



Balcombe to Horsham walk

Through the Weald to an old market town





Length 27km (17m) for the full walk or 21km (13m) for the shortcut

OS Map Explorer Map OL34 and 135

Toughness 7 out of 10

Features This walk passes through the beautiful woodlands of the [High Weald](#) between [Balcombe](#) and [Horsham](#) including [St Leonard's Forest](#) just to the east of Horsham, the source of the river [Arun](#). A major theme of this walk are the various water features along the way from gurgling streams to rivers and lakes. The ridge at the northern end of St Leonard's Forest along the line from Colgate to Pease Pottage forms the watershed between the river Thames and the English channel. The streams to the north flowing into the Thames are called brooks while the ones to the south flowing into the English channel are called gills (ghyll). The river Mole's source are various brooks on the northern side of the watershed. The source of the river Ouse is near the lunch pub. In the morning the walk passes through [Nymans Estate](#) the former country retreat of the Messel family and now owned by the National Trust. The destination of the walk is the old market town of Horsham at the upper reaches of the Arun. Shortly before entering Horsham you walk across the [Chesworth Farm Riverside Fields](#) a small nature reserve along the river Arun.

Travel Take the train nearest to 9:00 from London Bridge to Balcombe

Lunch	Wheatsheaf (01444 400472) , a quirky pub with a nice veranda and a large garden.
Tea	Various team rooms and pubs in Horsham. The Cafe No 4 in Market Square (closing at 16:30) is recommended, though it is difficult to get there in time as realistically you would need to arrive at 16:00. The Black Jug which you pass on the way to the station is a nice pub.
Help Us!	<p>After the walk, please leave a comment, it really helps. Thanks!</p> <p>You can also upload photos to the  SWC Group on Flickr (upload your photos) and videos to  Youtube. This walk's tags are:</p>
By Car	Start RH17 6JQ Finish RH12 1RD
Help	National Rail: 03457 48 49 50 • Traveline (bus times): 0871 200 22 33 (12p/min) • TFL (London) : 0343 222 1234
Version	Aug-24 Dirk
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Walk Directions

1. Cross over to the other platform (Platform 1) and enter the car park.
2. At the car park entrance take the footpath on the right downhill over stiles ignoring the branch to the left.
3. In 100m at a road go straight crossing the stream and follow the footpath on the right uphill through a metal gate.
4. In 200m after crossing the stile in the line of trees continue by keeping the trees on your left hand side.
5. In 300m join a car wide track, pass the house on your right and continue on the footpath to the left.
6. In 250m follow the path past a pond on your right and through Westup Farm.
7. In 550m where the grass verge on your left turns into bracken, bushes and trees leave the car-wide track, follow footpath marker on your left and walk along the line of trees keeping them on your right hand side.

8. In 100m after crossing a stile take the right branch of the fork and follow the edge of the wood on your right hand side,
9. In 400m go over a stile in a line of trees next to a metal field gate.
10. In 200m enter the woods over a stile.
11. In 70m where the path veers left and levels off, with another small path joining from the right continue on for 10m before turning right downhill into a ravine at a foot path marker.
12. In 140m cross a car wide track slightly diagonally to the left and in 50m cross a lane entering Ditton Place.
13. In 350m turn left just before reaching the school building following the tarmac lane.
14. In 100m go through a kissing gate on your right.
15. In 150m enter the woods through a kissing gate.
16. In 100m ignore a left branch and continue downhill.
17. In 150m ignore another left branch and continue uphill.
18. In 200m the path leaves the woods and enters an open field. Continue towards a metal field gate in the hedge on the opposite side of the field slightly bearing right.
19. In 100m go through the metal field gate and turn right.
20. In 60m go through another metal field gate keeping the hedge on your right.
21. In 50m turn left onto a car wide concrete track.
22. In 100m you reach a T junction where you go through the opposite hedge 10m to your right and follow the line of trees on your right.
23. In 400m, after passing a house on your right, enter the woods through a gate.
24. In 80m, after crossing a stream, turn right. Here you enter Nymans Estate now owned by the National Trust.
25. In 270m turn left uphill away from the pond on your right.
26. In 700m turn right across a bridge with wooden fences and in 40m take the path uphill on the left.
27. In 200m cross a car wide track.
28. In 320m you come out onto a road junction. Cross the road towards the Red Lion and turn left into Horsham Road.
29. In 380m turn left in between bushes just past the Royal Oak Inn. The house on your left is marked Treefold.
30. Follow this path without turning off as it snakes around allotments until in 200m turn right onto a lane.
31. Follow this lane ignoring any tracks leading off it until in 1.2km you leave the lane and take the public footpath on your right marked by a 3-armed footpath sign 80m

before the white gate into Slaugham ahead of you.

