

Clockwise walk sections one and two last checked	Clockwise walk section three last checked	Anti-clockwise walk last checked	
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Lewes Circular via Glynde and Southease

An energetic walk over three South Down ridges with great views

Length: 23.5km (14.6 miles)

- Lewes to Glynde	6.3km (3.9 miles)
- Glynde to Southease	6.4km (4.0 miles)
- Southease to Lewes	10.8km (6.7 miles)

Toughness: 7 out of 10: three steep climbs, but mostly level walking on good paths with easy navigation

Maps: Explorer OL11 (formerly 122), Landranger 198

Features

This is an energetic walk (550 metres or 1,600 feet of ascent) over three distinct downland ridges, with magnificent views throughout. One of the pleasures of the walk is that the entire route is in view for much of the walk, so you can look back at the terrain you have already done or ahead to the delights to come. Navigation is easy, the walking is over wide and distinct paths, and while there are three substantial climbs, most of the walk is flat, gently undulating or downhill.

As well as plenty of grand downland walking, the route includes a start and finish in historic Lewes, quaint corners of which you see both at the start and end of the walk, an optional detour to Mount Caburn (Iron Age fort) with its dramatic viewpoint of the whole circuit, and the pleasant small village of Glynde. You also pass the remote station of Southease, with its YHA cafe nearby. You can do the walk either clockwise or anti-clockwise - see **Walk Options** below.

Walk options

Directions are given to do this walk anti-clockwise (Lewes-Southease-Glynde-Lewes) or clockwise (Lewes-Glynde-Southease-Lewes). There is not much to choose between them in terms of views or gradients climbed: rather it is the length of sections and the positioning of lunch and tea options:

Anti-clockwise (directions on page 3-5) is in many ways better. It has the advantage that you get the long Lewes to Southease section out of the way first, and this provides a decent length section before you get to lunch at the Abergavenny Arms in Rodmell. Doing the Lewes to Southease section in this direction also means you have a long pleasant descent with fine views to

Rodmell. In the afternoon, the Little Cottage Tea Rooms in Glynde (if they are open) are a possible tea stop, though sadly there is no longer a pub stop in the village. You then have an exhilarating finish over Mount Caburn that brings you directly down into the part of Lewes with the best tea options (Cliffe High Street). If tired, you can omit this last section and still enjoy a 17.2km (10.7 mile walk).

Clockwise (directions page on 6-8) leaves the longest section, Lewes to Southease, till last, and you face a long slow climb up to the highest point on the walk as part of this. If you feel too tired to tackle this, you have to finish the walk at Southease, after just 12.7km (7.9 miles). Now that the Trevor Arms in Glynde has closed, the first possible pub stop is even further on, in Rodmell, after 14.5km (9 miles), though the Little Cottage Tea Rooms in Glynde is an earlier option if they are open, as is the YHA Cafe at Southease.

You can also obviously do the circular walk starting in Glynde or Southease, though if doing the latter by train, note that the last train leaves at around 7.30pm and, the YHA cafe excepted, there are no pubs or facilities at this station, and only a basic shelter on its platforms.

Shorter walk options As there is a station at the start and end of each section of this walk, you can do any one section as a walk in its own right, or any two consecutive ones (even starting at Southease, lunching in Lewes and finishing in Glynde or vice versa). If you are planning to walk from Lewes to Southease clockwise, however, you may like to consider the Lewes via West Firle walk on this website which covers some extra territory not included on this route.

Longer walk options: Heroic types might like to substitute the directions for the Lewes via West Firle walk on this website for the clockwise section two of this walk from Glynde to Southease, taking in a longer downland section and the pretty village of West Firle with its possible lunch stop at the Ram Inn. To do this, follow the directions in this document as far as the end of clockwise section one and then follow the Lewes via West Firle directions from point [3]. At Southease carry on with clockwise section 3 of this walk. This adds **6.3km (4 miles)** to the walk, making a total walk length of **30km (18.5 miles)**.

Transport

Trains to **Lewes** go twice hourly from Victoria (hourly on Sundays). The recommended train for the anticlockwise walk is the one closest to 9.45am, but if doing the clockwise walk and aiming to lunch in Rodmell the 9.15am might be a good idea.

