

East Grinstead to Wivelsfield & Forest Row Start			Sheffield Park Ending		
1 st walk check	2 nd walk check	3 rd walk check	1 st walk check	2 nd walk check	3 rd walk check
28 th April 2018	03/07 Nov. 2023		28 th April 2018	03 rd Nov. 2023	
Current status	Document last updated Monday, 22 nd April 2024				
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East Grinstead to Wivelsfield or Sheffield Park

Start: East Grinstead Station

Finish: Wivelsfield Station or Sheffield Park (Bluebell Line)

East Grinstead station, map reference TQ 388 382, is 43 km south south east of Charing Cross and 122m above sea level and in **West Sussex**. Wivelsfield station, map reference TQ 320 200, is 19 km south east of East Grinstead and 43m above sea level; Sheffield Park station, map reference TQ 403 236, is 15 km south of East Grinstead and 22m above sea level; both are in **East Sussex**.

Length: 31.9 km (19.8 mi), of which 9.4 km (5.9 mi) on tarmac or concrete.

Cumulative ascent/descent: 453/532m. For a shorter walk, see below **Walk Options**.

Toughness: 8 out of 10

Time: 7 hours walking time.

For the whole outing, including trains, sights and meals, allow at least 10 hours.

Transport: East Grinstead station is on the East Grinstead branch of the Oxted Line from London Victoria (journey time 60 minutes, at least hourly every day). Wivelsfield station is on the Brighton Main Line, with frequent services to Victoria and London Thameslink stops (journey time from 51 minutes). Sheffield Park station is the southern terminus of the Bluebell Railway from East Grinstead (journey time 40 minutes). Buy an East Grinstead return, you then may have to buy an additional single from Wivelsfield to East Croydon.

Saturday Walkers' Club: Take the train closest to 9.00 hours.

OS Landranger Map: 198 (Brighton & Lewes)

OS Explorer Map: 135 (Ashdown Forest)

Walk Notes:

This route in the East/West Sussex boundary lands descends from East Grinstead into the Upper Medway Valley and past Weir Wood Reservoir and then meanders through an undulating landscape of hills, streams, ponds, heaths and mixed woodland, rich in bluebells and wood anemones in season. For the most part, it largely shadows the course of The Bluebell Line steam railway, and lunch is either in tranquil Horsted Keynes or in Scaynes Hill, near the (Sussex) Ouse River. Later you pass through several parts of the large Chailey Common heathlands and continue westbound through flatter ground – mostly pastures with fine South Downs Views – to Burgess Hill (for Wivelsfield station).

An Alternative Finish at Sheffield Park, the terminus of the Bluebell Line, for a return by steam train, is described, as are other alternatives to shorten the route.

Walk Options:

A diversion along a permissive path along the Weir Wood Reservoir's dam and past the Water Works avoids a **mud and flood prone footpath** north east of the reservoir; see the route map for details.

Start from Forest Row (bus stop by the Chequers Inn, Line 270 from East Grinstead, hourly Monday-Saturday, 4 buses on Sundays or Line 291 from East Grinstead, frequent service Monday-Saturday, 5 buses on Sundays): cut 3.6 km/2.2 mi.

Start from Horsted Keynes (bus stop on the Village Green, Line 270 from East Grinstead or Haywards Heath, as above): 18.0 km/11.2 mi and 225m ascent, **3/10**.

Finish in Horsted Keynes (bus stop on the Village Green, Line 270 from East Grinstead or Haywards Heath, as above): 13.7 km/8.5 mi and 226m ascent, **2/10**.

Finish at Sheffield Park station (Bluebell Line back to East Grinstead) for a 22.5 km/14.3 mi walk with 336m ascent: **6/10** for the train back or for a bus: Line 121 from Newick to Lewes, 6 buses on Saturdays, 4 buses on Sundays).

Finish at a bus stop in North Chailey (Lines 31/31A/31B from Uckfield to Haywards Heath, hourly Monday-Saturday and Line 121 from Newick to Lewes, about hourly Mon-Sat and 4 buses on Sundays): cut 7.9 km/4.9 mi and 75m ascent for a **6/10** rating.

Finish at a bus stop outside Wivelsfield village on the B2112 (Ote Hall Chapel stop; Lines 166, 271, 272; last buses as of Nov 2023: late midweek, 18.42 Sat and 18.08 Sun): cut 2.6 km/1.6 mi.

Lunch (details last updated 08/11/2023)

The Green Man The Green, *Horsted Keynes, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 7AS (01825 790 656, <http://greenmanhorstedkeynes.co.uk/>)*. The Green Man is located 13.7 km (8.5 mi) into the walk. Open 12.00-15.00 and 17.30-23.00 Mon-Fri, 12.00-23.00 Sat and 12.00-22.30 Sun. Food served 12.00-14.30 and 18.00-21.00 Mon-Fri, 12.00-15.00 and 18.00-21.00 Sat and 12.00-16.00 Sun. A Greene King pub.

The Crown Inn The Green, *Horsted Keynes, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 7AW (01825 791 609, <http://www.thecrownhorstedkeynes.co.uk/>)*. The Crown is located 13.8 km (8.6 mi) into the walk. Open all day every day. Food served 12.00-14.30 and 18.00-20.30 Mon-Thu, 12.00-15.00 and 18.00-21.00 Fri, 12.00-21.00 Sat and 12.00-16.00 Sun.

The Sloop Inn 99 Sloop Lane, *Scaynes Hill, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 7NP (01444 715 388, <https://thesloopinn.com/>)*. The Sloop is located 19.2 km (11.9 mi) into the walk. Open all day every day. Food served 12.00-14.30 and 18.00-20.45 Mon-Fri, 12.00-19.45 Sat and 12.00-16.00 Sun.

Tea Both Endings

The Sloop Inn As above.

Tea Wivelsfield (details last updated 08/11/2023)

The Watermill Inn 1 Leylands Road, *Worlds End, Burgess Hill, West Sussex, RH15 0QF (01444 235 517)*. Open all day every day.

