

# ROCHESTER SOUTH

FULL CIRCUIT - Sheet 1  
(first and last sections)

88 Direction label (as in the walk notes)

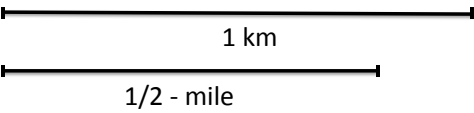
### ROADS:

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

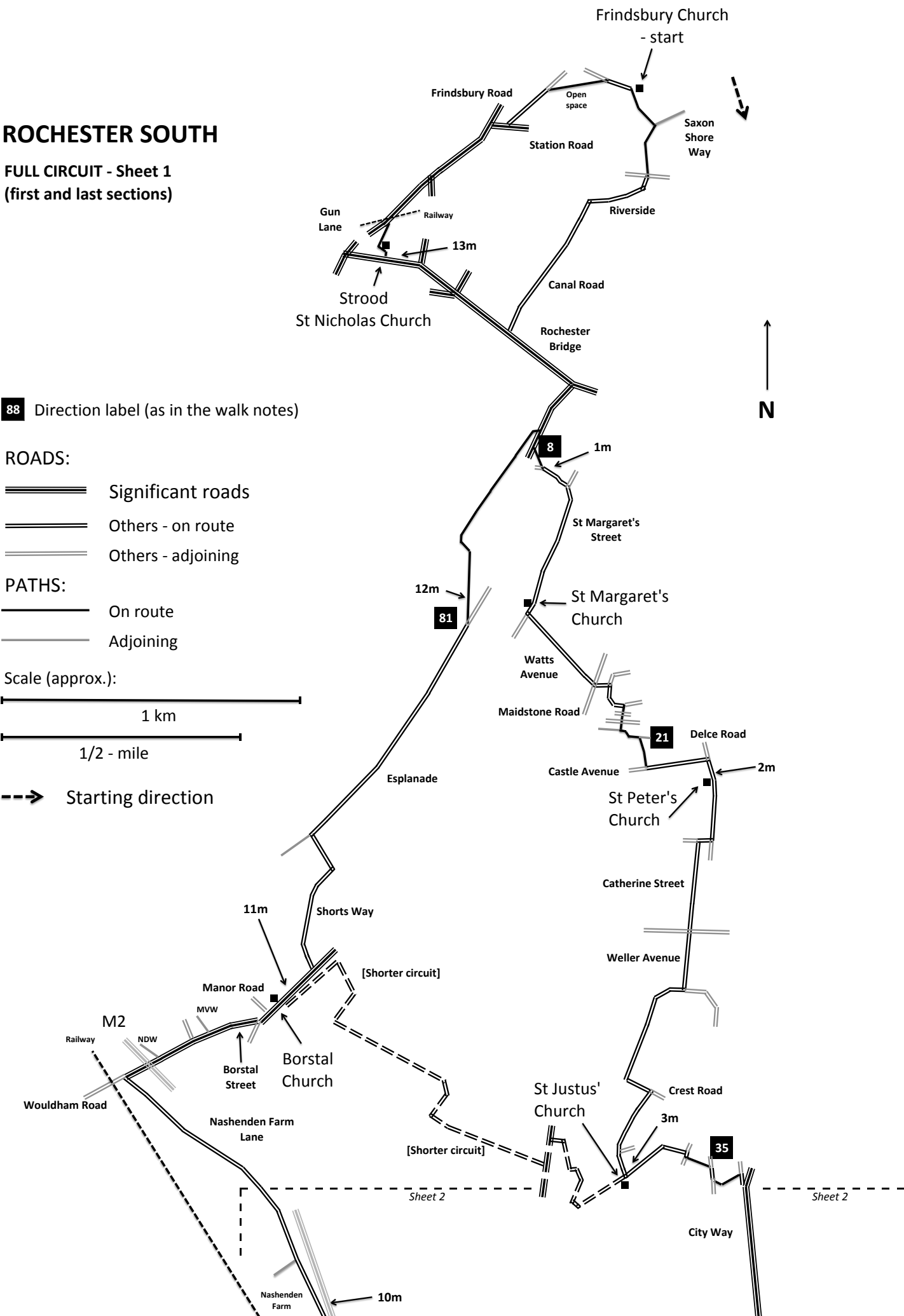
### PATHS:

