

Main walk last checked	Extension to Brighton last checked	Shorter ending to Southease last checked	Rottingdean to Southease checked	Lewes start last checked
9 July 2022	6 December 2022	4 November 2022	4 November 2022	4 November 2022
Document last updated: 11 January 2024				
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## Southease to Rottingdean or Brighton

<b>Length:</b>	<b>Southease to Rottingdean</b>	15.3km (9.5 miles)
	<b>Southease to Brighton</b>	23.2km (14.4 miles)
	<b>Southease Circular (short)</b>	15 km (9.3 miles)
	<b>Southease Circular (long)</b>	23.7km (14.7 miles)
	<b>Starting in Lewes</b>	
	shortens all walks by	3.8km (2.4 miles)

**Toughness:** 4 out of 10: one steep hill climb. (5 out of 10 for the long Southease Circular)

**Maps:** Explorer OL11 (formerly 122), Landranger 198

### Features

This walk takes in the morning along the beautiful (and entirely flat) valley of the River Ouse, firstly along the banks of the river itself, and then through the pretty village of Rodmell (summer home of Virginia and Leonard Woolfe) and out across farmland (potentially very muddy in winter).

Lunch is at a popular pub in the peaceful village of **Kingston**, nestling in the South Downs near Lewes. Afterwards you get your main real exercise of the day in the form of a steep, but exhilarating, climb up onto the downs. After a walk along the escarpment with magnificent views, you cross the lonely heart of the downs to the village of **Rottingdean**, with fine sea views in the latter stages.

You can end the walk here (after **15.4km/9.5 miles**) by taking the very regular bus into Brighton, or carry on along the seafront to **Brighton Pier** (6.3km/3.9 miles from Rottingdean) and then on up to **Brighton station** (another 1.6km/1 mile). There are regular opportunities to shorten this extension by taking a bus, but if you do the whole of it, this makes a total walk from Southease of **23.2km (14.4 miles)**.

### Walk options

**a) Short Southease Circular:** This option reduces the walk to just **15km (9.3 miles)** by following the main walk directions as far as paragraph 47, and then following the South Downs Way back to Southease station, with the option of diverting to Rodmell to the Abergavenny Arms

for refreshment or to visit Monk's House. The YHA cafe at Southease is a possible tea stop at the end of this walk (see **Tea** below).

**b) Long Southease Circular:** This 8.4km (5.2 mile) extension to the main walk takes you from Rottingdean eastwards along the seafront to Saltdean and back over the downs to Southease station. It makes a total circular walk of **23.7km (14.7 miles)**.

**c) Starting in Lewes:** You can start any of the walks described here from Lewes - not a bad idea in winter when the low-lying fields on the morning of the main walk may be very muddy. To do this option, start with the directions in paragraph 128 on page 10. From this start the following walks are possible:

- **Lewes to Rottingdean**, 11.5km (7.2 miles), with no mid-walk refreshment stops.
- **Lewes to Brighton**, 19.4km (12 miles), lunching in Rottingdean.
- **Lewes to Southease**, 11.2km (7 miles) using the **Short Southease Circular** directions: there are no mid walk refreshment stops on this walk.
- **Lewes - Rottingdean - Southease**, 19.9km (12.4 miles) - an interesting exploration of the heart of the downs, lunching in Rottingdean.

## Transport

Trains to **Southease** are hourly from London Victoria via a change at Lewes. Recommended train at time of writing is the 9:54am. Returns to Southease are valid for return via Brighton.

From **Rottingdean** there are very regular **buses to Brighton** along the coast road. The bus stop is on the far (seaward) side of the coast road, about 50 metres to the right of the intersection (if approaching from the land: 50 metres to the left if coming from the beach): Buses you can get include the 12, 13X, 14 and 27 All go to Brighton railway station and all pass Brighton Pier. Note that 14B buses detour to Brighton Marina, which adds a bit to journey times. If you use contactless to pay your fare, note that Brighton buses are now "tap in, tap out": you tap in on the reader by the driver, while the exit readers are on the left by the door.

**Trains back from Brighton** are extremely frequent, going to both Victoria and London Bridge. From **Southease** trains run hourly until 11pm.

## Lunch

A very early lunch would be possible at the **Abergavenny Arms** (01273 72416) in Rodmell after just 2.6km (1.6 miles). This is a popular pub with walkers, serving good hearty food, and has some outside seating. Lunch is served from midday to 2.30pm and 6pm to 8.45pm Tuesday to Friday, midday to 8.45pm on Saturday, and midday to 3.30pm on Sunday. The pub is closed on Mondays, but open on other days to 10pm for drinks (to 8pm on Sundays).

