

Pulborough to Halfway Bridge (via Tillington)		
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Pulborough to Halfway Bridge (via Tillington)

Start: Pulborough Station

Finish: Halfway Bridge Bus Stop

Pulborough Station, map reference TQ 042 186 is 67 km south west of Charing Cross and 10m above sea level. Halfway Bridge Bus Stop, map reference SU 929 218, is 3 km east of Midhurst and 27m above sea level. Both are in **West Sussex**.

Length: 26.0 km (16.1 mi), of which 8.7 km (5.4 mi) on tarmac or concrete.

Cumulative ascent/descent: 439/422m.

For a shorter walk, *see below* **Walk options**.

Toughness: 8 out of 10

Time: 6 hours 20 minutes net walking time.

For the whole outing, including trains, sights and meals, allow at least 11 hours.

Transport: Pulborough station is on the London Victoria to Southampton West Coastway Line through the Arun Valley. Journey times are from 71 minutes Mon - Sat (two trains an hour), and 77 minutes on Sunday (hourly). Halfway Bridge is a stop on bus line 1 (Midhurst – Worthing via Pulborough Station).

The bus runs hourly from Midhurst on xx.30, then 17.40 and 18.45 (Sundays & Bank Holidays: two-hourly 08.30 to 18.30), passes Halfway Bridge 4 minutes later, and arrives at Pulborough station in another 26.

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

OS Landranger Map: 197 (Chichester & the South Downs)

OS Explorer Map: OL10 (Arundel & Pulborough)

Walk Notes:

This walk is a winding excursion through the Rother and Lod valleys in central West Sussex, routing through various quaint, remote villages, some atmospheric woods and several fine commons, part-wooded, part sandy heathland. Frequent southerly views of the South Downs and of Black Down to the north and long stretches in deep, shady holloways add to the mix, making this a very varied outing.

After leaving Pulborough on a westerly route familiar from other walks, past the picturesque Stopham Bridge and church and on to Littleworth Common, the walk leads in a southerly direction through the Rother valley and picks up the Serpent Trail Long Distance Path up to the idyllic Sutton Common heathland and various woods to Burton Park, a large estate with multiple ponds in a fold of the South Downs.

Leaving the Serpent Trail, the two recommended lunch options are back in the Rother valley, in Coultershaw Bridge and Tillington, and in the afternoon the route rises to Upperton and Hoe Hill, in between dropping into the Lod Valley through woods and fields. The finish is a descent back to the Lod River at Halfway Bridge, where another well-run pub helps whiling away the wait for the bus back to Pulborough.

Note: The route off Hoe Hill includes a tricky descent down a very narrow and slippery gully.

Walk options:

Bus line 1 (Midhurst – Worthing via Pulborough Station) follows the A 272 and 283 through the area.

Convenient stops for shortcuts are:

- **Tillington** (the late lunch-stop: 16.1 km/10.1 mi);
- **Petworth** (reached after lunch via an alternative route through Petworth Park: 19.5 km/12.1 mi).

The bus leaves Midhurst hourly on xx.30, then 17.40 and 18.45 (Sun: two-hourly to 18.30) and stops at Tillington 8 and Petworth 15 mins later.

A Morning Shortcut cuts out Sutton Common heathland (cuts 1.2 km and 48m ascent).

An Afternoon Shortcut stays largely level at the top of some hanging woods and cuts out several more woods and the last sharp ascents around Hoe Hill by taking a much more direct route through the Lod valley (cuts 4.4 km and 135m ascent). Rated **7/10**.

For an epic walk, use the alternative route after lunch through Petworth Park to Petworth and there pick up SWC 128's Pulborough Ending.

Lunch:

The Swan Inn (Hotel) Lower Street *Fittleworth, Petworth, West Sussex RH20 1EN* (01798 865 154, <http://www.swaninnhotel.com/>). The Swan Inn is located 5.4 km (3.3 mi) into the walk and suitably located for late starters. Open 08.30-23.00 daily (-22.30 Sun). Food served 12.00-14.15 and 18.30-21.15 Mon-Sat and all day Sun. The Swan has acted as a coaching inn since 1536, having grown from a 12th century Saxon enclosure that offered food and lodgings to weary travellers, to the building that you see today. The earliest parts of the inn are dated to 1382.

The Old Railway Station Coultershaw, *Petworth, West Sussex, GU28 0JF* (01798 342 346, <http://www.old-station.co.uk/>). The ORS is located 13.1 km (8.2 mi) into the walk, 200m off route.

The Badgers Station Road, *Coultershaw Bridge, Petworth, West Sussex GU28 0JF* (01798 342 651, <http://badgerspetworth.co.uk/>). The Badgers is located 13.0 km (8.1 mi) into the walk, 100m off route. Open 11.00-23.00 daily. Food served 12.00-14.30 and 18.00-late Mon-Sat and 12.00-late Sun.

The Horse Guards Inn Upperton Road, *Tillington, West Sussex GU28 9AF* (01798 342 332, <http://www.thehorseguardsinn.co.uk/>). The Horse Guards is located 16.0 km (10.0 mi) into the walk. Open all day every day. Lunch served 12.00-14.30 Mon-Fri, 12.00-15.00 Sat and 12.00-15.30 Sun. Dinner 18.30-21.00 Sun-Thu and 18.00-21.30 Fri-Sat.

