

SHOREHAM-BY-SEA AND THE DOWNS LINK, WEST SUSSEX



Moderate Terrain

Hello there, I'm Claire and this is my West Sussex Weekends walk.

I love exploring on foot with my husband, opening our eyes to things most people don't see and discovering our own special places together. This 7.5 mile walk takes in the lovely Adur Valley and then climbs into the South Downs. Is there anything more satisfying than getting some fresh air after a busy week? To read my full story visit www.west-sussex-weekends.com so I can tell you why I think you will love this walk and what highlights to expect. The West Sussex Weekends website is a great resource where you will also find ideas for places to stay, eat and drink plus plenty more inspirational stories to tempt you to explore more corners of West Sussex.

7.5 miles
Circular
3.5 hours

011115



Getting there

The walk starts and finishes at Shoreham-by-Sea rail station which sits on the south coast line with trains running between Brighton and Southampton and from London Victoria. If you are coming by car, the rail station has its own car park alongside which costs £4.40 Mon to Sat and £2 on Sundays and Bank Holidays (correct October 2015).

Approximate post code **BN43 5UA**.

Walk Sections



Start to Downs Link



Access Notes



- 1. The walk is flat for the first few miles, before a fairly stiff climb onto the South Downs and a gentle descent back into town.*
- 2. Half of the route is surfaced, but the paths through the downs and farms can be very muddy at times so good boots are a must.*
- 3. You will need to negotiate several gates, some steps and two stiles (both with gaps alongside for dogs to pass through).*
- 4. You will be sharing one of the pastures with cattle (although this stretch is on the South Downs Way so the livestock are used to walkers), one with sheep and one with horses.*
- 5. Small Dexter cattle are also used for conservation grazing in the nature reserve at some times of the year.*



Leave Shoreham-by-Sea Station via Platform 1 and make your way to the main road, Buckingham Road. With your back to the station and the level crossing to your left, cross over Buckingham Road with care and take the side road ahead, Queen's Place. Follow this road all the way to the end at a crossroads.

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Go straight ahead, signed with a blue cycle sign for the Downs Link. At the next crossroads, go ahead once again to join Swiss Gardens, passing a school on your right. Further along, Swiss Gardens becomes Connaught Avenue. Simply keep ahead along this avenue, which eventually swings right and leads you to a T-junction. Turn left to reach the mini-roundabout with The Amsterdam pub on the left and The Red Lion pub on the right. Cross over the road with care and go through the small wooden gate to reach the estuary side footpath and cycleway known as the Downs Link.

1 → 2 Downs Link to South Downs Way



Turn right along the Downs Link, heading inland with the River Adur running on the left. Across to the left you will be able to see a wooden footbridge, Old Shoreham Tollbridge originally built in 1781, and the large impressive chapel of Lancing College. Tap the Listen button below (available via App only) to hear more about the college...

Do NOT cross the bridge, instead keep straight ahead on the Downs Link, a wide stone track with the River Adur running across to the left. The Downs Link leads you past a wooden heron sculpture and then under the A27. The Downs Link follows old rail lines and, today, is a route for walkers, cyclists and horse riders that links the North Downs Way at St Martha's Hill in Surrey with the South Downs Way at Botolphs and then continues down to the coast here at Shoreham-by-Sea.

Follow the Downs Link path for about 2 miles and eventually you will come to a path T-junction with the River Adur ahead, marked with a fingerpost. Turn right, staying with the Downs Link track. The track follows the line of the Adur swinging steadily left and, further along, swings right to reach a crossroads with the South Downs Way, with a river footbridge on your left.

2 → 3 South Downs Way to Mill Hill

Do NOT cross the river, instead turn right (signed to Devil's Dyke) and follow this path out to a lay-by alongside the A283. Walk straight ahead, over the near grass verge and then cross the A283, taking time to watch and listen for traffic as it can be busy. At the far side, turn left along the pavement, pass the bus stop and then turn right alongside a metal gate (signed as the South Downs Way).

Follow this grass and stone track leading you steadily uphill between fenced pastures. As you reach the gate at the top of the first stretch, it is the perfect spot to pause, catch your breath and admire the views across the Adur Valley that have opened



up behind you.