The **Juggs** (01273 472523) in Kingston, (7.5km/4.6 miles into the walk) is a popular and very pleasant country pub. Seating inside is limited though there is an additional 'inside-outside' area which is covered and also has gas heaters for cooler days; there are quite a few tables in the front garden although these can fill up so it makes sense to arrive fairly early for lunch, especially on sunny days. The pub is closed on Tuesday, but food is from 12pm to 3pm Monday and Wednesday to Saturday, and 12pm to 6pm on Sundays. It is open all afternoon for drinks (except on Tuesday).

## Tea

There are numerous options in Rottingdean. The nicest tea place from April to October is the **Grange Tea Garden**, behind the library, open to 5.30pm daily. Otherwise, **The Trellis Restaurant and Tea Room** on the right just before you reach the coast road has fine home-made cakes and outside tables, even if they are next to a noisy road, and just before it there is a **Costa Coffee**, open till 6.30pm Monday to Friday, 6pm Saturdays and 5pm on Sundays. There is also a cafe at the top of the beach in Rottingdean, just to the left of the ramp which you descend from the road. This is **Molly's** and it is open till 5pm daily.

Pub choices in Rottingdean include **White Horse** - a modern pub, but with sea views (there are some tables at the back overlooking the beach) - and opposite it on the short road down to the beach the more traditional **Coach House**.

If you are doing the extension of the walk into **Brighton**, there is also a **tea kiosk** 1km along the cliff-bottom walk at **Ovingdean**, open daily in summer and often on fine days in winter too. It offers homemade cakes and serves tea in proper china mugs (no plastic cups) and has outside tables to sit at. Otherwise there is a pleasant Weatherspoon's pub, the **West Quay**, in **Brighton Marina**, whose upper floor has fine views over the yacht harbour

Once at **Brighton Pier**, there are numerous food and tea options. If you want fish and chips, one of the more elegant options is the **Palm Court** restaurant halfway up the pier. The top of the beach (ie below the road level) beyond the pier is good for trendy seafront bars. Alternatively, if you follow the walk route inland, this takes you through the **North Laines** area of the city, which has plenty more cafes, restaurants and pubs.

On the **Southeast Circular** walks, tea options include the **Abergavenny Arms** in Rodmell and the **YHA Courtyard Cafe** 200 metres beyond Southeast station (go across the level crossing and carry on up the road). The latter is open until 8pm daily, serving hot drinks, cakes and a limited range of alcoholic drinks.

## Swimming in the sea

Rottingdean has a gently shelving shingle beach which is perfectly swimmable so long as the tide is reasonably high. However, at lower states of the tide, be careful of the underwater platform of sharp chalk rocks. The beach immediately opposite the ramp by which you descend to the seafront promenade has a better depth of water at such times than the ones either side, but still may not be swimmable at very low tide. At high tide, be careful of an underwater obstruction on the right-hand side of this beach, at a point indicated by a sign at the top of the beach.

## WALK DIRECTIONS

To **start from Lewes**, go to paragraph 128 on page 10.

### **Southeast station to Rodmell** **(3.6km/2.2 miles)**

1. Coming off the train from Lewes at Southeast Station cross the footbridge over the railway (or use the level crossing) and follow the tarmac road round to the left, parallel to the railway line.
2. In 100 metres this turns right and in 280 metres brings you to a bridge over the **River Ouse**. (*It was against this bridge that Virginia Woolf's body was found when she committed suicide - see panel opposite.*)
3. 10 metres beyond the bridge turn right through a wooden gate onto the footpath along the riverbank.
4. Pass through a wooden gate in 40 metres and carry on along the riverbank.
5. In another 700 metres, just before the river turns sharply right, pass through another gate.
6. In another 900 metres, just after yet another gate, descend the steep river bank to walk away from the river on an earth track.

7. This track goes through a series of gates, before coming to a road in 1.3km, with the car park of **Monk's House** on your left.
8. Keep straight on up the road, into the village of **Rodmell**. In 100 metres, you pass the entrance to **Monk's House** on your left.

**Monk's House** was the summer home of Virginia and Leonard Woolf from 1919 - later their only home after their London house was bombed in World War II. In March 1941 Virginia was staying here when she committed suicide, filling her pockets with stones and drowning herself in the River Ouse: her body was found against the piers of the bridge you cross in paragraph 2. Her ashes are buried in the garden. Leonard remained here until his death in 1969.