To start at Glynde or Southease (hourly trains in either case), change at Lewes. Connections are usually better for the Southease trains than the Glynde ones.

If aiming to finish the walk at either Glynde or Southease, a day return to these stations is valid for return via Lewes.

Lunch and tea

*The **Trevor Arms**, the pub in Glynde has sadly now closed.*

The **Little Cottage Tea Rooms** 01273 8589215 www.littlecottagetearooms.co.uk next to the post office in Glynde, serves cream teas in a pleasant garden from noon to 5pm Wednesday to Sunday and bank holidays (daily from July to October). In winter opening hours "depend on the weather", but they may open specially for walking groups if you phone ahead.

The **YHA** by Southease station has a cafe, but it is only open till 4pm. It re-opens from 6pm-8pm to serve dinner (non-residents are apparently welcome). Outside those times, the reception of the YHA has a tea and coffee machine and serves snacks and cakes - again, non-residents are apparently welcome.

Abergavenny Arms, Rodmell 01273 572416 www.abergavennyarms.com is a popular pub with a pleasant outdoor terrace and is now the only possible lunch pub on this walk. It is open 12pm to 11pm (10pm on Sunday) but serves food only 12pm-3pm and 6pm to 9pm Monday to Saturday and 12pm to 4pm and 6pm to 8pm Sunday. Cream teas are served Wednesday to Saturday from 3pm to 5.30pm.

In **Lewes** the pedestrianised **Cliffe High Street** (the first bit of the town you come to on the anti-clockwise route) now has many pleasant cafes and eating places, as well as some fine old pubs. In the clockwise direction the **Landsdown Arms** 100 metres up the hill from the station is a characterful and popular pub, and continuing up the hill to the left of this pub brings you to **Lewes' high street**, where there are other tea options, such as the **White Hart Hotel** immediately to the left.

Anti-clockwise

Section 1: Lewes to Southease **(10.8km/6.7 miles)**

1. Coming out of the main entrance of Lewes station, turn right on Station Road, which crosses the railway.
2. In 100 metres turn left on Southover Road.
3. In 120 metres cross over Garden Street and enter the flint-walled arched gate of **Southover Grange Gardens**. Continue on the path inside the gardens, with the flint wall to your right.
4. After 70 metres take the path off to the left across the lawn. Then after 40 metres (and 20 metres before some toilets) turn right just before the watercourse.
5. In 80 metres pass through a stone arch and turn left on a red brick path across a footbridge and veer right to exit the gardens through an arch in the far corner. Turn left uphill on a road.
6. In 50 metres, at a junction with the Kings Head pub on your left, turn right, still on Southover High Street.
7. Continue along this street passing Southover parish church on your left and, in 200 metres Anne of Cleves House on your right.
8. In 400 metres more cross a mini-roundabout and veer slightly left with the main road, passing the Swan Inn on your right.
9. In 20 metres turn right up Juggs Road, taking the bridleway to the left of the road.
10. In 200 metres veer left with the road over a bridge high over the A27 in a deep cutting below you. Beyond, veer right again with the road, climbing steadily uphill.
11. In a further 200 metres, at the top of the hill, the lane becomes a car-wide track. Keep straight on down this.
12. In 300 metres go through a wooden gate and follow the path in the same direction as before across the centre of a field, heading for two diverging paths on the downland escarpment visible after about 100 metres.
13. In 500 metres exit the field through a wooden gate to go past some stables on your right and a mock-Tudor house on your left. The path becomes a tarmac lane.
14. In 150 metres cross over a road (**take care**, as traffic comes quite fast), and continue up the tarmac lane opposite.
15. In 400 metres, where the lane ends at a junction of tracks, keep straight on up a potentially muddy, fenced-in car-wide track.
16. In 300 metres go through a metal gate to the left of a metal fieldgate and continue uphill.
17. In 80 metres, where the path divides, take the left fork to follow the path upwards.
18. Ignore all ways off until you come in 600 metres to the top of the hill, where the track merges with the South Downs Way, as indicated by a blue bridleway arrow.
19. Veer left on the South Downs Way, along the escarpment. In 70 metres you pass through a wooden gate, and continue along the ridge with a barbed wire fence on your right and magnificent views to the left.
20. You are now on a car-wide track right along the edge of the ridge. In 250 metres this curves around a natural bowl, and in 250 metres more turns right around a much larger bowl.
21. In 150 metres, at the apex of this second, larger bowl, ignore a concrete farm track slanting sharply left downhill, and the double fieldgates to the right that it leads to, and keep straight ahead. But in another 150 metres go through a wooden gate to your right, following the South Downs Way signpost
22. In 60 metres, you come to a concrete track. Turn left down this.