Tea:

The Hollist Arms *Lodsworth, Petworth, West Sussex GU28 9BZ* (01798 861 610, <https://www.thehollistarms.com/>). The Hollist Arms is located 1.6 km (1.0 mi) from the end of the walk. Open all day every day. Food served 12.00-14.30 and 19.00-21.00 (not Sun evening).

The Lodsworth Larder *Lodsworth, Petworth, West Sussex GU28 9BZ* (01798 861 947, <http://lodsworthlarder.com/>). The Larder is a community run, eco-friendly, village shop, located 1.6 km (1.0 mi) from the end of the walk. Open 08.00-18.00 Mon-Fri, 08.00-17.00 Sat and 08.30-12.30 Sun.

The Halfway Bridge *Lodsworth, Petworth, West Sussex GU28 9BP* (01798 861 281, <http://www.halfwaybridge.co.uk/>). The Halfway Bridge is located at the end of the walk. Open 11.00-23.00 daily. Food served 12.00-14.00 and 18.00-21.00 Mon-Fri and 12.00-21.00 Sat-Sun.

In Pulborough

The Banyan Tree 19 Swan Corner *Pulborough, West Sussex RH20 1RJ* (01798 874 141, <http://www.thebanyantreerestaurant.co.uk/>). The Banyan Tree is located 300m beyond the end of the walk. The Restaurant is open to 23.00 daily, the café open to 17.00 Tue-Sun.

The Oddfellow Arms 99 Lower Street *Pulborough, West Sussex RH20 2BP* (01798 875 282, <http://www.theoddfellowsarms.org.uk/index>). The Oddfellows is located 1.2 km/0.7 mi beyond the end of the walk. Open 11.00-23.00 Mon-Sat and 12.00-18.00 Sun. Food served 12.00-14.30 and 18.00-21.00 Mon-Sat and 12.00-16.00 Sun.

Chequers Hotel Old Rectory Lane *Pulborough, West Sussex RH20 1AD* (01798 872 486, <http://chequershotelpulborough.co.uk/>). The Chequers is located 650m beyond the end of the walk.

Notes:

Pulborough

Pulborough is located almost centrally within West Sussex, 70 km south west of London. It is at the junction of the north-south A 29 and the east-west A 283 roads. The village is near the confluence of the River Arun and the River Rother and looks southwards over the broad flood plain of the tidal Arun to a backdrop of the South Downs. Historically, it was a fording place over the River Arun used by the Romans, who had a *mansio* across the river at Hardham, one day's march from Chichester on the London road, Stane Street. The Saxons bridged the River Arun here and at nearby Stopham, north of its confluence with the River Rother. The Normans built Pulborough Castle, an earthwork motte and bailey in a prominent position overlooking the junction of the Rother and Arun, which were key Sussex transportation routes. One of the main attractions near Pulborough is the RSPB Pulborough Brooks Nature Reserve, which takes advantage of the winter flooding of the Arun Valley to give a boost to birdlife. Each year, Pulborough hosts a lawn mower race which runs continuously for 12 hours. On August bank holiday, the Pulborough duck race society hosts its annual duck race, a charity event.

Wey-South Path

The 58 km (36 mi) Wey-South Path runs from Guildford to Houghton Bridge, following the route of the River Wey, the River Arun and the canal linking them.

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. <http://www.hospicestrail.co.uk/>

The Arun River

At 60 km (37 mi) long, it is the longest river entirely in Sussex and one of the longest in Sussex after the Medway, Wey and Mole. From the series of small streams that form its source in St. Leonard's Forest in the Weald, the Arun flows westwards through Horsham to Nowhurst where it is joined by the North River. Turning to the south, it is joined by its main tributary, the western River Rother, near Stopham and continues through a gap in the South Downs to Arundel to join the Channel at Littlehampton. The mouth of the river has not always been there, though. Until the later 15th century the Arun joined the River Adur at Lancing some 16 km to the east before entering the sea. This estuary became blocked with shingle by the eastward drift of the tides, pushing the Adur towards Shoreham-by-Sea, while the Arun eventually formed its present estuary at Littlehampton between 1500 and 1530.

It is one of the faster flowing rivers in England (some sources say the second fastest after the Severn), and is tidal as far inland as Pallingham Quay, 41 km (25.5 mi) upstream from the sea.

In Roman times the Arun was called the *Trisantonis*, thought to be Brythonic for 'the trespasser', indicating the river's tendency to flood land near to the river. A name derived from this, the Tarrant, is reflected in the road name Tarrant Street, which runs through Arundel.

Stopham Village/Manor House/Bridge

The parish is bounded to the east by the River Arun, spanned by the Grade I listed Stopham Bridge. The River Rother forms the southern boundary of the parish from its confluence with the Arun below Stopham Bridge. Part of the present manor house is dated 1485, but there was a house on the site before that. Its plan is E-shaped, a layout popular for Jacobean manor houses. The house is a Grade II* listed building. The seven-arched ironstone Stopham Bridge was built in 1423, replacing an earlier wooden bridge, apparently built in 1347. The central arch was raised in 1822 to allow barges to pass. The bridge was still being used by traffic until the new A283 road bridge was constructed alongside in 1986. Stopham Vineyard was established in 2007.

