

SUSSEX HOSPICES TRAIL PART 23

BILLINGSHURST TO PULBOROUGH



Moderate Terrain

**9 Miles
Linear
4.5 hours**

120519



Access Notes

1. The walking route from Billingshurst to Pulborough is relatively flat with just a few gentle slopes along the way.
2. Some sections of path are quite narrow (and are prone to become a bit overgrown in the late summer) and some of the riverside paths and woodland bridleways can get very muddy at times.
3. You will need to negotiate several gates, kissing gates, footbridges, steps and 12 stiles (all of which have purpose-built dog gates or open fencing alongside, meaning most dogs will pass through easily).
4. There is limited road walking and most of the paths are enclosed from fields and roads so well-behaved dogs can enjoy plenty of off-lead time.
5. You will need to cross two fields that may be holding sheep and two fields that may be holding cattle (the cattle seemed very relaxed when we passed by with our dog, but be careful with dogs all the same).

A 9 mile linear walk from Billingshurst rail station to Pulborough rail station, forming the 23rd stretch of the Sussex Hospices Trail.

This is a particularly beautiful stretch of the trail, offering a peaceful riverside setting for much of the journey with plenty of wildlife and history to enjoy along the way. Once you have escaped the hum of Billingshurst, most of your journey is in the company of the River Arun and the disused Wey and Arun Canal. Discover some of the canal's old structures, including Lordings Lock and Waterwheel, and relax in the tranquil setting of the waterway now reclaimed by nature. The return journey can be completed with a single 6 minute train journey.

There are no facilities for the bulk of the route. If you are looking for refreshments, The Limeburners pub is 1.5 miles into the route, there is a great picnic site at Lordings Lock or you will find a choice of places to eat in Pulborough at the end of your walk.

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.

Getting there

The walk starts at Billingshurst rail station (served by the Bognor Regis to London Victoria service) and finishes at Pulborough rail station. The two stations sit on the same line, usually with two trains per hour Mon-Sat and an hourly service on Sundays. The return train journey between the two stations takes just 6 minutes. If you are coming by car, Pulborough rail station (at the end of the walk) has the cheapest of the two rail car parks, it costs £5.50 Mon-Sat and £2 on Sundays (correct July 2016).

Approximate post code **RH20 1AH**.

Walk Sections

Go → 1 Start to Lordings Road

Leave Billingshurst Station via the exit on Platform 1 and turn left through the parking area to reach the main road (with the level crossing to your left). Cross over the road and go straight ahead into Myrtle Lane, signed as a public footpath. Continue to the end of this lane and then



Get the AllTrails App for a smarter walking experience. 75K walking guides in the palm of your hand with live maps that show your progress as you walk. Say goodbye to wrong turns.

alltrails.com





pick up the tarmac footpath ahead. This narrow path swings left and then right to run alongside the railway line (on your left).

When you emerge out to a road, cross over with care to reach the far pavement and turn right along this (heading away from the railway). At the T-junction (with a mini-roundabout), once again cross over to the far pavement and turn right along this. Ignore the first footpath signed to the left, instead continue to the traffic lights and turn left into Luxford Way. Just a short way along, as you reach House Number 5 on your left, cross over to turn right through the gate within the hedgerow to reach the edge of some playing fields.

Standing with your back to the gate, walk between 11 and 12 o'clock across the grass. At the far side, pass immediately to the right of the small culvert ditch and walk ahead through the narrow gap in the hedge line. Bear left to follow the narrow path with a hedge on your left and a fence on your right. As you come to a three-way junction, take the right fork and continue ahead through the grass clearing, staying close to the right-hand boundary. Towards the end, the path leads you down a grass slope to merge with a tarmac path ahead, leading you over a pretty stream. A few paces later at the fork, take the left-hand branch and follow this wide tarmac path leading you steadily uphill.

