

Price
£2.00

NORTH DOWNS WAY

DOWN LINK

SOUTH DOWNS WAY

A Six Stage Route Guide



**A 59 kilometre (37 mile) level waymarked route, open to
walkers, horse riders and cyclists**

managed by

**West Sussex and Surrey County Councils and
Waverley Borough Council**



How to use this guide

This route guide has been produced to provide walks or rides of between six and eleven kilometres (four to seven miles) accessible by public transport or car. The trail can be completed in stages or as a weekend walk or a full day's ride. Information on how to get to each start point is noted and Ordnance Survey (O.S.) map references are quoted. Take O.S. maps with you. Points of interest and refreshment stops are mentioned. Allow time to enjoy the countryside and visit the nature reserves, villages and country towns along the way.

Travelling by Public Transport




The telephone numbers for the rail and various bus companies are listed. Services, routes and operators can change. Be sure to plan outward and return journeys before you set off.

Parking

Where possible please use public car parks. Take care not to block drives, or access to farms or fields.

Accommodation

Some B&B accommodation is listed in this guide, but please check availability before you set off. Contact the local Tourist Information Centre for further details.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT	
Traveline (for all public transport enquiries)	0870 6082608
All Rail Enquiries	Telephone No. 0845 7484950
Bus Companies	Telephone No.
Brighton & Hove	01273 886200
Arriva Buses	01483 505693
Stagecoach/Coastline	0845 1210170
MAP INFORMATION	
†	Church
PH	Public House
	Public Telephone
WC	Public Toilets
	Parking
	Railway Station

 **01403 732561**

BIKE HIRE

ON THE

DOWNSLINK

NR. SOUTHWATER COUNTRY PARK

**UNIT 24, STATION ROAD, SOUTHWATER,
HORSHAM, WEST SUSSEX RH13 7UD**

www.southwatercycles.co.uk

Camping

Sites nearest the Downs Link include:

- Raylands Park, Jackrells Lane, Southwater. 01403 730218
www.roundstonecaravans.com
- The White House, Newham Lane, Steyning. 01903 813737

To camp on land not listed as an official camping site requires the permission of the landowner.

WSCC is grateful to all establishments who have given their support to the production of the Downs Link Route Guide.

West Sussex and Surrey County Councils and Waverley Borough Council accept no responsibility for the accuracy of information about facilities, goods or services advertised in this leaflet.

If you would like a copy of this publication in another format (audio, Braille, large print, another language) please contact the Communications Officer, Environment and Development, West Sussex County Council, The Grange, Tower Street, Chichester, West Sussex PO19 1RH
 Telephone 01243 777544 or email env.dev@westsussex.gov.uk

NORTH DOWNS WAY

DOWNS LINK

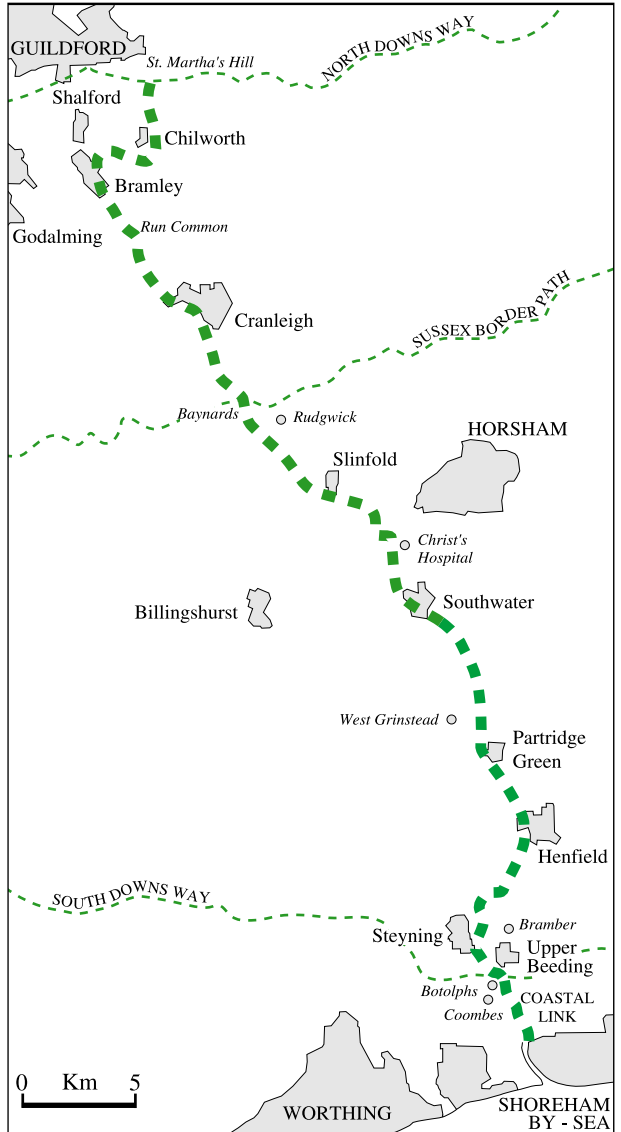
SOUTH DOWNS WAY

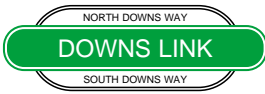
The Downs Link footpath and bridleway links the North Downs Way at St Martha's Hill, Surrey with the South Downs Way near Steyning, West Sussex and on via the Coastal Link to Shoreham-by-Sea.

