

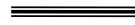


GILLINGHAM SOUTH

SHORTER CIRCUIT



F Open fields (see 'Introductory Notes')

88 Direction label (as in the walk notes)

ROADS:

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

PATHS:

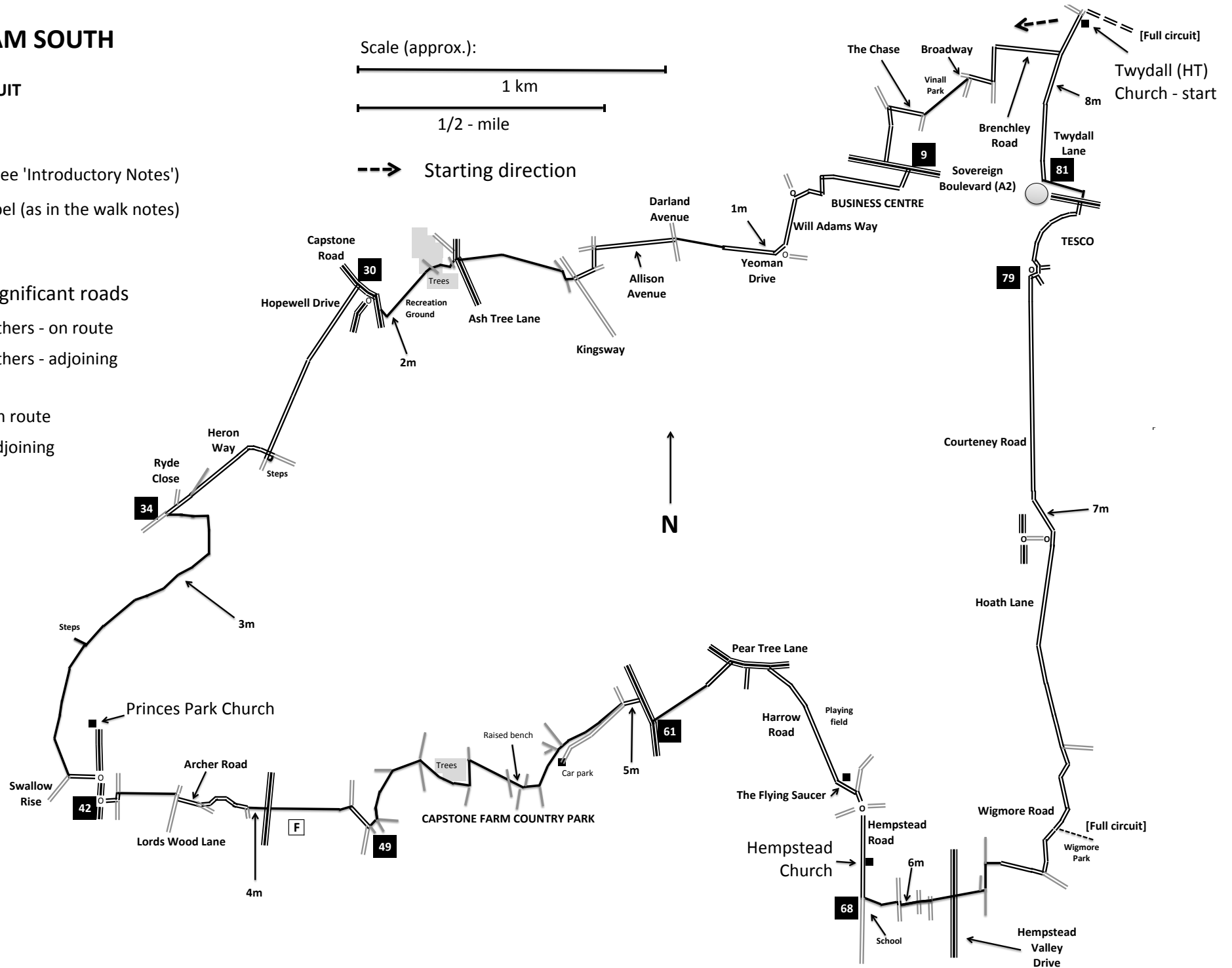
-  On route
-  Adjoining

Scale (approx.):