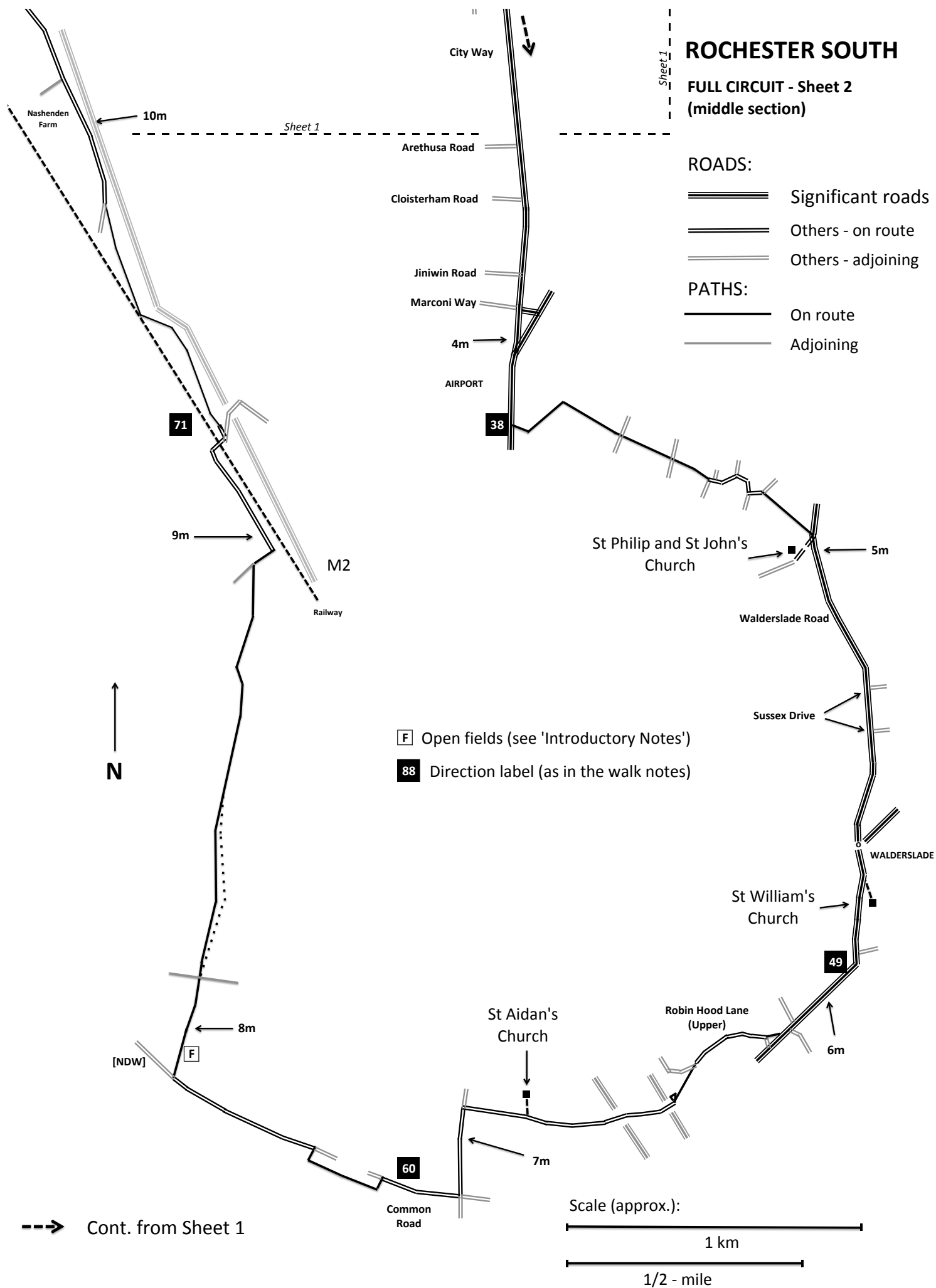
- On route
- Adjoining

Scale (approx.):