Tea Sheffield Park (details last updated 08/11/2023)

360° Brewing Company Taproom Unit 24, Bluebell Business Estate, *Sheffield Park, East Sussex, TN22 3HQ (01825 722 375, <https://www.360degreebrewing.com/taproom/>)*. Open Fri-Sat 12.00-21.00 and Sun 12.00-16.00. Food served Fri-Sat 12.00-20.00.

The Bessemer Arms Station Approach Road, Bluebell Railway, *Sheffield Park Station, Uckfield, TN22 3QL (01825 720 800, <https://www.bluebell-railway.com/the-bessemer-arms/>)*. Opening hours depend on the train schedule, check the website.

Notes

East Grinstead

While the 'East' in the town's name was added late on to distinguish it from (West) Grinstead, a village in the Horsham District, 28 km to the south-west, Grinstead means 'green place' in Saxon, i.e.: a pasture clearing in the great Forest of Anderida, which historically stretched along the northern boundary of Sussex. Nowadays East Grinstead lies in the northeast corner of West Sussex, near the East Sussex, Surrey, and Kent borders. Until 1974 East Grinstead was even located in the county of East Sussex. The town lies on the Greenwich Meridian, which runs through the grounds of the 1769 East Court Mansion, and The High Street has one of the longest continuous runs of 14th century timber-framed buildings in England.

Dr Richard Beeching was a resident of the town at the time he wrote the (in)famous report into British Rail. In the late 1970s the town's inner relief road was built along a section of one of the closed railway lines and it is named "Beeching Way". It is rumoured though that this road, which runs through a cutting, was to be called "Beeching Cut", but that the name was altered in the interests of formality.

Greenwich Meridian Trail (GMT)

The Greenwich Meridian Trail is a 467 km (290 mi) waymarked long-distance walk that follows the line of the Prime Meridian. Inaugurated in 2009 to coincide with the 125th anniversary of the Meridian, it begins at Peacehaven in East Sussex and ends on the Holderness peninsula at Sand le Mere in East Yorkshire.

Sussex Border Path (SBP)

The SBP is a waymarked 240 km (150 mi) long distance footpath that uses existing rights of way to broadly follow the inland border of the old county of Sussex, connecting Thorney Island to Rye. There is also an additional 53 km (33 mi) spur known as the Mid Sussex Link which follows the modern boundary between West and East Sussex. <http://www.sussexborderpath.co.uk/>

Weir Wood Reservoir

Weir Wood Reservoir is a 2.4 km long stretch of water, situated on the north-western margins of Ashdown Forest. It has a full water capacity of 5,566,000 cubic metres, covering a site of 1.1 km². The reservoir was built over the period 1951-54, a process which involved damming the valley of the River Medway.

River Medway

The Medway is 113 km long, rising in Turners Hill, Sussex in the High Weald and flowing through Tonbridge, Maidstone and the Medway conurbation in Kent before emptying into the Thames Estuary near Sheerness. Its catchment area of 2,409 km² is the second largest in southern England after the Thames.

Horsted Keynes

Horstede (The Place of Horses in Saxon) was given to Guillaume de Cahaigues, a French knight who participated in the Norman conquest, and became Horstede de Cahaigues and in time Horsted Keynes. The village has been formally twinned with the Normandy village of Cahagnes since 1971 and the Horsted Cahagnes Society promotes social and cultural links, and organises annual visits between the two places. On Saturday, 28 August 1624, it hosted what was probably the earliest organised cricket match in Sussex. Two months before being assassinated, U.S. President John F. Kennedy slept in the parish when he stayed at Birch Grove, the home of the former PM, Harold Macmillan (buried in the parish church's graveyard). The American Secret Service closed the village that night, siting their communication hub in The Crown Inn. On 1 July 2003 a lightning bolt struck the electricity pole beside The Crown Inn. The roof and much of the building were destroyed in one of the largest fires in the area for many years.

Bluebell Line

The Bluebell Railway is a 17.7 km heritage line almost entirely in West Sussex, except for Sheffield Park which is in East Sussex. It is managed by the Bluebell Railway Preservation Society and uses steam trains between Sheffield Park and East Grinstead, with intermediate stations at Horsted Keynes and Kingscote. The first preserved standard gauge steam-operated passenger railway in the world to operate a public service, the society ran its first train on 7 August 1960, less than three years after the line from East Grinstead to Lewes had been closed by British Railways. On 23 March 2013, the Bluebell Railway started to run through to its new East Grinstead terminus, where there is a connection to the national rail network, the first in 50 years, since the Horsted Keynes – Haywards Heath line closed in 1963. Today it has over 30 steam locomotives – the largest collection in the UK after the National Railway Museum – and also almost 150 carriages and wagons, most of them pre-1939.

<https://www.bluebell-railway.com/> https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bluebell_Railway

(Sussex) Ouse River

The river rises near Lower Beeding and flows eastwards into East Sussex, meandering narrowly and turning slowly southward. It flows through Lewes and past Glynde, finally reaching the Channel at Newhaven. The Ouse is one of the four rivers that cut through the South Downs. It is presumed that its valley was cut during a glacial period. In the warmer interglacials the lower valley would have flooded; there are raised beaches 40 metres (Goodwood-Slindon) and 8 metres (Brighton-Norton) above present sea level. The offshore topography indicates that the current coastline was also the coastline before the final deglaciation, and therefore the mouth of the Ouse has long been at its present latitude.

'Ouse' is a very common name for rivers in England, stemming from a Celtic word for water.

The author Virginia Woolf drowned herself in the River Ouse on 28 March 1941, near the village of Rodmell.

Sussex Ouse Valley Way (SOVW)

The SOVW is a waymarked 68 km (42 mi) long distance footpath opened in 2005 and broadly following the course of the River Ouse from close to its source to the sea. It runs from Lower Beeding near Horsham through the Low Weald to Newhaven and Seaford Bay.