32. In 700m turn left along the road.
33. In 450m at the corner of Furnace Pond before a small parking bay turn sharp right almost back on yourself onto a small footpath. Continue to walk around the pond keeping it on your left hand side. For those who want to picnic the benches around the pond might be a good opportunity since there are no good places to sit outside the pub.
34. In 700m turn right onto a lane.
35. In 1.2km you reach the Wheatsheaf pub the recommended lunch stop. Just before you reach the pub at the eastern end of its garden there is a ditch on the other side of the hedge on your left hand side which is the start of the river Ouse.
36. Coming out of the pub cross the road and walk along the road opposite the pub (Hammerpond Road).
37. In 150m pick up a footpath on the right next to the first house on your right.
38. In 150m go straight across a footpath.
39. In 200m the path turns right downhill
40. In 200m, just before a wooden gate, turn left downhill at a footpath marker. Follow the path as it leads down to a pond and across its dam.
41. In 300m you enter a grassy field over a stile. Follow the 4 mature trees on your right and then bear slightly right towards the corner of the field where you should spot a metal field gate and a 3-armed footpath sign. In 150m go through the metal field gate and turn left onto a concrete lane.
42. In 150m at a 3-armed footpath sign turn right off the concrete lane and follow the fence on your right.
43. In about 250m you encounter 3 trees. Pass them and then pick up the path heading towards the middle of the field leaving the upper path along the fence.
44. In 370m at the lower far corner of the field where the wood forms a horseshoe around you enter the woods over a stile on your left. Beyond the stile, ignore a path on your right and cross a bridge.
45. In 100m ignore the stile exiting the wood. Stay in the wood this side of the stream along the path.
46. In 200m exit the wood over a stile and walk up the grassy field passing the overhead pylon closely. Continue in this direction across the field towards a clump of trees at the far corner of the field. There are electric fences to cross. They mean business so only touch the plastic handles.
47. In 300m enter a farm track which you follow uphill towards Newstead Farm.
48. In 150m go through a metal field gate and continue in the same direction with a track joining from the right and in another 50m cross a car wide track through metal

field gates with a 4-armed footpath sign and continue in the same direction downhill, ignore a track leading off towards the left in some further 50m and follow the fence on your right towards the woods ahead of you which you enter in 200m.

49. In 20m after crossing Newstead Gill across a wooden bridge the path turns right. The continuation of this path can be very overgrown as it first winds its way through the woods and then leads in between a field fence on your left and a fence of a private property on your right. There might be barking dogs behind the latter.
50. In 400m turn left along the road.
51. In 330m turn right onto a footpath through a metal gate and follow the fence keeping it on your right hand side.
52. In 300m go through a metal field gate and in 100m cross a lane and follow the sign towards Spring Farm.
53. In 150m leave the car wide track and go straight.
54. In 100m ignore the path towards the right and go straight.
55. In 440m cross a stream over a wooden bridge with a stile afterwards.
56. In 160m go straight over a double stile at a 3-armed footpath sign.
57. [!]In 100m, at a tree on your left hand side with a sign "Beware of the bull" and a metal trough next to it, go over stile onto a path in between fences.
58. In 200m go through a wooden gate/climb over a stile (your choice) and ignore the path towards the right
59. In 100m you come to a T junction with a wide path where you turn left.
60. In 100m turn right uphill following the public footpath sign. You are now entering the open access area of St Leonard's Forest.
61. In 250m cross a car wide track.
62. In 70m you need to decide if you want to take the shortcut which leads you directly to Horsham station. If so continue with the instructions at the end of the text under "Shortcut to Horsham". Otherwise, turn left into the woods.
63. In 260m at a 4-way junction you have another option to walk through St Leonard's Forest by going straight on a slightly wilder path which is only defined by a gpx file. If you decide to follow this pick up the instructions at point [70]. Note, that you would be coming up from the gully so you would need to go straight at point [70] in this case. If you want to continue to follow the walk instructions turn right here.
64. In 70m turn left.
65. In 400 cross a car wide track.
66. In 150m turn right at a 5 way junction.
67. In 130m cross a car wide track.
68. In 150m after crossing Sheepwash Gill, which can be dried up, turn left.