Visitors to the house during the years they spent here included Vita Sackville-West, Lytton Strachey, E. M. Forster, Maynard Keynes, T. S. Eliot and Roger Fry. The house (National Trust-owned) is open to visitors on Fridays and Saturdays, April to the end of October from 12.30 to 5pm.

9. In another 100 metres, just past a house called 'Johns' on the right, turn

right through a wooden gate (to the right of a fieldgate to 'Denholme') onto a driveway between houses, signposted as a footpath. *Continue with the directions in paragraph 10.*

- If you want to have an early lunch at the **Abergavenny Arms**, ignore this turning and stay on the road for another 350 metres. Return to this point after lunch to continue the walk.

### **Rodmell to Kingston** **(3.9km/2.4 miles)**

10. In 30 metres go through a gap to the right of a fieldgate and continue straight ahead across a small field.
11. In 70 metres cross a brick-stepped stile over a flint wall and continue in the same direction with tennis courts to your left and a hedge to your right.
12. In 50 metres enter a large arable field and veer slightly left across it.
13. In 350 metres, just before the far left-hand corner of the field, leave it by a fieldgate to come out onto a busy main road. **Cross the road with care** and turn right to follow the narrow grassy pavement on its far side.
14. In a further 250 metres pass the main gates of Northease Manor School on your left.
15. In another 50 metres **cross back over the road** to turn right onto a car-wide track.
16. In 10 metres turn left into a field on a footpath marked by a yellow arrow on a post. Aim for the middle of the far edge of this field.
17. When you approach the far edge of the field in 300 metres the exit is not obvious, but just to the right of a small tree is a gap in the fence. Pass through this into the next field and carry straight on across it, aiming for the left corner of a house garden ahead.
18. In 150 metres, on reaching the corner, continue in the same direction, now with a hedgerow on your right.
19. In 60 metres turn right to cross a stile to the right of a metal fieldgate. Turn left along the lane beyond.
20. In 25 metres, as the lane curves to the left, enter a field via an old metal kissing gate to the left of a metal fieldgate (both rusting, and the fieldgate usually seems to be open) and keep on down its right-hand edge.
21. In 100 metres pass through a wooden gate to cross a driveway and go through another wooden gate. Continue up the right-hand edge of the field beyond.
22. In 220 metres go over a stile to the right of a metal fieldgate, cross a tarmac lane, and continue ahead up a gravel drive between low stone walls to the right of white cottages.
23. In 40 metres turn left over a stile and then turn right, resuming your former direction, up the right-hand edge of a field.
24. In 100 metres exit the field by a stile and continue in the same direction along the left-hand edge of the next field.
25. In a further 200 metres exit the corner of the field through a wooden gap (formerly a kissing gate) and continue straight across a field to come over a slight rise which reveals a view of Lewes ahead to your right and cottages in pine trees straight ahead. *(The paths across this large field may be difficult to find in which case an alternative would be to follow the left-hand edge of the field all the way round until you come, after 400 metres, to the wooden gate leading onto the road in paragraph 27.)*
26. In 200 metres, **halfway across the field**, at a footpath post with concrete drain behind it, and level with the far side of the garden hedge to your left, **turn left** across the field towards a road and buildings beyond (not visible in summer).
27. In 170 metres exit the field by a wooden gate 30 metres to the left of a mini-pylon pole. **Cross the busy main road with care** to go up a side lane signposted 'Swanborough', and 'No Through Road'.
28. Walk past the houses to your left and after 60 metres pass the entrance to Swanborough Manor on your right.
29. In a further 40 metres, where the road divides, take the right-hand fork.
30. In 60 metres turn right with the concrete track to pass in 40 metres between a corrugated barn right and a brick building left.

31. In 40 metres keep straight on with a huge open-sided haybarn to your left.
32. In 100 metres you pass as wooden-sided house on your left. Beyond, take the left fork, a grass track between a fence left and a hedge right, ignoring a tarmac drive curving right.
33. In another 100 metres go through a kissing gate to continue along a path between hedges.
34. In 400 metres emerge onto a road and turn left along its far pavement.
35. In 350 metres turn left into 'The Street' to come to the lunchtime pub, **The Juggs**, on your right in 50 metres.