1 km

1/2 - mile

 Starting direction



GILLINGHAM SOUTH CIRCUIT - shorter: 8.23 miles

Churches in the shorter circuit:

Twydall - Holy Trinity (start and finish)

Princes Park (Direction 41B: Detour - see Appendix)

Hempstead (67)

Associated local circuits

- GS2: Parkwood – Rainham – Twydall – Wigmore – Parkwood
- MN1: Chatham – Gillingham – Darland Banks – Luton – Chatham
- CS2: Luton – Darland Banks – Hempstead – Capstone Farm CP – Princes Park – Luton
- GS1: Hempstead – Wigmore – Parkwood – Bredhurst – Hempstead

Shorter circuit: This walk is airily suburban for the most part, but punctuated by the delights of Darland Banks and later a fleeting glimpse of open countryside followed by the Capstone Farm Country Park.

Roads and hindrances:

The busier roads are well supplied with lights or islands. The roads and roundabouts around Princes Park (Directions 41B and 42) should command particular respect.

The climb up from Emily Way (43) is steep, but relatively short.

SHORTER CIRCUIT

Twydall – Darland Banks – Princes Park – Capstone CP – Hempstead – Twydall

Notes taken: December 2019

The start and finish is at Holy Trinity Church, Twydall (ME8 6JX).

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
1		From the entrance path to <u>Holy Trinity Church</u> , turn left (along Twydall Lane).	798 671	
2	2	Turn right along Brenchley Road.		
3	4	At the T-junction at the end, turn left.		
4	6	Turn right into Broadway.		
5	7	Turn half-left across the grass as Vinall Park opens out on the left. Aim at its diagonally opposite corner, where a blue and white notice board is visible.		
6	9	At the corner turn half-right along The Chase.		
7	11	At the end turn left along Featherby Road.		
8	14	Reaching the A2, go across to the right to use the light-controlled crossing. Once across, turn left along the far side.		

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

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
9	15	[Map point] Leave the A2 by turning right, between barriers, along a dual-use track.		
10	16	Follow the track as it turns right and goes up the slope towards the Business Centre car park.		
11	17	At the top go ahead along the right-hand edge of the car park, eventually swinging left, then right, with the roadway.		
12	19	Cross to the left-hand side before the roundabout.		
13	20	At the roundabout swing left with the road, and when convenient cross to its right-hand side.		0.99
14	23	Alongside the next roundabout at the end, turn right, along Academy Drive.	789 663	
15	24	Continue ahead on Yeoman Drive, alongside the big sports ground on the right.		
16	26	Still go ahead alongside the sports ground as the road bends away to the left, now along a narrow passageway.		
17	27	At the end of the passageway cross the road and go ahead along the left-hand pavement of Allison Avenue opposite.		
18	31	Turn left into Preston Avenue and cross when convenient.		
19	32	At the end turn right.		
20		Cross Kingsway and opposite, between a bin and the 'Kingsway' sign, find steps, and go down them.		
21	33	At the bottom, reach an information board, and go briefly right, past a bench. Then a few yards further on follow the track on the left, steeply downhill. Ignore all tracks to left and right and always follow the main path all the way down to the road.		1.61
22	39	Cross the road and, directly opposite, go, among the trees, leftwards down a few steps and then briefly right.		
23		After a few yards emerge into an open grassy area. Go down across it to the trees below, slightly to the right, to find a narrow path heading down into the trees.		
24	40	Follow this winding path, ignoring, after a few yards, a left fork.		
25		Reach a wider crossing path, and continue ahead beyond it. <i>(The next few yards go steeply downhill. If underfoot conditions, or just the steepness itself, make this direct route seem unwise, detour a little to the left along the crossing path to find a gentler descent.)</i>		
26	41	At the bottom, emerge at the corner of a large open space and continue ahead along its right-hand side.	777 662	
27	44	At the far end, use the gently rising walkway to go rightwards up towards the main road.		
28		Reach the road, opposite house no. 72 (Hillview), and continue along its right-hand side, crossing Capstone Green at the roundabout.		
29	45	After the roundabout cross to the left-hand side without delay.		
30	46	[Map point] Turn left along Hopewell Drive.		
31	52	Continue ahead between the barriers.		
32	53	Go past more barriers and under the bridge.	772 657	
33	54	After the bridge double back on yourself to the left and go up the steps, turning left at the top to go over it, staying on the left-hand pavement as the road swings left, uphill.		2.54