23. After a long gentle descent, with fine views ahead, in 1.6km cross a track and pass through a gate into another field and carry on down its left-hand edge.
24. In 400 metres again pass through a gate, cross a track and pass through another gate and again keep on down the left-hand edge of the next field.
25. In 300 metres pass through a gate and on down a fenced-in footpath.
26. In 300 metres at a crossroads, with the gates of Mill Hill House to your right, turn left downhill on a road and continue the directions in paragraph 27.
 - **If you are not planning to have lunch at the Abergavenny Arms**, you can keep straight ahead at this junction, staying on the South Downs Way, which descends a hillside coming to a gate at the bottom. Beyond the gate turn left onto a track passing through a fieldgate in 60 metres. In another 30 metres turn left at a track T-junction and follow a track along the bottom of a valley. In 1km as the track comes to a line of trees, turn right off it, following the South Downs Way sign, up a path alongside a fence (initially to the left, then to the right). In 80 metres pass through a gate and curve right and then left with the path up a hill to come to another gate and a road junction beyond. Cross a minor road and carry on along the edge of the main road. In 20-30 metres cross the main road with care and go down a side road signposted to Southease Village. In 150 metres Southease church is on your right (with a useful drinking water tap by its front gate). Continue with the directions in paragraph 31 below.
27. In 800 metres you come to the main road and the centre of **Rodmell**, with the **Abergavenny Arms**, the recommended lunchstop, ahead.
28. After lunch, come out of the pub and turn left on the main road.
29. In 200 metres, just after the last house on the left, turn left up a tarmac driveway and immediately turn right onto a stony path, signposted as a permissive footpath. This brings you out onto the edge of a field. Follow this down into a dip for 250 metres and through a gate into another field.
30. Carry on along the field edge (the field fenced off to your left) for 400 metres,

as it turns left, right and then left again and comes down to a gate. Pass through this and immediately turn right through another gate onto a road. Turn left downhill on this, passing Southease Church on your right in 70 metres.

31. In another 200 metres the road emerges into open country, and in 300 metres more it crosses the River Ouse. In 250 metres it turns left and in another 150 **metres comes to Southease** station. Trains to Lewes are on this side of the tracks.

Section 2: Southease to Glynde (6.4km/4.0 miles)

1. Coming of the platform at Southease if arriving from Lewes, do not cross the line, but take the road leading east away from the station. (If coming from section one, cross the line by the level crossing or footbridge and carry on down the road)
2. In 150 metres the **YHA Courtyard Cafe** is just ahead of you, but your onward route is to turn right up a track marked by a three-armed signpost, the South Downs Way.
3. Follow the track as it turns left in 60 metres and climbs up onto a footbridge to cross over the main road in another 100 metres. 100 metres after the bridge merge with a track from the left and curve right with the track across the slope.
4. In 120 metres you pass through a gate to the right of a fieldgate. A **short cut path** leads directly up the hill to the left here, coming out at the end of the fence mentioned in paragraph 6 below. But **for a gentler climb** keep straight ahead on the track.
5. **[!]** In 300 metres more, 100 metres before a cattle stockade ahead of you, fork left to keep on the SDW, now a grassy track that slants back across the hillside, with a fence soon starting to the right.
6. In 400 metres, where the fence ends, curve uphill to the top of the ridge, and follow it eastwards, with fine views of Newhaven to your right and of Lewes to your left.
7. In 300 metres go through a gate and keep on, in 180 metres passing a trig point on your left.
8. In another 1km, at a four-way junction with communication masts visible on the

hill 300 metres ahead, turn left downhill on a track (initially part tarmac).

