



# SUSSEX HOSPICES TRAIL

## PART 1:

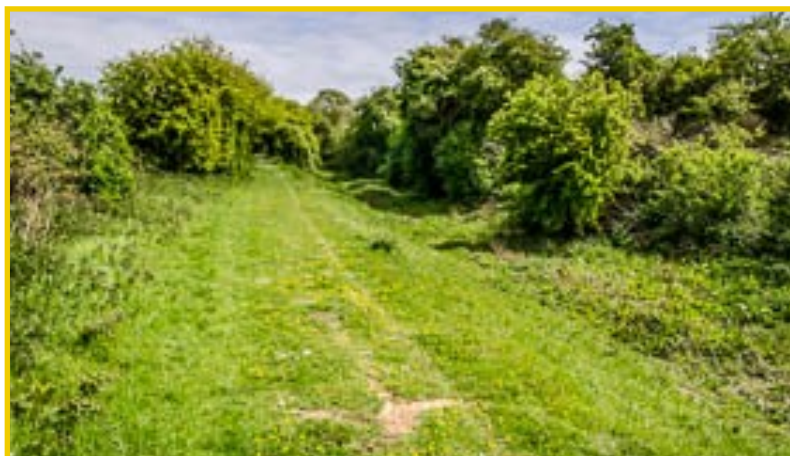
### CHICHESTER TO BARNHAM



*Moderate Terrain*

**10 Miles**  
**Linear**  
**5 hours**

090519



#### Access Notes

1. The walking route from Chichester to Barnham is almost entirely flat.
2. The paths across farmland can be very muddy at times and can also be quite overgrown in part, so shorts are not recommended (unless you're immune to nettles!).
3. There are a couple of sections of walking along quiet lanes (so take care of traffic for these stretches) and you will need to cross the railway at an unsignalled footpath crossing so take extreme care and listen carefully for trains before you cross.
4. You will need to negotiate some steps, several kissing gates plus 4 stiles (most of these have large gaps alongside, but two have tighter fence surrounds that medium-large dogs should be able to pass through – our standard poodle just squeezed through).



#### Start to St Wilfrid's Hospice

Leave the station (or adjacent car parks) to reach the main road and turn right along the pavement, heading south. Follow the pavement down to the junction with traffic lights. Use the pedestrian crossings ahead and then left to swap to the left-hand pavement to continue your journey along the main road.



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**A 10 mile linear walk from Chichester rail station to Barnham rail station in West Sussex, forming the first stretch of the Sussex Hospices Trail.**

The route passes by St Wilfrid's Hospice in Chichester before following the line of a long lost canal which once transported goods from London to Portsmouth, avoiding encounters with enemy ships in the English Channel. You will enjoy a stretch of the restored Chichester Ship Canal, several charming villages plus the rural path of the old canal as it crosses arable fields and fruit farms with plenty of wildlife to enjoy along the way. The return leg can be completed with a single 7 minute train journey.

The hospices of Sussex are dedicated to providing specialist end-of-life care. Friends of Sussex Hospices has worked with partners and supporters to create the Sussex Hospices Trail, a 200 mile long-distance path to support and raise awareness of the twelve hospice care providers that serve the adults and children of Sussex.

There are no facilities or refreshments for the bulk of the route. Toilets are available at the rail stations at each end and there are pubs in the villages of Hunston (near the start of the walk) and Barnham (near the end of the walk). In dry weather, the grassy slopes of the old canal make a great place for a picnic about half way through the walk.

## Getting there

The walk starts at Chichester rail station and ends at Barnham rail station. The two stations are connected by a regular train service and the journey takes just 7 minutes. If you are coming by car, there are pay and display car parks alongside both stations.

Approximate post code for Chichester Station **PO19 8DQ**.

## Walk Sections



Just before you reach the roundabout junction with the A27, fork left to join the small residential road which runs parallel with the main road. At the end of this, keep ahead along the tarmac footway and cycleway and follow this up the spiral slope and over the footbridge across the A27. At the far side, pass between the staggered barriers and turn left into Stockbridge Road, signed to Witterings.

Continue past the parade of shops to the right and then take the first road on the left, Grosvenor Road. Shortly, on the left, you will see the access road for St Wilfrid's Hospice, the first hospice on the Sussex Hospices Trail.

St Wilfrid's Hospice provides high quality specialist palliative and end of life care to adults in the community. At any one time the hospice is caring for around 200 patients at home, in nursing and care homes, in hospitals and at the hospice itself. As a charity providing care free of charge, the hospice must raise £6 million a year to continue providing these invaluable services.