At the top, pass through the staggered barrier to reach a junction with the road. Cross over to the far pavement and turn left along this. Where the road swings away left, fork right, taking the middle of the three tarmac paths which leads you up a ramp and across a bridge over the A29. At the far side, keep ahead along the quiet lane, passing Bridgewater Cottage on your left. Stay with the left-hand pavement which continues ahead (leaving the lane) and then becomes a pavement along a second quiet road before becoming a path running alongside the A272. Keep ahead, passing Newbridge Farm across to your right, and then follow the pavement as it bears left into the side road, Lordings Road.

1 → 2 Lordings Road to Lordings Lock

Follow the left-hand pavement ahead and it will lead you past a pub, The Limeburners (which started life in the 1500s as a row of three lime-workers' cottages). NOTE: The pavement ends at this point so take care of traffic for this next short stretch. 50 metres beyond the pub, cross over to turn right onto the signed public footpath (the driveway for Guildenhurst Manor). A little way along, ignore the kissing gate on your left, simply keep ahead along the drive. Just before you reach the vehicle gate for Guildenhurst Place to your left, turn right over a stile in the hedge to enter a large meadow. NOTE: You may come across sheep in any of the next fields so take care with dogs.

Follow the obvious grass path at about 10 o'clock and across to the left you will see the old buildings of Guildenhurst Manor.



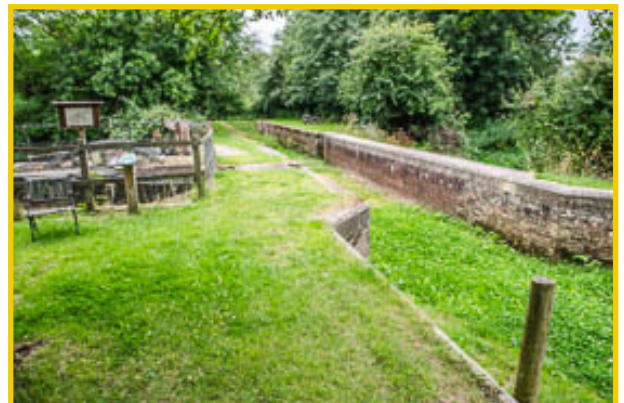
Cross the next stile and continue across the second field where another stile leads you into the third field. With your back to this stile, walk straight ahead, heading for the wide bridge at the field bottom. Go through the gate and cross the wide wooden bridge over the River Arun.

Keep ahead along the obvious grass track and, just before you reach the tree line (which conceals a subtle fingerpost marking a crossroad), turn left following the grass path with the tree line running on your right. Cross the footbridge (which has low step stiles each side) and keep ahead through the next field, staying close to the tree line on your right. NOTE: There may be an electric fence holding sheep on your left so take care with children and dogs.

Stay with this path, with the tree line on your right and the River Arun meandering on your left (at times the river runs far away from your path and at others, it runs immediately alongside). You will come to a stile ahead. Cross this and continue on the narrow path through the strip of woodland. Beyond the trees, the narrow path continues through a section of riverside scrub which is prone to become both overgrown and muddy.

Cross the next stile ahead and you will emerge to the corner of a large field. Turn right to follow the grass track with trees to your right and the field to your left. Continue in the same direction for about 500 metres. Along this stretch, with open fields and rich hedgerows, look out for birds of prey such as buzzards and red kites which are often seen soaring overhead. At the end of the grass track (with a field gate to your right) follow the path as it narrows and swings left to reach a stile. Cross this and follow the path right then left leading you to the site of Lordings Lock.

2 → 3 Lordings Lock to Haybarn Farm



With several picnic benches and chairs, this makes the perfect spot to pause for refreshments and to understand the history of this beautiful site. This lock was once part of an

important canal trade route, the Wey and Arun Canal. In the 1800s it was possible to travel by boat from The Thames in London to Littlehampton on the south coast. The route was via the rivers Wey and Arun, linked by the 23-mile Wey and Arun Canal. The canal had 26 locks, of which this was one. The unusual waterwheel here was used to lift water from the River Arun into the canal. The wheel is unusual in that one side of the paddles is designed to turn the wheel using the river flow while the other side of the paddles are cupped and used to lift river water into the canal. The wheel could lift more than 8,000 litres of water per hour. By 1871, railway competition was fierce and the canal was abandoned. Since 1970, the Wey and Arun Canal Trust has been restoring many of the locks and bridges, with the intention of one day re-opening the whole canal.

