

IFIELD

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

--> Starting direction

Scale (approx.):

1 km

1/2 - mile

N

Sheet 2

Sheet 2




IFIELD

SHORTER CIRCUIT - Sheet 2 (middle section)



F Open fields (see 'Introductory Notes')

88 Direction label (as in the walk notes)

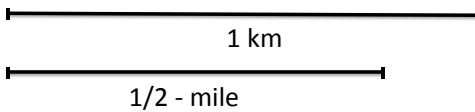
ROADS:


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

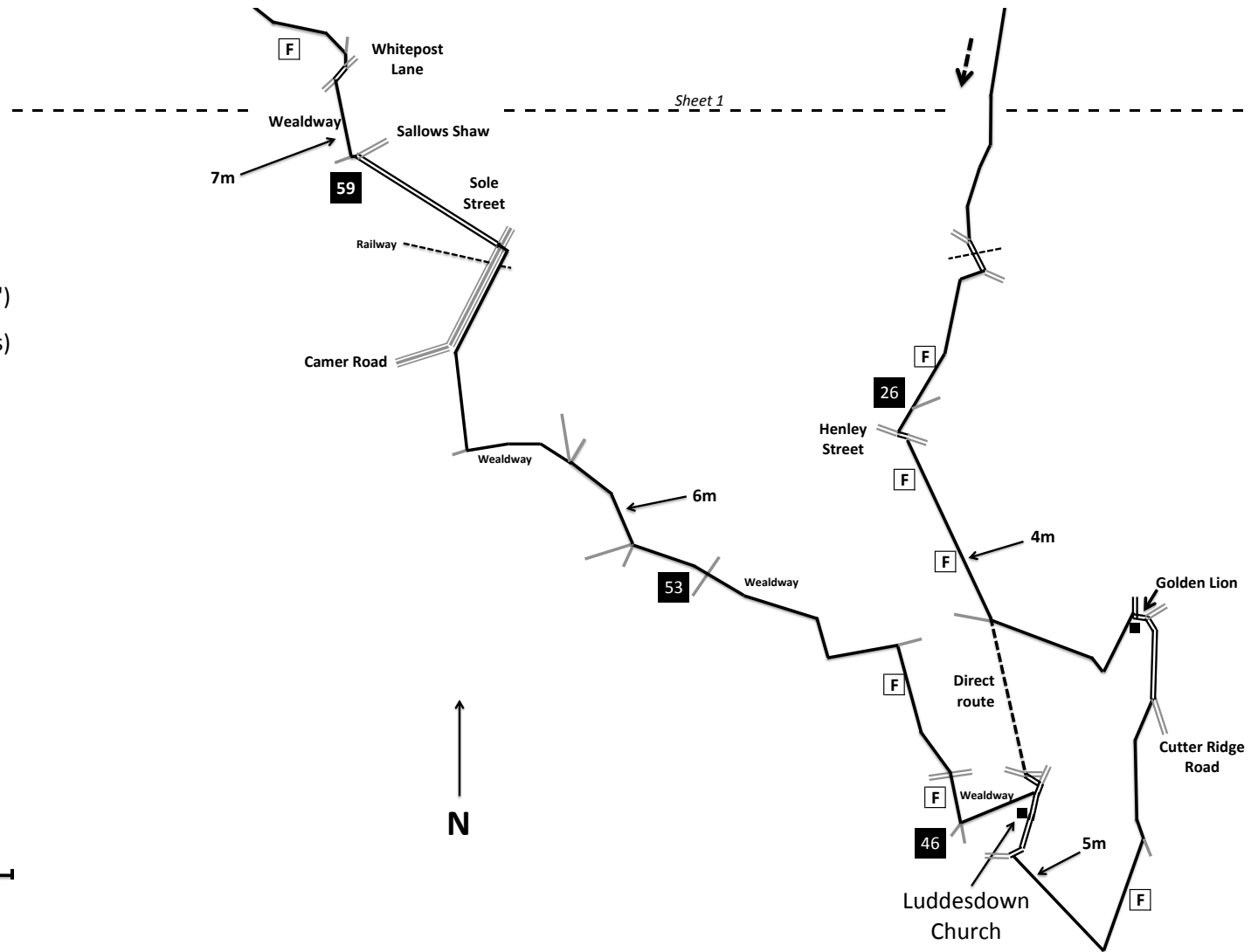
PATHS:

-  On route
-  Adjoining

Scale (approx.):



 Cont. from Sheet 1



IFIELD CIRCUIT - shorter: 9.02 miles

Churches in the shorter circuit:

