

THE VANGUARD WAY

(NORTH TO SOUTH)

From the suburbs to the sea!

SECTION 2

Chelsham Common to Limpsfield Chart

(Version 6.0.2, 2020)



THE VANGUARD WAY

ROUTE DESCRIPTION and points of interest along the route

SECTION 2 Chelsham Common to Limpsfield Chart

COLIN SAUNDERS

In memory of Graham Butler 1949-2018

This edition (6.0.2) of the north-south route description was first published in 2020 and replaces previous printed editions, published in 1980, 1986 and 1997; also the online 4th and 5th editions published in 2009 and 2014. It is now only available as an online resource.

Version 6.0.2 (North-South)

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Cover photo: The Vanguard Way near Woldingham, Surrey – cc-by-sa/2.0. © David Anstiss.

Vanguard Way Route Description: Section 2

CHELSHAM COMMON TO LIMPSFIELD CHART

12.8 km (7.9 miles)

Route overview

This version of the north-south Route Description is based on a completely new survey undertaken by club members in 2018.

Section 2 starts gently, but is one of the hilliest of the Vanguard Way, and includes the highest point along the whole route. There are some very steep and quite long ascents and descents, but the effort is compensated by outstanding views. Along the way you pass the mystical Nore Hill Chalk Pinnacle and cross the North Downs, part of the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. A level walk across farmland of the Titsey Estate is followed by a long climb through the Greensand Hills to Limpsfield Chart. Titsey Place is worth a detour, but its open days are limited.

Lowest and highest points: River Eden (108m); North Downs near Flint House (262m).

How to use this route description

Paragraphs are numbered for ease of reference. The route is marked on Ordnance Survey Explorer and Landranger maps, though you should note that in some places it is incorrectly marked on some older maps - we draw your attention to specific instances where relevant. Grid references are given at each numbered point to help identify the route. The country is divided into 100 km squares identified by a two letter code, and following standard OS practice we include these letters in our grid references. In this section they are in square TQ.

The actual route description is shown in black Roman (upright) text.

Links with stations and other key places off route are shown in boxes with a green background.

Italic text is used for items that are not part of the main route description, including:

- *Key information about facilities (see Vanguard Way Companion for more details)*
- *Road and street names **
- *Advice and asides.*

* The mention of a road or street name does not necessarily mean that you will see this name on the spot, but it may be helpful if you need to be picked up or set down, or to find your position on a street map.

Names that are not visible are shown in italics within brackets.

Underlined bold italic text indicates that more details can be found in the Commentary, which follows the route description.

⊗ - Busy roads

You often need to cross busy roads. Rather than tediously advising you to take care, which is common sense, we remind you with the symbol ⊗ – it means ‘Cross with care!’

Roads with no pavement

‘NP’ in the route description indicates that the road has no pavement, and there are several of them in this section. Although they are usually quiet, you should take great care when walking along them, as traffic may approach at speed. Generally, you should walk in single file along the right-hand side, but this may be dangerous at a right-hand bend, where you cannot see approaching traffic, and the driver, not seeing you, may keep too close to the bend. You should therefore follow the advice given in the Highway Code for such situations, which is: ‘It may be safer to cross the road well before a right-hand bend so that oncoming traffic has a better chance of seeing you. Cross back after the bend.’ If walking in poor light conditions or in the dark, always wear something bright, luminous or reflective on top.

Public transport

On route: Buses at Chelsham Common, Moorhouse and Limpsfield Chart. Links with buses and trains at

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Woldingham and Oxted stations, and with buses at Warlingham Sainsbury's, Grasshopper Inn and Westerham. Brief indications (subject to change) are shown at the relevant locations in the route description - for more information please see the Vanguard Way Companion on our website (click Directions & Maps).


Abbreviations

Bw	= bridleway	KA	= keep ahead	N	= north
CB	= compass bearing	TL	= turn left	S	= south
FB	= footbridge	TR	= turn right	E	= east
Fp	= footpath	L	= left	W	= west
KG	= kissing gate	R	= right		
NP	= no pavement (see above)				
Rd	= road	m	= metres		
Tk	= track	km	= kilometres		
VGW	= Vanguard Way	>	= off route		

Key to symbols

 = Bus	 = *Cafés etc	 = Toilets	 = Tram
 = Train	 = *Pubs	 = Phone box	 = Cross with care
 = Taxi	 = *Accommodation	 = *Equipment shop	

* For more information and contact details of these facilities, please refer to the VGW Companion.