## St Wilfrid's Hospice to Hunston Footpath



Continue along Grosvenor Road and take the next road on the left, Waterside Drive. Keep ahead along this quiet residential road and, when you draw level with houses 15 and 17 on the left, turn right onto the tarmac path which leads you between gardens. At the crossroads of paths, keep ahead to join the stone path which swings left and leads you down to the towpath alongside the Chichester Ship Canal. Turn sharp right to join this towpath, with the canal running on your left.

The towpath is popular with cyclists, joggers and dog walkers and will be your companion for the next mile. The Chichester Ship Canal was opened in 1822 having taken three years to build. It runs for 4.5 miles from Chichester Basin to the sea at Chichester Harbour. It carried trade until 1906, bringing in building materials and coal and taking away manure. The canal

is home to a wide range of wildlife. As well as the more common waterfowl – moorhens, coots, mallards, swans – birds such as the heron, kingfisher, whitethroat, common sandpiper, spotted flycatcher and greater spotted woodpecker can be seen. An eagle eye is needed to spot the water vole, but they are here in reasonable numbers.

Eventually the towpath will lead you up the slope and over Poyntz Bridge. Pause here for a moment to appreciate the views back to Chichester. It is from this bridge that artist and watercolourist JMW Turner painted his work named Chichester Canal. Painted in 1828, it depicts a ship on the canal, probably a collier brig, with Chichester Cathedral in the background. The sunset is depicted as a spectacular yellow colour, thought not to be simply artistic licence but to come from high levels of volcanic tephra in the atmosphere at the time, following the massive eruption of Mount Tambora in 1815, the effects of which were felt worldwide for many years.

If you look over the opposite side of the bridge, you will see the canal swings right at this point, heading out towards the sea at Chichester Harbour. Originally, there would also have been a branch to the left, the Portsmouth and Arundel Canal. This stretch of canal has been lost, but much of your onward journey to Barnham will follow the route of its towpath.

Continue to the far side of the bridge and a gravel path will lead you out to a T-junction with the road. Turn right along the pavement and ignore the towpath off to the right. At the mini roundabout, cross left and then right (across Foxbridge Drive) to swap to the left-hand pavement heading into the village of Hunston. Continue between the village stores on the left and the village pub on the right. Immediately after the last house on the left, turn left to join the signed public footpath between fences (passing a disused stile).



## Hunston Footpath to North Mundham



Follow this path ahead (which can be overgrown, but persevere as it isn't a long stretch), cross a small footbridge and you will emerge to the corner of a crop field. Keep directly ahead following the left-hand edge. Beyond the last property on the left, the grass path continues ahead leading you between crop fields. Take time to enjoy the expansive views from this path.

As you reach the corner of Hunston Copse on the left, turn left over the footbridge and walk directly ahead with a field on the left and the copse on the right. At the crossroads, keep straight ahead over a low stile and follow the path as it swings right and over a second stile then a footbridge. Walk directly ahead with the pretty copse still on the right, which hosts a variety of wild flowers in the spring.

Beyond the copse, keep straight ahead following



the hedge line on the right, with a large meadow on the left. In the meadow corner you are forced to swing left, heading for the church tower visible in North Mundham. At the end, pass through the kissing gate and follow the path through a tunnel of trees. You will emerge out to a T-junction with the village road in North Mundham.

### 3 → 4 North Mundham to Old Canal Path



Cross over to reach the pavement and turn left along this. You will pass St Stephen's Church on the left. There is a handy bench by the lych gate, ideal for the first refreshment stop as you are about a third of the way along your journey. When we walked someone had also kindly provided a dog water bowl by the bench.

Follow the pavement through the village and take the first road on the right, Post Office Lane. The road dwindles to a single width lane (take care of occasional traffic here). After a short distance, fork left (signed to Footpath and Nursery) and then turn left to join the signed public footpath which runs with a fence on the right and a line of trees on the left. Stay on this fenced path for some distance which leads you past fenced pastures on the right.

Continue past the bench and on through a pretty belt of woodland. Keep right at the fork and the path continues with rough pastures to the right. You will emerge to a junction with the village lane in Runcton. Turn left and take a moment to admire the view of the old mill and mill stream on the left here. Runcton Mill dates originally from the 1600s, with the south east wing being added in the 1700s.