### **Kingston to the top of the downs (2.1km/1.3 miles)**

36. Coming out of the pub, turn right to continue along the road.
37. In 450 metres, where the road ends, continue straight on up a path.
38. In 60 metres pass through a wooden kissing gate and continue on a footpath which bends round to the right.
39. In 30 metres turn half left to follow the path uphill, ignoring a path to the left in 5 metres. You will now follow this footpath all the way up onto the top of the South Downs ridge.
40. In 250 metres you emerge onto the open hillside. The path steepens and continues up the hill.
41. Follow the path all the way to the top of the downs, a distance of 400 metres, crossing two stiles. (Don't forget to turn around and look at the view as you do so.)

From this point you get a fine view back over the town of **Lewes**. Note how the castle dominates a gap between the downs, a key communication pinch point in times gone past. The castle was one of five built by William the Conqueror shortly after his invasion of England in 1066 to control supply routes between London and his Normandy home. The other castles were Pevensey, Hastings, Bramber and Arundel.

42. At the very top of the ridge, with a fence ahead, turn left on the South Downs Way, a broad grassy path along

the ridge, which at this point turns into a gravel track. (**Not the track slanting downhill which you cross 20 metres before the top of the ridge!!**)

43. Continue on the track, with a barbed wire fence on your right and fine views to the left.
44. In 250 metres the track starts to curve around a natural bowl and in 250 more around a much larger one.
45. In another 200 metres, at the apex of this second bowl, ignore a concrete farm track slanting sharply left downhill.
46. In another 180 metres, where a fence blocks your way ahead, go right through a wooden gate, following a blue South Downs Way arrow.
47. In 60 metres, you come to a concrete track and a three-armed footpath sign.
  - For the **Short Southeast Circular walk** *turn left* onto the concrete track, and refer to paragraph 90 on page 8.
  - **To continue with the main walk**, *go straight on* along the other arm of the track, towards a barn ahead and carry on with the directions in the next section.

### **Top of the downs to Rottingdean (5.7km/3.6 mi)**

48. In 400 metres pass to the left of the barn and curve left along the brow of the ridge, on a track between two fields (obvious when crops are growing, but a little harder to spot in winter when the fields are bare).
49. In 600 metres this starts to descend gently and you can see a panoramic view of the coast ahead.
50. In 800 metres more the track turns left towards a ruined brick barn. Here, at a footpath post, **go right** along the right-hand edge of a field, heading for a large modern barn in the valley.
51. In 180 metres, at the end of the field, go through a wooden gate and on downhill, veering slightly left across the field towards a junction of tracks on the opposite side of the valley.
52. Descend into the dip and up the other side. In 400 metres pass through a gate to merge with a farm track
53. In 60 metres go through another gate, and turn right uphill on a road.

54. You stay on this road (which is a private road to a farm, and so virtually traffic free) all the way into Rottingdean, a distance of 2.5km. The track curves left and up the far side of the valley and in 800 metres starts to descend, with a fine view of the sea, and Rottingdean's famous **windmill**.
55. In 1.5km more you come to houses left and right. Carry on for another 300 metres down to a T-junction, with a busy main road, where you go left.
56. In 50 metres cross the road at the zebra crossing, and carry on up the right-hand side of the road.
57. In 70 metres, at a major junction, go right downhill, on a road marked with a no-entry sign.
58. In 30 metres, notice the entrance to **Kipling Gardens** to the left (see *panel*). If it is open, turn left into this. Go through the doorway in the stone wall, and veer right, to follow the path through the gardens and eventually emerge onto the road. (Alternatively, if the gardens are closed, stay on the road, curve left with it in 40 metres, and carry on for 80 metres to reach the point below)
59. Whichever way you come, you should be back on the busy road, with the porticoed North End House to your right. The next house on the right is Prospect Cottage, which was the home of the pre-Raphaelite painter **Sir Edward Burne-Jones**.
60. In 150 metres a main road joins from the left:
- To get to the **Grange Tea Garden**, turn left on main road and curve back a little to find the tea room in 80 metres or so, on the right behind the library and just before the church and duck pond.
  - **For other tea options** ignore this left turning, and keep straight on along Rottingdean high street. In 130 metres, **Costa Coffee** is on the right, with **The Trellis Restaurant and Tea Rooms** just beyond it.
61. Wherever you have tea, return to or carry on down the Rottingdean high street until you come to the busy coast road.
- The stop for the **buses to Brighton** is the one 50 metres to the right of the intersection, on the far (seaward) side of the coast road.