9. Follow this track all the way downhill. In 1.5km it levels out and becomes a road and in 500 metres more comes to the A27.
10. Cross this road with care using the central strip, and carry on down the road into Glynde. In 700 metres you pass the site of the former Trevor Arms, now closed, on the left, and shortly afterwards the road curves left across the railway bridge. The entrance to **Glynde station** is just beyond this on the left.

Section 3: Glynde to Lewes **(6.3km/3.9 miles)**

1. Coming out of Glynde station, follow the approach road down to the main road through Glynde village and carry on along it. (Or if coming from section two above, simply keep on past the station on the road.)
2. 250 metres after the station approach road joins the road (and just after Glynde Forge on your right), turn left up a side road, Ranscombe Lane.
3. In 30 metres you come to the **Little Cottage Tea Rooms** on your left. In another 10 metres turn right through a gate and follow the path up across a field.
4. In 150 metres cross a stile to the left of a metal fieldgate into another field and carry on uphill on a wide grassy path with a fence to your left.
5. In 500 metres exit this field through a kissing gate and carry on up the open downland on a faint grassy path.
6. In another 500 metres you come to a fence with a stile in it. *Turning left just before this stile brings you to the summit of Mount Caburn, which has panoramic views but adds 500 metres or so to the walk.* However the onward route is to turn right before stile and follow the fence over a low hill.
7. In 400 metres, 200 metres beyond the crest of the hill, cross a stile and keep ahead across a flat hill.
8. In 350 metres cross a stile between two fieldgates. Beyond, veer left on a grassy path towards a dip, ignoring a chalk track ahead and slightly to the right.
9. In 100 metres cross a chalk track in the dip and slant left up a grassy track leading to the summit of the hill ahead.
10. In 200 metres, when you come to the summit, carry straight on, aiming for a kissing gate near a corner in the fence 180 metres away.
11. Pass through this kissing gate onto a well-defined path along the side of the ridge, with a valley to your left. Follow this path, at first fairly level, later gently downhill, for 1.8km.
12. After that distance, you come to a hedge ahead, with the escarpment unseen beyond and a bank of vegetation to your right. Here go through a kissing gate in the right-hand corner to emerge onto a road with a grey golf club building ahead.
13. Turn left on the road and follow it downhill. In 600 metres, after a steep descent past pretty houses in its later stages, you come to a crossroads at the bottom of the hill. Ahead is the pedestrianised **Cliffe High Street**, which has several cafes and pubs.
14. Follow Cliffe High Street to its end, crossing the River Ouse. At the end of the pedestrian section turn left on a road. In 80 metres keep ahead at a roundabout. In 300 metres more you come to a crossroads with the **Landsdown Arms** pub on the right. **Lewes station** is visible downhill to the left.

Clockwise

Section 1: Lewes to Glynde (6.3km/3.9 miles)

1. Coming out of the main exit of Lewes station, turn right across the railway bridge. In 100 metres turn right down Landsdown Place (not named here).
2. In 300 metres go straight on at a mini-roundabout. In another 80 metres turn right onto the pedestrianised high street.
3. In 80 metres cross the river and continue along Cliffe High Street until it ends at a junction with Malling Street. Cross this and go more or less straight on up a small road called Chapel Hill.
4. Follow this road which soon climbs steeply uphill. After 200 metres the houses end and in another 70 metres you can take the path parallel to the road to the right, which gives you fine views over Lewes.
5. In another 300 metres you come to the car park and clubhouse of Lewes Golf Club. Pass to the right of this and through a wooden gate onto open downland. Turn left onto a clear path past a water trough.
6. In 300 metres keep left at a fork marked by a large wooden post on a path that slants gently uphill along the ridge, ignoring the right fork which descends into a valley.
7. In 1km pass through a gate to the left of a fieldgate and keep on along a more level path, now with a steeper slope to your right.
8. In another 500 metres, at the top of the ridge ahead, pass through a kissing gate and turn half right over the summit of a low hill 180 metres away, ignoring a path that skirts to the right of the summit.
9. Beyond the summit carry on down a grassy track into a dip (at the head of bowl in the hillside). At the bottom of the dip in 200 metres cross a chalk track and carry on uphill to a stile between fieldgates in 100 metres. Cross this and keep straight on up a grassy slope on faint grass track.
10. In 350 metres cross a stile to the left of a fieldgate, ignoring a gap into a field to the right of the fieldgate.