69. In 150m go straight across a path coming up from the gully on your left.
70. In 450m where another path is coming up from the gully on your left turn right uphill.
71. [!] In 200m turn right onto a narrow path through a patch of bracken. Follow this path as it meanders through the woods.
72. In 300m at a car wide track turn left towards the road and then right along the road.
73. In 100m, at a house on the right, turn left into the woods following a public footpath sign.
74. In 900m turn right along Golding Lane into Mannings Heath.
75. In 630m, at a four-way junction by a small green on the left, turn right into Pound Lane.
76. In 400m cross the road and continue on the footpath opposite the Dun House.
77. In 100m turn right through a kissing gate. Continue in this direction following the footpath markers through Rickfield Farm, keeping a hedge on your right hand side.
78. In 600m turn left with the edge of the field and in 50m turn right through a metal kissing gate and aim towards the metal fieldgate at the opposite side of the grassy field, direction 225° where you enter Whyting Farm.
79. After walking through the metal field gate turn half left towards the line of trees at the rear of the large shed to pick up the path in 60m [!] on your right through the line of trees across wooden planks and through a metal gate. This path can be obscured due to overgrown weeds !
80. Walk along the rear of the shed until in 100m you turn right through a metal gate and in 20m through another metal gate. This path can be very overgrown.
81. Walk diagonally across the field towards the opposite corner.
82. In 170m leave the field through a metal gate and wooden planks and in 20m go through metal field gate on your left picking up the path on the other side of the hedge (The metal field gate can be closed off by the farmer, in which case your only option is to climb over it. This is after all a public footpath !). There, aim for a metal gate at the opposite side of the field in roughly the same direction (250°) you came from, along the fence on your right.
83. In 120m leave the field through the metal gate and cross a stream over wooden planks.
84. In 250m turn right along the edge of the field.
85. In 110m you reach a lane where you turn right.
86. In 150m turn left into Bulls Farm.
87. In 100m turn right following the public footpath sign.

88. In 50m go through a wooden gate and towards a metal field gate slightly on the left at the opposite side of the field.
89. In 120m go through the metal field gate, cross the tarmac lane and continue through the second metal field gate ahead onto a concrete track.
90. Follow the public footpath until in 800m you go through a metal field gate and then diagonally across the field, direction 320°
91. In 200m, after crossing the Arun, turn left onto a car wide track.
92. In 80m cross the road and pick up the footpath opposite. Turn right parallel to the road on a clear gravel footpath and turn left in 40m through a gate.
93. In 180m go straight with a hedge 80m on your left.
94. In 160 turn left onto a board walk. These are the Chesworth Farm Riverside Fields, a small nature reserve next to the Arun, where an attempt is made to establish a natural flood plain. This area has never been used for farming.
95. In 90m at the end of the board walk turn left.
96. In 50m, after crossing the Arun, turn right.
97. In 220m turn right up along the fence. At the top keep right following the fence on your right.
98. In 500m turn right and cross a lane through 2 wooden kissing gates. You can see the spire of Horsham church ahead.
99. In 360m go through a wooden kissing gate and continue in roughly the same direction following the lane towards the railway bridge.
100. In 80m go underneath the railway bridge and immediately turn left crossing the Arun again.
101. In 190m turn right across the Arun, pass in front of the church and walk into the centre of Horsham. You reach Market Square with the "Cafe No 4" on your right in 450m.
102. For the station walk straight across the centre (called Carfax) past The Spire on Chart Way. Cross the foot bridge across the A281 and continue on for another 500m. The Black Jug is on your left hand side 300m before the station.

Shortcut to Horsham

This shortcut will go straight to the station and will not lead you to the centre of Horsham. Apart from a small station kiosk there are no refreshment opportunities.

1. Go straight in the same direction.
2. In 100m cross a path and continue in the same direction.
3. In 210m join a car wide track downhill.
4. In 340m ignore a car-wide track on the right.

5. In 90m go straight at a 3-armed footpath sign.
6. In 150m the wood opens up. Follow the path in between two large oak trees where the path turns into a car-wide track a veers left.
7. In 260m go through a metal kissing gate, cross a car wide track and continue westward.
8. In 520m at a T-junction turn right passing a metal field gate.
9. In 60m at a 3-armed footpath sign turn left towards wooden boards.
10. In 530m turn right and immediately left following the footpath sign and crossing a car wide track.
11. In 720m turn left into Hampers Lane.
12. In 220m cross a road (Smithbarn) and continue along Hampers Lane.
13. In 130m cross Comptons Lane into Depot Road.
14. In 1.1km turn left and in 110m right towards the station. If you want to continue into the centre of town turn left just before reaching the station entrance with its bike racks, enter the car park and walk towards its far left corner, turn right through the underpass under the railway and the road. On the other side, turn left. You will reach the centre in about 10mins.

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