Chailey Common

Chailey Common is – with over 180 hectares – one of the largest commons in the south of England and was designated a Local Nature Reserve in 1966. The common is a Site of Special Scientific Interest for its heathland plants, and diverse insect and bird communities. It includes Red House Common, Memorial Common, Romany Ridge Common, Pound Common and Lane End.

Sussex Hospices Trail

The SHT is a waymarked 314 km (195 mi) long distance footpath around East and West Sussex. The trail has been created by Friends of Sussex Hospices and dedicated to raising awareness of hospice care, as a venue for fundraising activities and as a permanent route for walkers.

<https://www.friendsofsussexhospices.org.uk/sussex-hospice-trail/>

Chailey Windmill & Museum of Local Artefacts

The windmill near North Chailey is known as Heritage Mill, or Beard's Mill and is a Grade II listed Smock Mill, which is maintained as a landmark and open to the public. A windmill was first recorded at this site in 1596. Heritage Mill, the seventh on this site, was built in 1830 at Highbrook, West Hoathly. In 1844 it was moved to Newhaven, from where it was then moved to its current location at Chailey, replacing a post mill. A Smock Mill consists of a sloping, horizontally weather-boarded or thatched tower, usually with six or eight sides. It is topped with a roof or cap that rotates to bring the sails into the wind. This type of windmill got its name from its resemblance to smocks worn by farmers in an earlier period. The mill museum is open to visitors regularly on the last Sunday of each month from April to September, 15.00-17.00 hours.

<http://www.chailey.org/amenities/chailey-windmill-museum/>

WALK DIRECTIONS

[For a start from **Forest Row**, go to the end of this text and pick up the directions under **Forest Row Start**.]

Leave **East Grinstead Station** through the station building and follow a sign for 'Town Centre' along a pavement to the right of a bus stop with a major road to the left of it. In 80m cross a couple of roads coming off a large roundabout on the right with another sign for 'Town Centre' (crossing **Beeching Way** in the process, named after the eponymous Grinstead resident) and continue along the left-hand pavement of **Railway Approach**, to the right of a large timber dealer's premises (signed 'FOREST WAY & Town Centre'). In 320m at a T-junction with **London Road** *turn right* and continue along its right-hand pavement. Ignore all roads off and in 370m by a roundabout at a T-junction, cross **West Street** at a zebra crossing a little to the right and *turn left* along a short tarmac lane running at a higher level to the parallel **High Street**. In 20m continue along a paved path, with a row of shops on the right. In 100m continue to the right of **1 Middle Row** (a café) along a tarmac lane (Middle Row) and in 40m ignore the right turning Portland Road. [!] In 15m at the corner of **The Dorset Arms**, *turn right* down **Hermitage Lane**, in 75m between high sandstone bluffs.

In another 300m at the bottom of the lane, you *turn left* at a T-junction with Hermitage Lane, where **The Rise** joins from the right. In 25m cross **Herontye Drive** and continue a little to the right along **Harwood's Lane**. In 320m cross **Victoria Way** and continue in the same direction along a signposted byway with a **Greenwich Meridian Trail (GMT)** marker. In 50m *turn right* with the lane and in 20m [!] *turn left* at a three-way signpost to pick up a grassy path a little to the left of the drive to **Great Harwood's Barn**. You pass a broken stile to the left of a rusty metal field gate and continue in the same direction along a fenced path through a pasture. For the next 900m most of the paths are fenced and somewhat mud-prone! In 370m, at the end of the field, you pass a GMT marker post on the right and *veer right* through trees along the right-hand fence. In 40m *veer left* with the path (140°) past a marker post. In 210m pass a marker post and walk down some steps to cross a stream on a footbridge. There is a lot of **wild garlic** in this area, in season. You follow the fenced path on the other side and in 250m go up some steps to cross another stream at a meander over a footbridge and *turn right* with a clear path between the two arms.

In 15m go over a stile into a pasture and *turn left* along its left-hand boundary. In 150m, where the boundary and the stream turn left, you continue in the same direction (145°) across the field (a **sewage plant** is visible away to the left). In 250m by a two-way signpost, you go through a metal kissing gate and cross a railed footbridge across a streamlet. On the other side at a T-junction with a bridleway, ignore a footbridge on the left and [!] *turn right* and in 5m go through a metal gate into a pasture. In 15m by a three-way signpost on the right (with **GMT** and **Sussex Border Path (SBP)** markers) continue along the left-hand boundary growth for 30m and then *turn left* along the left-hand field boundary. You have wild garlic and some bluebells along the stream on the left in season. In 130m at the far-left corner pass a two-way signpost and go through a metal kissing gate to cross a stream on a railed plank bridge and go through a metal gate into another pasture. Follow a clear path, initially along the left-hand boundary, gently uphill (175°). In 300m at the top of the rise you have fine views back to East Grinstead on its hill and walk through a gap to the left of a wooden field gate by a two-way signpost and continue in the same direction through the next pasture, with parts of **Weir Wood Reservoir** visible below, and with bluebells in the wood on the right.

In 120m just before a wooden gate by a three-way footpath signpost you *turn left* along a right-hand side wire fence (i.e.: **do not** go through the gate, although this is the

diversion should the footpath following this field be flooded). In 340m in the bottom far-right corner of the field, go through a metal kissing gate and follow a fenced path. In 80m go over a stile and in 220m cross the reservoir outflow (the **River Medway**) on a two-railed footbridge. You continue in the same direction at a signposted three-way footpath junction through a pasture along its right-hand fence. In 220m in the far-right field corner go over stile into trees and in 15m *veer right* to continue along a fenced path with a tarmac lane to the right (the reservoir approach). In 60m join the lane and continue in the same direction along it. In 230m at the far corner of the garden fence of a couple of cottages on the right, a footpath joins from the left through a squeeze gate. This is the Alternative Start from Forest Row. *Turn right* into a wood past a three-way signpost with **GMT and L2B** (London to Brighton) markers (bluebells in season).