11. You now have a fence on your right and are climbing steadily along the top of the ridge. In 200 metres you come to the crest of the hill and carry on gently downhill, still on the ridge line, with Mount Caburn visible ahead.
12. In 60 metres more, 300 metres before Mount Caburn and level with a fieldgate to the right, turn left downhill at a footpath post. Ignore a grassy track straight ahead and instead veer slightly right on a faint grassy path, passing to the right of a water trough in 80 metres. *(If you want to visit Mount Caburn with its fine panoramic views, adding 800 metres to the walk, do not turn right at the post but keep straight ahead along the fence, and then when coming off the mount turn right downhill at the first stile in the fence.)*
13. Carrying on downhill, in 400 metres pass through a kissing gate and keep straight on downhill on a car-wide grassy path with a fence to your right.
14. In 500 metres cross a stile in the lower right-hand corner of the field and continue downhill.
15. In 150 metres go through a wooden gate onto a road. The **Little Cottage Tea Rooms** is opposite here. Turn left in front of it and at the main road in 30 metres turn right. In 250 metres the approach road to **Glynde station** is on your right.

Section 2: Glynde to Southease (6.4km/4.0 miles)

1. Coming out Glynde station, walk down its approach road, and turn sharp right on the main road through Glynde village. (Or, if coming from section 1 carry on past the station on the road.) *On the right just after crossing the railway bridge is the former site of the **Trevor Arms**, now closed.*
2. Follow the road down through the village, ignoring ways off, until you come to the busy A27. **Cross this with care**, using the central strip.
3. Beyond keep straight on up a side road, heading directly for the downs. The road becomes a track and starts to climb after 500 metres.
4. In another 1.5km you come to the crest of the downs, with communications masts visible to the right. Turn right

here at a signposted crosspaths, joining the South Downs Way, initially a gravel track. There is a fine view of Newhaven to your left.

5. In 1km you pass a trigonometry point on your left and the path starts to go gently downhill. In another 150 metres you pass through a gate.
6. In 300 metres more the path starts to descend more steeply. In 100 metres the path swings to the left, picking up a fence.
7. In 400 metres you come down to a junction with a track and turn sharp right on it, still on the South Downs Way.
8. In another 500 metres, just after the path swings left downhill towards the main road, fork left off it over the footbridge. On the far side of the bridge follow the path as it curves right to a track T-junction.
9. To the right at this junction is the YHA's **Courtyard Cafe**, but your onward route is to turn left, which brings you in 150 metres to **Southease station**. Trains to Lewes go from the platform on the far side.

Section 3: Southease to Lewes **(10.8km/6.7 miles)**

1. Coming off the train from Lewes at Southease station, cross over the footbridge or level crossing to carry on down a lane that curves left. (Or if coming from section two, cross the railway line and carry on down the road.)
2. The road soon curves right and in 250 metres crosses the River Ouse. In another 350 metres you come to the village of **Southease** (not named here), and the road starts to climb. In 150 metres there is a church on the left and in front of it there is a drinking water tap.
3. Otherwise, ignore the turning left to the church and carry on up the road. 70 metres beyond the church, a permissive path is signposted to the right. **Here you have a choice.**
 - **To have lunch or tea at the Abergavenny Arms**, take the permissive path to the right, signposted to Rodmell. Follow the directions in paragraph 4 below.
 - **If you do not intend to have lunch or tea at the Abergavenny Arms in Rodmell**, stay on the road for another 70 metres until a T-junction with a main road. Cross the main road with care and turn right. In 30 metres cross over a side road and pass through a gate into a field. Follow the path downhill, and around to the right and then to the left to another gate in 100 metres. Beyond follow a path along a fence. In 80 metres more turn left on a track along the bottom of a valley. After 1km, just before you come to a farm, the SDW is signposted to the right. Pass through a gate in 30 metres and then in 60 metres turn right through a gate onto the open hillside. Follow the grassy path uphill, curving left until in 300 metres or so you come to the top of the hill. 100 metres beyond it pass through a gate in the field corner, go straight on across a junction with a lane right and a gated house called Mill Hill left, onto a fenced path. Resume the walk directions below at paragraph 11.
4. Pass through a gate to the right of a fieldgate in 30 metres, and then turn left through a gate following the footpath sign, to walk up the left-hand edge of a field.
5. At the top of the field the path turns right along its edge, and is now parallel to the main road to the left.
6. The path descends for 250 metres into a dip, passes through a gate into a next field, and then starts to climb.
7. In 250 metres more, at the top of the slope with a house visible 80 metres ahead, veer left into the scrub, following a white arrow on a post, on a gravel path that brings you to the main road.
8. Carry on down the main road and the **Abergavenny Arms** is in 200 metres on the right.
9. After lunch or tea come out of the pub, cross the main road with care and veer slightly to the left up a side road.
10. Keep on up this road, ignoring ways off, to the very top of the hill in 800 metres. Here the road ends at the gates of a house called Mill Mill. Go right in front of the gates, onto a fenced path, joining the South Downs Way.
11. In 300 metres pass through a gate and carry on down the right-hand edge of a field.