 Please note that, with improvements in mobile connectivity, phone boxes (or the equipment inside) are being removed.

Distances

Chelsham Common to:

>Woldingham Station	6.3 km	(3.9 miles)
>Oxted Station (via western link)	8.2 km	(5.1 miles)
>Oxted Station (via eastern link)	9.0 km	(5.6 miles)
>Botley Farmhouse (pub/bus nearby)	8.7 km	(5.4 miles)
>Titsey Place	9.2 km	(5.7 miles)
>Grasshopper Inn (pub/bus)	11.9 km	(7.4 miles)
A25 Moorhouse (bus)	11.2 km	(7.0 miles)
Limpsfield Chart (bus)	12.7 km	(7.9 miles)
>Westerham (bus)	16.4 km	(10.2 miles)

Woldingham Station to:

>Oxted Station (via western link)	6.2 km	(3.9 miles)
>Oxted Station (via eastern link)	7.1 km	(4.4 miles)
>Botley Farmhouse (pub/bus nearby)	6.9 km	(4.3 miles)
>Titsey Place	7.1 km	(4.4 miles)
>Grasshopper Inn (pub/bus)	9.9 km	(6.1 miles)
A25 Moorhouse (bus)	9.2 km	(5.7 miles)
Limpsfield Chart (bus)	10.8 km	(6.7 miles)
>Westerham (bus)	14.5 km	(9.0 miles)

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Oxted Station (via western or eastern link) to:

>Botley Farmhouse (pub/bus nearby)	4.5 km	(2.9 miles)
>Titsey Place	4.8 km	(3.0 miles)
>Grasshopper Inn (pub/bus)	7.6 km	(4.7 miles)
A25 Moorhouse (bus)	6.9 km	(4.3 miles)
Limpsfield Chart (bus)	8.4 km	(5.2 miles)
>Westerham (bus)	12.1 km	(7.5 miles)

In the route description, distances are only shown in metres (m) or kilometres (km); but if you are more familiar with yards and miles, remember that 100m is about the same as 110 yards, and that 1 km is about five eighths of a mile.

Altitudes are shown in metres – for an approximate conversion to feet multiply by 3 and add 10 per cent.

ALL INFORMATION SHOWN IS SUBJECT TO ALTERATION WITHOUT NOTICE

Inevitably changes to the route and facilities will occur, and we try to keep abreast of them. It is our intention to bring out an updated version of the Route Descriptions and Companion as necessary, but you can refer to the Latest News page on our website www.vanguardway.org.uk for any changes that may have taken place meanwhile.

If your trip relies on the provision of public transport, catering etc, you are strongly advised to check in advance that they will be available on the day of your visit. Further information about these facilities is provided in the Vanguard Way Companion available at www.vanguardway.org.uk (click the 'Directions and Maps' button). If you carry a smartphone, there are apps that give up-to-date information on public transport. Search engines will provide information on refreshments, taxis and other services nearby. This can also be done on Google or Bing maps by typing e.g. 'Pubs Forest Row' in the search box, then the map will highlight locations together with website links if available.

We will always be pleased to hear about any changes you may find, in which case please email colin@vanguardway.org.uk.

BEFORE SETTING OUT ALONG THE VANGUARD WAY

Please read the [Introduction to the route](#), available from the 'Directions and maps' pages of our website www.vanguardway.org.uk. It contains important information that will be helpful when reading this route description. **And don't forget to look at the [Latest News](#) page on our website for any developments affecting this and any other part of the route.**

PROBLEMS WHILE WALKING THE ROUTE

If you encounter an obstruction, closure or diversion on a public right of way, please tell us about it by emailing colin@vanguardway.org.uk.



Vanguard Way Route Description: Section 2

Section 2 of the Vanguard Way starts at Chelsham Road [TQ 372 592]

on the north side of Chelsham Common, in Tandridge District in Surrey.

