

Map
3

Open Access at
**Castle Hill and
Kingston Ridge**

Making the most of open access



Open access land offers walkers an exciting opportunity to explore some of the spectacular South Downs landscape from a much closer perspective than ever before!

This map will help you get more from a visit to **Castle Hill and Kingston Ridge** whilst enjoying it in harmony with the site's wildlife and its management. There is a detailed map on the overleaf that shows the site, a linear and circular self-guided walk and additional information that will help you better enjoy what it has to offer. Please read the information on the back of this leaflet and most importantly, enjoy your visit!

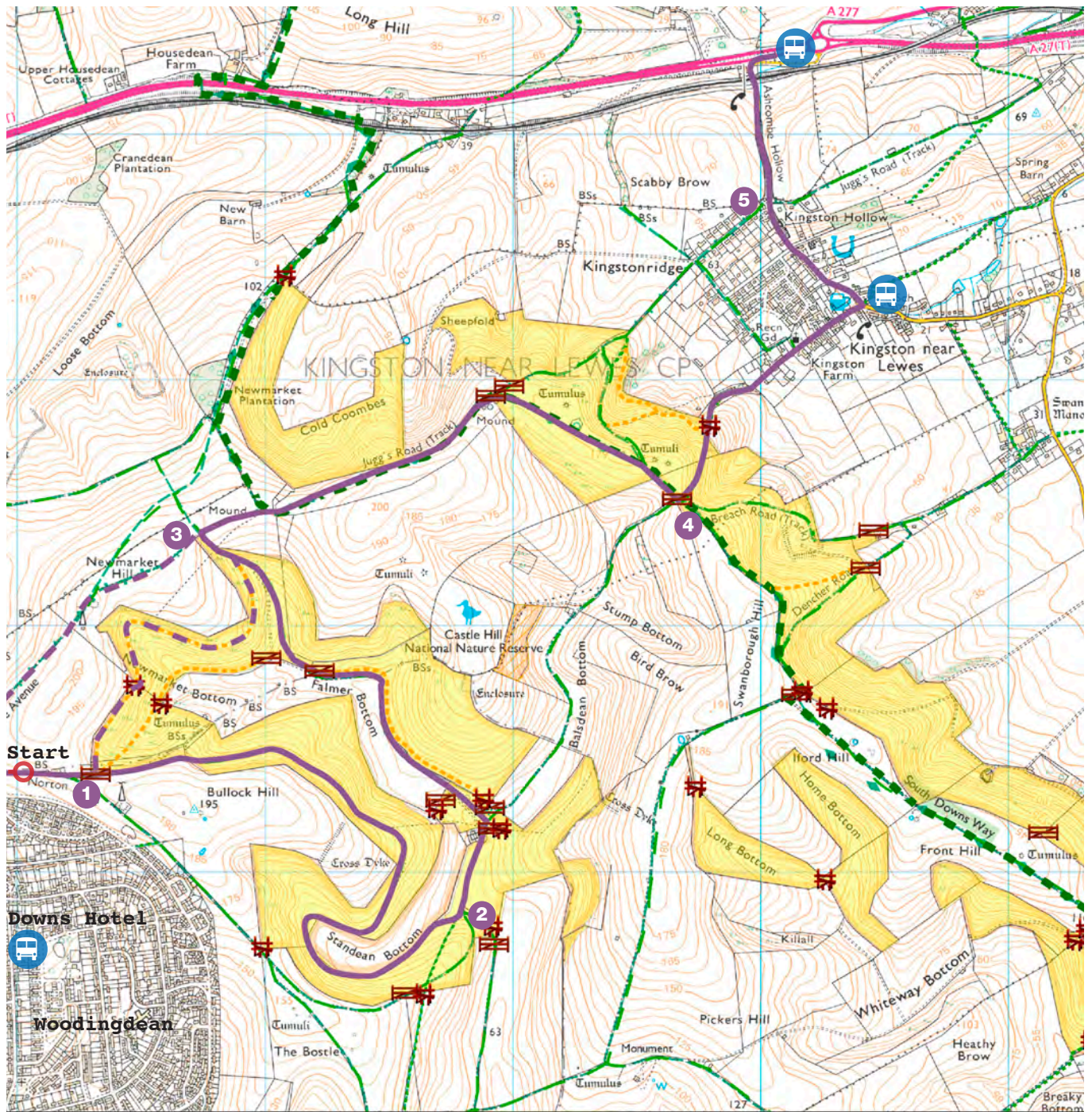
Kingston Ridge is fine example of classic chalk downland escarpment rising steeply from Kingston village and extending S.E. in a series of steep-sided scalloped valleys, grazed by cattle and sheep. There are fine views from the ridge towards Seaford Head, across the Ouse Valley and towards Firle and Ditchling Beacons. Castle Hill National Nature Reserve is a fine example of ancient, traditionally managed chalk grassland set within the steeply folded landscape. The area has a rich variety of flora and fauna including round-headed rampion, and the country's largest colony of wartbiter crickets. It is also the location of the lost village of Balsdean.



