

Loop past Sharnden on bridleways and roads



09 September 2018 – the bridge near Merrieweathers is being repaired. The river can be forded instead



A route of just over 4 miles on bridleways and roads which makes it suitable for just about everyone (dog walkers, horse-riders, off-road cyclists, joggers, runners) although care is needed on the road portion. Alternatives for the road sections which are suitable for those on foot (including dogs) are mentioned below. Sections of road with bends and no pavement (but mostly in 30mph zone)

Length	7km (4.3 miles)
Terrain	bridleway (with muddy and uneven parts) and road, mostly quiet but without pavements
Difficulty	Easy but two steep hills
Time	60 – 100 minutes
Suitability	Walkers, walkers with dogs, bikes, pushchairs, wheelchairs (able to cope with steep slopes)
Points of interest	Mayfield High Street ; quiet footpath leading through Ashurst Wood ; site of Mayfield Gunfoundry

Start	South Street car park, Mayfield (TN20 6DF) ; grid reference TQ586268 ; GPS co-ordinates 51° 1'11.14"N, 0°15'42.34"E
Public transport	Bus route 51/251/252 between Tunbridge Wells and Heathfield/Eastbourne stops in Mayfield High Street, from where you can walk west (away from Tunbridge Wells) 50 yards then left down Star Lane (a small passageway) to turn left at the bottom and arrive at the car park. There is also a community bus to & from Wadhurst twice a day. For detailed bus timetables go to the Mayfield and Five Ashes website
Parking	Car park for 50 cars in South Street, which can be full at peak times.

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Leave car park by the main entrance and turn right into South Street. Keep straight on as the road becomes The Avenue and in 150 yards come to the junction with Fletching Street with the old Carpenters Arms pub opposite (which is now sadly being turned into a set of cottages). Turn right down the hill to the green triangle where you bear right onto East Street.

Continue down East Street for 700 yards, past Southmead Close on your left, where the footpath stops and then past the two entrances to The Warren and finally past a row of houses on the left with fields on the right. Just as the road turns right and starts to descend bear slightly left onto a wide gravel then tarmac track, leaving the road on your right and a private road through gateway on your left. The drive turns

left after 10 yards, past the entrance to Stoneycroft on your right and descends gently. After just over 200 yards and 30 yards before the drive leads to a house, the bridleway leaves the drive to the left and descends more steeply on a gravel and earth path.

You pass some buildings on your left and in 2502 yds a footpath joins from the left. After this you pass Merrieweathers, in impressive building on your left and a chicken farm on your right. Where the path levels out, the bridleway splits and you take the left fork which in 20 yards leads to a footbridge crossing the Little Rother river. The bridleway then climbs, passes a rustic bench on your left and then levels out between hedges – a section that is often muddy. After 400 yards you arrive in a farmyard and turn left onto a road made of concrete slabs. Climb for a short while on the road after the farmyard and after 200 yards turn right on the road (again made of concrete slabs) that climbs steeply.

You follow this road uphill for almost half a mile as it climbs then levels off then climbs again, eventually steeply, with good views of Sharnden, an impressive house on the crest.

When you reach the crest turn left at the junction of drives and in 50 yards come to a public road. Go straight across to Lake Street in front and in 100 yards this turns sharp left and you come to a road junction.

Here the main route turns downhill on Pennybridge Lane and the rest of the route is on road. An alternative route which is mostly on footpaths and is suitable for those on foot and with dogs is [described below](#).

Go down Pennybridge Lane for about 600 yards, passing Pennybridge Farm and Oast on your left and with views over fields towards Banky Wood and Old Place on your right. This road is narrow and twisting and so eyes and ears need to be kept open for vehicles, which luckily are infrequent.

At the bottom turn right on the junction over the bridge and up Coggins Mill Lane with many delightful houses and cottages on both sides. The road climbs steeply for over 600 yards, mostly without pavements but with a speed limit of 30mph. As it levels off you come to a green on your left and the Rose & Crown pub on your right.

After this you bear right up Fletching Street and retrace your steps from the first part of the walk turning left opposite Carpenters' Arms Cottages and along The Avenue and South Street back to the car park.

Alternative return mainly via footpaths (not for horse riders or cyclists)

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Instead of turning down Pennybridge Lane, bear right along Lake Street past a vineyard on your left and in 300 yards where there is a driveway with a small green triangle on your right, turn left by the signpost over a stile into a field with beautifully tended grass. Head down the middle of the field through a neck with trees on left and fence on right to the lower part of the field and a gate at the bottom. Through the gate go carefully down a short steep and uneven section to cross a small stream, either using a stepping stone or taking a large stride, to climb through trees on the other side for 20 yards and come out into a field.

Turn left down the side of the field and at the bottom bear left to cross a bridge and enter a wood. The path bears right then turns left, though another path has been made by many people cutting this corner. In about 30 yards come to a

junction and turn right to cross another footbridge and go up a short very muddy section between two banks (or find a slightly less muddy path on the top of the right bank). Just before the end of the muddy section, turn left on a narrow windy path and pass the wish trees, where many ribbons are tokens of the wishes that passers-by have left. After the tree cross a stile to come into a field.

Keep the edge of the field on your left until you come to a large gap in a hedge and pass through to the next field where the path bears right fairly level across the field with a drop on the left. You pass through a small gap in the next hedge and then the path starts to descend. Pass a large tree on your left and descend the last part with a fence and woods on your right to come to a gate, stile and dog latch at the bottom.

Over the stile almost immediately left over a narrow concrete footbridge with handrails. Climb up the path and bear right at the signpost where footpaths split. In 50 yards bear left, ignoring a path to the right, onto a sunken track which continues climbing in the woods and in 100 yards comes to stile. The sunken track is now at the left side of a field and eventually becomes part of the field and leads to a stile in a very muddy corner. On the other side of the stile the path continues between two lines of trees and climbs steeply through another muddy patch. After the next stile you come out into a field for the final part of the steep climb straight ahead to a fingerpost at the top marking the crossing of two footpaths. Continue straight ahead with the hedge on your left, over another stile, and through another field keeping near the hedge. The stile at the end of this field leads onto an unmade road which you cross and climb the steps opposite to come out in the corner of a football pitch.

Turn left and go round two edges of the football pitch. At the far corner turn left onto a concrete path which leads downhill. At the bottom turn left past an oak tree and onto a narrow path between fences and walls with houses behind them

on the right. After 100 yards turn left downhill on the path to come out on Fletching Street. Turn right past the Rose & Crown and then bear left uphill to retrace your steps from the first part of the walk, turning left opposite Carpenters' Arms Cottages and along The Avenue and South Street back to the car park.