The Rother River/Rother Valley

The River Rother flows from Empshott in Hampshire to Stopham in West Sussex, where it joins the River Arun. The upper river, from its source to Midhurst, has been used to power watermills, with the earliest recorded use being in 1086. Many of the buildings which housed the mills still exist, and in some cases, still retain their milling machinery. This section is also noted for the number of early bridges, which have survived since the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries. The lower Rother has been used for navigation in the past. The river is a designated Site of Nature Conservation Importance, in recognition of its value for wildlife.

Serpent Trail

The Serpent Trail is a 103 km (64 mi) waymarked Long Distance Path through some of the finest heathland and woodland landscapes in the South East and follows a rough "S" shape along the hills of the Sussex Greensand - snaking between Haslemere, Petworth, Midhurst and Petersfield in a habitat of snakes.

West Sussex Literary Trail

... is a waymarked 88 km (55 mi) long distance footpath which runs from Horsham to Chichester.

Burton Park

Burton Park is a 19th century country house, now converted into flats, which stands in its own estate in the parish of Duncton. It is a Grade I listed building. The mansion was built in three storeys faced with Roman cement and has a five-bay west-facing entrance frontage and a 10-window eastern frontage. The interior contains a Grecian hall and an impressive staircase possibly rescued from Michelgrove near Arundel, which was demolished in 1828. The staircase had been built in 1800 and made of cast and wrought bronze with a figure of a greyhound on alternate steps and is largely responsible for the house's Grade I listing.

The house is surrounded by 6 hectares of pleasure gardens, parkland and formal gardens laid out in 1738 and subsequently altered in the 1920s and 1930s. The parkland dates from the 13th century and was landscaped in the 18th and 19th century. The house and park were requisitioned by the army during WWII after which the house, gardens and southern half of the park were sold to St. Michael's, a girls' boarding school. It remained in occupation until the 1980s after which, in 1994, the site became a police dog-training centre. Since then the house has been divided into apartments.

In the park stands the small Norman parish Church of St. Richard, a Grade I listed building.

Petworth Park and House

Petworth House is a late 17th century Grade I listed country house, rebuilt in 1688 by Charles Seymour, 6th Duke of Somerset, and altered in the 1870s to the design of the architect Anthony Salvin. For centuries it was the southern home for the Percy family, Earls of Northumberland. Petworth is famous for its extensive art collection made by George Wyndham, 3rd Earl of Egremont (1751-1837), containing many works by his friend J.M.W. Turner. It also has an expansive deer park, landscaped by Capability Brown, which contains the largest and oldest herd of fallow deer in England. The 283-hectare (700-acre) landscaped park is one of the more famous in England, largely on account of a number of pictures of it which were painted by Turner, and widely acknowledged to be one of Brown's finest creations. There is also a 12-hectare (30-acre) woodland garden, known as the Pleasure Ground, which contains a rotunda and Doric temple.

The wall that surrounds Petworth Park stretches for 22 km!

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/petworth-house-and-park>

The River Lod

The River Lod is a short river draining only about 52 km² of northwest Sussex, but still one of the main tributaries of the (western) River Rother. The source is on Marley Heights near Haslemere, about 140m above sea level. From here it flows west past Linchmere, then south to Furnace Pond, where iron cannon were cast during the English Civil War. It then turns southeast, flowing south of Fernhurst to Lickfold and Lurgashall where it formerly powered Lurgashall Mill, now moved to the Weald and Downland Open Air Museum. From Mill Farm it heads south between high banks, which it only overflows after the heaviest of rainfalls, passing between the hills of Lodsworth and River to Halfway Bridge then joining the River Rother at Lods Bridge.

WALK DIRECTIONS

Alight from the train at **Pulborough** station on platform 2 and leave through the station building onto the forecourt. *Do not* turn right to the main road, but instead *turn left*. Head briefly towards the main car park but in 25m *turn right and left immediately* at the end of a small bicycle shelter to continue along a signposted tarmac footpath on the other side of a wire fence, with the car park now on your left and a service road to an industrial estate on your right. In 320m the footpath comes out onto a road by a railway bridge. *Turn left*, crossing over the railway, and in 70m follow the road (**Coombelands Lane**) as it curves round to the left, ignoring a right turning footpath.

Where the road bends to the right after 210m, *bear left* onto a signposted footpath which climbs gently through a field (250° initially). As you climb up, there are **fine views** developing of the **South Downs** towards Eastbourne and of **Pulborough Brooks**. In 300m the path passes a WWII gun emplacement and heads into some trees, where it turns left and then right to cross the driveway to **Park Farm** on the left. Head uphill on an – initially tarmac – broad path with wooden railings on the right. You are now on the **Wey-South Path**, which you will follow for 1.2 km to Stopham Bridge.

In 140m at the top of the rise walk through a gap to the right of a wooden field gate and *turn left* at a bridleway signpost just inside **Pulborough Park Plantation**, with the site of **Pulborough Castle**, a 11th century motte and bailey fortress, soon up on your right on Park Mound. Follow this attractive bridlepath near the edge of the wood for just under 1 km, ignoring a signposted footpath to the left after 630m (the **Sussex Hospices Trail** turns left here). You now have a hanging wood and the **Arun River** below on the right, and eventually descend to meet the **A 283**. Cross the road carefully, take the bridleway opposite and *turn right* onto a lane with the **White Hart** pub on your left to cross the river on the very picturesque medieval **Stopham Bridge**.