South Downs Society
Protecting the Beauty of the Downs

**SOUTH DOWNS
NATIONAL PARK**





Open Access

- Bridleway
- - - Public Footpath
- South Downs Way
- - - Well used path in Access Land
- Open Access
- Currently inaccessible Access Land
- ⌘ Gate
- # Stile

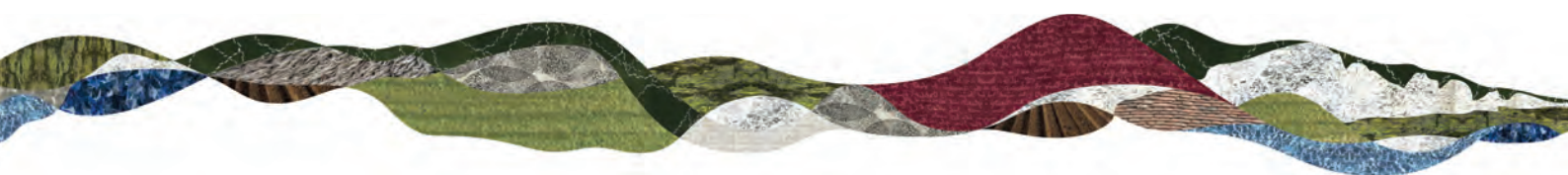
Public Interest

- U Horse riding
- 🐎 Nature Reserve
- ☎ Phone
- ✝ Church
- 🏠 Public house/s
- 🎣 Fishing
- Walk Route
- - - Alternative Shorter Route
- 🚌 Bus Stop



0 250 500 Metres

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Route instructions



A linear walk with shorter circular option featuring excellent examples of a downland escarpment and several dry valleys or Bottoms. Castle Hill National Nature Reserve is rich in wildflowers and insect life. From the higher points there are fine views along the Downs, towards the coast and across the Ouse Valley. There is one steep downward slope. Sensible walking shoes are recommended.

Distance: 10.3 km/6½ miles

Time: 3 hrs

Total ascent: 252m/826 ft

Highest point: 183m/600 ft

Map: OS Explorer 122

Start: Car Park to left of Falmer Road as you enter Woodingdean from north. TQ 356063 or near BN2 6NT

Stiles: 2

How to get there: Buses 2 or 22 from Brighton, alight Downs Hotel, Woodingdean. It is a 10 minute walk to the start. Turn left at traffic lights and uphill along Falmer Road. On return from circular walk bus 22 can be boarded at the Sea View Way stop in Bexhill Drive adjacent to car park.

Refreshments and toilets: The Downs Hotel, Woodingdean and The Juggs (pub) in Kingston near finish.

There are no public toilets.

Walk east through the car park, keeping left on the grassy area beyond to follow mown grass track with views across Woodingdean to Rottingdean windmill and the sea.

- 1 Where the track bears right fork left on a short less well marked path to cross a track and follow the path to a gate keeping the mast to your right. Enter the access land and follow the clearly defined track ahead for 3 km, at first high above the dry valley to your left then gradually descending to meet the rising valley floor at Standean Bottom.

- 2 On reaching the farm track turn left and walk towards some derelict farm buildings, and others used by Canadian troops in preparation for the WW2 D-Day landings.