Buses you can get include the 12, 13X, 14 and 27. All pass Brighton Pier and all go to Brighton railway station. If you want, you can get off at the pier and use the directions in paragraph 77 on page 7 to walk up through the town to the station (an interesting walk, passing Brighton Pavillion and the North Lanes). Note that the 14B buses detour to Brighton Marina, which adds to journey times.

**Rottingdean** was a remote village until the coast road was built, and is one of those places that supposedly was a hotbed of smuggling. As well as Burne-Jones, it was the home of writer **Rudyard Kipling** from 1897 to 1902 (The Kipling Gardens are the gardens of his former house). He had a very productive time in Rottingdean, writing his children's works *Kim*, *Stalky & Co* and the *Just So stories*, as well as *Recessional*, a surprisingly downbeat poem considering the fact that it was written for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. In it, he worried about the imminent decline of the British Empire:

*Far called, our navies melt away  
On dune and headland sinks the fire  
Lo, all our pomp of yesterday  
Is one with Nineveh and Tyre.  
Judge of Nations, spare us yet  
Lest we forget - lest we forget*

The fact that "Lest we forget" often appears on war memorials is not a coincidence. After the First World War Kipling was given the job of coming up with appropriate texts for war graves, and used his own line. It was an interesting choice, as it was the same concern about the possible decline in British power that is expressed in this poem that led Kipling in the run-up to the First World War to campaign vociferously for an increase in the size of the British army and navy to counter the growing power of Germany.

One consequence of this was that when war finally broke, he vigorously encouraged his son Jack to enlist, despite the latter having terrible eyesight which would normally have disqualified him from active service. After Jack was killed, Kipling was wracked with a terrible guilt, from which he never quite recovered.

62. **To continue to Brighton** or to do the **Long Southease Circular**, cross the

coast road, and pass down the road to the left of the **White Horse** pub (with the **Coach House** a little further along on the left). At the end of this short road go down the ramp onto the beach promenade.

Once on the promenade:

- turn **left** for the **Long Southease Circular** walk and refer to the directions in paragraph 109 on page 9. **Molly's**, the seafront cafe, is also 40 metres to the left here.
- turn **right** for **Brighton** and continue with the next section.

### **Rottingdean to Brighton Pier (6.3km/3.9 miles)**

63. Carry on along the concrete esplanade that runs along the bottom of the cliff.
64. In 1.1km at **Ovingdean** beach, there are steps that allow you to climb the cliff up to the road, if you want to catch the **bus**. The **seasonal tea kiosk** and public toilets are just beyond the bottom of these steps.
65. Beyond this it is 1.6km to the marina, with a ramp just before it being your next exit point to catch a bus, should you wish to do so.
66. 20 metres after this ramp, turn left off the esplanade to walk along the seawall of the marina.
67. In 200 metres turn right off the seawall down steps, crossing a footbridge over a lock in 50 metres to get to the main waterfront of the marina. Carry on along this, with interesting views of yachts and apartments.
68. In 700 metres, where the waterfront ends, there are some restaurants and the **West Quay**, a Weatherspoon's pub.
69. Past the West Quay, your onward route is straight ahead along a road with a multi-storey car park to your right...but to get there you have turn right down steps and then turn sharp left with the metal fence to cross a side road and pass McDonalds on your left.
70. In 100 metres, just after the multi-storey car park entrance, **ignore** a covered passage to your right, but in another 100 metres, at the end of the Oneworld cinema, go right through another covered passage.
71. At the end of the passage you emerge into a large ground-level car park. Turn left along the edge of this.
72. In 100 metres, at the end of the car park, turn right for 40 metres and then left just beyond some steps to go through a concrete tunnel onto the seafront.
73. In 100 metres you come out onto a paved pathway, with the beach left.
74. Construction work of some kind was going on here in December 2022, but keeping to whatever seafront path there is, in 250 metres you pass the white terminus station of the **Volks Railway** (*the small electric railway along Brighton's seafront - opened in 1883 and the oldest electric railway in the world still in operation*).
75. Follow the wooden broadwalk along the seaward side of the railway, passing areas landscaped to allow shingle beach flowers to grow.
76. In 700 metres, just before some railway sheds, the broadwalk runs out: here cross the railway track and continue along the road on its landward side.\* In 1.2km you come to **Brighton Pier**.  
  