Turn immediately right into Saltham Lane (taking care of occasional traffic) and then take the first road on the left. Follow this residential lane with a pretty stream running on the right. At the top you will come to a crossroads with the main Lagness Road. Cross over with care (there is a crossing island just to your left) and then keep ahead along the edge of Marsh Lane (taking care of traffic).

Stay on the road as it swings right (ignoring the smaller Green Lane off to the left). Continue past MarshBarns on the left and then stay on the road which leads you between hedgerows. Follow this quiet lane for 0.5 miles, taking particular care of any traffic. Along the way you will pass the Church of St Giles on the right, seeming in an isolated position. In fact this would once have sat alongside the now lost canal.

After passing the first cottage in Merston on the left, turn right crossing the gravel bridge over water and then bear right along the gravel track. Where the brick wall on the left ends, turn right through the metal gateway and keep directly ahead on the farm track between hedgerows. Continue for a few hundred yards to

reach a signed junction of public footpaths.

### 4 → 5 Old Canal Path to A259



Turn left here to join the line of the old canal, passing the brick remains of a canal bridge on the left. The canal itself is not entirely obvious at this point but further along you will see more hints and subtle reminders of this area's once industrial past.

Follow the path directly ahead (which can be a little overgrown) following the line of the hedge on the right. Keep ahead over the ditch bridge and then continue straight on along the mud track which leads you between sections of polytunnels, rearing that English delicacy the strawberry. On a sunny day you will feel the heat pouring out of the tunnels, a sure sign of their efficiency in using solar radiation...

The rich alluvial soils, mild climate and good transport links in the area make it an important centre for market gardening, orchards and nurseries. In the late 1800s a special train left Barnham every evening for London's Covent Garden market, and at that time Barnham's nurseries were producing 45 tons of tomatoes each year.

At the crossroads of tracks, you need to go straight ahead but do NOT take the main wide track (this will lead you to a dead end), instead take the narrow footpath with the hedge running immediately on the right. Follow the path with more sections of polytunnels to the left and it will lead you out to a crossroads with the main A259.

### 5 → 6 A259 to Lidsey



Cross over, taking extreme care, and keep directly ahead on the path through the centre of the crop field. Take time to enjoy the expansive views to the left, on a clear day these stretch to the ridge of the South Downs. Go through the gap in the hedge and keep directly ahead on the path through the centre

of the second and third crop fields. At the far side go up the short flight of steps to reach the road at the edge of Colworth village.

Turn left and then immediately right to rejoin the footpath which leads you between hedgerows. The pronounced gully running within the gardens to your right would once have been the canal. You are walking on what was once the towpath. You will emerge to the edge of another large crop field. Keep directly ahead across the centre of this to reach the next area of polytunnels.

Go straight on to join the track with a hedge on the left and the polytunnels to the right. Beyond the tunnels, the path continues ahead, narrowing to become a grass path between hedgerows. The path widens to a grass track, with a wire fence running on the left. Here you have the most obvious remains of the canal channel on the right, now filled with grass and wild flowers. On a dry day the grass bank makes an ideal spot for a picnic.

Follow the grass track ahead for some distance. The Portsmouth and Arundel Canal was built between 1818 and 1823. It was part of a larger scheme to create a secure inland canal route from London to the naval dockyards in Portsmouth, to allow craft to avoid the English Channel where they risked enemy encounters with the Napoleonic fleet. The canal's commercial viability was doomed as by the time it was completed the Napoleonic Wars had ended, coastal shipping had resumed and the advent of the railways from 1846 onwards provided unbeatable competition. The canal was abandoned in 1855. Today this area is a haven for wildlife. In spring and summer you will see plenty of butterflies. Also look out for rabbits and foxes which make this green corridor their home.

Further along, the path narrows once again with open crop fields to the left. Keep ahead on the obvious path which leads you under a tunnel of hedgerow (which can get quite muddy) and out to a stone track. Follow this ahead to reach a junction with the A29, just beside the village of Lidsey.

## 6 → 7 Lidsey to Barnham Church



Turn right for a few paces (across the entrance drive for the caravan park) and then cross over the main road with extreme care. Join the tarmac lane opposite, signed as a public footpath. You will notice that you have now swapped to the south side of the canal and the channel is now running on the left.