Istead Rise (start and finish)

Ifield (Direction 9A: Detour - see Appendix)

Cobham (21)

Luddesdown (44)

Associated local circuits

- IF1: Istead Rise – Ifield - Gravesend (South) – Istead Rise
- LH3: Cobham – Nurstead – Ifield - Cobham
- LC1: Cobham – Cuxton - Cobham
- LH2: Meopham - Cobham - Luddesdown - Meopham
- SO1 (to be published April 2018):
Longfield – Southfleet – Istead Rise – New Barn - Longfield

Shorter circuit: Leaving out the Gravesend suburbs which feature in the Full Circuit, this route covers its country stretches: imposing countryside and views around Luddesdown, and then a good stretch of the Wealdway back towards town. (There seems to be no consensus about the spelling of Luddesdown(e) – even in official sources!)

Roads and hindrances:

The A227 needs crossing with care twice, and the main road in Sole Street can be quite busy. There are several other roads, but they are less busy. The barrier at Direction 5 is unkind, and should not extend across the whole width of the path as it does. There are times when parts of the Wealdway section are muddy and can delay progress.

SHORTER CIRCUIT

Istead Rise – Ifield – Cobham – Luddesdown – Istead Rise

Notes taken: June – August 2017. Directions 40-64 revisited March 2018

The start and finish is at Istead Rise Church (DA13 9DA).

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
1		With your back to Istead Rise Church , turn left, uphill, along the road.	634 699	
2	2	Continue ahead along the right-hand pavement, passing the shops over on the left.		

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

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
3	7	After following the road down and up, reach and cross the main road (A227), and turn briefly right along its far side.		
4	8	After a few yards, turn left along a roadway (signposted as a footpath).		
5	9	Go ahead, passing, as best you can, an obstructing barrier which (currently) culpably takes up the whole width.		
6	17	Go straight ahead, ignoring the junctions with the Wealdway (first on the right, then on the left).		0.84
7	19	At the end of the railings merge leftwards into the estate road, keeping to the left of the big corrugated metal building.		
8	20	[Map point] [!!F!!] Just after this building follow a waymark (NU32 - easy to miss) which takes you slightly right through a gate into a scrappy piece of land. Go ahead, keeping just to the right of the buildings, to another similar gate, then slightly to the right into some small trees.	649 700	
9	23	After going through the trees you reach a road. <i>[To visit Ifield Church, now divert instead to the <u>Detour</u> in the Appendix.]</i> Main route: Cross the road to the track immediately opposite - the left-hand of the two alternatives - which sets out initially along the left-hand side of a field (after a slight left-right adjustment). And go straight ahead for about half a mile.		
10	34	Eventually you reach a road, converging simultaneously with the power lines above. Turn right at the road and immediately (after about 20 yds.) left into Jeskyns Country Park.	660 698	
11	36	Next to a bench, turn right along the gravelled track.		1.80
12	37	[Map point] At the first junction take the right fork.		
13	39	Turn left, off the gravelled track, up a grassy path (opposite a path on the right) towards the brow of the hill.	662 695	
14	42	Straight on, as the path becomes gravel again.		
15	48	[Map point] You reach a complex wooden gate. Go through it, cross the main track, and go (slightly rightwards) up along the grass opposite towards a pole.	667 691	
16	52	Go through a wooden gate. Turn right and immediately follow the path leftwards.		
17	53	You meet a metalled road as it turns through a right-angle. Turn right to follow it.	669 688	
18	54	Turn left into Sarsens Close.		
19	55	Just before the end of this cul-de-sac, go left into the car-turning area and follow the narrow passageway out of it, going to the left of no.3 'Ragstones'. This winds right-left-right-left, then goes across a small rough field to a wooden gate.		
20	57	Turn right on to the track which leads, visibly, to the main road. Cross this and turn left along the pavement.		