🚌 *Bus services operate Mondays to Fridays only to here from Selsdon Library and stations at Upper Warlingham and Caterham. A more frequent daily service operates from central Croydon to Warlingham Sainsbury's – see below.*

Link from bus stop at Warlingham Sainsbury's (1.2 km)

☕ *Amano Caffe & Deli (closed Mondays); Knight's Garden Centre.*

♿ *In Sainsbury's.*

- Alighting at bus stop outside Sainsbury's, TR along Limpsfield Road to roundabout. You could TL here to follow the footpath beside Chelsham Road for 1.1 km to Chelsham Common, but you may prefer to take the slightly longer but much more pleasant bridleway route below:*
- KA along Limpsfield Road via pedestrian refuge ☒ to pass Amano Caffe.*
- In 100m TL along Bw (Rogers Lane, National Cycle Route 21). (Knight's Garden Centre is 120m further ahead.)*
- Follow Bw for 720m past cemetery and ascend through wood (KA at junction) to rejoin Chelsham Road.*
- Cross Rd ☒ and TR along roadside footpath for 200m to junction with Chelsham Common Road.*
- Cross over ☒ to take narrow Fp half L across common, which leads to the car park of the Bull pub and TR to rejoin VGW.*

2.1 [TQ 372 592]

- At Chelsham Road TR then in 20m immediately after bus shelter TL on faint and possibly overgrown Fp* through trees to Rd (Ledgers Road). Note the 'coal tax post' on the opposite corner.*
- TL then immediately R along access Rd (signed 'private road') to the Bull pub.
If this footpath is impassable, continue a short distance to TL along Ledgers Road, then turn right to the Bull.

🏠 *The Bull – assuming it's still called that: this pub has changed its name several times in recent years.*

2.2 [TQ 372 590]

- At end of car park, KA between posts on to grass of Chelsham Common then TL on narrow Fp.*
- Follow Fp bearing R into woods, passing pond on your L.*
- Join Rd NP (Chelsham Common Road) and TL for 30m, ignoring a signed Fp on your R.*
- Just before crossroads TR through gate along signed, broad Bw to field.*
- Follow (sometimes muddy) Tk along R edge of very large field, and after 900m go through trees and past barrier to Rd (Ledgers Road again).*
- TR along Rd NP to junction with B269 Limpsfield Road at Worms Heath. ☒ Take great care here, keeping left as you must pass a right-hand bend and then watch out for vehicles turning fast off the main road.*

2.3 [TQ 376 579]

- TR along path beside B269 for 60m.*
- Cross Rd ☒ with great care to private drive (Barnards Road), then immediately (before reaching gate) TL (low concrete Fp sign) past gatepost and fenced garden of Lodge Cottage.*
- At end of fence bear slightly R on faint Fp through trees for 40m, then in 25m beside sawn up tree trunk bear slightly L (CB 160°).*
- Pass L of house and garden to continue on faint Fp between posts.*

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Vanguard Way Route Description: Section 2

- e) Cross stile into field then bear slightly L (CB 110°) across grass, keeping L of depression containing **Nore Hill Chalk Pinnacle**.
- f) Pass fingerpost then clump of bushes and head (CB 120°) towards far corner of field, a little to L of radio mast, to find waymark post by Worms Heath Cottages. *For the next 4 km the VGW runs together with the **Greenwich Meridian Trail**, with its GMT waymarks.*

2.4 [TQ 381 574]


To your right here is your last view of London along the Vanguard Way.

- a) TR to follow L edge of field beside hedge, descending very steeply and crossing two stiles.
- b) You now start to ascend a little, with **Warren Barn Farm** away to your R, and in 50m cross farm Tk (*Upland Road*) by two more stiles.
- c) With hedge on L follow Fp uphill then down to Rd (*Slines Oak Road*), with the scattered houses of Woldingham occupying the hillside opposite.


2.5 [TQ 376 567]

- a) Cross stile onto Rd and TL for 225m, keeping to L-hand side.
- b) As Rd swings R KA on Tk.