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	Mins.*		OS	Miles
34	61	[Map point] Just after passing the end of Ryde Close opposite, turn left away from the road on the signposted footpath (RC36), going down steps to start with.		
35	63	Follow the tarmac path as it swings to the right (ignoring the left-turn).		
36		And swing slightly right again.		
37	64	Take the right fork, slightly uphill.		
38	71	START OF THE SPINE SECTION Where the steps come down from the right, continue ahead.	766 651	
39	74	Ignore the narrow path leading down to the left. <i>[It would be possible, and indeed it is tempting, to use it as a short cut down to Princes Park Church and its surroundings, but even in the dry it is too steep to recommend!]</i>		
40	76	At the end turn left alongside the road.		3.53
41	77	<i>[To visit Princes Park Church, now divert instead to the Detour in the Appendix.]</i> Main route: After crossing the road when convenient, reach the roundabout at the bottom and turn right along the main road.		
42	78	[Map point] After a second roundabout, use the lights to cross the main road on the left, and continue briefly up Wren Way opposite.		
43	79	At the top look across the crossing road (Emily Way) and slightly to the left, to find the start of the steep uphill footpath ('to Lordswood Lane, RC9A'). Set off up this path.		
44	84	After two squeeze gates reach a crossing road, and continue up Archer Road, almost opposite (slightly to the right).		
45	86	Turn left on to Stanley Road, and swing right with it.		
46	88	When the roadway bends right again, instead go straight ahead along a pathway leading towards a main road.		
47	89	[!F!] Go down steps to reach the road, cross it by way of the island, then go up steps beyond. Maintain the same direction along the field path ahead, aiming at the left-hand edge of the further row of trees in the middle distance. On reaching them, continue down the right-hand edge of the very big field.		
48	94	After carefully negotiating a steep step down to the road, turn right along it.		
49	95	[Map point] Just around the bend look out for a gap on the left with two footpaths signposted to lead away from the road: one only slightly left, uphill; the other (RC6) sharp left after a few yards up through the undergrowth. This second is the one to take. After about 40 yds. along the bottom of a field it leads to a squeeze gate in the corner.		
50		Go through the squeeze gate into the Capstone Farm Country Park, and a few yards later go leftwards along the bottom of a new field.		4.27
51	98	After following this path along the field-edge through its gentle rightward curve, go into trees.		