* "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	58	Reach Cobham Church on the right, climbing the steps and the path towards its main (north) door. Then go along the path around the west (right-hand) end of the church - the one which is a few yards to the right of the church, not the narrower one which follows the church building itself.	669 685	2.89
22	60	Pass a stile on the left, and go straight ahead (ignoring the path on the right).		
23	61	Go ahead through a small metal gate to a track which leads all the way down the right-hand side of a large field.		
24	69	At the corner at the end, go slightly right to join the road. Turn left on to it, go over the railway bridge, and about 40 yds. after it turn right, along a track which leads through a MKG along the left-hand side of a field.		
25	72	At the end of this stretch, go through a metal gate on the left, then through two MKGs. !!F!! After the second of these, go about 30 degrees to the right across the large field, aiming towards a pole - the fourth, and last visible, of a line leading down to houses (and perhaps camouflaged against one of them).		
26	75	[Map point] Go past the pole, and then go ahead down a narrow path between fences.		
27	76	You reach another road. Ignore the waymark directing you to the right along it, but turn left, and after a few yards right, over a stile into the bottom of a field. !!F!! Walk up diagonally to the left, to another stile darkly visible in the upper corner.	666 671	
28	78	Cross this stile and continue along the same line, through a wooden kissing gate at the end of some trees, then out into a large field. !!F!! The line, still more or less the same, leads upwards across this field, aiming somewhat to the left of the highest point of the hill ahead.		
29	84	Just after the path starts to drop, you see a wooden kissing gate immediately ahead. Go through this, and a few trees, to emerge next to a bench commemorating the silver jubilee of the local rights-of-way group. <i>Directions 30-44 involve a hilly loop designed to complete a link in the Spine Route. If this link is not required an easier and more direct route is shown in the Appendix.</i>		
30	85	At the bench, turn left down along the top edge of the field.		4.07
31	89	At the bottom turn left along the track, and after a few yards go through a wooden kissing gate on the right and through to the road.		
32	90	Turn left along the road.		
33	91	At the junction at the Golden Lion, follow the road round to the right.		
34	92	At the next junction turn uphill to the right (signposted 'Great Buckland').		4.38

* **"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
35	95	Just after the end of the steepest bit of the road, as it starts to level off, look out for a hidden footpath sign on the right, and follow it to go along the top left-hand edge of a sloping field, still parallel to the road.	673 665	
36	96	Continue ahead, with fields on both sides.		
37	97	And still ahead, now alongside trees on the right.		
38	100	Ignore the first footpath on the right ...		
39		... but a few yards later do turn right through the gap in the trees. !!!F!!! Beyond them turn half-left to cross the field, up towards the gap visible in the hedge in the middle distance. (Bearing about 200.)	672 662	
40	104	START OF THE SPINE SECTION Cross the stile at the gap, and join the Wealdway by turning sharp right to go steeply down the grassy field alongside the hedge on your right.	671 659	
41	108	Just after the lowest point, go through a wooden kissing gate, and on up ahead.		
42	109	Go through another gate and turn right along the cobbled roadway, following it as it swings gradually to the left.		
43	110	Continue along the roadway, ignoring the turning area on the left.		
44		At the wooden gates, the left-turn leads into the churchyard of Luddesdown Church . But to continue, instead go straight ahead, then briefly follow the road as it forks left.		
45	112	After a few yards turn left up some steps opposite the 'Luddesdown' sign, cross a stile at the top, and go ahead along the left-hand edge of a field, with trees to your left.		5.16
46	115	[Map point] !!!F!!! At the end of these trees turn right and go down towards the stile in the hedge.	668 662	
47	116	Cross the stile, go down steps and cross the road to a path opposite. This leads immediately to another stile, after which you go ahead down the right-hand edge of a field, as waymarked.		
48	120	Go ahead, steeply uphill, among small bushes.		
49	121	!!!F!!! As it becomes slightly less steep, the route goes straight across the field. There may not always be a clear path, but there is a waymark on a post clearly visible at the top. Aim directly for this.		
50	124	Turn left at the waymark, now contouring along the top of the field.		
51	126	Follow the path (and waymark) to the right, up some steps and into trees. Then go through a wooden kissing gate and along the left-hand side of a field, with woods and a fence to the left.		