Starting direction





## **ROCHESTER SOUTH CIRCUIT - 13.68 miles**

### **Churches in the full circuit:**

Frindsbury (start and finish)

Rochester St Margaret (Direction 13)

Rochester St Peter (24)

Rochester St Justus (33)

Chatham St Philip and St James (47B: Detour 1 - see Appendix)

Walderslade (50B: Detour 2 - see Appendix)

Blue Bell Hill (57)

Borstal (78)

Strood St Nicholas (88)

### **Associated local circuits**

- UP1: Upnor – Frindsbury – Strood – Upnor
- RS1: Rochester – Borstal – Rochester
- CS1 (in preparation – due Autumn 2019): Luton – Chatham – South Rochester – Luton
- RS2: Blue Bell Hill – South Chatham – Lordswood – Walderslade – Blue Bell Hill
- SW2: Borstal – Wouldham – Nashenden – Borstal

**Full circuit:** A long walk, largely urban. There are green interludes, particularly around the stunning view from Blue Bell Hill; and the approach along the Esplanade and the riverside walkway to Rochester is a pleasant follow-up.

### **Roads and hindrances:**

Of the many roads, the crossings of the A229 after City Way and of the Walderslade Village By-pass stand out as needing particular care, though even these are entirely manageable. As urban main roads go, City Way itself is entirely pleasant, and safe, with the walkway set back away from the road.

Rochester Bridge is currently awash with road works, which might temporarily override the detail of the directions given.

The woodland track in Direction 67 can be very muddy, but the worst of it can be avoided by means of the parallel path described.

### **FULL CIRCUIT**

**Frindsbury – Rochester – South Chatham – Walderslade – Blue Bell Hill – Borstal – Rochester – Strood – Frindsbury**

Notes taken: Spring and Summer 2019

The start and finish is at Frindsbury Church (ME2 4UR).

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
1		<b>START OF THE SPINE SECTION</b> From the west door of <b>Frindsbury Church</b> , turn sharp left to go through the churchyard, almost parallel to the church's south side, towards the gate in the far right-hand corner. Then go through the gate, and along the path beyond to the T-junction of paths at the end.	744 698	
2	<b>2</b>	Turn right to join the Saxon Shore Way, dropping steeply down, between fences.		
3	<b>4</b>	Reach the road at the bottom, cross it, and go ahead along Riverside directly opposite, then almost immediately swinging rightwards and then leftwards. <i>Riverside is currently (March 2019) a building site, but will no doubt return to normal in due course. Meanwhile a protected walkway is in place.</i>		
4	<b>10</b>	Continue ahead, passing the end of the link road to Strood station.		
5	<b>13</b>	At the end, turn left to go over Rochester Bridge, following the left-hand pavement all the way across ( <i>if possible in the road works – see note under 'Roads and hindrances' on the first page</i> ).		
6	<b>17</b>	After crossing the river, reaching the first traffic lights on the other side, use them to start road crossings, negotiating a right turn to start you setting off to the right of The Crown and along the Esplanade.		0.83
7	<b>18</b>	Continue ahead, ignoring Castle Hill on the left.		
8	<b>20</b>	[Map point] Carry on up the paved walkway on the left which soon bends to the left, steeply uphill.		
9	<b>21</b>	Merge with the road joining from the right, still uphill.		
10	<b>22</b>	Follow on leftwards at the top of Baker's Walk.		
11		At the junction at the end, turn right, along St Margaret's Street..	742 685	
12	<b>23</b>	Pass the Coopers Arms on the right.		
13	<b>28</b>	Reach the lych-gate, the entrance to <b>St Margaret's Church</b> .		
14	<b>29</b>	Turn left into Watts Avenue.		
15	<b>32</b>	At the end go over the crossing road, and more or less straight ahead along the 'no through road' roadway.		
16	<b>33</b>	At its dead end go ahead along an enclosed walkway.		
17		At the end turn right along the road, following it as it swings to the left.		1.66
18	<b>35</b>	Just before the shops on the right, turn right up the roadway, and, after crossing another one, start up a narrow passageway opposite, passing briefly under the houses.	743 678	
19	<b>36</b>	Cross another road, and continue ahead along a similar alley.		
20		When finally confronted by a wall, turn left to go parallel to the road above.		
21	<b>37</b>	[Map point] Take the first opportunity to turn right up a similar passage.		
22	<b>38</b>	Reaching one more road (Castle Avenue), turn left along it.		
23	<b>41</b>	At the T-junction at the bottom turn right along Delce Road.	746 676	
24	<b>42</b>	Pass the driveway leading to <b>St Peter's Church</b> .		
25	<b>44</b>	Turn right along Cecil Road.		