* **"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	99	Meet a fenced-off crossing track, and go directly across it and along another path opposite.	777 647	
53	100	After about 40 yds. turn half-right, going alongside more trees, so that they are now on your left, bending gently left alongside them.		
54	102	At the bottom, just after a bench (and a waymark not to be followed) turn left along a path into a wooded avenue.		
55	103	At the end of the trees, swing right to go up along the left-hand edge of a large field.		
56	107	Near the top, once again meet a fenced-off crossing track and go directly across it, and on along the left-hand side of a grassy area, sweeping gradually to the left.		
57	109	At the end, just before the fence, merge leftwards into the path alongside it. Keep with this path, ignoring the right-turn into the car park and three tracks joining from the left.	781 647	
58	110	Still following the main path, slightly right at first, go down parallel to the roadway on your right.		
59	113	Reaching the road at the bottom, opposite an information board, join the road to go straight down, keeping the information board on your left.		4.98
60	114	END OF THE SPINE SECTION Turn right along the road.		
61	115	[Map point] At the start of the road's right-hand bend, leave it by turning left up the signposted footpath, which soon goes steeply uphill.		
62	120	Go between the barriers at the top, and straight on ahead along the metalled driveway..		
63	122	Reaching the main road, turn right along it, staying on its right-hand side and crossing the end of Dukes Meadow Drive.		
64	123	About 100 yds. further on, turn right along the rough Harrow Road.		
65	129	At the end, alongside the Flying Saucer, merge right into a major road, with a small row of shops on your right.	791 646	
66	130	Continue ahead, crossing (the other end of!) Dukes Meadow Drive.		
67	133	Pass Hempstead Church , on the left.		5.84
68	134	[Map point] Just beyond house no.193, turn left along the footpath, passing the school on your right.		
69	136	Reach a road and cross it, and continue in much the same direction, on a path starting downhill about 20 yds. to the right.		
70	137	Cross a second road and continue downhill directly opposite, all the way to the main road at the bottom, ignoring the crossing driveway in between.		
71	138	Use the zebra crossing and go straight ahead up a similar path, ignoring the dead end of a cul-de-sac on the right.		
72	140	Pass a squeeze gate, turn left, and go ahead on the level path to pass between barriers.		
73	141	Turn right along a road which goes ahead over a bridge.		
74	144	Beyond the bridge turn left into Wigmore Road, crossing when convenient to its right-hand side.		

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	Mins.*		OS	Miles
75	146	Continue ahead past the park entrance, and swing leftwards with the road.		
76	150	Continue ahead, crossing Woodside, at the corner by the Spyglass and Kettle,		
77	152	Continue ahead, crossing Swain Road.		6.73
78	158	Continue ahead (now on Courteney Road) past the roundabout, and the past the Delphi Technologies premises on the right.	797 654	
79	169	[Map point] Go anti-clockwise round the next roundabout, crossing the access roads to the garden centre and to Tesco's. Then continue along Courteney Road, again on the right-hand pavement, in the original direction.		7.58
80	172	Approaching the A2, start on an anti-clockwise course around the major roundabout, starting with the crossing of another Tesco access road, and making use of the pedestrian crossings on offer.		
81	173	[Map point] Eventually, having completed the crossing of the A2, turn left briefly as far as the nearby junction, and then right to start along Twydall Lane.		
82	180	Opposite Staplehurst Road, reach, on the right, the entrance to Holy Trinity Church , the starting point of the walk.	798 671	8.23

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

APPENDIX to Shorter Circuit

Detour to Princes Park Church

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
41A		To reach Princes Park Church, do not cross the road at Direction 41, but carry on down the left-hand side and turn left at the roundabout at the bottom instead of right. Stay on the left-hand side of the main road.		0.00
41B	2	Cross the side road and find <u>Princes Park Church</u> over on the left. After visiting the church, retrace your steps towards the roundabout, crossing the main road to the left-hand side when convenient, and before reaching the roundabout (using the footbridge if necessary).		0.10
41C	4	Pass the roundabout and continue ahead to a second one.		
41D	5	Rejoin the main route by turning left up Wren Way, as at Direction 42. Add 4 minutes to subsequent total times and 0.20 miles to cumulative distances.		0.25

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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!

GILLINGHAM SOUTH - SHORTER CIRCUIT	Direction numbers	% of walk
Busy road	1, 7-8, 11-13, 28-30, 33b, 40-42, 60, 63, 65-67, 74-81	44
Quiet road \$\$	2-4, 6, 14-15, 17-19, 44-45, 48, 59, 62, 64a, 64c, 73	17
Open field with livestock		0
Edge of field with livestock		0
Field (or edge) without livestock **	5, 23, 26-27, 34b-37a, 47a, 49-50, 53, 55, 56b, 64b	14
Path (hedged, or otherwise forced)	9-10, 16, 20-21a, 31-33a 34a, 37b-39, 43, 46, 47b, 61, 68-72	20
Woods	21b-22, 24-25, 51-52, 54, 56a, 57-58	5

** 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.