Stopham House is visible on the half left ahead and in 75m the shared tarmac cycle- and footpath crosses the drive leading to it. In another 50m you continue along the left-hand pavement of the **A 283**. In 210m pass **Wild Sussex** on the left housed in some farm buildings (a Coppice Products business, open 9.00-17.00 Saturdays). In 140m, by **Upper Lodge** on the left-hand side and 30m before the pavement runs out, *turn right* across the road and up a tarmac lane ('Stopham ¼'). In 180m by a triangular green with the 12th century **St. Mary the Blessed Virgin, Stopham** church on the right (worth a visit), *fork left* and in 120m *turn left* along a tarmac lane at a smaller green, where the lane veers down to the right.

In 40m you continue in the same direction along a gravel car wide lane with a bridleway signpost and past a 'Stopham Estate'-sign, where the tarmac lane turns left (300°). In 160m enter a wood (**Walter's Plantation**), ignoring a right turning private path, and in 300m continue in the same direction at a three-way signpost with the footpath, ignoring the bridleway turning down to the right. In 110m *bear left* with a marker post along the wood's edge 15m away to the left, ignoring the faint continuation of the path in the same direction. In 110m the path descends to the long audible A road and you **[!]** *turn left* by a marker post, either inside the wood (pathless) or along the road (with fast traffic), **[!]** ignoring the indicated right turn.

In 50m *turn right* across the road and *bear right* on the other side up along a signposted footpath ascending into **Fittleworth Common**. In 80m the path levels out and in 40m you pass a marker post (ignoring an unmarked right turning path). In 120m you have some splendid **South Downs views** on the left through the trees and in another 25m *turn left* steeply down the wooded slope at a three-way signpost (170°), with a house down at the bottom a little to the left (not visible in summer). In 120m leave the wood and *turn right* along a tarmac lane at a T-junction.

In 40m *turn left* with a signpost across a two-plank bridge over a ditch and go over a stile into an arable field to follow its right-hand grassy boundary with a wood on the right. In 125m go past a couple of redundant stiles into a much larger arable field and *turn right* with a signpost along its boundary. You now follow the boundary around a few turns, generally with marker posts, to the far bottom corner in 500m. Walk through a metal kissing gate and down some steps with a wooden railing on the left to *turn right* along a car wide gravel lane (a signposted footpath). You have the **Rother River** brooks on your left and in 180m cross a road (the B 2138) in **Little Fittleworth**, with the very early lunch stop **The Swan Inn** (hotel) 50m to the right.

Turn left along the opposite tarmac pavement. The **Serpent Trail** has joined from the right; you will broadly follow it for 7.3 km. In 70m the road crosses a millstream (the stream is gushing down a fall on the right behind), and in 75m crosses the Rother on a humped bridge. Ignore a left turning footpath immediately after the bridge to in 160m cross the dismantled **Pulborough to Midhurst Railway** line on a road bridge (notice the former station building on the right, as well as the **Station Masters House** and then the **Railway Cottages**). In 160m **Coates Lane** turns right off the busy B-road.

Here you have a choice:

For a shortcut to the recommended lunch pubs, *turn right* along Coates Lane and pick up the directions at the end of this text under **Morning Shortcut**.

For the Main Walk, continue with the pavement (which changes sides a few times) up **Tripp Hill** and in 180m pass a disused service station. The hills on the right are **Barlavington and Duncton Down**. In 80m *turn right* by **Copse Cottage** along a signposted bridleway, initially along tarmac. In 80m pass **Tripp Hill Farm** (a small industrial estate) and in 75m you walk to the left of a metal field gate, as the track continues as gravel, by the last house on the right. In 120m cross a stream on the track as you enter **Coates Common** woodland and in 200m ignore a left turning car wide forest track to continue in the same direction with a marker post along a narrowing path. In 75m cross a stream on a railed plank bridge and in 40m *veer left* along a car wide sandy track which joins from behind on the right (225° initially).

In 20m walk under an electricity line and in 40m ignore a left turning track as you start a gentle ascent. In another 40m walk under another electricity line and in 160m you **[!]** *turn right* at a three-way junction of tracks **with the Serpent Trail**, ignoring the restricted byway in the same direction along the fringe of the wood. The wood on the left is **Sutton Common**. In 80m another track joins from the right as you *bear left*, now on the level. In 120m ignore a right running bridleway. In 10m you *turn left* through a wooden kissing gate to the left of a metal field gate into **Sutton Common**. This is **Open Access Land**. **The aim is a gate at the bottom of the area**, 550m away as the crow flies, on a bearing of 235°, to the right of a car park and a mire.

A recommended route goes like this: continue along a wide sandy track with the open heathland on your right and a wooded area on the left (205° initially). [The hill ahead in the distance with two transmission masts is **Glating Beacon**, off the South Downs Way.] In 80m you *veer left* with the track along the top of the valley and in 60m *veer right* with it. In 150m *turn right* at a cross-paths just before a gap in a treeline and in 120m continue in the same direction at a four-way junction of sandy paths. In 80m *turn left* (245°) at a four-way junction of sandy tracks, in 70m ignore a left turn, in 80m pass a mire on your left and in 75m leave the Common through a metal gate.

Cross a tarmac lane and continue in the same direction for 750m along an always rutted and often muddy bridleway, ignoring all ways off, lately with **Collumn Hill** heathland on your left. In 750m another bridleway joins from the left at a three-way signpost and in

200m the track curves right (now as tarmac) towards the red brick **Keyzaston House**. In 40m *turn left* with the lane by the drive to the house and in 75m *turn right* with a signpost at a T-junction with a lane through the pretty **Sutton End** hamlet. **The West Sussex Literary Trail** joins from the left along the lane.

