



Ouse & Adur Rivers Trust

Riverside Walks

Walk 6 – Lewes Brooks Circular Walk. (OS Map – Explorer 122)

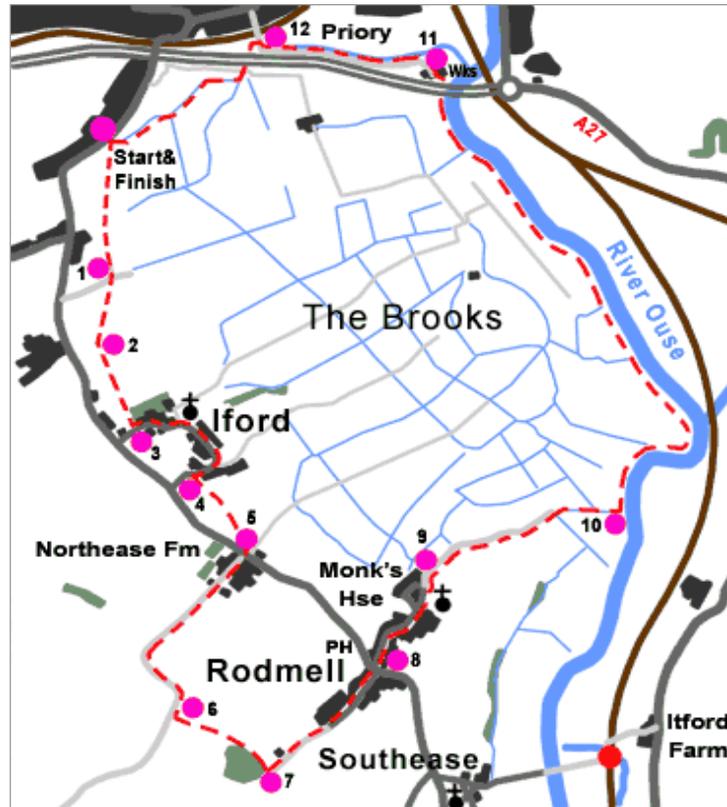
This is a 9 mile circular walk starting south of Lewes and taking in the villages of Iford, Northease, and Rodmell. On the walk you cross the Greenwich Meridian a total of 4 times, and enjoy some panoramic downland views from the valley of the Lower Ouse.



Downland scenery

Directions

Start – TQ40450893, Park in the layby on the Kingston Road (C7), just south of Lewes Rugby Club. Looking Northwards, Lewes castle is visible on the horizon, and turning to look to the North East the 2 hills are Mount Caburn (on the left) and Firle Beacon (on the right). Follow the footpath signs down the track from the layby, through the gate, and take the right hand fork diagonally across the field to the gate in the hedge. In early July we saw plenty of butterflies including Gatekeepers, Commas, and Tortoiseshells. Pass through the gate and continue straight ahead through the middle of the field to the hedge.



Waypoint 1 - TQ40390845, Looking to the left, the chalk cliffs mark the site of the Asham Cement Works which closed in 1978. Follow the narrow track under the trees keeping the barbed wire fence on your left. As you walk you pass a garden centre on your right. Continue over the stile, past the sewage treatment works on the left, at this point we spotted a number of alpacas in the field beyond. Whilst not typically Sussex animals, there are a number of farms keeping herds of alpacas for their fine fleece. Climb over a second stile and continue to the concrete track. Turn right and then almost immediately left at the finger post. Walk up the steps to the stile. Cross the stile and walk diagonally to the right uphill across the field to the marker beside a drain cover near the trees where the footpath divides.



Unusual site in the Sussex Countryside - Alpacas

Waypoint 2 – TQ40360780, Take the path to the left and continue to the stile in the hedge. Climb over the stile and walk ahead keeping the hedge/ fence on your right. At the trees,



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climb over the stile, keeping the trees on your left. After crossing the next stile turn right onto a track, continuing a short distance to the lane.



