

CUT OUT
& KEEP

Photo: Ian R Lancaster

Singleton from Levin Down

Singling out Singleton

A woodland walk that has incredible views and a glimpse of juniper, which loves the chalky soil of the South Downs

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Set in the Lavant valley north of Chichester, Singleton, and its church, date from Saxon times when the manor was owned by King Harold's

father, Earl Godwin of Wessex. A railway station was built in 1881 to serve nearby Goodwood Racecourse, but is now a private dwelling. Today, the village is home to the Weald & Downland Museum.

Levin Down, which rises steeply above Singleton is one of the best places on the South Downs to see juniper – it loves the thin chalky soil. Its berries are used to flavour gin, but less well known is that its wood used to be favoured by illicit distillers because burning it produces little smoke. Traditional crafts are being kept alive in the area. Just off the path in Westdean Woods, look out for charcoal burners with their perfectly stacked wood piles. And surprisingly, there is an oil field just off the route in Singleton Forest. ♦



Illustration: Graham Jeffrey

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Membership starts from £2.50 per month and grants access to a comprehensive programme of guided walks and strolls. Non-members can take part in taster sessions. 01798 875073 (Monday to Wednesday 9am to 1pm).

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COMPASS POINTS

Location: Singleton, West Sussex.

Distance: Six and a half miles (10.5km).

Terrain: Undulating with one steep climb and one stile.

Ascent: 1,013 ft (309m).

Where to park: Off road along The Leys, or lay-by outside the primary school.

Grid reference: SU 879132.

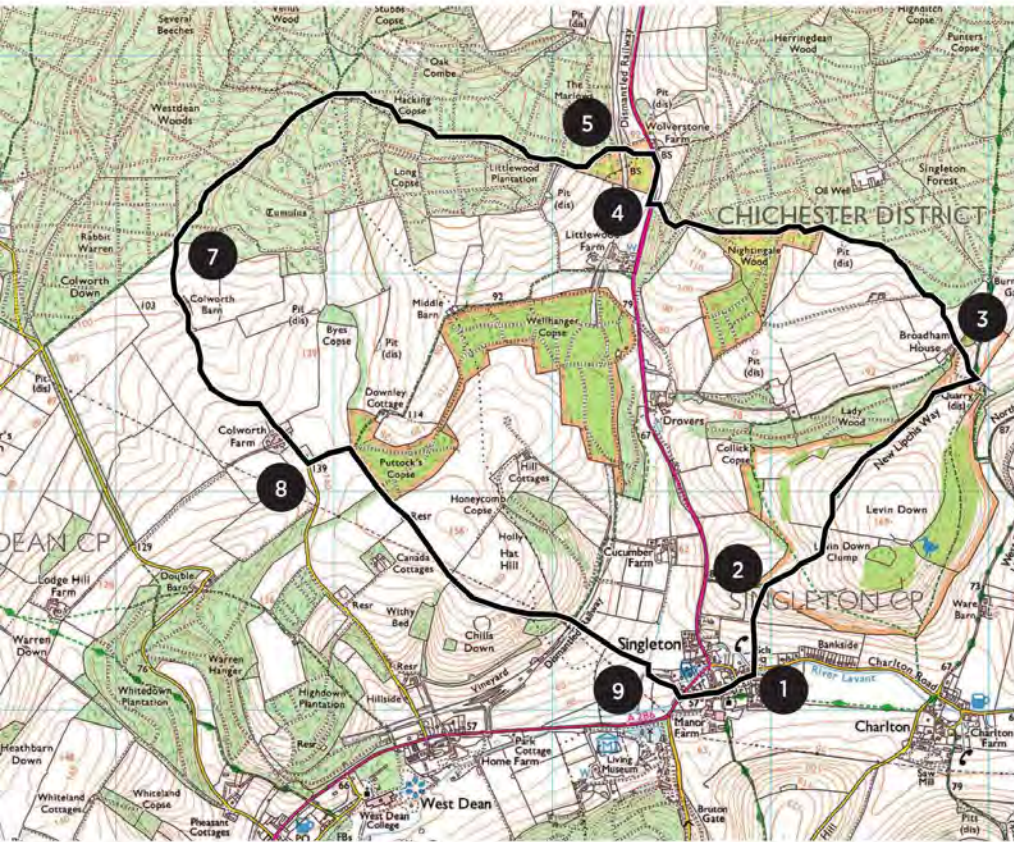
Sat nav: PO18 OHR

What3Words: ///visual.technical.finger

Map: OS Explorer OL8, *Chichester*.

Dog-friendly: Yes (sheep in fields on Levin Down).

Refreshments: The Partridge Inn, Singleton.



THE WALK

1 Take the path to the left of the school and walk up the hill along a defined track. Go through two kissing gates close together and continue up the hill.

2 Follow the path towards a water trough in the direction of a gate on the brow of the hill. Go through and follow the fence line, keeping it on the left. Crest the hill and follow the path as it slowly curves right, descends past another trough, and on towards a kissing gate in the far-right corner of the field.

3 At the double signpost take the path marked Cocking. The flinty path descends and passes a farm nestled in the dip. Continue past the farm up the hill. This path skirts the edge of the wood and fields. The path splits about 300 yards after the farm. Take the right-hand fork and follow this all the way to an asphalt road. Turn left and then immediately right down a path that descends to the junction with the A286.

4 Cross the road carefully and take the permissive path (not shown on all maps) through the copse on the right. At a T-junction with a wider path, turn left and walk up the hill, crossing the dismantled railway line.

5 In a clearing and junction of paths ahead, take the left-hand bridleway through the trees. Continue along this path for three-quarters of a mile. The path eventually joins a wider track. Go left, soon reaching a glade.

6 Take the minor pathway on the left that descends through the trees. This leads past the charcoal burners then out onto the open plateau.

7 Turn left on the track towards the house in the dip. Stay on this path for three-quarters of a mile going through Colworth Farm on your way. After the farm, the track becomes a road that passes a couple of houses on the left.

8 Turn left and after 250 yards, there is a National Trust sign

ahead and a path up a bank along the edge of a field. Follow this path all the way down Hat Hill, crossing the old railway again, then along a narrow, tree-lined path towards Singleton.

9 At the bottom, go over a wooden bridge (it avoids a muddy section in winter) and left through two final gates onto the cricket green. From here there's a short section of road to reach the A286. Cross over, turn left and then immediately fork right by a sign that points towards several pubs. The road passes the Partridge Inn before merging with a wider road from the left to arrive back at the start. ♦

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