In 140m pass the **Old Poor House** on the right and continue along the road in a very tranquil setting. In 100m you cross a stream on the road and continue between trees. In 100m ignore a drive on the left to **Sutton End House**, but 30m further along you **[!]** *turn left* with a signpost along tarmac to join that drive in another 15m and *turn right* along it. In 50m continue in the same direction where the tarmac drive turns left to the house, in 40m along an earthen track between trees. Ignore all ways off on your way through **The Warren**, a Sussex Wildlife Trust Nature Reserve.

In 400m *turn left* along a tarmac lane at a T-junction. In 55m cross a stream on the road to re-ascend and in 100m, by **Crouch Farm** on the right and where the lane turns to the left, continue in the same direction. In 30m pass a footpath signpost and go through a usually open wooden field gate. In 40m go through a set of metal gates either side of a farm track (with the wooded **Barlavington and Duncton Downs** now on the left) and continue in the same direction with a pasture behind a line of trees on the left and a wood on the right, gently descending. In 220m a permissive footpath joins from the right, just 30m before emerging from the trees with **Chingford Pond** on the left.

You *turn right* along the pond along a railed track with **Burton Park** part-visible across the pond between trees and some moorland on the right below and in 70m cross the pond outflow and in another 60m the overflow. In 30m continue in the same direction through a wooden gate to the right of a wooden field gate and in 100m continue along tarmac by some houses on the left. You walk through **Lodge Green** hamlet and in 250m, where the tarmac lane turns left, reach a four-way signposted footpath junction. The shortcut joins from the right through a wooden gate. Ignore the **West Sussex Literary Trail** turning left with the tarmac lane and continue in the same direction with the Serpent Trail through a wooden kissing gate along a narrow earthen path.

***)** In 70m you cross a pond outflow on a railed plank bridge and in 25m the path *veers left* around the **Black Pond** (on the OS map) between fences and in 150m the trees discontinue on the left to unveil views of **Burton House** and **St. Richard's church** and the downs beyond it. In 100m walk through a fence gap onto a farm track (a bridleway) and *turn right* along it (SWC 217 Arundel to Midhurst has joined from the left). In 210m you walk past some buildings of **Burton Park Farm** and in 100m the track continues as tarmac with grassy margins. In another 100m a driveway joins from a house on the left. In 200m a footpath joins from the left along a fence and in 70m you cross a tarmac lane and continue in the same direction along a tarmac drive with a bridleway signpost.

In 70m **[!]** *turn left* along a car wide earth track with a signpost, ignoring a track ahead through a wooden field gate, and in 300m *turn right* on the **A 285** along its right-hand pavement (the Serpent Trail turns left). In 250m the pavement discontinues and in 50m you cross the dismantled **Pulborough to Midhurst Railway** line on a very narrow road bridge (*beware of the fast traffic*). From the bridge you see the former **Coultershaw Halt**, now **The Old Railway Station**, a B&B with afternoon tea provision. The approach to it is another 100m down the A road, as is the first of the recommended lunch stops, **The Badgers**. *Turn left* just after the bridge to cross the road and continue along a tarmac lane, with one arm of the **River Rother** below on the right.

In 300m you cross a stream on the lane and in 50m another one. In 80m ignore a left turn to **Kilsham Farm** and in 150m Tillington's church is briefly visible ahead as is Bexleyhill with its transmission mast in the distance on the left. In 150m the track continues as gravel and you start to descend to the Rother River. In 240m cross a ditch

on an earth bridge and *veer left* through a wooden gate to cross the river on an elevated two-railed footbridge.

Continue in the same direction on the other side by **Rotherbridge Farm** with the bridleway car wide tarmac lane (Rotherbridge Lane on the OS map), ignoring a left turning footpath and in 110m *turn left* (due N) at a three-way bridleway junction away from the right turning lane along a deeply sunken earthen path (**Hungers Lane**), initially with **sandstone bluff** on either side. In 500m cross a farm track and continue in the same direction along yet more sunken path and in 850m emerge on the **A 272** by a '**Public Way**'-signpost to cross the road and *turn left* along the opposite tarmac pavement with the stone perimeter wall of **Petworth Park** on your right (the **Serpent Trail** has joined from the right along the A road, you will follow it for the next 6.8 km).

In 250m *veer up to the right* along a narrow path with a footpath signpost and a Serpent Trail marker and in 20m go through a metal bike barrier and continue along a fenced path along the right curving wall, with a grassy area on the left towards a church up on a rise. In 120m go through some bike barriers and along a tarmac path and in 40m up some steps to emerge in the churchyard of **All Hallows Church, Tillington with Upperton and River**. *Turn left* with the path past a couple of benches to the left of the church (an ideal picnic spot) and *turn right* at the corner of the church down to **Upperton Road**, opposite the recommended late lunch stop **The Horse Guards Inn, Tillington**. You'll find a **bus stop for services to Pulborough** station down on the A road 150m away, and then 30m to the right.