Pass through the gate (NOTE: this pasture is likely to be holding cattle) and follow the obvious track directly ahead across the field. Across to the right you will have a great view across Lancing College Chapel and out over the English Channel. Within the field itself, just to your right, is the steep dry valley known as Anchor Bottom.

At the end of the field, pass through the bridle gate to reach a T-junction with a stone track. Turn right for just a few paces and then turn right again to join the small tarmac lane, Mill Hill, signed as a public byway.

3 → 4 Mill Hill to Nature Reserve



Follow this quiet tarmac lane, taking care of any occasional traffic, with the pasture that you just crossed running immediately on your right. You will pass the end of Anchor Bottom and then simply stay with the lane which leads you up and over the brow of the hill. From this highest vantage point you will be able to see a long stretch of the River Adur as it winds through the valley to the right and a wide expanse of the sea ahead. It feels like you can see forever, it's got to be my favourite bit of the walk.

Continue downhill for half a mile at which point you will find a fingerpost on the right (about 200 metres before the lane enters a tunnel of trees). Turn right through the small gate to join the signed public footpath. Follow the stone track, staying close to the left-hand field boundary. Just before the bottom field corner, follow the track as it swings left into the adjacent field.

Keep straight ahead on the obvious track with a crop field on your right and a hedgerow running on your left. Beyond the crop field, stay with the stone track as it leads you between fenced pastures to reach Erringham Farm. Pass the farm buildings on your left and then cross the stile ahead to enter a horse paddock. Cross the paddock at 11 o'clock and cross the next stile to enter a sheep pasture. Follow the obvious grass track ahead, with a bank of scrub on the left. At the end of the

pasture, a couple of gates lead you into Mill Hill Nature Reserve.

4 → 5 Nature Reserve to End



NOTE: Cattle are used at some points during the year to provide conservation grazing so take particular care with dogs. Immediately after passing through the wooden gate into the reserve, turn right (signed as the public footpath). Follow this narrow path which hugs the contour line of the hillside. At the far end, follow the path up the wooden steps and you will emerge to a T-junction with a higher grass path.

Turn right and stay on the main grass path which leads you to the nature reserve's parking area. Leave the reserve through the gate and turn right along the road, Mill Hill, taking care of traffic for the first short stretch which is fairly narrow. Join the pavement as the road leads you over the A27. Beyond the bridge, ignore the footpath signed off to the right, simply keep ahead on Mill Hill, descending steadily between houses.

At the end you will come to a T-junction. Cross over and turn left along the pavement, following the road as it swings right. At the end of the road you will come to a crossroads. Use the zebra crossing to cross over and go straight ahead into Mill Lane. Towards the bottom of the road you will pass Mill Lane cemetery on the right and, just as the road swings right, turn left into the side road which is a continuation of Mill Lane.

At the end of Mill Lane you will come to a T-junction with Buckingham Road. Turn right for just 200 metres and you will reach Shoreham-by-Sea rail station where the walk began. If you are looking for refreshments, keep straight ahead beyond the station and then follow East Street, running to the left of St Mary's Church, where you will find plenty of options.