Link to Woldingham Station [2.7 km / 1.7 miles, TQ 359 564]

- a) At Tk TR on to Slines Oak Road then TL up it **NP** for 1 km, ignoring side turns.
- b) Halfway up, just after house on R called White Gates, climb steps on L then continue along parallel close (*Clare Court*) and rejoin Slines Oak Road at the top.
- c) KA to Station Road in Woldingham village centre, where the village store lies 200m to your right.
- d) You can obviously TR along Station Road for quicker access to the station, passing shops, on a rather narrow pavement all the way on L-hand side. However, there's a pleasanter and mostly traffic-free route with a fine view as below, though steep and muddy in places.
- e) Cross  to signpost on village green, TR then shortly TL down Park View Road **NP**.
- f) Follow this as it bears R, then in 250m (between Hardown House and The Red Cottage) TL down narrow stepped Fp between hedges/fences and through wood.
- g) Cross stile (fine view of Marden Park) and continue steeply down L side of field to KG (may be very muddy here) and unmade lane (*Church Road*).
- h) TR and follow Church Road for 750m past Church Farm and station car park to Woldingham Station.

 Trains to East Croydon, central London, East Grinstead and Buxted.

 Buses from Woldingham village (Monday to Friday only) to Caterham.

 Dene Coffee Shop at Knight's Garden Centre (300m along Woldingham Road past station).

If starting from Woldingham Station:

- a) From the main station exit KA to car park exit.
- b) Either KA up Station Road, using R-hand pavement, for 1.5 km to village green then TL along Slines Oak Road at (f) below); or for picturesque route immediately TR up Church Road, parallel to station car park and railway.
- c) In 500m pass entrance to Marden Park Farm (bridge over railway), then Church Farm and cottages on unmade Rd.
- d) In 185m (just after another bridge over railway) TL through KG (may be very muddy here) and ascend R side of steep field.
- e) At top of field cross stile and KA up narrow stepped Fp through wood to Rd.

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Vanguard Way Route Description: Section 2

- f) TR along Park View Road **NP** bearing L to village green and bear R between tall conifers to signpost near seat.
- g) Cross Rd ⊗ then KA along Slines Oak Road, using R-hand pavement.
- h) In 230m, soon after Rd bends R, join parallel Rd on R called Clare Court.
- j) At end descend steps then TR, rejoining Slines Oak Road, now **NP**.
- k) Soon after Butlers Dene Road at foot of hill, where Rd bears L, TR on to Tk to rejoin VGW.

2.6 [TQ 376 565]

- a) Pass metal gate then in 120m at fork by another metal gate keep L on clear Bw steeply uphill between fields to enter wood. *Hang gliders may sometimes be seen here, launching from the opposite slope.*
- b) Continue climbing for 1 km on narrow Bw following ridge between two deep valleys, which appear first on your L and later on your R.
- c) The Bw broadens out by gate then passes **Greenhill Shaw** on your L. *At the top of a rise, with access covers, you have reached the highest point of the VGW at about 260m (853 feet).*
- d) Descend gently to the point marked on maps as '**WT Sta**', where the Bw becomes a metalled lane. *In the absence of anything official, the Vanguardians call it **Whistlers Wood Lane**.*
- e) KA along access Rd for 400m, passing with Whistlers Wood on your R, to reach Rd (*The Ridge, but shown as Woldingham Road on some maps*) at Flint House, with its venerable, globe-topped red-brick wall.

2.7 [TQ 386 546]

- a) Cross Rd. ⊗ As traffic comes fast round the bend, for greater visibility you are strongly advised to do so at the bend itself, by the watchtower attached to the outside of the wall.
- b) KA along left-hand side of Chalkpit Lane **NP** opposite.
- c) After 90m, as Rd bears R, KA on Fp down through trees, bearing R at junction to go through KG onto **Oxted Downs**.

Note that the VGW heads south-westerly from this point to join the NDW, not south-easterly as shown on some OS maps.

*You now have a fine view across **Oxted** and The Weald towards the high ground of Ashdown Forest, though unfortunately it is rather spoiled by the noise and traffic on the **M25 motorway** below.*

- d) Descend slope called Whistlers Steep - it is indeed very steep and may be slippery if wet.
- e) At foot join **North Downs Way** (NDW).

You can now either TL to continue along the VGW at 2.8, or TR to follow our Western Link to Oxted Station (2.0 km). It's the shorter of two VGW links into Oxted, but almost entirely on roads ⊗ so you may prefer to continue along the VGW to use the slightly longer and much more rural Eastern Link (but at May 2019 this link is not available, see next page) at the end of 2.8, which is mostly on footpaths.