Most of the 59 kilometre (37 mile) trail follows former railway lines.

The Downs Link

- Offers short or long walks and rides combining Weald and Downland scenery.
- Makes a good introduction to long distance walking over a weekend or to a full day's ride.
- Is easily accessed, and the route is waymarked.
- Provides an invaluable green corridor – a nature reserve for people and wildlife alike.





Maps and Distances

Ordnance Survey Maps

These maps are recommended and the following cover The Downs Link area.

Landranger Series 1:50 000 2 cm to 1 km (approx. 1/4 inches to 1 mile)

Sheet Numbers: 186, 187, 198

Explorer Series 1:25 000 4 cm to 1 km (2½ inches to 1 mile)

Sheet Numbers: 122, 134, 145

Conversion 1 kilometre = 0.63 mile 1 mile = 1.6 kilometre

K I L O M E T R E S	St. Martha's	Chinthurst Hill	Bramley	Run Common	Cranleigh	Baynards	Rudgwick	Slinfold	Christ's Hospital	Southwater	Copsale	West Grinstead	Partridge Green	Henfield	Bramber	Botolphs	Shoreham
St. Martha's		4.6	6.6	10.4	14.4	19.2	21.1	24.8	29.9	33.1	34.6	37.3	40.8	44.5	52.2	53.6	58.7
Chinthurst Hill	4.6		2.0	5.8	9.8	14.6	16.5	20.2	25.3	28.5	50.0	32.7	36.2	39.9	47.6	49.0	54.1
Bramley	6.6	2.0		3.8	7.8	12.6	14.5	18.2	23.3	26.5	28.0	30.7	34.2	37.9	45.6	47.0	52.1
Run Common	10.4	5.8	3.8		4.0	8.8	10.7	14.4	19.5	22.7	24.2	26.9	30.4	34.1	41.8	43.2	48.3
Cranleigh	14.4	9.8	7.8	4.0		4.8	6.7	10.4	15.5	18.7	20.2	22.9	26.4	30.1	37.8	39.2	44.3
Baynards	19.2	14.6	12.6	8.8	4.8		1.9	5.6	10.7	13.9	15.4	18.1	21.6	25.3	33.0	34.4	39.5
Rudgwick	21.1	16.5	14.5	10.7	6.7	1.9		3.7	8.8	12.0	13.5	16.2	19.7	23.4	31.1	32.5	37.6
Slinfold	24.8	20.2	18.2	14.4	10.4	5.6	3.7		5.1	8.3	9.8	12.5	16.0	19.7	27.4	28.8	33.9
Christ's Hospital	29.9	25.3	23.3	19.5	15.5	10.7	8.8	5.1		3.2	4.7	7.4	10.9	14.6	22.3	23.7	28.8
Southwater	33.1	28.5	26.5	22.7	18.7	13.9	12.0	8.3	3.2		1.5	4.2	7.7	11.4	19.1	20.5	25.6
Copsale	34.6	30.0	28.0	24.2	20.2	15.4	13.5	9.8	4.7	1.5		2.7	6.2	9.9	17.6	19.0	24.1
West Grinstead	37.3	32.7	30.7	26.9	22.9	18.1	16.2	12.5	7.4	4.2	2.7		3.5	7.2	14.9	16.3	21.4
Partridge Green	40.8	36.2	34.2	30.4	26.4	21.6	19.7	16.0	10.9	7.7	6.2	3.5		3.7	11.4	12.8	17.9
Henfield	44.5	39.9	37.9	34.1	30.1	25.3	23.4	19.7	14.6	11.4	9.9	7.2	3.7		7.7	9.1	14.2
Bramber	52.2	47.6	45.6	41.8	37.8	33.0	31.1	27.4	22.3	19.1	17.6	14.9	11.4	7.7		1.4	6.5
Botolphs	53.6	49.0	47.0	43.2	39.2	34.4	32.5	28.8	23.7	20.5	19.0	16.3	12.8	9.1	1.4		5.1
Shoreham	58.7	54.1	52.1	48.3	44.3	39.5	37.6	33.9	28.8	25.6	24.1	21.4	17.9	14.2	6.5	5.1	

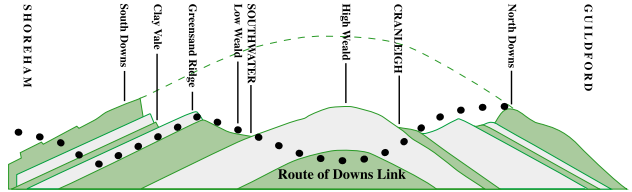
For further information about the Downs Link, the countryside, or how to become a Volunteer Ranger please contact:

- Surrey County Council, County Hall, Penryhn Road, Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey KT1 2DN
Tel: 08456 009 009 (general number)
- Waverley Borough Council, The Bursys, Godalming, Surrey GU7 1HR
Tel: 01483 523394
- Environment and Development, West Sussex County Council, The Grange, Tower Street, Chichester, West Sussex PO19 1RH
Tel: 01243 777610
- WSCC Low Weald Countryside Rangers, Station House, Cowfold Road, West Grinstead, RH13 8LU
Tel: 01403 864001

The Wealden Landscape

The Weald landscape took shape between 30 and 20 million years ago when the great Wealden dome rose above the sea. Gradually the centre of the dome was eroded to create a basin, with the North and South Downs facing each other across the Weald. Several different layers of rock are exposed in the Weald and as the trail crosses different soil types so the scenery changes.