When you have finished at the lock site, continue beyond it and cross a footbridge over the River Arun (with a pretty weir across to your right). Immediately beyond the bridge, fork right and soon this path swings right passing through a kissing gate and continuing along the former left-hand towpath. The path leads you over two further footbridges (part of the same towpath), ignore the kissing gate on the left, and instead continue along the left-hand canal bank to reach the site of Lordings Bridge, a red brick bridge. Turn right to cross over this bridge and then turn left to continue on the right-hand canal bank. Keep your eyes peeled for a wide range of butterflies and dragonflies in the summer months.

Cross an old stile, continue ahead and you will eventually come to a crossroads with an access track. Go straight ahead (via the stile and gate) to continue on the narrow Wey South Path. Beyond the dense undergrowth each side the canal is running to your left and the river is running to your right. This stretch can be particularly muddy at times. Cross the next stile ahead and follow the grass path as it swings left, leaving the river behind and staying with the old canal. As you reach the next gate ahead (with the river and canal close once again), you will see an arched river bridge to your right and a restored canal swing bridge to your left.

For the moment, we are leaving both river and canal behind. Turn left over the canal swing bridge, go through the farm gate and keep ahead to pass through a second farm gate. You will emerge into the farmyard of Haybarn Farm.

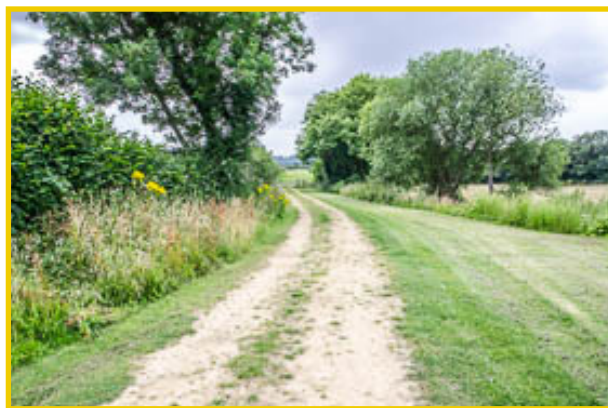
3 → 4 Haybarn Farm to Furnace Pond Cottage



Follow the track between the farm barns (right, left and right) to reach a crossroads of track marked with a fingerpost. Go straight ahead on the vehicle track, signed as a public bridleway. Towards the end, the track swings left and, before you reach the wooden gate ahead, turn right onto a side branch. Follow this track which leads you over the ditch of the former canal and then over a concrete bridge across the River Arun.

NOTE: You may come across cattle in one of the next two fields. Beyond the bridge, keep straight ahead on the bridleway grass track which crosses two fields. At the end of the second field, go through the bridle gate and bear right to join the farm track. Follow this track, with the pasture running on your right, all the way out to a junction with Pallingham Lane with the pretty cottage Furnace Pond Cottage ahead.

4 → 5 Furnace Pond Cottage to Pallingham Bridleway



Turn right and then immediately left to continue on the public bridleway. Pass through the gate to enter the long pasture (which may be holding cattle) and walk ahead on the track which leads you through the centre of this. Ignore the footpath branching right, simply continue to the end of the field where a bridle gate leads you into woodland.

Keep ahead on the obvious bridleway (which can be very muddy at times) through the trees. You will emerge out to a T-junction with a quiet road, Horsebridge Hill. Turn left along this, taking care of occasional traffic, and follow it passing Westland Farm and Westland Cottage on your left. The lane now leads you into a beautiful section of woodland. Ignore the first gated track on your left and, 300 metres later (just after the entrance for Round Copse House), turn left onto the stone track signed as a public bridleway for Pallingham Quay Cottage.