Western Link to Oxted Station [2.0 km / 1.3 miles, TQ 393 528]


⊗ Take care at all road crossings.


- a) TR steeply down NDW.
- b) Go through KG then immediately TL along narrow enclosed Fp parallel with Rd (Chalkpit Lane) – beware exposed roots. *This is not entirely comfortable but preferable to walking along the narrow and busy lane.*
- c) At double gates join verge beside lane to go under M25, then you can walk on a pavement for the rest of the link.

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- d) Just before railway bridge, bear L along Gordons Way.
- e) In 350m at Rd junction bear L along Barrow Green Road.
- f) In 300m pass under railway bridge then TL along Bluehouse Lane and immediately TR along Station Approach, which leads in 200m to Oxted Station.

 Trains to East Croydon, central London, East Grinstead, Buxted and Uckfield.

 Buses to Redhill, Westerham (Mon-Fri) and (Mon-Sat) Edenbridge, Lingfield, Limpsfield Chart.

 Oxted Inn (Wetherspoons) beside station (west side).

 Cafés in Station Roads East and West.

 Station Approach (west side), almost opposite station entrance. Also in Morrisons supermarket (west side).

 In Oxted.

If starting from Oxted Station, from the station platforms:

- a) Follow signs to Ticket Office.
- b) KA along Station Approach, past taxi office and public toilets, parallel with railway line.
- c) At junction with Bluehouse Lane TL then immediately TR along Barrow Green Road, passing under railway bridge.
- d) Bear L with Rd and in 300m take right fork (Gordons Way), ignoring side turnings.
- e) In 350m at Rd junction TR up Chalkpit Lane and follow this for 500m. When the pavement runs out, follow the verge leading under the M25 bridge to wide double field gates.
- f) Dive into the bushes to follow a narrow, enclosed footpath, parallel with the lane, watching out for exposed roots. This is not entirely comfortable but preferable to walking along the narrow, busy lane.
- g) In 70m TR up steps and go through KG (joining NDW and Woldingham Millennium Walk) then climb steeply for 100m, ignoring R fork, to fingerpost, where TR to rejoin VGW.

2.8 [TQ 385 543]

- a) Continuing along the VGW, now together with NDW and GMW, follow rutted Tk for 400m, soon joining wire fence.
- b) Bear R through KG then go through barrier into next field. *The impressive red-brick building on hillside beyond the M25 is the former **St. Michael's School**. The Eastern Link with Oxted Station starts here.*

Please note that this link is closed because of damage to the footbridge, known as Whistler's Bridge, on Tandridge footpath 75 over the M25. The closure is effective to 15th November 2020 or until the completion of repair work, whichever is sooner.


Eastern Link to Oxted Station (2.3 km / 1.4 miles, TQ 393 528]

This is also shown on OS maps as a link between the NDW and the Greensand Way.

- a) After barrier TR on Fp leading downhill with hedge on your R.
- b) At bend go through KG and continue along Fp leading to FB over M25.
- c) Follow this twisting Fp for 1 km through small wood and beside fields, ignoring side turns through hedges.
- d) Eventually Fp reaches stile, which cross and TR to pass playing fields of Oxted School to Rd at bend.
- e) KA (Park Road) to junction then TR along Bluehouse Lane.


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- f) In 200m  TL along Gresham Road, which bears R, following right-hand pavement.
- g) At its end TR along Station Road East to Oxted Station in Station Approach East.

See Western Link for facilities in Oxted.


If starting from Oxted Station:

- a) From the station platforms follow signs to Station Approach East.
- b) KA to main Rd and TR.
- c) In 200m TL along Gresham Road, which bears L, following left-hand pavement.
- d) At end,  TR along Bluehouse Lane, then in 200m TL up Park Road.
- e) Where Rd turns R, KA on Fp past playing fields of Oxted School.
- f) Cross stile and TL to follow twisting Fp for 1 km along field edges and through small wood (its entrance may be obscured by foliage) towards M25.
- g) Cross M25 on FB then TL and continue on Fp for 250m.
- h) Go through KG and KA beside field to join VGW and NDW, where TR.