The northern start point, St. Martha's Hill, shows the acid sandy soils of the greensand ridge. The woodland here is typically dominated by oak with holly, hawthorn, hazel and bluebells in spring.



A few miles to the south the sand and clay of the Wealden basin supports ash and oak and hawthorn hedges. Crossing the River Tillingbourne near Chilworth the soil is very marshy in places but well wooded with alder, willow and poplars. On leaving Chilworth the land rises gently with the Downs Link skirting the acid sandy soil of the Blackheath area, where heather and gorse compete with birch, oak and pine.

From the county border to Slinfold the trail crosses the Low Weald clays, interleaved in places with beds of hard sandstone known as 'Horsham Slab', much used for roofing in days gone by. The heavy clay soil supports woodland favoured by birds such as green, great spotted and lesser spotted woodpeckers, with many species of warbler using the scrubby undergrowth.

Between Henfield village and the small country town of Steyning, the route enters the River Adur flood plain. These communities sit on low bluffs of upper greensand. The river cuts through the South Downs at Botolphs. Arable fields and grasslands are surrounded by 'rifes' or drainage ditches.



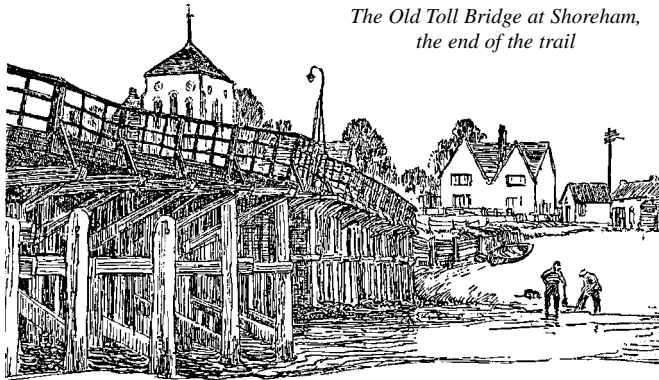
The trail now joins the Coastal Link to Shoreham-by-Sea. Until the 14th century the surrounding meadowlands formed the estuary of the River Adur. Today these provide habitat for a wide variety of flora and fauna. The waters rise and fall with the tides, from 0.4 metres mid lunar cycle to as much as 6.7 metres with spring tides, providing rich feeding grounds for birds, mammals and insects.

The Downs Link

The Downs Link bridleway was established in 1984 to link the North Downs Way and South Downs Way National Trails. As a bridleway it is available to walkers, horse riders and cyclists. Cyclists must give way to walkers and horse riders.

In 1995 the 5 kilometre Coastal Link from Botolphs near Steyning to Shoreham-by-Sea was completed, linking the 59 kilometre trail to the seaside communities.

The trail crosses the Low Weald and mostly follows two former railway lines. Much of this track is owned by West Sussex and Surrey County Councils and Waverley Borough Council who jointly manage the Downs Link.

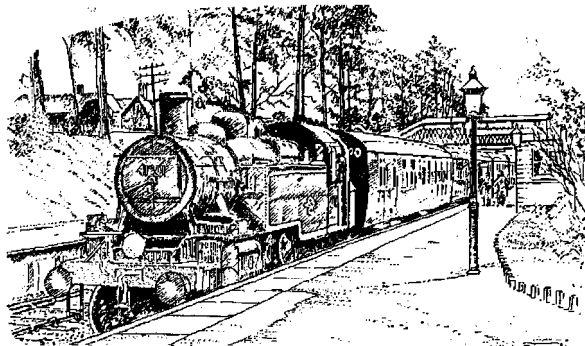


*The Old Toll Bridge at Shoreham,
the end of the trail*

The Hundred Years Railway

The railway was built in two sections. The northern part, built in 1865 by the Horsham and Guildford Direct Railway Company, went from Guildford to Christ's Hospital. The earlier line built in 1861 by the London Brighton South Coast Railway ran between Itchingfield Junction, near Christ's Hospital, and Shoreham-by-Sea on the Sussex Coast. Both connected at Christ's Hospital with the Mid Sussex Line to Pulborough, which is still in service.

The railways served the local communities and industries, like the Southwater brickworks, but were not profitable. Even the Rambler's excursions to the countryside during the 1950's and early 60's were not enough to save the lines from the 1966 railway closures. A small section of the track remained operational until 1981 used by the Blue Circle for bulk movements of cement to Shoreham harbour.