*) In 160m you emerge from the wood by a marker post with **GMT** and **L2B** markers and *turn right* along a concrete track at a T-junction. You follow this track for about 900m. **In more detail:** In 150m by South Park Farm and The Old Barn *turn left* with the track. In 130m *veer left* by South Park Farm Cottage. In 280m pass Springhill Lodge and in 100m walk through a usually open double wooden field gate. In 40m ignore a left fork to 'Springhill Orchard'. In 50m pass 'Lake View' and 'West View Cottage' on the left. In 75m you reach the end of the concrete track by **Hen Barn** on the right and some farm buildings on the left. Go through a wooden gate with GMT and L2B markers and continue along a gravel drive. In 75m pass **Dove Barn** on your left and in 20m *turn right* over a stile by a footpath marker stone into a pasture and cross it uphill along an obvious path to the left of an oak tree. At the top of the rise, you have good views of the **Weir Wood Reservoir**, of **Standon House** on its slope and **East Grinstead** on its hill, with the **North Downs** to the right and beyond the town.

After 230m in the field, leave it through a metal kissing gate at a signposted three-way footpath junction and *bear left* across the field corner (225°), downhill towards a gate 100m away, with a couple of signposts. There go through the metal kissing gate and follow a field's right-hand boundary uphill past a pond on the right. In 40m, where the boundary turns right, you *veer left* and in 50m walk through a metal gate left of a wooden field gate. You are walking towards a large wood on the other side of a valley and in 110m go over a stile and continue in the same direction down a pasture towards a few ponds and a bridge over a stream at the bottom of the valley. In 70m pass a redundant stile and follow a path between ponds and re-ascend the opposite flank and in 15m cross a stream on a plank bridge. In 100m (about 30m to the left of the upper corner of the field) you go through a metal gate into the wood (**Access Land**) and follow a clear path. In 20m at an unsigned four-way path junction, you *turn right*, in 5m passing a three-way signpost. In 60m *turn left* by a three-way signpost on the right, gently uphill further into the wood (175°).

In 100m the path levels out and in another 100m you continue in the same direction at a four-way junction. In 100m ignore a path up to the right and continue in the same direction along a narrower path, in 20m passing to the left of a multi-stemmed beech tree. In 40m at a signposted three-way footpath junction and T-junction with a gravel drive leading to a house on the left (**Lavender Platt** on the OS map), you *turn right* uphill along the drive. The woodland clearing away to the left is covered in bluebells in season. In 500m you *turn right* with the drive by a marker post and in 60m, 20m before reaching a road, *turn left* with a marker on a tree along a grassy path through a bracken and gorse filled area and finally past some trees. In 150m you reach a busy four-way road junction to the right of a car park. Cross the road coming from the left and continue along the left-hand verge of the road ahead, signed '**Wych Cross 1**' (130°). In 75m *turn right* to cross the road and continue along the tarmac drive signed for '**Snuff Cottage & Little Snuff**', a signposted footpath.

You pass **Goat Farm** (as per the OS map) and continue in the same direction along the drive (bluebells in season). In 520m *fork left*, signed '**Snuff Cottage**' and '**Little Snuff**', ignoring the right turn to a house. In 75m the drive turns right and in 50m it turns left by a house on the right. Ignore a left forking drive in 30m by a marker post and in another 30m go through a wooden gate with a marker post (you have **left the Access Land**). In 130m, by the last building on the right, continue in the same direction along a grass path with a ditch on the left and a pasture behind a fence. In 125m by a pond on the left, you cross a stream over a two-railed footbridge and continue in the same direction uphill through a wood, briefly back in Access Land. In 65m at a junction with a holloway you *veer up right* along it (200°). In 230m another path joins from the right behind at a two-way signpost, and in 40m you *turn right* at a T-junction with a tarmac lane, opposite **Tudbridge Gate/Suttons Farm**. In 90m ignore a right fork, signed 'Twyford Farm B&B/Bellflower Cottage', and in 30m **[!]** *veer right* along a clear path across a grassy area, away from the road curving left downhill.

In 20m pass a GMT marker on a fence post and follow a clear path (a 'Public Path') through a wood on a bearing of 220° and in 130m cross an indistinct but marked public footpath. In 160m the path continues with an open field on the left and in 240m you pass a house on the left. In 140m you ford the outflow of a pond on the right (or use the bridge to the left) and in 70m at a T-junction with a tarmac lane at a bend, *turn up right* along the lane (the L2B turns left). In 200m at the top of the rise with **Balcombe Lane**, *turn left* along the road at a T-junction. In 160m *turn right* with the lane by **Hurstwood Farm** on the left. In season, along this stretch the earth banks on the grass verge on the left will be completely covered in bluebells. Continue along the road (now called **Broadhurst Manor Road**) for 650m. *Turn left* along a tarmac drive (a signposted bridleway), gently downhill. The timber-framed house ahead on the left is **Broadhurst Manor**. In 300m by a scenic pond on the right and where a drive turns left to the manor house, you *turn right* with the tarmac drive around the pond.

In 20m pass a SBP & bridleway marker post and in 50m by the **Garden House** ahead, *turn left* with the now gravel drive. In 200m you pass through some ponds, the first of many between here and Horsted Keynes, the early lunch stop destination. In 40m walk to the right of a metal field gate and follow the car wide track with fishing ponds on the right below (Horsted Keynes Angling Club), ignoring a left turn along the way. In 650m you pass a car park on the left just before walking to the right of the largest pond yet (Isfield & District Angling Club). At the end of that pond the track starts to gently ascend towards the village, in 50m as a tarmac lane. In 250m go through a gap to the left of a metal field gate and ignore a left turn. In 90m ignore a signposted right running footpath and **[!]** *turn left* along the drive to **St. Giles C of E Primary School**. In 10m *fork right* along a grass path to the right of a hedge and to the left of Spring Cottage. In 20m you *turn right* inside a churchyard along a paved path and pass **St. Giles Church, Horsted Keynes** to the right. [Ex-PM **Harold Macmillan's grave** can be found by turning left past the church and continuing into the modern part of the churchyard. The Macmillan family site is on the left, surrounded by hedges on three sides.]