2.9 [TQ 389 543]

- a) Continue together with NDW along edge of very large field, with Titsey Woods on your L and M25 down to your R.
The VGW has now entered the Titsey Estate, which has a network of trails indicated by arrows of various colours, which you should ignore.
 - b) In 600m (250m before hedge) reach set-back plaque indicating **Greenwich Meridian** (may be obscured by foliage), then continue through KG in hedge to end of next field, marked by line of trees.
 - c) Go through another KG and down steep steps to join sunken Tk (*Pitchfont Lane*). NDW turns left (uphill) here.
-  *Botley Hill Farmhouse, about 1 km off route, is a pub with its own brewery – the Titsey Brewing Company. To reach it, TL on NDW uphill for 650m to B269 Limpsfield Road, then TL along that for 300m.*

2.10 [TQ 398 548]

- a) TR down twisting Tk past barns and through gate between Pitchfont Farm and Limpsfield Lodge Farmhouse.
 - b) KA on Pitchfont Lane to junction with Rd (*Water Lane*) beside Pitchfont Lodge and Titsey Foundation Walk indicator board at entrance to **Titsey Place**. VGW crosses presumed line of the **Pilgrims Way** here. *Water Lane NP provides an alternative route into Oxted, if you can't use the eastern link.*
-  *Tea room at Titsey Place – restricted opening times, see Commentary.*

2.11 [TQ 401 544]

This stretch crosses several grassy fields, where you may discern a faint footpath, but you should try to follow the compass bearings.

- a) KA for 20m along Bw (still Pitchfont Lane) then cross stile on L.
- b) Go half R on across field (CB 95°), and enter fenced area where field narrows into far (E) corner of field.
- c) After crossing small stream and stile by metal gate, continue in much the same direction (CB 115°) up next field to stile L of tall tree.
- d) Cross next field in same direction to pass remains of old stile.
- e) KA over next (larger field) heading for far corner (CB 120°).
- f) Cross stile onto wooden FB over infant **River Eden**.

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2.12 [TQ 408 542]

a) Go through KG on to Rd (B269 Titsey Road).

 Infrequent bus (Mon – Sat) to Westerham and Oxted.

b) TL along grass verge for 100m (if you wish to visit **Titsey Church** continue along Rd **NP** for 700m) and TR through gate just beyond water company building and power substation. Note that the verge has sometimes become overgrown, forcing walkers to use the road – in this case you will need to take great care, keeping right.

c) Follow Tk beside high fence on R, and when this ends KA (CB 105°) across large field towards M25 motorway to reach fingerpost by fence.

d) TL beside fence (good view of Titsey Church to your L) and M25, into scrub, then follow narrow Fp through ‘hawthorn tunnels’ (beware exposed roots, may be overgrown) and up 25 steps to cross stile.

2.13 [TQ 417 544]

a) TR to cross motorway on Tk bridge. Just 500m away to your left is **Clacket Lane Service Station** but at present the only way to reach it is via a diversion of 3.2 km (see link to Grasshopper Inn below).

b) KA down clear broad Tk (Broomlands Lane), continuing ahead at junction beside area with high fence. Tk later becomes metalled at **Broomlands Farm**.

c) Ascend with Titsey Wood on your L to crossing Rd - beware large earth-moving vehicles. This is the access road to the huge **Moorhouse Sandpits**, on your R, and you are now crossing the **Greensand Ridge**.

d) In 150m reach junction with Fp.

Link to Grasshopper Inn [1.0 km / 0.6 miles, TQ 428 533]

Although there is a pavement beside the A25, if you wish to visit the **Grasshopper Inn** the following may be preferable to walking along the busy main road. You can also use this link if you wish to visit **Moorhouse Bank**. **The Grasshopper Inn is closed for maintenance but should re-open mid 2020.**

If you are staying at the **Premier Inn at Clacket Lane Services**, you can use this link to the Grasshopper, then continue 200m to junction and TL along Clacket Lane **NP** for 1.3 km.



a) 150m after sandpits access, TL on Fp through wood for 400m.

b) Soon after large water tank, emerge into field.

c) Go half R across field (bearing 120°, may be muddy) towards small brick building. In August 2018 the right of way across this field was obstructed by a maize crop. This has been reported, but if still the case you should TL then immediately bear R to follow field edge.

d) TR along field edge to layby beside A25 Westerham Road (may be overgrown at exit point).

e) TL to A25 and entrance to Moorhouse Sand Pits and KA for 75m to Grasshopper Inn.