A Train at West Grinstead Station 1961



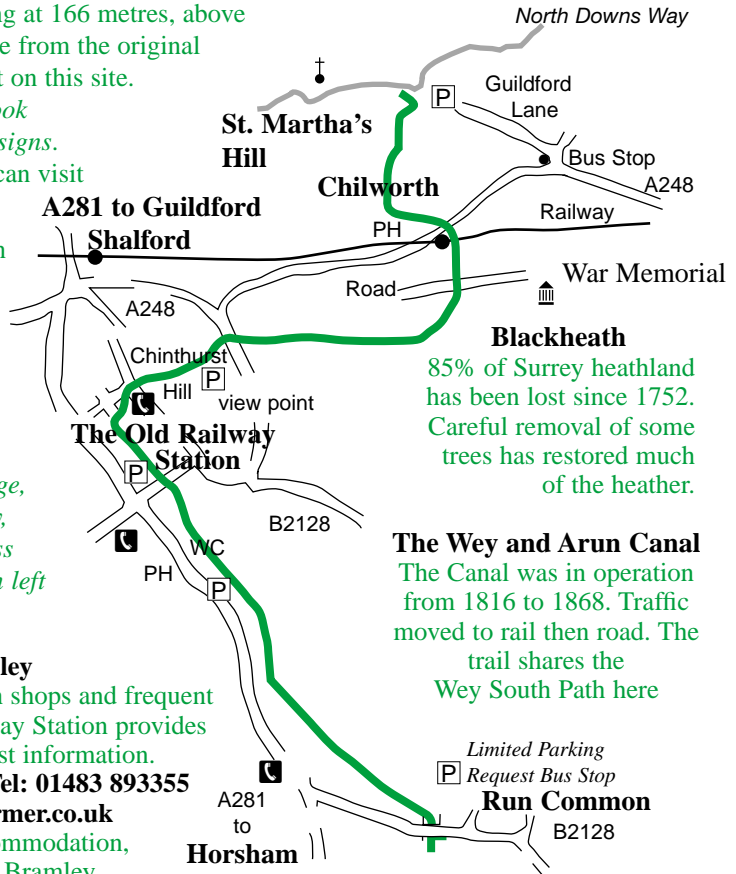
Downs Link – Stage 1

St Martha's Hill – Bramley – Run Common 10.5km (6.5 miles)

St. Martha's Hill standing at 166 metres, above Guildford, takes its name from the original Norman Parish Church built on this site. Many paths cross here so look closely for the Downs Link signs. At Chinthurst Hill walkers can visit the viewpoint tower.

In Tannery Lane the modern road bridge was built over the railway, on top of a bridge which crossed the Wey and Arun Canal. The Downs Link joins the old railway line here.

Just before this double bridge, turn left on to the bridleway, and immediately right across the lower bridge. Then turn left alongside the canal.



Blackheath
85% of Surrey heathland has been lost since 1752. Careful removal of some trees has restored much of the heather.

The Wey and Arun Canal
The Canal was in operation from 1816 to 1868. Traffic moved to rail then road. The trail shares the Wey South Path here

Bramley
A pleasant village with shops and frequent buses. The Old Railway Station provides parking and tourist information.
The Jolly Farmer Tel: 01483 893355
www.jollyfarmer.co.uk
Food and Accommodation,
High Street, Bramley.

Downs Linkers & group bookings welcome.
Good accommodation with famous large breakfasts.

Go under the bridge, take the path to the left which leads to the lay-by.

Getting Started

BY TRAIN – The nearest railway station to St Martha's is Chilworth

BY BUS – *Arriva* bus from Guildford or Cranleigh to Chilworth. Get off at the stop after the Railway Station. Continue along the road for 360 metres. Turn left into Guildford Lane.

St. Martha's lies about 1.5 kilometres from the bus stop.

BY CAR – From Guildford or Horsham follow the A281 to Shalford then follow the A248. Then 1.5 kilometres after Chilworth Railway Station, turn left into the narrow Guildford Lane. There is a car park about 1.2 kilometres along the lane.

At The End Of The Day

Arriva buses from Horsham or Guildford can be boarded at Gaston Gate on the B2128 road, about ¼ mile on the east of Run Common.

Downs Link – Stage 2

Run Common – Cranleigh – Baynards – Rudgwick 10.8km (6.7 miles)

When the railway closed in 1966 the cleared banks reverted to woodland.