Leave the churchyard through a double wooden gate and continue in the same direction along the tarmac lane, initially downhill. In 130m, just before the lane re-ascends, you ignore a right turning footpath and in 140m where the lane (Leighton Road) turns right, you continue in the same direction up a tarmac path. In 50m you reach the village green in **Horsted Keynes**, with a milestone on the green opposite showing the distance to the name-giving twin village **Cahagnes** as '276 km'. You have a **bus stop for services to Haywards Heath** 40m to the right but *turn left* along the left-hand pavement. In 20m pass the **bus stop for services to East Grinstead** and in 50m pass **The Green Man** on the left. In another 60m, just before the village store, *turn right* to cross the road and head for **The Crown Inn**.

Continue to the right of the pub through its car park and in 25m *bear right* through a grassy area. In 50m walk through a hedge gap onto a tarmac lane and *turn left* along it (130°). In 80m at a four-way junction of tarmac lanes (a signposted footpath/bridleway junction), ignore the footpath to the right and continue in the same direction along **Wyatts Lane**, passing **Buckhurst Place** on the left-hand side. In 120m *turn right* with the lane and in 25m by a three-way signpost on the left leave the tarmac lane (and the SBP) and walk with the footpath through a wooden gate to continue along a fenced path with a house on the left, initially parallel to the lane. In 60m walk through a wooden kissing gate into a pasture and follow its right-hand boundary. In 120m in the far-right corner you go through a wooden kissing gate and continue between hedges. In 50m you cross a driveway and *veer right* along a tarmac drive to the right of a house and in 15m *veer a little to the left* at a signposted three-way footpath/bridleway junction (the SBP re-joins from the right). You follow the tarmac lane between hedges, in 60m passing a house on your left (**Wyatts Flat**), where it continues as a gravel lane.

In another 150m ignore a right turning footpath at a three-way signpost and continue past some bollards into a wooded area (**Sandpits Wood**, wood anemones in season). In 250m ignore a right turning footpath at a three-way signpost and continue with the bridleway, soon turning left with it. In 150m ignore a right turning footpath over a plank bridge and through a metal kissing gate into a pasture at a three-way signpost (on the left). In another 150m cross **Danehill Brook** and re-ascend along a gravel track. In 100m you *turn left* with the track by a signpost on the right and in 80m *turn right* uphill at a T-junction with a tarmac lane, by a bridleway marker post on the left. The lane becomes quite steep for the final ascent but in 250m it almost levels out and in another 40m [!] you continue in the same direction with a permissive bridleway and a two-way signpost alongside the fence on the left, leaving the right forking tarmac lane.

In 180m you *turn right* along a road (**Freshfield Lane**) at a T-junction. In 50m ignore a left turning tarmac drive to **Butchers Barn** (the continuation of the SBP) and in another 200m *turn left* along a gravel drive, a signposted footpath, also signed for 'Kidborough' and 'Longridge' (80m before a roadside 'West Sussex' sign, by a drive on the right to 'Latchetts'). In 170m ignore a right running footpath and in 140m *turn right* off the drive by a signpost on the right past a redundant stile and walk to the right of a line of trees through an area of young fruit trees. You get views of the **South Downs** in the distance ahead and in 70m go over a plank across a ditch and then over a stile into a pasture and *veer left* across it (155°) towards a stile. In 100m walk through a wooden gate to the right of the stile and enter a small wood (bluebells and wood anemones in season). The path *bears left* in 15m and crosses a stream on a plank bridge.

You *turn right* and follow a clear path downhill. In 70m emerge into an open field and follow its right-hand boundary and in 140m in the bottom field corner *turn left* briefly with a marker post and in 20m *turn right* and go down some steps to cross a two-railed plank bridge over a stream and re-ascend on the other side, with dense carpets of bluebells in season. In 40m you go over another plank bridge and then a stile into a pasture and continue in the same direction along its right-hand boundary (with bluebells in the wood on the right). In 200m in the far-right field corner you cross a stile to the right of a wooden field gate and in 50m *turn left* onto the tarmac drive of **Northlands Farm** on the left and *turn right* along it. In 50m at a signposted three-way footpath junction, *turn right* with the tarmac drive (the SBP has re-joined from the left). In 380m you cross **Ketche's Lane** and enter **King's Wood** with a two-way signpost and in 15m *turn right* with a GMT marker post. In 130m ignore a right fork and in 110m leave the wood through a fence gap by a two-way signpost into an arable field.

The aim now is the (not visible from here) left-hand corner of a small wooded area 320m away on a bearing of 200° (i.e.: not the larger wood to the left of it (Round Wood

on the OS map)), and although the right of way on the OS map curves to the right first to then approach that point in a wide arc, there is no evidence of a path on the ground to support this. **Therefore: Cross the field in the previous direction on a usually clear path** (200°) towards a tree-lined (round) pond 140m away and pass that pond on its right-hand side to continue past a two-way signpost in the previous direction towards the left-hand corner of the small wooded area now visible 150m away. There you pass a low marker post on the left and continue in the same direction along the wood's left-hand boundary, with an arable field on your left. In 140m (30m before the field corner) **[!]** *fork right* with a low marker post along a farm track slightly downhill and in 50m go under the **Bluebell Line** railway. In 20m walk through a metal gate or over a stepless metal stile to the left of it and follow a pasture's right-hand boundary, with loads of wild garlic in the wood on the right.

In 150m you *turn right* with a two-way signpost and cross a concrete car wide bridge over a stream, to go through a metal field gate and *veer a little to the left* (285°) along a faint path diagonally across the field towards a wooden railing. In 200m go over a railed plank bridge across a water channel and *veer to the left* (260°) towards a wooden gate to the right of **Freshfield Mill Farm**. In 170m cross a gated two-railed footbridge over a ditch with a two-way signpost and pass the farm buildings to the right. In 40m cross a stile to the right of a metal field gate and head for the far-left corner of this pasture with a yellow arrow (the right of way on the map hugs the field boundary though). In 110m go through a wooden gate to the left of a wooden field gate and follow a tarmac drive to a main road where you *turn left*. You cross the **(Sussex) Ouse River** in 25m and in 70m **The Old Canal** on **Freshfield Bridges** by **The Sloop Inn**.