Turn right up through the village along **Upperton Road** (i.e. *turn left* if coming out of the pub) for 850m gently rising, all the way with a pavement and mostly with a walkable grassy strip alongside as well. After clearing the last houses of Tillington you have the perimeter wall of **Petworth Park** again on your right and on the left developing views through occasional trees across a grassy slope to the **South Downs** ridge. Just before the first house in **Upperton** village on the right, a stepped path to the right of a wooden field gate leads down to the right.

Here you have a choice:

For a finish in Petworth (through Petworth Park) *turn right* down the stepped path and pick up the directions at the end of this text under **Petworth Ending**.

For the main walk, continue along the road through the village. In 140m *turn right* with the road, ignoring a left turning drive. In 300m ignore a left turn at a three-way junction (signed 'Pitshill') and continue in the same direction with a sign for 'Lurgashall 3', still rising. In 120m ignore a signposted left turning bridleway into trees, where the road levels out but in another 100m – just after passing an elaborate residential turreted lodge behind the wall on your right – *turn left* at another signposted turnoff.

Here you have a choice:

For a shortcut, *turn hard left* with the signposted footpath, staying on the level, and pick up the directions at the end of this text under **Afternoon Shortcut**.

For the Main Walk, *bear left* with the Serpent Trail along a steep narrow path down into **Upperton Common** (wood). The path bears right in 350m just before crossing a stream, and you now have a sloping pasture to the right behind the trees, with **Nithurst Farm** visible on top of the slope. In 360m you pass a two-way signpost on the left and in 200m emerge from the wood into a clearing to the right and continue in the same direction along the wood's boundary and in 80m *turn left* at a T-junction with a car wide tarmac track.

In 35m *turn right* by a small triangular green along a signposted bridleway car wide gravel track. You pass **Rock Cottage** and follow the gravel track and in 210m *turn left* by a three-way signpost with the footpath over a stile in a hedge into a large pasture. *Bear right* to follow its left-hand boundary hedge – with good views of **Black Down** on the right – and in 270m continue in the same direction where the hedge bears left and in another 100m leave the field through a metal field gate. *Veer left* with a signpost in the hedge on the right across the next field towards the left corner of a hedge around **Lodge Farm** – with **Bexleyhill** and its transmission mast visible behind the farm.

In 220m continue in the same direction along that fence to the left of the farm buildings and in 50m leave the field through a wooden kissing gate to the left of a wooden field gate. Follow a grassy bank and then the tarmac drive around to the right and in 60m cross **The River Lod** on a bridge and *turn left* with the drive. In 50m **[!]** *turn right* off the drive by an **easy-to-miss** footpath signpost away on the right in the hedge. Go through the hedge into an arable field corner and follow the left-hand grassy verge with **Lord's Wood** on the left. In 110m you walk under an HV pylon line for the first time and in 60m in the field corner *turn left* with a Serpent Trail and footpath marker post at a four-way footpath junction into the wood.

In 30m you cross a stream on an earth bridge and in 40m walk under the pylon line again and in 25m cross a tarmac lane. You continue in the same direction up through the wood for about 450m, ignoring all ways off, going through a dip and passing a few marker posts along the way. There is one potentially very muddy stretch but it has an alternative path to the right to circumvent it. You eventually emerge on a tarmac lane which descends steeply to the right and ascends on the left to a road T-junction. *Turn down to the right* along the lane with a signposted bridleway and in 100m continue in the same direction along an earth path by **Lod House** on the right below.

You walk at the bottom of a hanging wood with a large pasture on the right behind occasional trees and in 200m curve right with the path. In 50m walk through a clearing to walk under the HV pylon line for a third time and in 80m continue along a car wide gravel track by some houses on the left. Follow the drive to the left around some more houses and up to a road after 240m. You *turn left* up **Leggatt Hill** with the road (in 90m under the HV pylon again – although this may be difficult to spot due to the foliage above) and in another 25m ignore a left fork further up the hill to *curve right* with the road. In another 60m – and 30m before another lane joins down from the left – **[!]** *turn hard right* back on yourself with a signpost on the right.

You descend to a metal field gate and in 40m enter a large sloping field through the gate. *Bear left* with a signpost, staying parallel to the left of the pylon line, and well to the left of a lone oak tree (255°), with **Black Down** dominating the view on the right. In 140m continue in the same direction at a wood's corner by a two-way signpost and follow a fence along the wood and in 80m walk up some steps and go through a metal gate to leave the field. *Turn right* along a grassy car wide farm track (a bridleway), initially between fences, steadily ascending **Hoe Hill**. You have a hanging wood on the right (**Snapelands Copse**) and a large arable field on the left, and **Vining Common and Copse** on the left across a valley.

Along the way you walk under the HV pylon line again (for a fifth time) and through a metal field gate and in 600m *bear right* with the boundary fence by a two-way bridleway signpost near the far field corner to leave it in another 20m through a metal field gate. From here you have **good views back along the South Downs** ridge in an easterly direction. Continue to a T-junction with a car wide forest track at a bend and in 15m *turn up right* along it with the Serpent Trail. In 150m at a four-way junction of forest tracks, ignore the first track turning down right (the Serpent Trail continues along that

track, SWC Walk 48 Haslemere to Midhurst via Lurgashall or Lickfold joins from there) and *turn left* at the upper T-junction along a signposted bridleway.