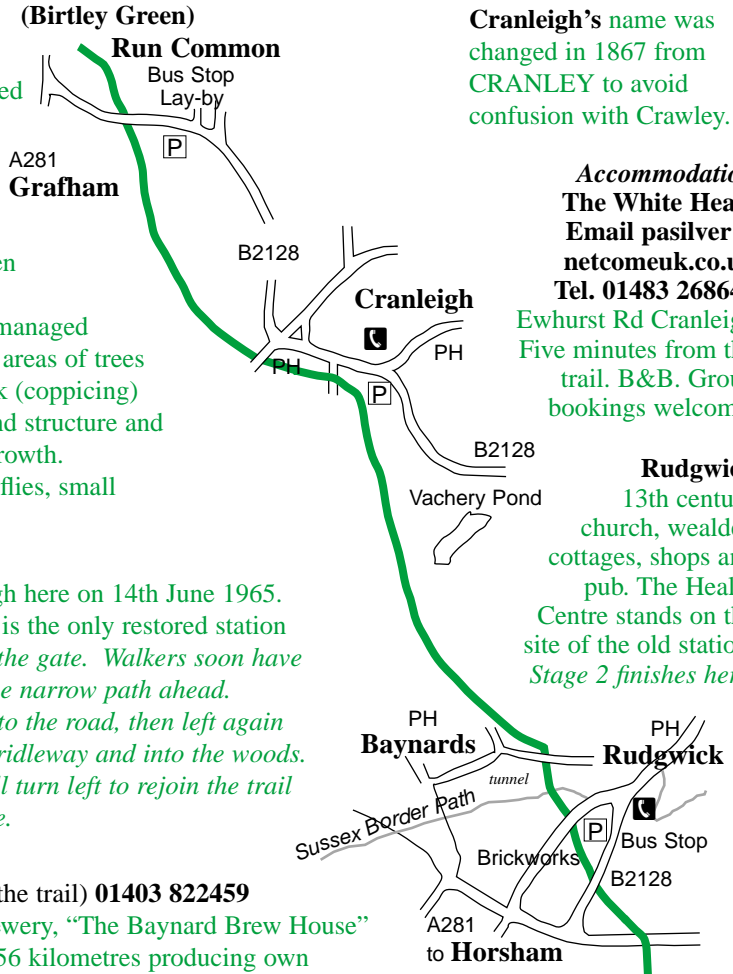
Old railway lines can be rich in wildlife, acting as corridors linking habitats. Between Bramley and Slinfold the track is owned and managed by the Councils. Small areas of trees are periodically cut back (coppicing) to diversify the woodland structure and encourage wildflower growth. This also benefits butterflies, small mammals and bird life.

Baynards Station

The last train ran through here on 14th June 1965. Now privately owned it is the only restored station on the route. *Leave by the gate. Walkers soon have the option to descend the narrow path ahead. Riders must turn left onto the road, then left again over the bridge to the bridleway and into the woods. After the brow of the hill turn left to rejoin the trail near the tunnel entrance.*

Thurlow Arms

Refreshment Stop (On the trail) **01403 822459**
 The pub has its own brewery, “The Baynard Brew House” and is the only pub for 56 kilometres producing own brew real ale. An excellent snack or lunch stop.



Cranleigh's name was changed in 1867 from CRANLEY to avoid confusion with Crawley.

Accommodation
The White Heart
Email pasilver@netcomeuk.co.uk
Tel. 01483 268647
 Ewhurst Rd Cranleigh
 Five minutes from the trail. B&B. Group bookings welcome.

Rudgwick
 13th century church, wealden cottages, shops and pub. The Health Centre stands on the site of the old station. *Stage 2 finishes here.*

Getting Started

BY RAIL – There are railway stations at Guildford and Shalford

BY CAR – From Guildford or Horsham take the A281 to the turn-off between Grafham and Birtley Green to Rowly and Cranleigh. After 1.2 kilometres park in the lay-by just after the bridge over The Downs Link. Access to the trail is noted above.

At The End Of The Day

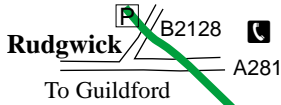
RETURN to Guildford, Shalford or Horsham by **Arriva** Buses from Church Street, Rudgwick.

Downs Link – Stage 3

Rudgwick - Slinfold - Christ's Hospital - Southwater 12km (7.5 miles)

Shortly after leaving Rudgwick the trail crosses the busy A281 and then in 500m reaches the two-tiered bridge. There is a viewpoint to the left of the path. The bridge was built in 1865 to take the trains across the River Arun.

The upper span was added because the railway inspector disliked the track's steep gradient into Rudgwick Station.



At Slinfold

The Nature Trail, starting from Spring Lane, focuses on local wildlife and scenic aspects of the old railway.

The Village pub and shop are reached by turning left 400m beyond the A29. To avoid backtracking rejoin the trail via Hayes Lane.

The trail crosses under the A264. Leave the old railway at the next bridge. The trail heads first right then left towards Christ's Hospital via Westons Farm along minor roads. On crossing the working railway keep right to walk south beside the track. At the end of the playing fields look for a sign to the right.