Follow the tarmac access drive which leads you to a wastewater treatment works. Keep ahead on the main track, passing alongside the metal gate, and continue past the treatment works on the right (probably exuding its distinctive aroma!). Beyond the works, the track continues ahead between hedgerows. Just BEFORE you reach the next gateway, fork right onto the narrower path (signed as the public footpath). This leads you up

some steps and through the centre of the hedgerow.

A little way along you will come to a stile ahead, marking the railway crossing. NOTE: This railway crossing is unsignalled so take extreme care, taking time to look and listen for trains before you cross. At the far side cross the next stile and continue along the pretty woodland bank, passing over an idyllic stream. You will emerge to the corner of a large meadow. Keep straight ahead up the slope (following the hedge on the right). The path becomes a wider track leading you past horse paddocks on the left.

At the fork, keep right, staying close the fence on the right. Soon you will be following another obvious section of old canal channel on the left. Beyond this you will have a good view Barnham Court mansion, more about that later...At the end of the grass path look to the left where you will see the brick remains of a canal swing bridge, Stewart Swing Bridge. This was one of seven cast iron swing bridges along this stretch of the canal and the remains were buried until 2002.

Keep ahead along the stone track passing Dairy Cottage on the right and farm buildings on the left. Continue on the access track between hedgerows, pass alongside a pair of wooden gates and you will come to a junction with the remains of another swing bridge directly ahead, Hollinsworth Swing Bridge, named after the canal's engineer. Pass to the right of these remains and turn left to cross over the top of them. Keep directly ahead on the tree-lined stone track which leads you up to a road junction with the Church of St Mary the Virgin in Barnham directly opposite.

## 7 → 8 Barnham Church to End



Turn right along Church Lane. Just beyond the church look through the hedges on the left and you will be able to see landscaped grounds including impressive pyramid topiary. This is part of the grounds of Barnham Court.

A medieval manor house appears to have stood on this site since at least 1253. The present Barnham Court was built around 1640, probably for a rich merchant, when the landscaped gardens were also created. Considered the best of its date in the county, the house is a red brick mansion built in the time of the Stuarts. For some time the Dukes of Richmond were the owners of the Manor of Barnham, ancestors of Princess Diana and so also of Prince William.

Keep straight ahead at the crossroads, passing the 1890 flint terraced cottages on the left. Stay ahead on the main village road, taking care of occasional traffic, and follow it all the way to the T-junction at the end (with a small chapel and the village pub on the right). Turn left along the pavement and follow it past another old chapel then under the railway bridge. The pavement swings left. If you are continuing onto Trail Part 2, cross right

over the road and then turn right along the far pavement (passing the roundabout on your right). Otherwise stay with the left-hand pavement which leads you to Barnham rail station, marking the end of part one of the Sussex Hospices Trail.

#### Disclaimer

This walking route was walked and checked at the time of writing. We have taken care to make sure all our walks are safe for walkers of a reasonable level of experience and fitness. However, like all outdoor activities, walking carries a degree of risk and we accept no responsibility for any loss or damage to personal effects, personal accident, injury or public liability whilst following this walk. We cannot be held responsible for any inaccuracies that result from changes to the routes that occur over time. Please let us know of any changes to the routes so that we can correct the information.

#### Walking Safety

For your safety and comfort we recommend that you take the following with you on your walk: bottled water, snacks, a waterproof jacket, waterproof/sturdy boots, a woolly hat and fleece (in winter and cold weather), a fully-charged mobile phone, a whistle, a compass and a map of the area. Check the weather forecast before you leave, carry appropriate clothing and do not set out in fog or mist as these conditions can seriously affect your ability to navigate the route. Take particular care on cliff/mountain paths where steep drops can present a particular hazard. Some routes include sections along roads – take care to avoid any traffic at these points. Around farmland take care with children and dogs, particularly around machinery and livestock. If you are walking on the coast make sure you check the tide times before you set out.

We hope you have enjoyed walking this stretch of the Sussex Hospices Trail. Hospices deliver their services for free but such care is not cheap and they largely depend on funds raised from their local communities. We would be very grateful if you would consider making a donation either to your local hospice, wherever that may be, or to the Friends of Sussex Hospices in order to support these invaluable services.

To donate £5 to the Friends of Sussex Hospices text  
**SHTRI6 £5 to 70070**

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### In Memory of Hilda Wadham

The creation of this stretch of the trail was possible thanks to the kind donation from Di Steele, in loving memory of her aunt, Hilda Wadham. To read more about Hilda's life and her love of walking visit [hospicetrail.co.uk](http://hospicetrail.co.uk)