In 140m, where the path curves to the right and by a bridleway marker post, you **[!]** continue in the same direction down an unlikely looking, steep and narrow gully (a streambed after heavy rain). This is **not without difficulty** but at least you are never in doubt about where to go! Ignore a track to the left after 160m where your path levels out, to continue in the same direction on a track with a blue marker post, gradually rising up **Vining Common**, after crossing a stream. The track *bears left* after 100m as another track joins from the right above. In 40m ignore a left fork and continue in the same direction uphill to in 90m walk under the HV pylon line for the sixth and last time and in 50m reach the top of the rise by a four-way signpost and a bench. With far views of the **South Downs** ahead, *turn left* along the ridge top track.

In 160m *turn left* at a track T-junction and in 10m ignore a right turning track. You walk in an easterly direction and in 160m the trees on the left discontinue and you get views across the valley and some fields (and that pylon line) to the wood side path walked along a little earlier. In 130m *bear left* with the track, ignoring a right turn, with a bridleway marker post passed not long after. In 160m **[!]** continue in the same direction along a faint path into trees, where the track turns left and follow this meandering path through the wood, with a field just to the right of the wood. In 60m ignore a left turn; in 30m the path starts a steep descent and in 50m you *turn left* at a T-junction with a drive to **Old Vining Wood** (house) on the right. In 20m *turn right* at a T-junction along a gravel track past some houses into **Lodsworth**, once home of Sir Ranulph Fiennes.

In 100m notice the **small private burial ground**, where several generations of the Farthing family are buried, behind a fence on the right up some steps [they were Protestant dissenters and a Congregational (or possibly a '**Society of Dependents**'-) chapel used to be beside it] and in 70m continue in the same direction along a road which has joined from the left (School Lane). In 130m continue in the same direction where Shepherds Lane joins up from the left. In another 60m – about 30m before a T-junction by a triangular green – *turn left* along **The Croft**, a residential road. In 100m at the very end of the cul-de-sac *turn right* along a footpath between hedges and in 40m *turn left* along **Gills Lane's** raised pavement. In 35m continue along the road.

In 70m you reach the village green by **The Hollist Arms**, an early tea option, on the left-hand side, with **The Lodsworth Larder** village shop behind it. In 20m *turn right* down the main road through **Lodsworth** (The Street). In 170m – just before The Street turns sharply right – *turn left* down **Vicarage Lane**. In 60m pass The Old Vicarage on your left and in 150m you *turn right* with the lane, where an unmarked bridleway joins from the left. This is the afternoon Shortcut.

****)** You have splendid views on the left across the **Lod Valley** to **River Wood and village** while you pass **St. Peter's Well** on the right (a row of cottages named after the nearby well that was a place of pilgrimage in the Middle Ages for people with eye problems, and a source of revenue for the village then; Ranulph Fiennes' former home) and in 120m *turn left* up some railed steps where the lane turns right and walk through a wooden gate into the churchyard of **St. Peter's, Lodsworth**. Pass the church (usually shut) to the right and leave the churchyard up some railed steps and through a wooden gate to continue in the same direction through a grassy area (the church car park).

In 40m leave the grassy area by the entrance gate to **The Manor** on the left and *veer right* along a gravel drive and immediately **[!]** *turn left* (160°) along a bridleway by a marker post on the right. You pass **Manor Farm House** on its left and in 35m start to descend gently. In 90m you *bear right* to continue along a car wide grassy track to the left of **Manor Cottage**. Continue in the same direction along a barbed wire fence on the

left (with the **Lodsworth Hanger**, a steep U-shaped pasture, behind) and in 90m ignore a footpath joining from the right by a three-way signpost. In 300m pass a marker post at the corner of a wood and in 240m continue on tarmac by **Cowdray Barns**. In 40m you reach a road, opposite the tea stop **The Halfway Bridge**.

The bridge in question (over **The Lod River**) is 80m away to the left along the lane. **The walk continues to the right** along the lane to in 90m reach the A 272. The **bus stop for services to Pulborough** is then 40m away to the right.

In Pulborough you'll find **possible tea stops** a little beyond the train station:

- **The Banyan Tree** 300m along the A 283 Station Road at **Swan Corner**;
- **The Oddfellow Arms** 850m further along the A 283, now called **Lower Street** (stay on the bus for this option);
- **Chequers Hotel** 350m further away than the Banyan Tree: left up **Church Hill** on the corner of **Old Rectory Lane**.

London bound trains depart from the far platform, reached via an underpass.

Morning Shortcut (Cut 1.2 km/0.8 mi and 48m ascent)

Follow **Coates Lane** for 900m to **Coates** village, en route dipping down with the lane to cross a stream. You walk mostly between thick hedges or bramble or fern, obstructing any views, but can occasionally see pastures to the left or the shallow Rother valley to the right. 120m after the lane has turned left in the village, you pass the entrance to **Coates Manor** on your right. In another 10m *turn right* along a signposted footpath along a car wide gravel track to the left of the manor house. In 20m walk through a metal field gate and in 35m continue in the same direction along a wide fenced grassy margin of an arable field, where the farm track turns right through a wooden field gate.

You have an earth bank on the left and in 200m, at the corner of the fence on the right and the end of the tree line on the left, *veer left* into an arable field and follow a usually well-cleared path through it (on an initial bearing of 250°) towards a point a little to the right of the corner of a wood some distance away. In 300m leave the field in its far corner through a wide gap (a missing field gate) by a marker post onto a car wide earth lane that forks immediately to the right. *Bear right* along the lane and take the left fork (ignoring the hard-right turn) to continue with the wood on your left and an arable field on your right (265°). Up on the left in the sloping wood but invisible from down here is **Coates Castle**, and you continue between bracken and fern along the grassy track, a very pleasant stretch, with the Rother valley on the right and wooded slopes beyond it.