  Grasshopper Inn.

 Premier Inn, Clacket Lane Services.

 Infrequent buses to/from Westerham, Sevenoaks, Oxted, Redhill, Reigate.

Returning from Grasshopper Inn:

a) TR beside A25 for 75m, then KA past entrance to Moorhouse Sand Pits along layby.

b) In 75m, at tall wooden pole TR through trees into field (may be overgrown).

c) Follow R-hand side of field for 150m to small brick building.

d) Go half L across field (bearing 300°) to locate Fp into wood. In August 2018 the right of way across this field was obstructed by a maize crop. This has been reported, but if still the case continue along field edge, bearing sharp L at the end to reach access into wood (ignore Tk just before it).

e) KA on Fp through wood, past large water tank, for 400m to Broomlands Lane where TL to rejoin VGW.


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2.14 [TQ 421 535]

a) KA to Rd (A25 Westerham Road) at Moorhouse.

 Infrequent buses to/from Westerham, Sevenoaks, Oxted, Redhill, Reigate.

2.15 [TQ 420 532]


a) Cross Rd  with great care and take Bw opposite (Woodlea), which goes at first between fences and through gate.

b) KA across field, pass through righthand (smaller) of two gates then bear slightly R to pass through another gate behind bushes into Loampit Wood. TR along Tk (which carries the London Countryway).

2.16 [TQ 423 528]


a) Almost immediately bear half L uphill and KA, passing two path junctions.


b) At third junction fork R to reach Rd (Ridlands Lane) by lamppost at Limpsfield Chart.


c) Cross Rd  and KA on L side of hedge along Fp (becoming gravel drive) past houses, with cricket field to your L, to Rd at bend (Stoneleigh Road).


d) KA between houses and common to junction (Moorhouse Road and Tally Road), where Greensand Way crosses VGW and Section 2 of the VGW ends at:

3.1 [TQ 426 519] Limpsfield Chart.

 A bus service (Mon – Sat) operates from the Carpenters Arms to Oxted.

 Carpenters Arms - TR for 100m along Tally Road.

 Afternoon teas served in St Andrew's Church Hall on Sundays in August.

 150m to R along Tally Road.

Link to Westerham [3.8 km / 2.4 miles, TQ 446 540]

This link follows the Greensand Way (GW) for the first 1.5 km then the GW link with Westerham. The route is mostly well signed by GW discs and fingers.


a) On reaching Tally Road at Limpsfield Chart, opposite white fence of The Mill House, TL into wood at fingerpost along GW, following stony (sometimes muddy) Tk.

b) In 60m at first fork, KA on main Tk. Note that GW signs are missing in this area.

c) In another 200m fork L on narrow Fp, leaving main Tk.

d) Follow this winding Fp in the same general direction (around bearing 70°) for next 900m to end of wood, keeping ahead at all cross Tks, then at first five-ways junction bear L on broad main Tk.

e) At second five-ways junction, KA to pass R of stone plinth marking GW halfway point, then along fenced Bw between gardens.

f) Cross Rd  (Goodley Stock Road) with care and pass wooden field-gate.

g) KA on broad gravel Tk (permissive Fp/Bw) for 80m to T-junction.

h) Here main GW route goes R, but VGW link goes L, now sharing GW link to Westerham. (GW waymark post here missing at time of writing – August 2018).

j) Follow this Fp in same general direction (around bearing 15° to 20°) for 900m, descending gently and ignoring all side turns.

k) At edge of wood, cross Tk and go through first KG then KA through copse, now in Squerryes Park. (Prominent white dovecote down to L is part of 17th century Squerryes Court complex.)

l) Go through second KG and KA across field to third KG then KA along winding fenced Fp.


m) Go through fourth KG then descend steeply towards pond, with fine view of the North Downs.


n) At foot TL beside Park Lodge then TR along lane (Mill Lane).

Continued on next page ►

Vanguard Way Route Description: Section 2

- p) In 100m by pond and just after small car park TR down steps, over FB and through KG, then KA along foot of sloping field.
- q) In 300m TL down through KG and along fenced Fp, which is actually the start of Water Lane, to cross stone stile and FB. (Note steps leading down to a stream – the infant River Darent – which must be where people once washed clothes and may now provide an opportunity to clean your muddy boots!)
- r) Climb to reach and descend steps into Westerham opposite the village green (bus stops close by).

