

Walk 2: Shoreham circular

An idyllic village set in a pastoral valley is the start and finish point of this walk with a trout stream, water meadows, hills and woodland

How long? 1½ hours/3.5 miles (5km)

Public transport: Two trains an hour to Shoreham station on the London Blackfriars to Sevenoaks line.

Parking: easy: car park in Filston Lane or park near station

Start of walk: footpath 80 metres west of Darent Valley golf club
Steep slopes? One short, quite steep uphill section. Moderately easy walk.

Picnic spot? Point 7 on hillside.

Dogs? On the lead for at least half the walk; sometimes horses or sheep in field

Walk and local highlights

15th-century village houses; the Water House, associated with early 19th century landscape painter Samuel Palmer of the 'ancients'; Shoreham Aircraft Museum, with tea shop attached, which has loads of exhibits from Battle of Britain aircraft and local stories from the period; great pizzas and wines from Mount Vineyard, which also serves Westerham beers by the bottle. Atmospheric church dating from 11th century.

The Darent river, hillside views, wildflower meadows, hedgerows, beech trees and old, flint and wooden houses. Pubs: The Samuel Palmer, The Crown, King's Arms. Not bad for the 'most bombed village in England' during WW2.

Covered on Ordnance Survey Explorer 147 map

[Click here for Ordnance Survey GPX map \(real time location\)](#)

THE WALK

Points 1-2: 150m. Leave Shoreham station and walk under bridge down Station Rd to footpath on left

Point 2-3: 550m. Follow footpath through trees, across golf fairways (take care) and by a cricket pitch to narrow lane

Point 3-4: 400m. Turn right down lane to Home Farm buildings

Point 4-5: 60m. Continue past large garden pond to little bridge over stream

Point 5-6: 800m. Walk over bridge then bear left along stream. Enter Water Lane and pass cottages, cross Filston Lane, then take farm track opposite uphill to hillside field

Point 6-7: 100m. Steepish climb, then, half way up hill, watch out for footpath in front of scenic bench

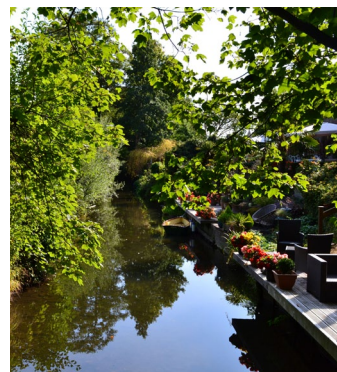
Point 7-8: 500m. Turn north (right) up footpath along side of valley. Walk straight on
Point 8-9: 800m. At path 'crossroads' continue straight on until path approaches Shacklands Rd (with cottage on left). Look for path on right, heading downhill

Point 9-10: 800m. Take the path on the right along edge of field back towards village for 150m or so. When the path comes out on the High St, cross, then walk down Mill Lane nearly opposite. Cross river on bridge, then turn right and walk along river path to war memorial

Point 10: Half mile back to station or car. Turn left on Church St, past cottages to church (can cut through churchyard) - Mount Vineyard is a turning on left just before the church

Take care on Station Road (especially with children) because there is no pavement. Soon after the golf club is the footpath on your left (**POINT 2**). Look out for some beautiful conifers (Lebanese cedar I think) astride the fairways.

The path will take you along the edge of a small cricket ground. Pass behind the little pavilion and you'll come across a tiny lane (**POINT 3**). Turn right here, downhill. After a converted oast house (**POINT 4**) is Home Farm and Mill Cottage, where the sound of gushing water will alert you to the presence of an impressive pond fed by the Darent river. Soon you arrive at a little iron bridge with wooden planking (**POINT 5**). After crossing, take the left fork alongside the river, with a



Darent river between points 9 and 10

plantation of alder, beech, oak and maple trees on the right (this is Robin's Wood).

The path becomes Water Lane and moves up hill past a couple of beautiful cottages (16th century Kennel Cottage is the first, on the right) with suitably cute gardens. Now, cross Filston Lane and head up the farm track opposite. This leads uphill towards a large grassy hillside with woods on the right (**POINT 6**). This hill is reasonably steep (great for sledging in winter) so take your time, the views are superb. Opposite is the eastern valley hillside, stretching from

the escarpment at Kemsing north towards Dartford. To the south is Otford, Sevenoaks, Knole Park.

Take the footpath bearing right (**POINT 7**) and head north, high on the valley hillside through yew, birch and beech. You'll pass above the huge chalk cross cut in to the hill side to commemorate the village's war losses. (A short cut back to the village is available at **POINT 8**.) Continue to Shacklands Rd (**POINT 9**). Here, follow the path (the one on the edge of the field, not the sunken path in the gully) to the right. Cross High St on to Mill Lane past old cottages down to the river, cross the bridge, turn right and walk along the paved footpath by the river into the centre of the village. Ahead of you is Shoreham War Memorial (**POINT 10**), soon hopefully to include the name of Pte Thomas Highgate, a local 19 year old, who was the first soldier to be executed for desertion in the first world war, and the bridge, where children can wade in the river. Turn left for The Samuel Palmer pub, Mount Vineyard, train station; right for museum etc.

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