*\* To your right on this section are the metal arches of Madeira Terrace, a mid-level walk between the seafront and the main road above. This is currently closed for restoration, but if it reopens would be the recommended route to the pier.*
77. When you get to **Brighton Pier** (*technically the **Palace Pier**, but the rival West Pier is now a ruin*) carry on past it (or turn left off it, if you have gone onto it for a visit) for 40 metres,

**Brighton Pier** might seem an unlikely spot for nature observation, but towards dusk in winter you can see immense flocks of starlings wheeling about here - many of them having come here from the continent to enjoy our milder winter climate. Thousands of these birds gather in to swirl and swoop in unison in the sky, before roosting for the night under the pier. Groups will settle and then take off again, and there is an immensity of chattering. It is quite a sight.

### **Brighton Pier to Brighton station (1.6km/1 mile)**

and then cross the main coast road by the pedestrian lights in front of the Royal Albion Hotel. Turn left on the far side of the road.

78. In 50 metres turn right into a kind of plaza. Follow the left-hand edge of this round to the left.
79. In 100 metres, where the plaza ends, ignore Pool Valley (a road) to the right, and instead curve left up another street, which in 10 metres is pedestrianised.
80. In another 40 metres, at a crossroads, turn right into a road lined with shops (East Street, though not named here).
81. In 100 metres, where the road curves left into Bartholomews, keep straight on up a part-pedestrianised area towards the domed gateway of Brighton Royal Pavillion visible in the distance.

**Brighton Royal Pavillion** evolved from 1787 onwards as a holiday home for King George IV, who first popularised Brighton as a resort. The current building was created by architect John Nash from 1815 to 1823. Its somewhat ludicrous oriental style is a good guide to the interior decor, which nonetheless somehow contrives to be breathtakingly beautiful.

One key innovation of the Pavillion was the siting of the enormous kitchens right next to the dining room – normally in palaces, the kitchens were far away from the state rooms, but George was a gourmet (he became enormously fat) and hired the best chef of his day to cook for him.

The Pavillion fell out of royal favour after Queen Victoria came to the throne in 1837, however. Not only did she have a very low opinion of the disreputable George IV, but after the coming of the railways in the 1840s Brighton became too busy with the lower classes. In any case the Pavillion was unsuitable for Victoria and Albert's large family. They eventually built their own holiday home at Osborne, on the Isle of Wight. The Pavillion is now owned by Brighton Council and is open to the public.

82. In 130 metres cross a busy road at Castle Square, and carry on up a pedestrianised road for another 70 metres to pass under a domed

gateway. **Brighton Royal Pavillion** is now to your immediate right.

83. Take the second path to the left beyond the gateway to go diagonally across the park.
84. In 80 metres keep straight on, with the Brighton Dome, another Pavillion-like building on your right, to exit the park in its far corner in 100 metres.
85. Here turn right on another part-pedestrianised road, passing the entrance to the Pavillion Theatre on your right.
86. In 90 metres you come to a road junction and go left. In 30 metres ignore Regent Street to the right, but in another 40 metres, go right up Gardner Street, which is full of alternative shops and cafes. This is the trendy **North Laines** (*sic*) area of the town.
87. In 150 metres, at the end of Gardner Street, go left and then right into Upper Gardner Street
88. At the end of this, in 150 metres, turn left uphill. Follow this road to the top of the hill, ignoring ways off.
89. In 170 metres, cross Frederick Place and go up the steps for 20 metres to a main road, where you turn right. **Brighton Station** is 200 metres away at the end of this street.

### **Top of the downs to Southease (5.4km/3.4 miles)**

*This is the onward route for the **Short Southease Circular**, including an optional diversion into **Rodmell** for refreshment or to visit **Monk's House**.*

90. Having turned left onto the concrete track, carry on down it as it descends gently along the top of a ridge, with good views of the coast to your right and ahead.
91. In 1.6km cross over a track and pass through a wooden gate to the right of a fieldgate. Carry on down the left-hand edge of the field beyond.
92. In 400 metres pass through a metal gates to cross another track, and again carry on down the left-hand edge of a field.
93. In 350 metres go through a metal gate to continue along a fenced-in path.
94. In 230 metres at a four-way junction of track, lane and paths (by some