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

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
26	<b>45</b>	Turn second-left along Catherine Street.		
27	<b>49</b>	At the crossroads continue ahead along Weller Avenue.		
28	<b>51</b>	Turn right, alongside the Co-op, and follow the road as it bends to the left.		2.51
29	<b>53</b>	Marling Way becomes The Tideway. Continue ahead.		
30	<b>56</b>	Turn left into Crest Road, steeply uphill.		
31	<b>57</b>	Turn right up Windward Road.		
32	<b>60</b>	Pass the end of Leeward Road, and continue ahead, uphill.		
33	<b>61</b>	<b>END OF THE SPINE SECTION</b> (although this Full Circuit shares Directions 33 to 35 with the Spine Section in the Chatham South circuit.)  At the junction with the major road (The Fairway), the steps leading to <b>St Justus' Church</b> are over the road and slightly to the right. But to continue the route turn left along The Fairway.		
34	<b>64</b>	Turn right at the bottom, and then, between houses 51 and 53, left up a steeply rising passageway, with an open area soon opening out on the right.	745 663	
35	<b>66</b>	[Map point] Go up steps to a road and turn right. Then after about 20 yds. turn left up more steps.		
36	<b>68</b>	Turn right to go alongside the main road, the A229 (passing the Methodist Church on the right), soon to become City Way.		3.30
37	<b>83</b>	Reaching traffic lights at the corner of a green over on the left, which serves as a major roundabout, continue ahead along the right-hand pavement. When the roads have come together again into one, take the first opportunity to cross, using the central reservation.	748 651	3.95
38	<b>88</b>	[Map point] The route now turns left on a footpath. The point mapped for this turning is currently being built over for a new estate, and the left-turn has been routed, perhaps permanently, a little further on. Go along this signposted pathway, currently skirting the works and winding from side to side.		
39	<b>93</b>	Go ahead through a squeeze barrier and past a children's playground on the left.		
40	<b>94</b>	Reaching a road at the end, cross it and go along a narrow alleyway more or less opposite, up to start with, then steeply down. The surface is poor in places - potentially unkind to ankles.		
41	<b>98</b>	At the bottom cross the road and continue up a similar passage, keeping to the right of the scout hut and its railings, soon going up steps.		
42	<b>101</b>	After some final steps, reach a road and turn half-left along it.		
43	<b>103</b>	After swinging left at the top, at Snodhurst Car Sales, turn right along Harptree Drive.		4.75
44	<b>104</b>	Turn left along Meadside Walk.		
45		And go diagonally across the large playing field towards a point on the main road (Walderslade Road) at the far right-hand corner, next to a bus stop and immediately to the left of an enclosed basketball court.	756 645	
46	<b>107</b>	Reaching that point, turn right along the road.		