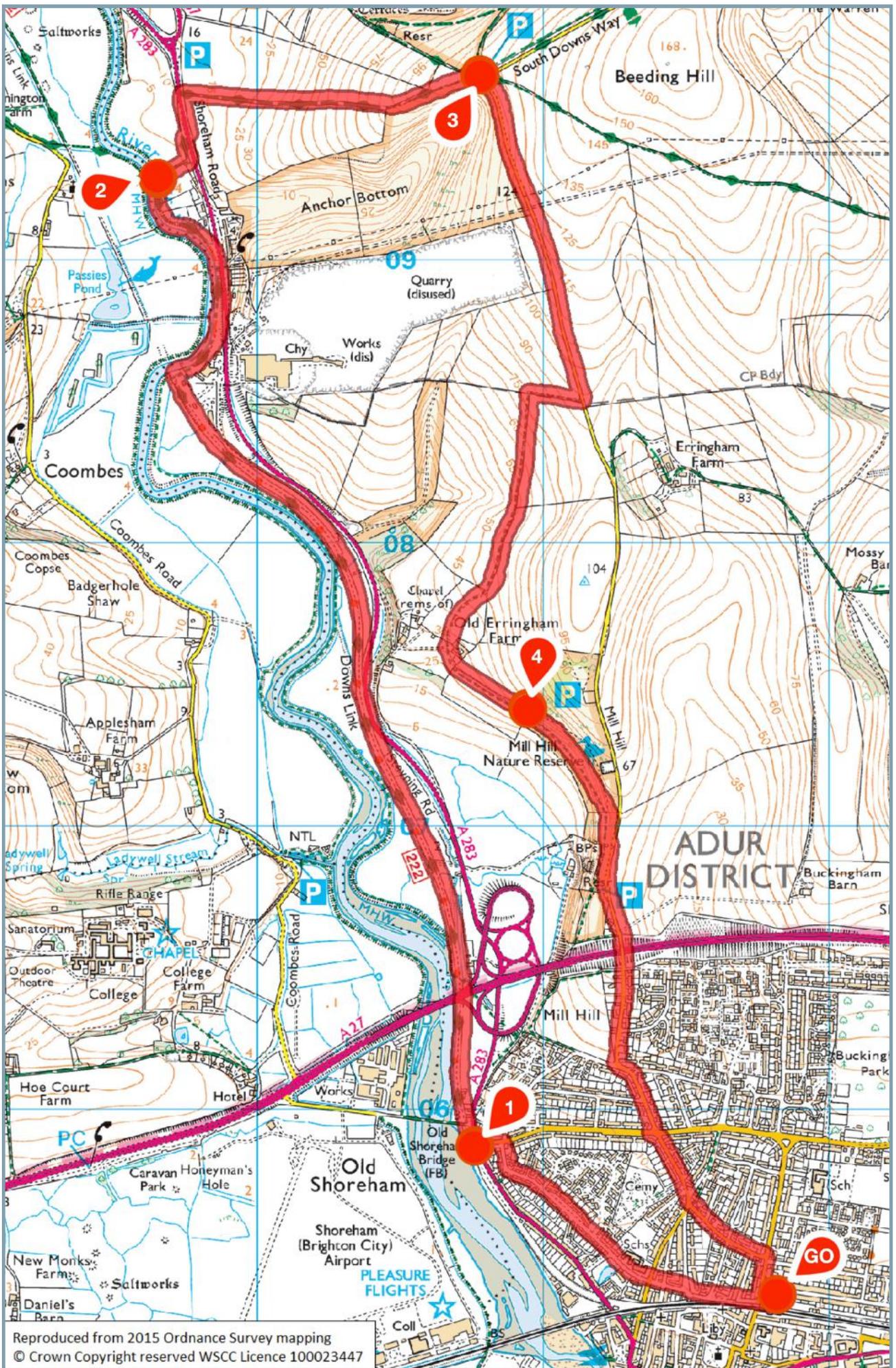
If you enjoyed this walk, remember to visit www.west-sussex-weekends.com where you will also find ideas for places to stay, eat and drink plus plenty more inspirational stories to tempt you to explore more corners of West Sussex.

Disclaimer

This walking route was walked and checked at the time of writing. We have taken care to make sure all our walks are safe for walkers of a reasonable level of experience and fitness. However, like all outdoor activities, walking carries a degree of risk and we accept no responsibility for any loss or damage to personal effects, personal accident, injury or public liability whilst following this walk. We cannot be held responsible for any inaccuracies that result from changes to the routes that occur over time. Please let us know of any changes to the routes so that we can correct the information.

Walking Safety

For your safety and comfort we recommend that you take the following with you on your walk: bottled water, snacks, a waterproof jacket, waterproof/sturdy boots, a woolly hat and fleece (in winter and cold weather), a fully-charged mobile phone, a whistle, a compass and an Ordnance Survey map of the area. Check the weather forecast before you leave, carry appropriate clothing and do not set out in fog or mist as these conditions can seriously affect your ability to navigate the route. Take particular care on cliff/mountain paths where steep drops can present a particular hazard. Some routes include sections along roads – take care to avoid any traffic at these points. Around farmland take care with children and dogs, particularly around machinery and livestock. If you are walking on the coast make sure you check the tide times before you set out.



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