anchor and Hope and crossing Pease Hill) look for a MKG on the right just after the '30' speed-limit sign. Go through the MKG, then swing left alongside the hedge: at first the road runs parallel beyond it. Later at a junction of tracks turn left through a MKG, and go along the right-hand edge of the field to another MKG.		
31C	125	Continue along the right-hand edge of the cricket field.		
31D	127	Go over the lift-and-drop stile and cross the road on to the church path leading back to the starting point at Ash Church .	601 645	6.06
31E		If returning to the circuit having visited the church, resume from Direction 1.		

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

APPENDIX to Local Circuit FA2

Detour to Stansted Church

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
16A	0	Where the main route turns right along the road at Direction 16, instead turn left along it.		0.00
16B	2	Turn left at the junction with the major road, and follow it down the hill and up the other side.		
16C	5	The church is on your right, the entrance gate being a few yards up Tumblefield Road. To rejoin the walk, simply retrace your steps: ... down and up Plaxdale Green Road.	606 621	0.25
16D	9	... A little before the top turn right on to Hatham Green Lane.		
16E	11	... And swing left with the road, then follow the directions of the main walk from 17. Add 11 minutes to subsequent total times and 0.50 miles to cumulative distances.		0.50

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

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!

LOCAL CIRCUIT FA2	Direction numbers	% of walk
Busy road	5, 20-21, 30, 31A	19
Quiet road \$\$	10, 16-17, 19, 22, 24, 26	21
Open field with livestock	12-14	4
Edge of field with livestock	2, 31Bb	2
Field (or edge) without livestock **	1, 3-4, 7-9, 11,15, 31Ba, 31C	22
Path (hedged, or otherwise forced)	6, 18, 25, 27-29	30
Woods	23	3

** 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 (6) - Details noted in February 2017, but **subject to frequent change:**

The stile at Direction **1** (revisited at **31D**) has easy gaps. In **9**, the first stile (next to the gate) has a pedestrians' gate next to it which is currently not padlocked; but if use of the stile is necessary, it is wired down to ground level, with climbs of about 1ft., then 2 ft. The stile at the bottom, though new and sturdy, could be a problem: it is a double stile, again wired to ground, with climbs of about 1.5 ft., 6 ins. and 2 ft. - 4 ft. in all. The one in **11** is easier: it is wired down with climbs around 2 ft. and 6 ins. A new one in **12** is a simple step-over one, 2 ft. in height.