* **"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
52	128	In the corner at the end, go through the MKG into trees and out again. Here go slightly to the right, keeping alongside trees to the right, with a scrubby field to the left, aiming to go directly under the cables above (which gradually converge, then cross from left to right).		
53	132	[Map point] Straight ahead (waymark NS225 at this point), ignoring paths to right and left.		
54	134	Continue ahead, ignoring the path on the left, then going on to pass houses on the left.	660 668	
55	138	Follow the main path as it begins to swing leftwards, ignoring other paths across the fields to right and left.		
56	141	At the end, faced by trees, do not go into them, but turn right to go alongside them, keeping them on your left (following the Wealdway waymark).		6.37
57	145	At the end, turn right to go alongside the road.		
58	148	Just after the railway bridge, turn left into Manor Road.	657 676	
59	153	[Map point] As the road turns sharply right (Sallows Shaw), instead follow the signpost to the left, and then immediately the waymarked (WW) path turning right.		
60	156	Through a kissing gate, then turn right on to the road. Then, after about 70 yds., turn left - the sharper of the two left turns signposted. Keep to the left of the entrance to Dark Sallows, and go through a wooden kissing gate into a field. !!!F!!! Then down, slightly rightwards, towards a kissing gate in the middle distance.		
61	160	Go through the gate and a little bit of woodland, and out again. Keep more or less straight on, keeping a pleasantly fenced sloping field on the left.		
62	165	Over a stile and cross the road to the path opposite.		7.53
63	169	Turn left with the blue waymark, ignoring the yellow one, and go uphill, ignoring paths to right and left.		
64	174	[Map point] You reach a junction of footpaths. Continue along the Wealdway by turning right as signposted.	642 688	
65	176	As you approach a few houses the path becomes a metalled roadway. Then, just after a French road sign on the right ('Sortie de camions!'), follow the roadway as it swings left.		
66	180	Keeping on the right-hand side of this minor road, reach the A227, cross it, and go through the MKG which is in the angle to the right, between the two roads. !!!F!!! Follow the grassy path towards the trees opposite. (Bearing about 300.)		8.34
67	181	At the trees, go down into them by way of the steps on your left.		
68	182	Swing right at the bottom, alongside the fence on the left.		
69	187	Emerge at the dead end of a cul-de-sac, and walk along it.		
70	188	At the road junction at the end, continue straight on along the right-hand side of Downs Road.		
71	192	Turn right up Upper Avenue, steeply uphill.		
72	194	Pass Biddenden Way on the left.		

* **"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
73	195	END OF THE SPINE SECTION Reach Istead Rise Church on the left, the starting point of the walk.	634 699	9.02

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

APPENDIX to Shorter Circuit

Detour to Ifield Church

9A	To reach Ifield Church , make a detour by turning left along this road. The church is on the right-hand side of the road. On returning to the crossing point, turn left to rejoin the main route (what would have been straight on at Direction 9). Add 8 minutes to subsequent total times and 0.35 miles to cumulative distances.			
----	--	--	--	--

Direct descent to Luddesdown Church

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
30A	0	<i>If Luddesdown Church and the approach to it from the south has been covered by a detour as described in the Luddesdown & Cuxton circuit, or if you are not aiming to cover the whole spine route, the extra distance and hills involved in Directions 30-44 are unnecessary, and the following short cut can be used:</i> Instead of turning left at Direction 30, descend directly across the field, just to the right of a pole, towards the right-hand edge of the cricket ground at the bottom. I found (in December) no sign of a track down the field, but the direction is very clear, and waymarked (NS188).		0.00
30B	3	When you reach the cricket field, go anti-clockwise briefly, then turn right with the path, and go up towards the brick building ahead.		
30C	5	After passing to the right of the building, go through the wooden kissing gate, across the road and half-left, to keep to the right of the grass triangle.		
30D	6	After a few yards rejoin the main route at Direction 45 by turning right up the steps opposite the 'Luddesdown' sign. Subtract 21 minutes from subsequent total times and 0.82 miles from cumulative distances. <i>* But to reach Luddesdown Church from this short cut make a very short detour at this point: go ahead and turn right at the gateway where the cobbled roadway begins. Afterwards retrace your steps and turn left up the steps (before the road junction, opposite the 'Luddesdown' sign).</i> Add 2 minutes to subsequent total times and 0.10 miles to cumulative distances.	670 663	0.27

* ***"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 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!

IFIELD - FULL CIRCUIT	Direction numbers	% of walk
Busy road	2-3, 20b, 57, 70	9
Quiet road \$\$	1, 17-18, 32-34, 42-44, 58, 60a, 65, 69, 71-72	13
Open field with livestock	24a, 41	1
Edge of field with livestock	25, 27, 40	4
Field (or edge) without livestock **	6, 8a, 9-15, 19b, 29-31, 35-39, 45-51, 52b-54a, 55b, 60c, 61b, 64a, 66	40
Path (hedged, or otherwise forced)	4-5, 7, 16, 19a, 20a, 21, 23, 24b, 28b, 54b-55a, 56, 62-63, 64b, 68b	26
Woods	8b, 22, 26, 28a, 52a, 59, 60b, 61a, 67-68a	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 (7) - Details noted in March 2018, but subject to frequent change:

The stiles in Directions **27** and **28** have easy gaps.

Those in **40** and **45** and **the two in 47** all have dog gates, or large gaps where dog gates used to be.

The one in **62** has easy gaps.