Waypoint 3 - TQ40580731, Turn left along the lane to walk through Iford village with its flint stoned walls and Norman church. In the early 16th century, land belonging to Lewes Priory at Iford was valued at only 2d an acre since it spent almost the whole year under water. At Iford farm follow the road around to the right, the road passes through the farm yard. Pass the grain hopper on your left, and at the next right hand bend in the road you will see a stile on your left which you must cross.

Iford village – No cars! **Waypoint 4 - TQ40880703**, Turn left, we noted the distinctive scent of the camomile flowers growing alongside the path, and continue straight ahead to another stile. After crossing this stile continue straight ahead across the field, passing midway between the pill box at the far side on the left, and the barns on the right. At the track turn right to the road.

Waypoint 5 - TQ41160659, At the road turn right and immediately left onto the bridleway towards Northeast Farm. Walk along the concrete track continuing straight ahead towards the downland. There is now a steady uphill climb during which time we spotted both Red and White Admirals, more Gatekeepers and Meadow Brown butterflies. You can also see Mount Caburn once again which has been a very important defensive lookout at many times during history, including the Battle of Lewes in 1264. Whilst walking we noticed the colourful contrast provided by the pink of Common Mallow, the white of Camomile and Hogshead, the red of the Poppies, and the purple of Greater Knapweed. After a while you reach a crossroads of this path with the South Downs Way.



View over the Ouse Valley from the South Downs

Waypoint 6 – TQ40760569, Turn left through the gate and continue uphill keeping the fence on your left. Go through the next gate and continue to the tarmac track. Ahead you see views of Newhaven.

Waypoint 7 - TQ41300535, Turn left and follow the bridleway downhill into Rodmell. Continue down Mill Lane to the main road by the former Abergavenny Arms.



The Monks House

Waypoint 8 – TQ41820596, Cross the road and walk along the road down the side of the pub, through Rodmell village. This is a delightful village with typical Sussex downland cottages part tiled, part flint. Towards the bottom of the road is Monks House, now owned by the National Trust but bought by Leonard and Virginia Woolf in 1919 originally as a summer house. It became their permanent home when they were bombed out of their London home in 1940. Virginia had been prone to bouts of depression throughout her life, and sadly the following year she drowned herself in the River Ouse by filling her pockets with stones. On the way to Monks House you pass the church – it is worth a slight detour to observe the stunning backdrop of the downs. At the bottom of the road beside the car park for Monks House take the track to the right along the bridleway.

Waypoint 9 - TQ42080637, Follow this track past the water treatment works on the right. Continue through the next 2 gates passing numerous ‘sewers’ on both left and right. These ‘sewers’ are actually drainage ditches – in Saxon times the word sewer meant drain. Finally you reach the main river.



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Waypoint 10 - TQ43200682, Turn left to walk along the river bank, keeping an eye out for wildlife. Depending on the state of the tide you may see grey mullet feeding at the river's edge. We also saw Little Egrets, Swans, Shelduck, and Cormorants. We also heard the typical 'giggling' noise made by the Marsh Frogs. Continue along the bank for about 1.5 miles until you pass under the A27. The path now starts to head away from the river. Continue for a short distance until you see the Household Refuse tip ahead.



Along the river with Firle Beacon in background



The Cockshut

Waypoint 11 – TQ42320930, Turn left beside the metal gate and keep the tip on your right. Beware of traffic emerging from the tip. Continue to the junction of the tarmac track, then turn left (by the entrance to the sewage treatment works) and after about 60 metres turn right. Pass the cricket ground on your right on the far side of the Cockshut (a drainage ditch), and keep an eye out for glimpses of the remains of Lewes Priory through the trees and behind the tennis courts. Continue to where the track bends to the right in front of the tennis club.

Waypoint 12 – TQ41240939, Take the track to the left, marked 'no through road' and cycle route to Kingston. Pass under the A27, and at the far end of the underpass turn right. Join the footpath immediately on the left by going through the gate. Keep the fence on your left and continue to the next gate. Turn right keeping the drainage ditch on your right, and walk along the embankment around the top of the field. Follow the path to the left (again keeping the drainage ditch on the right). Continue to follow the course of this drain around the edge of the field and through the gate marked with a footpath arrow. Follow the drain to a junction of footpaths, turn right and take the track back to the starting point.