12. In 300 metres more cross a track and go through another gate into a field, still keeping to its right-hand edge.
13. In 400 metres emerge into a vast field and carry on up it on a concrete track.
14. A very long climb ensues, with the best views behind you. In 1.6km the track finally comes to a fence and turns left. Here go right, onto a grassy path that leads to the escarpment edge, with the fence to your left.
15. In 60 metres turn left through a gate and follow the South Downs Way along the escarpment edge, with a fence to your left.
16. In 150 metres merge with a track coming uphill from the right, and carry on along it, still on the edge of the escarpment.
17. In 500 metres the track veers left across a cattle grid into a field*. Keep straight ahead here, across the grass, passing through a gate to the right of fieldgate in 100 metres.
** A path to the right here leads steeply down the escarpment to the village of Kingston and the pleasant Juggs Inn, but this refreshment stop is off the main walk route and you would need a map to finish the walk.*
18. 80 metres after the gate **[!] fork right** at a three-armed footpath sign, leaving the South Downs Way, and following a sign for 'Public Bridleway to Kingston and Lewes'.
19. Over the brow of the hill this becomes a gravel track, heading down the escarpment. Follow this for 600 metres to the bottom of the hill. Here it merges with another track from the left and carries on between fields, with a hedgerow to the right.
20. In 100 metres the track passes through a gate to the right of a fieldgate, and in another 300 metres it becomes a residential road.
21. In another 400 metres cross a busier road and go straight on up a tarmac driveway.
22. In 180 metres emerge into a field and keep straight on across it, initially with a fence and windmill to your left. (Turn around while crossing this field for fine views of the ridge you have just done).
23. In 700 metres, at the end of the field, pass through a gate and on up a path under trees, with a fenced field to your right.
24. In 300 metres the path becomes a tarmac lane, which in 400 metres turns left to cross the A27 on high bridge. Beyond the bridge turn right with the lane to carry on downhill.
25. In 300 metres the lane becomes a residential road. Continue ahead, ignoring side turnings, and in 70 metres you come to a T-junction with a main road and turn left onto it.
26. In 60 metres at a mini-roundabout veer right down Southover High Street (named but the sign is not obvious from this angle).
27. You can stay on this road for 800 metres until the station is signposted to the left. Or in 500 metres, just before the Kings Head pub, turn left downhill on a side road.
28. In 80 metres fork right through a stone arch into Southover Park. Take the red brick path to cross a bridge with black metal railings.
29. 20 metres beyond the bridge turn right through an arch, and head for the far left-hand edge of the green space beyond. Here pick up a tarmac path and follow this to a gate onto the road in the far corner of the park.
30. Go straight ahead down this road, ignoring a side road downhill to the right. In 200 metres you come to a crossroads. Lewes station is 100 metres downhill to the right. To the left, uphill, is the town centre, with tea options. Going straight on for 300 metres brings you to the pedestrianised part of the town, with further refreshment options.