In 80m ignore a right turning signposted footpath along the drive to Ham House (the **Sussex Ouse Valley Way** [SOVW] joins along it) and in 50m you *turn left* with a signposted footpath through a double wooden field gate along an earth-and-gravel drive (signed 'Bacon Wish' and 'Field Cottage'). In 100m go over a low stile to the left of a wooden field gate into **Hammer Wood** (dense bluebells in season) and in 110m, you *fork right* into some trees along a narrow path with a footpath signpost (120°). The path climbs steadily uphill and in 270m you *bear right* further uphill and in 100m leave the wood through a wooden gate. Continue in the same direction through a pasture with newly planted trees on the right initially and in 100m at a three-way signpost the SBP turns right, while the SOVW and the GMT continue in the same direction.

Here you have a choice:

For the Alternative Ending at Sheffield Park (or for a 5.0 km out-and-back to it), you continue in the same direction with the SOVW and GMT along some trees on the right and pick up the directions at the end of this text under **Sheffield Park Ending**.

For the Main Walk, you *turn right* with a **West Sussex Border Path 1989** signpost along a gravel car wide track. In 90m *turn left* with a signpost along the gravel lane and past a camp site (**Kitts Camp**, <http://kittscamp.co.uk/>). In 50m continue in the same direction with a two-way signpost where the car wide track bears right to a metal field gate and in 25m enter **Lye Wood** through a wooden gate (dense bluebells in season). In 180m you join the drive and in 60m *turn right* along **Butterbox Lane** at a T-junction. In 210m *turn left* with a signpost through a hedge gap and across a stile into a pasture. You follow the left-hand boundary gently uphill and in 200m go over a stile and continue in the same direction through the next pasture along its left-hand boundary to the far-left corner 120m away and then follow the boundary around to the right with a signpost and in 50m *turn left* to leave the field in its far-right corner over a stile.

Veer left across the field on a bearing of 165° and once over the brow you should see a signpost just in front of the boundary treeline and head for that. *Turn right* with the signpost along the tree-lined boundary and in 150m leave this field through a wooden kissing gate and continue in the same direction through a fenced area past a three-way signpost, to cross **Pellingford Brook** on a car wide bridge. In 35m go over a stile to the right of a metal field gate and continue in the same direction up a sloping pasture. In 180m at the top of the rise at a three-way footpath signpost ignore a left turn and go through a wooden kissing gate to the right of a metal field gate to continue in the same direction along a car wide grassy track with a hedge on the left and a wood on the right, gently downhill. In 200m you have a grassy area on your right and a large pond away on the right ('**Clear Water**' on the OS map, hidden by trees though) and re-ascend.

In 330m in the far-left corner a footpath joins from the right at a three-way signpost and you continue in the same direction across a plank over a stream and through a wooden gate to the right of a metal field gate and follow a right-hand field boundary gently uphill. Ignore a wooden gate and a later metal field gate on the right as you ascend this field for 225m. Near the top you walk through a gap to the right of a metal field gate and cross a farm track and in another 30m walk through a metal kissing gate to the right of a metal field gate and in 15m *turn left* at a T-junction with a gravel track through **Great Noven Farm**. In 50m by another three-way signpost ignore the continuation ahead and *turn right* through a metal field gate and in 15m through another metal field gate into a pasture and continue in the same direction towards its bottom right-hand corner. In 170m leave the field past a redundant stile and descend to a wooden kissing gate and then cross a stream over a plank bridge into the **Red House Common** part of **Chailey Common Nature Reserve**.

[All parts of this large Nature Reserve are **Access Land**, i.e.: you can walk anywhere, but the text describes a suggested route.] *Fork left* and in 30m cross a car wide track by a footpath marker post with a **Sussex Hospices Trail** marker (crossing is: '**The Link Walk**') and continue in the same direction uphill through the sloping heather, gorse and bracken covered common. The aim is 350m away – and not visible from here – on a bearing of 155°: a clear tree-lined car wide track at the top of the rise to the left of the fenced **St. Georges** housing estate. There are a variety of indistinct paths to get there. **At the top of the rise** continue down the tree-lined track with a marker post and in 90m pass a stone building on the right. In 25m you get good views on the right of the **Chailey Windmill** and in 70m cross a tarmac lane. In 80m pass a two-way signpost and *turn left* along **Mill Lane**. In 50m go over a cattle grid or through a wooden gate to the right of it and in 80m reach the **A272** by a marker post.

[**North Chailey** village and its **bus stop for services to Haywards Heath or East Grinstead** stations is 300m away to the left.]

Cross the road and continue to the left of a row of cottages along a car wide gravel drive. In 75m go through a wooden gate to the right of a wooden field gate into the **Memorial Common** part of **Chailey Common Nature Reserve**. With the **South Downs** ridge looming ahead, ignore a right turn and in 15m ignore a wooden kissing gate in the fence on the left and in 25m pass an info panel, where you can see a church away on the right in the grounds of a school. Cross the common in broadly the previous direction to an exit 450m away. **In more detail:** Continue initially along a fence line then a row of trees on the left on a bearing of 210°. In 180m, just after a multi-stemmed birch tree on the left and by a bench, you reach a five-way junction. Continue a little to the left but broadly in the same direction along a narrow path between gorse bushes (250° initially). In 220m you pass a '**Link Walk**' marker post just before a road and then a footpath signpost by **Beggars Wood Road** and continue opposite along a car wide track into the **Pound Common** part of **Chailey Common Nature Reserve**.