The track here passes through the site of the lost medieval hamlet of Balsdean¹. The site of the chapel is marked by a plaque set in a boulder on the grass bank to your left. Go through the gate and continue bearing slightly left keeping to the right-hand side of the valley floor. Go through the next gate and follow the field edge for another kilometre to a gate at the entrance to the Castle Hill National Nature Reserve² (notice board). Once through the gate ignore paths to left and right but carry on up the chalky track ahead. After 500 metres or 10 minutes look out for a less well marked path on your left which seems to double back up the hillside. If required this path can be followed back some 2.2 km to the start and keeps high above the valley and close to the edge of the access land. Alternatively ...

- 3 continue to the point where you leave the Nature Reserve and turn left along a track called Drove Avenue to reach the start in 1.5 km **or turn right to continue with the longer walk.** Follow the ridge, looking right to pick out the route covered so far among the folds of the downland landscape. At the gate join

the South Downs Way which here briefly follows Jugg's Road. This was the medieval drove road from Brighton along which the wives of fishermen took their catch to Lewes by donkey in containers called 'juggs'. The word later became synonymous with the carriers.

Where the path divides take the right fork to pass between a tree covered 'mound' and an old dewpond. At the gate bear right. When you have passed another dewpond pause to look at the view left covering Kingston, Ashcombe Windmill³, Lewes, the Ouse Valley, Malling Down ahead, The Caburn right and further right, Firle Beacon. Continue through a gate.

- 4 Look out for a cattle grid to your right. At this point several routes converge and you need to pick the right one. Bear left to follow a downhill track for about 20 metres and then turn sharp left to descend a steep narrow footpath with two stiles to Kingston below. Please take care here in wet weather. Follow the road past the church. Pause for refreshments at the Juggs if you wish before turning left at the junction. Pass The Avenue on your left and follow the footpath on the right uphill along a tree lined lane.

- 5 Where the footpath comes to an end at a minor crossroads follow the direction shown by the green notice 'Footpath to Ashcombe' i.e. right at the junction and left within a few metres. This brings you out at a railway arch. Take great care here to cross the road before the nasty bend. Walk past the Food Bar and turn right at the A27 to find the bus stop. Buses 28/29 pass this request stop every 10 minutes for Brighton.

Further information

¹ www.mybrightonandhove.org.uk search Balsdean

² www.naturalengland.org.uk search Castle Hill

³ www.sussexmillsgroup.org.uk/ashcombe.htm

Open access

Open access land gives you the right to explore interesting features within that parcel of land – you can choose your own route and you don't have to stick to the path!



What you can do:

- Walk
- Sightsee
- Picnic
- Bird watch
- Run
- Fly a kite

Please remember that with these rights come responsibilities. You have the legal right to explore access land but please remember that most of the areas are privately owned; they are also the home and place of work for many people. A number of sites are also nationally important because of some of the plants and animals found there. If rights of way (like footpaths or bridleways) cross the land, the legal rights still apply.

Access Land is good for dog walkers too but the South Downs landscape is also important for ground nesting birds and many important conservation grazing projects. Unless otherwise stated, dogs must be kept on a fixed lead (2 metres or less) when livestock are present and on all access land sites between March 1st and July 31st.

What you can't do:

- Cycle or horse ride (unless on an appropriate right of way)
- Drive a vehicle (unless on an appropriate right of way)
- Camp
- Light a fire
- Hang-glide or paraglide
- Use a metal detector

Please follow the Countryside Code at all times:

- Be safe plan ahead and follow any signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants and animals, and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under close control
- Consider other people.

Use the following link to find out more.

www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/access/openaccess

Find out more about visiting the South Downs

www.southdowns.gov.uk/gettingaround

Getting there via public transport



Castle Hill and Kingston Ridge.

There are regular services from Brighton city centre to the Downs Hotel at Woodingdean including bus routes 2, 22 and 52; Castle Hill is a short walk from here. Kingston has a day time bus service 123 from Lewes Bus station.

Services 28/29 to and from Brighton and Lewes stop on the A27 at Kingston Ridge and it is a short walk by footpath south to the village. Please visit www.traveline.info or call Traveline on 0871 200 22 33