black wrought-iron gate to a house on your left) **you have a choice:**

- **If you do NOT want to go to the Abergavenny Arms or Monk's House**, keep straight on through a metal gate into a field, and continue with paragraph 95.
  - To go to **Rodmell** for the **Abergavenny Arms** or to visit **Monk's House**, turn left down the tarmac lane at this junction. In 800 metres this brings you down to a main road, with the Abergavenny Arms opposite. To get to Monk's House go down the side road to the right of the pub for 450 metres and return to the pub afterwards. To get to Southease station from the pub, see paragraph 104 opposite.
95. Having gone through the gate into the field, follow the path ahead for 400 metres as it curves down the hillside.
  96. At the bottom of the hill pass through a gate and turn left along a path. In 60 metres pass through another gate to come in 30 metres to a T-junction with a track along the bottom of the valley. Turn left on this, still on the South Downs Way.
  97. In 1km, when the track comes to a line of trees ahead, turn right, leaving the track to follow a path along a fence (initially to the left, then to the right), signposted South Downs Way.
  98. In 70 metres pass through a gate and curve right and then left with the path up a section of downland.
  99. In 150 metres you come to a road junction. Cross a minor road here and go along the main road verge.
  100. In 50 metres cross the main road with care and go down a side road, signposted South Downs Way into the village of **Southease**.
  101. In 150 metres you pass the church (there is a drinking water tap here if you need to refill your bottles for the journey home). Keep on downhill through the village on the road, ignoring a road slanting right across its green.
  102. In 150 metres you are on the flat in open country and in 300 metres you cross the River Ouse on a bridge.
  103. In another 280 metres the road turns left and in 100 metres more you come

to Southease station. Trains to Lewes are on this side of the tracks.

For the **YHA** and its cafe cross the railway line and carry on up the road for 200 metres.

### **Abergavenny Arms to Southease (1.9 km/1.2 miles)**

104. Coming out of the Abergavenny Arms turn left on to the main road.
105. 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. In 40 metres this brings you out onto the edge of a field.
106. Follow the edge of the field down into a dip for 250 metres and through a gate into another field. Carry on along this field edge (the field fenced off to your left) as it turns left, right and then left again and in 400 metres comes down to a T-junction with a part overgrown driveway.
107. Turn right on this driveway and in 5 metres pass through a gate onto a road. Turn left downhill on this, passing Southease Church on your right in 70 metres.
108. In another 150 metres the road emerges into open country, and in 300 metres more it crosses the River Ouse. In 280 metres it turns left and in another 100 metres comes to **Southease station**. Trains to Lewes are on this side of the tracks.

### **Rottingdean to Southease (8.4km/5.2 miles)**

109. Walk along the esplanade at the base of the cliffs (with the cliffs to your left) for 1km until you get to the next bay, **Saltdean**, marked by a white cafe building halfway up the hill to the left.
110. Go up the steps onto the level of the cafe and then walk past it and on up a ramp to the coast road.
111. Turn right on the coast road for 30 metres, to cross it at the traffic lights. Go uphill on Longridge Avenue, a wide side road.
112. In 700 metres, where the road ends at the top of the hill, keep straight on up a gravel track between fields, ignoring another track slanting right with houses to its right.