5 → 6 Pallingham Bridleway to Pallingham Bridge



Follow this beautiful woodland stone track, keeping your ears pricked for the sounds of the vast array of birds that inhabit the woodland. At the first fork, take the branch that swings left to continue its woodland journey. At the next major junction, pass through (or alongside) the gate ahead, crossing an

old cattle grid. You will now have a beautiful open crop field beyond the hedge on your left.

Further along the track swings right and, just before you reach the buildings of Pallingham Quay Farm on your right, turn left onto the signed bridleway. The bridleway leads you over an arched brick bridge over one river branch and then over a concrete bridge across a second river branch. Finally, the bridleway takes you over an arched bridge across the old canal, Pallingham Bridge. Although difficult to imagine now, this was once the site of a major quay, Pallingham Quay. The River Arun is a tidal river that, before it became silted up, allowed navigation of large barges this far inland. It is here that the canal terminated and cargo continued its journey by river. There are very few remains of the wharf but the farm used to be an inn which catered for canal traffic.

6 ➔ 7 Pallingham Bridge to Horse Gallops



Continue on the bridleway (right, left, right again) to reach a choice of paths (one ahead and one left). Take the path ahead, passing through a metal gateway. Views soon open up across the rolling fields each side. Further along, bear left to merge with a tarmac driveway and follow this as it swings right to reach a T-junction (with the entrance for Sheepwash Farm on your right). Turn left and follow the driveway all the way to the end where it meets the road in Pickhurst.

Turn right along the road, taking care of occasional traffic, passing through the tiny hamlet of Pythingdean and then climbing (ignoring the side road on your left). Just beyond the brow of the hill (and a few metres after Horse Crossing warning signs), you will come to a subtle crossroads with wooden gates each side. Turn left here, through the gate (or over the adjacent stile) to enter the Horse Gallops area. This area is part of Coombelands Equestrian, a cross-country schooling course with more than a hundred fences to cater for all standards. The facilities include show jumping schooling facilities, dressage arenas on grass and these all-weather gallops. NOTE: This area is used for training horses so please follow all local safety advice.

7 ➔ 8 Horse Gallops to End

Turn immediately right to join the vehicle track, staying close to the fence line on your right. Soon, fine views open up ahead with the South Downs ridge in the background and the square church tower in Pulborough at about 11 o'clock. Follow the vehicle lane ahead and, just as a tall hedge begins on your left, glance to your right where you will see the entrance for Coombelands marked with a statue of a jockey. (Who knew



jockeys were quite so tiny these days!).

Follow the same vehicle track ahead, with the tall hedge on your left and a fence on your right. At the bottom of the slope, ignore the stile across to your right, instead stay with the track which swings left and continues between two hedgerows. You will pass the end of the sandy horse gallop on your left, then keep directly ahead to join the grass margin (staying fairly close to the tree line on your right). At the end of this grass margin, turn right on the grass track through the trees to reach the corner of a rough meadow. Keep ahead along the left-hand edge of the meadow and you will emerge via a kissing gate to reach the road.

If you are continuing onto Trail Part 24, take the footpath opposite. Otherwise, turn left along the road, taking care of any traffic, and follow it as it swings right and leads you over the railway. Immediately afterwards, turn right onto the tarmac public footpath and this will lead you directly back to Pulborough rail station, marking the end of this stretch of the Sussex Hospices Trail.

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
SHTR16 £5 to 70070

Friends of Sussex Hospices, Registered Charity No.
1089306

<http://www.friendsofsussexhospices.org.uk/how-you-can-help/>

Sponsored by the Gurney Charitable Trust

The creation of this stretch of the trail was possible thanks to the kind donation from Margaret and Michael Gurney on behalf of the Gurney Charitable Trust.

To read more about the sponsors of this Trail visit
hospicetrail.co.uk

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.