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

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
47		<i>[To visit <b>St Philip and St James' Church</b>, now divert instead to <b>Detour 1</b> in the Appendix.]</i>  <b>Main route:</b> Pass King George Road on the right, and continue ahead, crossing when convenient. (You will need to have crossed to its left-hand side eventually, and certainly by the time you reach the second exit of Sussex Drive on the left.)		
48	<b>121</b>	At the roundabout near the bottom of the hill, go around clockwise, and exit straight ahead (signposted for Walderslade Village), and continue along the left-hand side.		5.62
49	<b>123</b>	<b>[Map point]</b> Swing right with the main road, the Walderslade Village By-Pass, still staying on its left-hand pavement for now.		
50	<b>124</b>	<i>[To visit <b>St William's Church</b>, now divert instead to <b>Detour 2</b> in the Appendix.]</i>  <b>Main route:</b> Stay on the left-hand side as the road rises.		
51	<b>128</b>	Cross the road using the long grassy island up above, and swing right along its right-hand side.		
52	<b>135</b>	Continue ahead at the junction.	757 627	
53		A few yards further on, turn away from the major road by forking right along a minor offshoot. Follow this as it bends right and down, and left and up.		
54	<b>141</b>	When the road swings right, near the top, instead go straight ahead (a dead end for traffic).		
55	<b>143</b>	At the end embark on the spiral climb to the footbridge over the road.		6.42
56	<b>145</b>	Emerge at the dead end of a cul-de-sac and go straight ahead along it.		
57	<b>151</b>	Pass the gateway to <b>St Alban's Church (Blue Bell Hill)</b> , on the right.		
58	<b>154</b>	Turn left at the T-junction.		
59	<b>158</b>	Turn right along Common Road.		
60	<b>161</b>	<b>[Map point]</b> Turn left into the Blue Bell Hill car park, to face its magnificent view. Then immediately turn right. (For the next half-mile or so the route now follows the North Downs Way.)		
61	<b>162</b>	Leave the car park, passing the information board, with the view over to the left.		7.27
62	<b>164</b>	Go ahead through a wooden kissing gate, briefly into trees.		
63		At the end of the trees immediately turn right, up a brief, gentle rise. (There is a NDW waymark post, but it is not well positioned for us when coming from this direction!)		
64	<b>165</b>	At the top go through another wooden kissing gate, and turn right for a few yards. Then pass a redundant MKG and turn left along the road.	741 623	

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	Mins.*		OS	Miles
65	<b>172</b>	<p><b>[!!F!!]</b> Soon after the end of the houses on the left, leave the road and the NDW by turning right, past a redundant MKG, along the signposted footpath across the field. The line is slightly to the left of the nearest pole at the edge of the line of trees on the other side. (Bearing 020.)</p> <p><i>The route described here is the shortest way of reaching Nashenden Farm at Direction 74. An <u>alternative</u> is <u>not</u> to turn right at this point, but simply to continue straight ahead and follow the NDW all the way down to Nashenden (and beyond). This alternative would add about a quarter of a mile to an already long route, but it includes another fine view, and the extra time and distance might be seen as a worthwhile choice.</i></p>		
66	<b>174</b>	On the far side go over a footbridge and follow the path as it forks left into trees.		
67	<b>177</b>	At a meeting of paths, the route essentially goes straight ahead, down a little dip at first, and continues along the woodland track, gently downhill. But if it is, as often, excessively muddy, an easier alternative on the right, winding but more or less parallel, presents itself for much of the way to start with (before bending away to the right), avoiding the muddiest section.		8.05
68	<b>196</b>	Meeting a broader track at the bottom, merge right into it.	739 642	
69	<b>197</b>	Turn left to go alongside the railway on a metalled roadway.		8.92
70	<b>202</b>	Cross the railway, after climbing up and swinging right to reach the bridge.		
71	<b>203</b>	<b>[Map point]</b> After the bridge, swing left with the road; then immediately leave it by the unmarked roadway which goes down to the left, over the traffic barrier, to continue alongside the railway.		
72	<b>214</b>	Merge right, into the roadway joining from the pumping station.		9.78
73	<b>216</b>	Continue ahead, passing beside gates.		
74	<b>220</b>	Continue along the road, as the NDW rejoins from the left (now sharing its route with the Medway Valley Walk).	733 659	
75	<b>230</b>	At the T-junction at the end turn right to go under the motorway bridges, and go on ahead up into Borstal.		10.61
76	<b>231</b>	Continue ahead along the road (parting from the NDW as it disappears on the left by a gate). Cross when convenient.		
77	<b>234</b>	And still ahead, now in turn losing the MVW on the left.		
78	<b>236</b>	Reach Manor Road, with <b>Borstal Church</b> just beyond it on the left.		
79	<b>239</b>	Turn left down Shorts Way.		
80	<b>243</b>	Swing right at the bottom and follow the footway, winding at first, and then following the river along the Esplanade.		11.20
81	<b>256</b>	<b>[Map point]</b> Stay alongside the river as the path forks left, away from the road. After the end of the houses, follow it as it bends to the right and soon goes alongside an open space.		11.90
82	<b>262</b>	Continue ahead past a children's playground. Then edge rightwards across the grass to rejoin the Esplanade, merging with it at the corner, level with the entrance to the pier.		