Christ's Hospital School Tel: 01403 211293

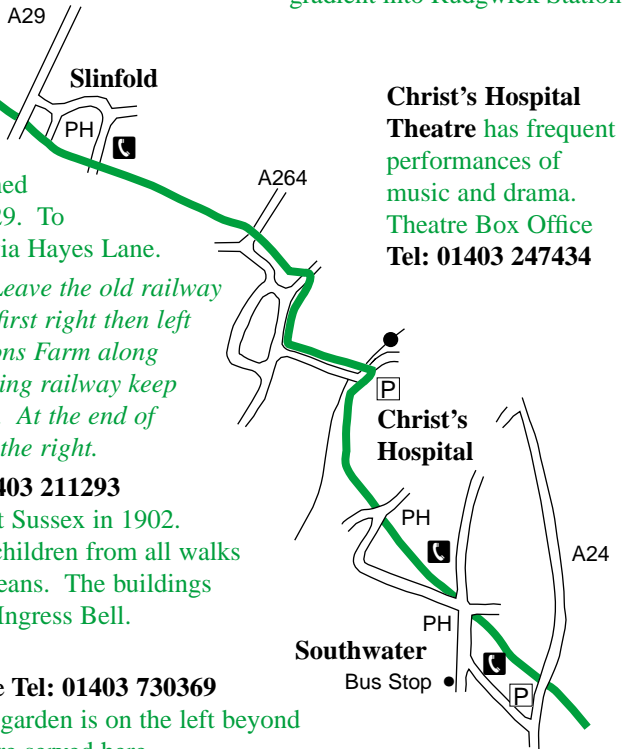
The 'Bluecoat' school came to West Sussex in 1902. The school provides education for children from all walks of life. Parents pay according to means. The buildings were designed by Aston Webb and Ingress Bell.

1km. ahead lies

Bax Castle 15th Century Freehouse Tel: 01403 730369

Refreshment Stop. Access to the garden is on the left beyond the bridge. Meals and bar snacks are served here.

Southwater is a further 1km. Pass under the road bridge. At the end of the old platform, turn right for the Worthing Road Bus Stop, or left for the shops.



Christ's Hospital Theatre has frequent performances of music and drama. Theatre Box Office
 Tel: 01403 247434

Getting Started

BY RAIL – The nearest railway station to Rudgwick is Horsham.

BY BUS – *Arriva* Buses from Guildford or Horsham, to Church Street, Rudgwick. Join the trail by the Rudgwick Health Centre, Station Road.

BY CAR – Follow the A281 from Guildford or Horsham to Bucks Green then take the B2128 to Rudgwick. Take the first turn left after the bridge into Station Road. *Weekends only* – park in Health Centre car park.

At The End Of The Day

RETURN to Horsham by *Stagecoach* bus from Worthing Road. On to Rudgwick/Guildford by *Arriva* Buses.

Downs Link – Stage 4

Southwater – West Grinstead – Partridge Green – Henfield 11.4km (7.1 miles)

Southwater Country Park covers 22 hectares (54 acres) and was opened in 1985. The land was farmed until 1889 when the underlying clay was used to make bricks. When the clay pit was exhausted, Horsham District Council developed the park to provide a range of activities.

The Visitor Centre has information displays and refreshments plus changing rooms and toilet facilities.

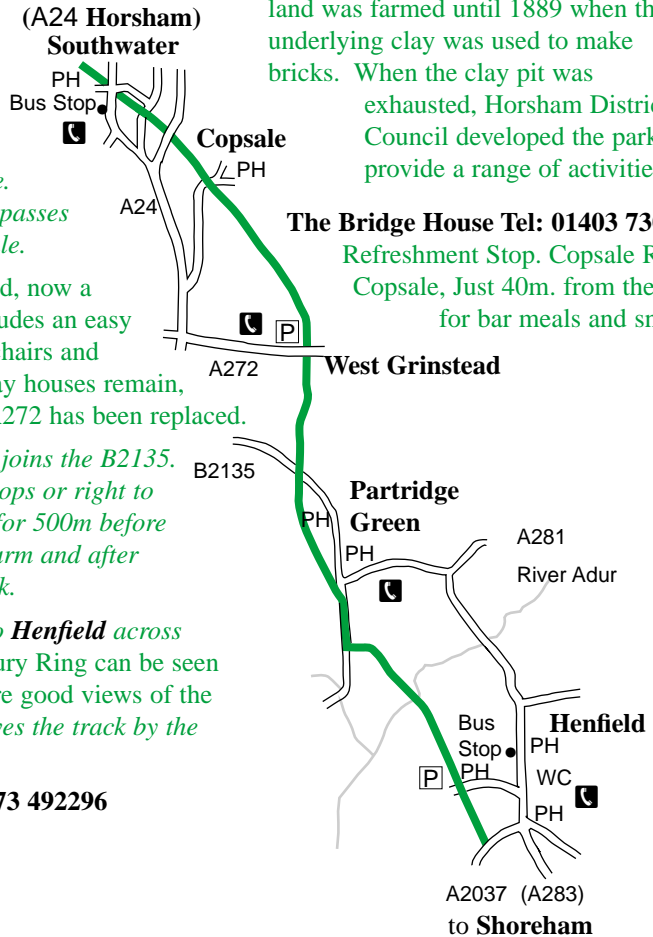
Join the trail in Stakers Lane. The route to West Grinstead passes under the A24 then to Copsale.

West Grinstead Station yard, now a car park and picnic site, includes an easy going trail suitable for pushchairs and wheelchairs. Original railway houses remain, but the bridge carrying the A272 has been replaced.