- 113.** In 1km you come to a track and path junction, with a wooden gate and fieldgate on the left. Go right here into a dip, still on a track, and up the other side, aiming for the right-hand end of a line of trees.
- 114.** In 400 metres, when you get to the line of trees, pass through a gate and keep on down the left-hand edge of a field with the trees to your left. In 30 metres, where the trees end, veer slightly left across an open field following a faint grassy path.
- 115.** In 450 metres you come to a road. Turn left downhill on this, passing over a cattle grid.
- 116.** In 300 metres you come to the first house of the village of Telscombe. Pass right through this on the road, climbing again after 200 metres.
- 117. You can simply remain on this road** for the 2.6km (1.6 miles) until it comes to a junction with a busy main road. This is a pleasant route, along a ridge with fine views and with only the occasional car passing. *Once you come to the main road continue with the instructions in brackets in paragraph 123 opposite.*
- Otherwise **for an off-road option**, 300 metres after starting the climb in Telscombe, just over the crest of the hill, take the signposted path to the left - **not the track going left at this point**, but through a gate to the left of a fieldgate on the far side of that track, where you pick up a gravel and grass track that descends downhill into a valley, diverging only slightly from the line of the road.
- 118.** In 350 metres, at the end of the field, curve left with the track into a dip and up the other side.
- 119.** In 120 metres pass through a wooden gate (it is round to the left of the metal fieldgates you see) and in another 30 metres turn right at a track T-junction.
- 120.** In another 700 metres pass through a farm. Beyond keep straight on along the track.
- 121.** In another 1km, just before the track reaches a line of trees ahead (which actually conceal the main road), turn **right** here, leaving the track, to follow a path along a fence (initially to the left then to the right), signposted South Downs Way.
- If you want to visit the **Abergavenny Arms** in **Rodmell**, stay on the track as it curves left before the trees. In 150 metres you come to the road and then it is 300 metres down the road into Rodmell, to find the pub on the left. To get from the pub to Southease station see paragraph 104 on page 9.
- 122.** In 70 metres pass through a gate and curve right and then left with the path up a section of downland.
- 123.** In 150 metres you come to a road junction. Cross a minor road here, and go along the main road verge. (**If you have stayed on the road since Telscombe, turn right on the main road.**)
- 124.** In 50 metres turn left down a side road following a South Downs Way sign.
- 125.** In 150 metres you pass the church: there is a drinking water tap by the gate of this church if you need to refill your water bottles for the journey home, and the benches here are a pleasant place to sit if you are early for the train. It is about 10 minutes to the station from here.
- 126.** To get to the station keep downhill on the road through the village, ignoring one slanting right across its green. In 150 metres you are on the flat in open country, and in 300 metres you cross the River Ouse on a bridge.
- 127.** In another 280 metres the road turns left and in 100 metres more comes to **Southease station**. Trains to Lewes are on this side of the line.
- For the **YHA** and its **cafe** cross the railway line and carry on up the road for 200 metres.
- Lewes to the top of the downs (5.8 km/3.6 miles)**
- 128.** Coming out of Lewes station through the main ticket hall, turn right on Station Road, which crosses the railway.
- 129.** In 100 metres turn left on Southover Road.
- 130.** In 150 metres cross over Garden Street and enter the arched gate of Southover Grange Gardens. Continue on the path inside the gardens, with a wall to your right.
- 131.** After 100 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.
- 132.** In 70 metres pass through a stone arch and turn left on a red brick path across a footbridge. Then veer right to exit the gardens in another 70 metres through an arched gate in the far corner.
- 133.** Turn left uphill on a road. In 50 metres, at a junction, with the Kings Head pub on your left, turn right on Southover High Street.
- 134.** Continue along this street, passing Southover parish church on your left, and, in 200 metres, **Anne of Cleves House** on your right.
- 135.** In 300 metres more cross a mini-roundabout to veer slightly left with the main road, passing the Swan Inn on your right.
- 136.** In 30 metres turn right up Juggs Road, taking the bridleway to the left of the road initially, then rejoining the road.
- 137.** In 300 metres turn left with the road over a bridge, high over the A27. Beyond, turn right again with the road, climbing steadily uphill.
- 138.** In a further 400 metres, at the very top of the hill and just after a house on the left, the lane starts to descend and becomes a gravel track. Keep straight on down this.
- 139.** In 300 metres emerge into a field and carry straight on across it on a wide grassy path.
- 140.** In 600 metres more, after passing a windmill on your right, 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.
- 141.** In 200 metres cross over a road (**take care**, as traffic comes quite fast) and continue up the side road opposite.
- 142.** In 400 metres, where the lane ends at a junction of tracks, keep straight on up track between hedges.
- 143.** In 300 metres go through a metal gate to the left of a metal fieldgate and keep straight on.
- 144.** In 100 metres more, where the hedges end and the path divides, take the left fork to follow the path upwards, with a wire fence to your left.
- 145.** Ignore all ways off until you come in 600 metres to the top of the ridge. Here the track veers left to merge with the South Downs Way, as indicated by a three-armed footpath post.
- 146.** Follow the South Downs Way, along the escarpment. In 70 metres pass through a wooden gate and continue uphill with a barbed wire fence on your right.
- 147.** In 100 metres you are on a track along the edge of the ridge, with magnificent views to the left. In 250 metres this curves around a natural bowl, and in 250 metres more around a much larger bowl.
- 148.** In 200 metres more, at the apex of this second larger bowl, ignore a concrete farm track slanting sharply left downhill and keep straight ahead.
- 149.** In another 180 metres, where a fence blocks your way ahead, turn right through a wooden gate, following the South Downs Way arrow.
- 150.** In 60 metres you come to a concrete track and a three-armed footpath sign.
- For a **shorter ending in Southease turn left** here and go to paragraph 90 on page 8.*
- For the **main walk to Rottingdean and Brighton** and also a **longer walk to Southease**, keep **straight on** here and go to paragraph 48 on page 5.*