In 30m you go through a wooden gate to the right of a cattle grid and, where the car wide track turns left, go through a wooden gate to the right of a wooden field gate into the common. You pass a pond on your left and [!] 40m from the far end of the pond you *turn right* along an indistinct path initially through trees then bracken and gorse (340°). In 80m you continue in the same direction along a path joining from the left behind. In 60m [!] *turn left* along a wider grassy path through the common (315° initially), gently uphill. In 100m you cross a broad grassy stretch (which on the left leads to a house visible several hundred metres away at the common's boundary). In 80m the path curves to the left and in another 30m it curves to the right. In 200m you walk to the left of a car barrier and across a gravel lane and under a height barrier and through a car park. Continue on a bearing of 245°, ignore a right fork in 40m, and in another 50m curve right to a road and cross it to enter a car park opposite.

This is the **Romany Ridge Common** part of **Chailey Common Nature Reserve** and you leave the car park in its left-hand corner over a plank bridge and past an info panel. Ignore clear paths to the left and right and *veer right* on a bearing of 310° along a grass path and in 20m *veer left* with the path (due W) and in 30m *veer right* through a grassy area. In 75m you enter an area of bracken and in 40m go through an often very boggy area to jump across a stream (**alternatively, 30m away to the right you find a raised plank bridge**). On the other side continue in the same direction and in 115m cross a broad grassy track (some houses are visible ahead about 150m away). In 100m you meet a tarmac lane and continue either along it or through the heather and grass to the left of it. In 35m walk through a wooden gate to the right of a cattle grid and follow the tarmac lane out of the **Chailey Common Nature Reserve**. In 180m pass **Gable Cottage** on the right and then pass a 'Private – No Public Access' sign.

In 150m by a sign for **Holford Manor & Holford Court** (on the OS map and visible a few hundred metres ahead), [!] you *turn left* with footpath markers through a wooden field gate into a pasture. **Note:** the route now follows a well-marked diversion of the public footpath as shown on the OS map! In 30m go over a stile by a two-way signpost and bear up to the left diagonally through a pasture. In 150m go over a stile by a two-way signpost with permissive footpath markers. *Bear up to the right* along a left-hand fence. In 80m go through a wooden field gate with another two-way signpost and in 100m go through a wooden field gate at the top of the gentle rise and turn left through a metal gate, back on the public footpath. In 90m go through metal field gates either side of a farm track and in another 90m [!] *turn left* through a wooden gate into a fenced area of **Newhouse Wood** (bluebells in season) and *turn right* through it, with **Wivelsden Farm** away on the right across a field.

In 100m leave the fenced area through a wooden gate and *turn right* along a gravel farm track towards the farm buildings. In 50m *turn left* along a grass track and in 40m *bear left* at a junction with the tarmac drive from the farm. In 40m at a signposted three-way footpath junction *turn right* along a tarmac car wide lane, past some solar panels on an earth bank on the right. In 70m continue ahead along a grass path along a wooden fence where the drive turns right into a yard and in 60m (having crossed a gravel track to some houses on the right), you *turn right* at the corner of **Roseland Wood** (lots of bluebells in season), along an unmarked hedged path. In 70m cross a track and continue downhill. In 50m *turn left* at the bottom of the wood and in 25m go over a stile into a pasture and continue along its left-hand boundary.

In 270m you go over a stile in the far-left field corner and *veer right* through the next pasture (245°). In 75m go over a couple of plank bridges either side of a stile and go up to a ladder stile and over it into another pasture. Follow its right-hand boundary and in 100m *veer left* with the barbed wire fence on the right. In 60m in the far-right corner go over a stile and cross a gravel drive to continue [!] over a stile *to the right* of a large

barn-type building and to the left of a small wooden shed. In 40m continue in the same direction at a signposted four-way footpath/bridleway junction by *turning right* over a ladder stile into a pasture and then *turning left* and following its left-hand field boundary. In 130m *turn left* over another ladder stile and *turn right* in the neighbouring pasture to continue in the previous direction. In 80m go over a stile and continue along a fenced grassy path by a footpath signpost on the left. You have **Wivelsfield Hall** away up on the right and in 200m go over a stile to leave the field and go through a large pasture and in 250m leave it through a metal kissing gate (another footpath joins from the left) onto the tarmac drive from the Hall and *turn left* along it.

In 40m cross **Slugwash Lane** (the SBP runs along it) and continue in the same direction through a wooden field gate with a signpost. Continue through a grassy area along a fence on the right and in 65m at the far end corner of a fence around a pond on the left, *bear left* to the corner of the fenced grassy area. [The prominent hill in the South Downs chain on the left on a bearing of 225° is **Wolstonbury Hill** south of Hassocks (SWC Book 2 Walk 23 Hassocks to Upper Beeding)]. In 30m go over a stile and continue in the same direction through a pasture on a bearing of 240° towards a large trough. In 150m just after passing the trough, you *bear right a little* (260°) towards a prominent gap in the far boundary tree line 280m away along a clear if narrow (animal) track through the grass. You leave the field by a redundant stile next to a missing field gate and continue in the same direction along a fenced track through a wooded area with some ponds on the right in the trees.

In 65m *turn left* over a stile into a pasture and *turn right*, initially along its fence, towards its far-right corner, with **More House** up on the right (on the OS map). In 150m leave the field over a stile onto the verge along the busy **B2112**, with a **bus stop for frequent services to Haywards Heath** station opposite. Cross the road and continue to the right of the bus stop through a metal gate by a footpath signpost into an arable field and follow a usually clear path across it (285°). In 250m at the opposite field boundary go through a metal gate in a hedge gap and *veer left* a little through the next field with a church up on the right behind a long stone wall. In 150m *turn left* through a metal gate to the right of a metal field gate and follow a fenced track around to the right. In 40m walk through a metal gate to the right of a metal field gate and *turn left* along a left-hand arable field boundary (with a ditch and a hedge on the left, 195°). In 180m go through a metal gate to the left of a metal field gate and continue in the same direction, ignoring a left turning footpath.