At Partridge Green the trail joins the B2135. Turn left for the pubs and shops or right to continue. Follow the B2135 for 500m before turning left to Homelands Farm and after 100m right to rejoin the track.

The Downs Link moves on to Henfield across the open plains. Chanctonbury Ring can be seen to the southwest and there are good views of the South Downs. The trail leaves the track by the Cat and Canary pub.

The George Hotel Tel: 01273 492296
 Restaurant/Public House
 High Street, Henfield.
 1km from The Downs Link.
 Group bookings welcome.



The Bridge House Tel: 01403 730383
 Refreshment Stop. Copsale Road, Copsale, Just 40m. from the trail for bar meals and snacks

Getting Started

- BY RAIL** – The nearest railway station to Southwater is Horsham.
- BY BUS** – *Stagecoach Coastline* from Worthing or Horsham to the Cock Inn, Southwater. Also *Arriva* Buses from Horsham. Walk down the lane opposite the pub, turn first left then right to rejoin the Downs Link. For Southwater Cycle Hire across the pub, turn left then first right.
- BY CAR** – From Horsham or Worthing via A24. Follow the signs for Southwater Country Park. There is parking by the Visitor Centre in Cripplegate Lane where you join The Downs Link.

At The End Of The Day

RETURN by *Stagecoach* bus from Henfield High Street to Horsham, Worthing and Southwater. Turn left at the Cat and Canary pub and walk 900m along Upper Station Road and Church Street into the High Street.

Downs Link – Stage 5

Henfield – Steyning – Bramber 7.7km (4.8 miles)

The Cat and Canary Pub was once the Henfield Station Hotel. Just south of here the station site is now a small housing estate known as ‘Beechings’, an ironic reference to Dr Beeching the Minister responsible for the 1966 railway closures.

The trail rolls out onto the flood plains of the River Adur, with more fine views of the South Downs. After crossing the Adur near Stretham Manor, walkers have the option of following the river bank south to Botolphs.

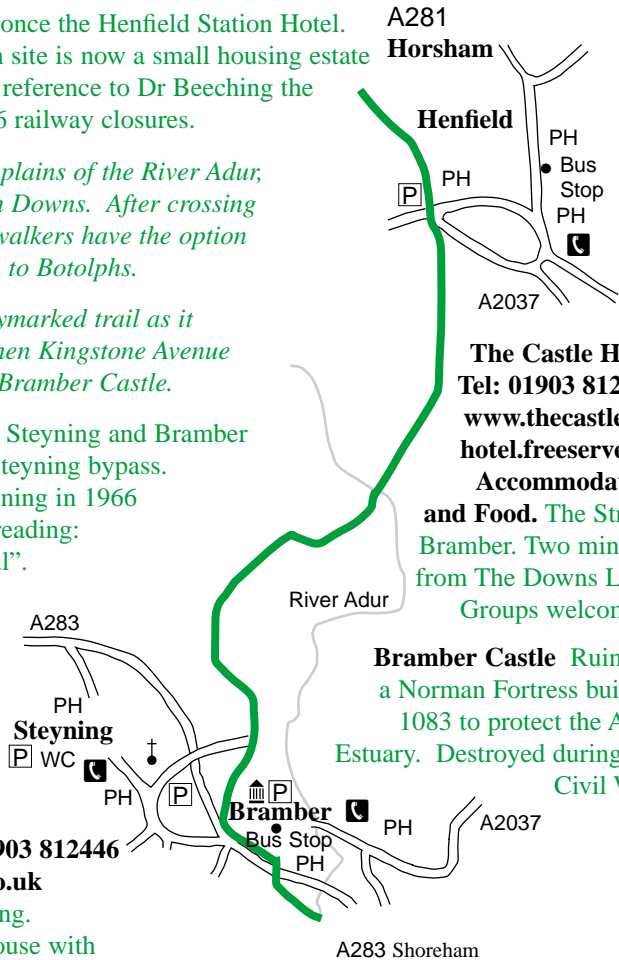
Those riding must follow the waymarked trail as it first joins Kingsbarn Lane and then Kingstone Avenue through the Steyning suburbs to Bramber Castle.

The original railway ran through Steyning and Bramber but the track is now part of the Steyning bypass. The last passenger train left Steyning in 1966 carrying a wreath on its buffers reading: “In loving memory of the faithful”.

Steyning is a delightful country town nestling beneath the South Downs. Its Norman Church, timber framed 15th Century houses, shops, pubs and museum are well worth a visit. It is 1km from the trail.

Springwells Hotel Tel: 01903 812446
www.springwells.co.uk
 High Street, Steyning.

A Georgian merchants house with 10 bedrooms providing B&B accommodation.



The Castle Hotel
 Tel: 01903 812102
www.thecastleinnhotel.freeserve.uk
Accommodation and Food. The Street, Bramber. Two minutes from The Downs Link. Groups welcomed.

Bramber Castle Ruins of a Norman Fortress built in 1083 to protect the Adur Estuary. Destroyed during the Civil War.

Getting Started

BY RAIL – The most convenient railway station to Henfield is Horsham.