\* **"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
83	<b>265</b>	On meeting the Esplanade, go along it to the end of the bridge.		
84	<b>268</b>	Keep on the left crossing the bridge ( <i>if possible in the road works – see note under ‘Roads and hindrances’ on the first page</i> ). Then cross the road after the end of it.		
85	<b>272</b>	Now on the right of the main road, continue straight ahead at the junction with Canal Road.		12.66
86	<b>274</b>	Cross Station Road and continue ahead along the right-hand side, ignoring the road forking left.		
87	<b>276</b>	At the next junction go ahead along the right-hand side of the road which goes almost straight ahead (or slightly left).		
88	<b>278</b>	Turn right up the steps leading to the south door of <b>St Nicholas’ Church</b> , and reaching it turn left at first to go around the building.		
89	<b>279</b>	Beyond the building continue along the path, with the grass on your right.		
90	<b>280</b>	Reach the road (A228) at the top left-hand corner, and turn right to walk alongside it, crossing as soon as possible.	735 694	
91	<b>286</b>	At the major junction, turn right along Station Road. This is probably best achieved by continuing an extra few yards up the left of the A228 to use the lights, then returning to the junction to turn left and go down the left of Station Road.		13.34
92	<b>287</b>	Turn left up Banks Road, staying on its left, for the moment.		
93	<b>289</b>	After the junction opposite with Commissioners Road, cross Banks Road and look out for a gap in the fence on your right, about 60 yds. along.		
94	<b>290</b>	Go through the gap and set out diagonally to the right up across the open space to meet the roadway at the top, beside a children’s playground.		
95	<b>293</b>	At the top, turn right along the road.		
96	<b>295</b>	After going through a gate at the end, reach the west door of <b>Frindsbury Church</b> , the starting point of the walk.	744 698	13.68

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

## **APPENDIX to Full Circuit**

### **Detour to Chatham - St Philip and St James’ Church (Detour 1)**

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
47A	<b>0</b>	To reach St Philip and St James’ Church, instead of Direction 47 turn right along King George Road.		0.00
47B	<b>1</b>	Reach the entranceway to the <b>St Philip and St James’ Church</b> . Then retrace your steps to Walderslade Road.		0.05
47C	<b>2</b>	Rejoin the main route, by turning right along Walderslade Road.  <b>Add 2 minutes to subsequent total times and 0.10 miles to cumulative distances.</b>		0.10

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



## Detour to South Chatham (Walderslade) - St William's Church (Detour 2)

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
50A		To reach St William's Church, instead of Direction 51 leave the road at the first lamp-post, through a gap in the trees, unpromising at first.		0.00
50B	<b>1</b>	After the trees, reach <b>St William's Church (Walderslade)</b> , and adjoining coffee bar, which appear on the right. Then retrace your steps to the main road.		0.06
50C	<b>2</b>	Rejoin the main route by turning left and continuing uphill. <b>Add 2 minutes to subsequent total times and 0.12 miles to cumulative distances.</b>		0.12

\* ***"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!

<b>ROCHESTER SOUTH - FULL CIRCUIT</b>	<b>Direction numbers</b>	<b>% of walk</b>
Busy road	5-7, 10-13, 23-24, 33-34a, 36-37, 46-52, 75-80, 83-87, 90-93	40
Quiet road \$\$	3-4, 9, 14-15, 17-18a, 22, 25-32, 35a, 42-44, 53-54, 56-59, 64b, 68-71a, 72-74, 95a	32
Open field with livestock		0
Edge of field with livestock		0
Field (or edge) without livestock **	34c, 38a, 39, 45, 61, 63, 65, 71c, 81b-82, 89, 94	9
Path (hedged, or otherwise forced)	1-2, 8, 16, 18b-21, 34b, 34d, 35b, 38b, 40-41, 55, 60, 64a, 71b, 81a, 88	12
Woods	62, 66-67, 95b	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:** There are currently no stiles on this walk.