In 500m *bear right* at a signposted junction of four tracks: continue in the direction of the signpost along the middle of the three onwards routes, gently descending through a wood (300°). In 100m cross a stream on an earth bridge and in 25m go over a stile or through the metal field gate next to it and enter a pasture by a half height three-way footpath signpost. Follow a clear track in the same direction up through the field and in 70m go under an electricity line. In another 20m ignore a stile to the right of a metal field gate 40m on the right and *curve left* with the track as it levels out (but short of the top of the rise). The path winds its way through the pasture on a broad bearing of 260°, while staying level, and in 100m you go past some dilapidated farm buildings in a walled enclosure on your right. In 50m continue in the same direction along a narrow footpath (250°), where the car wide track forks left towards a double metal field gate.

In 120m you walk through a wooden kissing gate to the left of a metal field gate by a footpath signpost and *turn right* along a tarmac lane. In 15m cross another lane in the signposted direction of '**Duncton**' and continue to descend gently through trees (310°). In 350m ignore a signposted footpath turning right into the wood, just as you reach the scenic **Burton Mill Pond** on your left, dotted with yellow water lilies and fringed with reed beds, and with some wooded downs behind. In another 20m ignore the tarmac drive to **Burton Watermill** on the right (www.burtonmill.org) and in 110m, where the drive re-joins from the right below, a wooden boardwalk on the left leads to a viewing platform (and provides wheelchair-bound anglers an opportunity to board their boats). In another 25m where the lane turns right, *turn left* with a footpath signpost and a Nature Trail marker along a gravel drive (**Burton Mill Lodge**).

In 30m you get some views of the pond on the left as you enter **New Piece** (wood). In 50m you go through a wooden gate to enter **Burton Mill and Chingford Ponds Local Nature Reserve** and continue through the wood, passing a few marker posts and ignoring a couple of left turning narrow paths along the way, and also passing a boggy pond on your left. In 400m walk through a wooden field gate and continue with a field on the right. In 140m you enter trees again and curve left with the path and in 170m walk through a wooden gate and reach a signposted four-way footpath junction at a bend in a tarmac lane. The Main Walk joins from the left. *Turn right* through a wooden kissing gate and pick up the directions in the main text at the asterisk *).

Afternoon Shortcut (Cut 4.4 km/2.7 mi and 135m ascent)

Continue along the earth path, soon with a steep drop on the right, ignore a left fork uphill after 300m, turn right with the path in about 200m and left again in another 200m (200°), and in about 300m the path narrows briefly before reaching a signposted bridleway junction at a metal fence. *Turn down to the right*, now with the fence on your left, and in 50m ignore the bridleway to the right and continue in the same direction along the footpath. You have a house up high on the left (**Pitshill** on the OS map) and in about 350m get some views of **Black Down** through breaks in the trees on the right.

In another 550m you walk down some steps to cross a sunken path (**Janes Lane**, a signposted Public Way) and go through a gap in the opposite bank to continue in the same direction with the footpath signpost and start a descent, which in 25m continues along a stepped section. There is a large swimming pool visible below on the right and you curve right with the stepped path and then walk along an earth path again to a stile and onto a lane in **River** village. *Turn left* along **River Lane** up through the village and in 100m, just before the lane veers up left, *turn right* with a partly covered signpost over a stile at the end of a short brick wall. Walk down an earthen path and in 140m at the corner of the garden fence on the left pass a marker post and curve down left with the path into **River Wood**.

In 250m bear left along a car wide forest track joining from the right below and **[!]** in 20m *bear right* along a narrow path (260°), ignoring the left forking continuation of the car wide track. In 50m the path starts a steeper descent and in 65m you *fork right* at a signposted three-way junction (a bridleway joins from the left). In 30m cross **The River Lod** on a concrete bridge (**Eel Bridge** on the OS map). Go through a metal field gate and continue up a pasture (**Lodsworth Common**) along its left-hand boundary fence (265°) and in 40m continue ahead where the boundary bears left. In 240m go through a wooden gate and *turn left* along a grassy path by a three-way signpost. In 70m reach **Vicarage Lane** at a bend. The Main Walk joins from the right along the lane. Pick up the directions in the main text at the double asterisk ******).

Petworth Ending

Turn right at the bottom of the stepped path through a wooden gate in the high stone wall into this far corner of **Petworth Park** and *turn left* immediately along the wall. In 20m walk through a high gate in a deer fence (notice the spring-fed stream flowing out from behind the wall on the left, this is one of the supplies for Petworth's ponds) and follow a clear grassy path through this slightly overgrown area to follow a fence on the right down into the park proper.

In 150m continue in the same direction where the fence bears right and in another 100m *turn right* along a car wide gravel track. In 1.1 km pass the **Upper Pond** and in another 220m *bear left* across the grass (aiming to the left of **Petworth House** and to the right of a wooded hillock). In 400m *turn right* through a double metal gate (signed 'Access to Petworth Town') to leave the park. In 40m walk through a tunnel and in 70m turn right through the NT yard. In 90m leave the yard onto a busy road and continue in the same direction into **Petworth**. You'll find the **bus stop on Market Square**.