BY BUS – *Stagecoach* bus from Horsham or Brighton to The White Hart, Henfield. Walk along Church Street into Upper Station Road for 900m. Join the Downs Link opposite the Cat and Canary heading south along Station Road.

BY CAR – From Horsham follow the A281 to Henfield. At the White Hart turn right into Church Street, leading to Upper Station Road. Park next to the Cat and Canary pub.

At The End Of The Day

RETURN by *Brighton and Hove Bus* from Bramber Castle to Shoreham railway station. Take the train to Horsham or Brighton. For Henfield take the *Stagecoach* bus from Brighton.

Downs Link – Stage 6

Bramber – Botolphs – Shoreham-by-Sea 6.6km (4.1 miles)

Follow the trail south along the River Adur valley as it cuts through the South Downs. The smell of the sea is in the air.

In Saxon times the estuary was navigable as far as Steyning, where there was a busy port and ship building industry. During the 14th century the river began to silt, the port moved south to Botolphs and then Shoreham. The Church at Botolphs shows Saxon work and is worth a visit.

The trains crossed the Adur at Coombes. The railway company had to display a light at night on the bridge for shipping. The penalty for not doing so was £10 per night! This section of the railway was used by the Cement Works to carry freight to Shoreham and was not closed until 1981.

Lancing College Chapel dominates the landscape to the west. Commenced in the late 19th century, the Rose Window added in the 1970's spans 9.75m with 30,000 pieces of stained glass. The land to the south, once a saltmarsh, is now the site of **Shoreham Airport**.

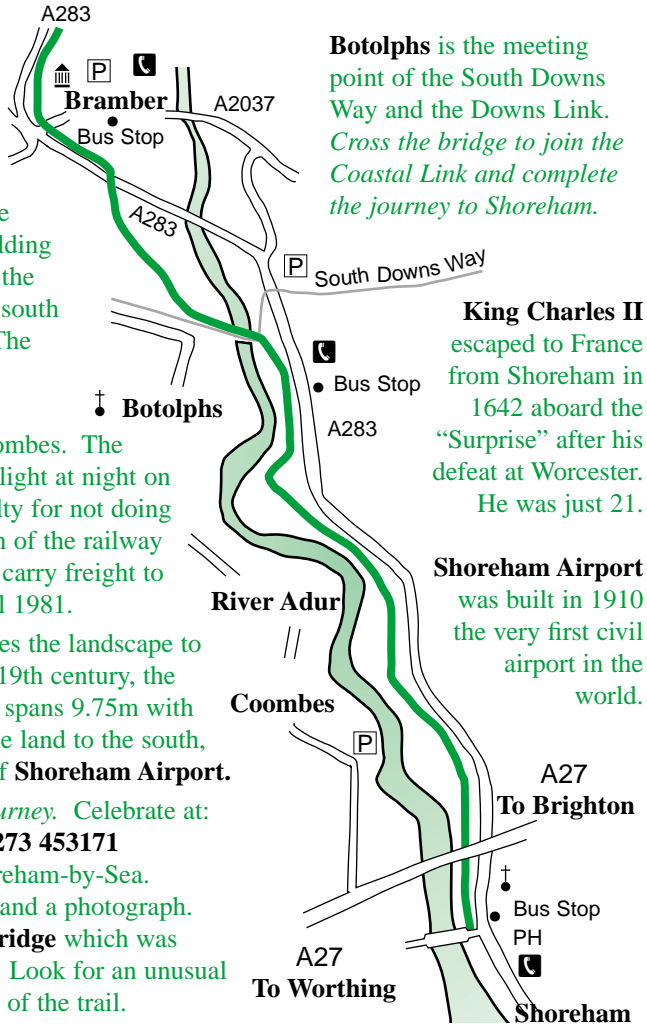
You are near the end of your journey. Celebrate at:

The Red Lion Tel: 01273 453171

Old Shoreham Road, Shoreham-by-Sea.

A good place for refreshment and a photograph.

It is opposite **The Old Tollbridge** which was built in 1781 to replace the ferry. Look for an unusual wood carving at the end of the trail.



Botolphs is the meeting point of the South Downs Way and the Downs Link. Cross the bridge to join the Coastal Link and complete the journey to Shoreham.

King Charles II escaped to France from Shoreham in 1642 aboard the “Surprise” after his defeat at Worcester. He was just 21.

Shoreham Airport was built in 1910 the very first civil airport in the world.

Getting Started

BY RAIL – the nearest railway station to Bramber is Shoreham-by-Sea.

BY BUS – *Brighton and Hove Bus* from Shoreham to Bramber Castle. Walk towards the roundabout. The Downs Link sign is on the left heading south.

BY CAR – From Horsham follow the A281 to Henfield, the A2037 and A283 to Steyning and Bramber. Turn right into Bramber. Park opposite the Castle Hotel. There is some parking at Bramber Castle. Walk back to the roundabout as noted above.

At The End Of The Day

RETURN to Bramber or Shoreham-by-Sea station by *Brighton and Hove Bus* from The Red Lion or The Amsterdam, Old Shoreham Road.