You follow this broad track between hedges to a wood fringed pond on your right and in 430m walk through a metal gate to the right of a metal field gate and *bear right* with the fence around the pond (260°). In 70m go through a squeeze gate to the right of a metal field gate and continue in the same direction and in 60m go through a wooden gate to the right of a wooden field gate at a signposted four-way footpath junction. Continue along the right most of the footpaths and in 20m continue ahead along a tarmac lane at a bend, ignoring a drive to the right (295°, signed **Great Ote Hall**). In 150m you continue in the same direction where the tarmac drive turns left to the last house on the left and in 20m walk through a gap to the right of a metal field gate. Follow a right-hand field boundary and in 100m ignore a signposted footpath to the right and go through a gap into the next field to continue in the same direction (with bluebells lining the verge on the right).

In 170m in the far corner enter the next field through a gap and *bear left* across it along a usually clear path (255°) to a point about halfway down the field. In 150m at the opposite boundary pass a two-way metal signpost and go through a wooden kissing gate to continue in the same direction along a fenced path between garden fences in **World's End**, the northerly reaches of **Burgess Hill**. Ignore all ways off, cross a

residential road and in 380m reach **Valebridge Road** by an info panel on the area. *Turn left* along the left-hand pavement and in 250m *turn right* at a roundabout, by **The Watermill Inn**. You pass a couple of **stores, a fish bar and a Thai** takeaway and in 50m, just before the railway bridge *turn left* up some steps and then *turn right* through an underpass past the ticket office to the far platform for services to London.

Forest Row Start (cut 3.6 km/2.2 mi)

From the bus stop by the **Chequers Inn** in Forest Row (in 2023 listed as "Britain's third poshest village to live in" by The Times), cross the road and take a signposted footpath through an archway under the buildings of **Ashdown Court** (to the left of a couple of shops). Continue through a courtyard and down some steps into a small parking area. On the far side continue along a gravel footpath, with a stream on the right and in 30m veer left with stream and path, now passing some houses to the left. Ignore a stile on the left and in 70m follow the path to the right across a footbridge over the stream and go uphill through an area of scrub. In 110m cross a stile and follow a fenced path along the right-hand edge of the field beyond. In 100m, in the corner of the field, cross a stile to the right of a rusty metal field gate, and in 10m cross another stile to the right of a black wooden barn. In 25m, just beyond the barn, *turn left* over a stile onto a car wide grassy track and *turn right* down along it. In 70m cross a stile to the right of a metal field gate and in 20m cross a stile to the left of a metal field gate to enter a field.

Carry on slightly to the left across this, heading for a stile in the left-hand corner of the field 100m away and continue along a path between trees, with a fence to your left. In 90m you have the **River Medway** on your right and can spot the remains of **Brambletye House** beyond it across a field. In 110m go through a metal field gate to the right of a metal field gate and cross a bridleway (leading to a stone bridge to the right) and continue in the same direction past a metal field gate and through a mud-prone grassy strip with newly planted trees (a pipeline has been put down here a few years back). In 350m go through a fence gap (a missing gate) and over a car-wide concrete bridge over a stream. Beyond this you *veer left* uphill, with a fence and hedge to your right. A couple of breaks in the hedge have (dilapidated) benches in them, with views to the right up to East Grinstead. In 250m, at the top of the hill, go through a squeeze gate and down a bank onto a tarmac lane. The Main Walk joins from the right along the lane. Continue to the left of a garden fence into a wood past a three-way signpost with **Greenwich Meridian Trail** and **L2B (London to Brighton)** markers (bluebells in season) and pick up the directions in the main walk at the asterisk *).

Sheffield Park Ending (cut 9.1 km/5.7 mi and 115m ascent)

[Sheffield Park station is another 2.5 km away, make sure you have enough time to take the last service back to East Grinstead, or a bus.]

In 20m you pass a pond on your right behind trees and continue in the same direction past a two-way signpost (on the right) between newly planted trees. In 115m pass another two-way signpost and go through a wooden gate into **Wapsbourne Wood**, largely a coppiced wood. In 50m pass a marker post and in 400m you *turn right* with a wooden barrier in front of you ('Private Woodland – No Public Right of Way') and a marker post and in 30m *turn right* again along a car wide forest track with a marker post and another wooden barrier across the track. [!] In 30m, where the broad track curves to the right, you *bear left* with a marker post on the right along a narrower forest track (200° initially). The path descends through the wood and in 250m you cross a two-railed footbridge over a ditch to a 'Welcome to Wapsbourne' sign and map and *turn left* along a grassy path with a fence on the right and an arable field behind.

In 130m you have a pasture on the left behind a fence and in 80m the wood is again on your left. In 70m you go over a broken stile in a hedge gap and *turn right* on the other side along a fenced grassy path. In 50m walk through a wooden kissing gate and continue in the same direction across a small grassy area and in 30m merge with a drive from the left and go through a double metal field gate. *Turn left* at a bend of a tarmac drive (a signposted three-way footpath junction, the GMT continues ahead, the SOVW turns left) and follow this for 520m, in 340m by a left turn through a field to the **360° Brewery & Taproom** crossing the **Pellingford Brook** to ascend with the lane. In 180m, just before a T-junction with the busy **A275** you *turn left* along a grassy field boundary with a two-way signpost. In 80m by an info panel, *fork down to the right* along an earth path to the A road and cross it carefully to continue in the same direction along the opposite grassy verge.

In 50m you pass a part of the former railway bridge of the dismantled East Grinstead – Lewes line on your left, now serving as sidings of the **Bluebell Line**. In 50m cross a tarmac drive leading to a business park and in 40m pass the **Railway Cottages** on the other side of the road. In 130m you cross the road and continue in the same direction along the pavement opposite. In 100m, where the SOVW turns right by a four-way signpost, you *turn left* towards **Sheffield Park Station**, the southerly terminus of the Bluebell Line. In 130m by a car park on the left, you pass the bus stop for (Saturday only) services to Lewes or Haywards Heath (change in North Chailey for the latter) or a (summer Sundays only) direct bus to Haywards Heath. Continue along a paved path to the station building 60m away. The **Bessemer Arms** is in the left-hand side building.