 Buses to Bromley and Sevenoaks; also (Mon-Fri) Edenbridge.

 Many pubs, cafés and tea-rooms in Westerham.

 In Westerham.

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Vanguard Way Route Description: Section 2

COMMENTARY

on places shown in bold italics and underlined in the route description

2.1

About 270 of the distinctive **coal tax posts** were erected in the 1860s by the Corporation of London, whose coat of arms they bear, to mark the points, about 15-20 miles from the City of London, where tax had to be paid on all coal brought into the area. The tax was abolished in 1890 but about 200 of the posts remain in place and are now Grade II listed structures!

2.3

Nore Hill Chalk Pinnacle is registered as a Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Site (RIGS) and is managed by the Surrey Wildlife Trust. This field was previously a gravel quarry, which was filled in with domestic refuse then covered with soil. Whilst digging the gravel, a number of submerged natural chalk pinnacles were discovered, and one of these has been left in situ as the RIGS, although it is gradually being worn away by rainfall. It was the first Geological Local Nature Reserve to be established in Britain. You can enter the site through a gate on the righthand side, but note that the descent into the depression is very steep, often overgrown, and may be slippery when wet. Be sure that you can climb back out again!

The 440 km (273-mile) **Greenwich Meridian Trail** was established in 2009 to coincide with the 125th anniversary of the Greenwich Meridian, when a zero longitude through the Royal Observatory at Greenwich was set up by international agreement – despite objections from France, which wanted it to go through Paris! It starts at Peacehaven, to the east of Brighton and dives into the North Sea at Sand-le-Mere in Yorkshire.

2.4

In addition to being a working farm, **Warren Barn Farm** is a busy leisure centre offering horse-riding, hang-gliding and paragliding. It is also the base of Warlingham & District Horse Club, which organises show-jumping and point-to-point events. The fields and combes to your left are regularly used for horse-riding, hang-gliding and paragliding events.

2.6

Greenhill Shaw is one of many shaws in Surrey. Often found in this part of England, ‘shaw’ is an Old English word meaning a small wood. It has the same root as ‘shaggy’, implying that the word may have been applied to an untidy clump of trees.

‘**WT Sta**’ on the OS map stands for Wireless Telegraphy Station, though nowadays such installations are usually known as Microwave Relay Stations. Built around a water tower, the masts are part of a national network used for communications between pilots and air traffic controllers.

Whistlers Wood Lane is the unofficial name given by the Vanguardians to this apparently ancient route, which seems to have linked Oxted with Woldingham and Croydon. We have checked old maps and consulted historical authorities, to no avail, but if someone knows better please let us know. We asked a resident who told us it was called ‘Vanguard Way’!

2.7

Oxted Downs, part of the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, is an area of chalk downland owned by the National Trust. In spring and early summer wild flowers such as bluebell, cowslip, dog’s mercury and sanicle may be found in profusion, while later on ploughman’s spikenard and autumn gentian make an appearance. This is part of the North Downs, a range of hills formed from a chalk stratum that dips beneath London to reappear further north as the Chiltern Hills. Chalk was formed during the cretaceous period (65 to 145 million years ago) from the shells of microscopic creatures, which sank to the bottom of the sea (by which this area was covered at that time) and were eventually crushed to become a soft, porous rock. As recently as 8,000 years ago, these chalk hills extended across to mainland Europe, but it is thought

Vanguard Way Route Description: Section 2

that a huge tsunami around that time and rising sea levels caused the destruction of the land link.

A feature of chalk landscapes is flint. This rock is normally only visible as small nodules made of a kind of quartz or silica, which are light coloured on the outside and very dark, almost black, inside. When fractured, extremely hard and sharp edges result, and during the Stone Ages they were highly prized for the manufacture of hand axes and arrow heads. This durability also led to their use as a building material, and they feature in many churches, barns and other buildings in this part of Britain.

Oxted (2.0 km S on link) is an expanding small town whose population at the 2011 census had reached 11,314, many of whom commute into Croydon and London. Its name was originally Acstede, Saxon for 'oak place'. Situated on the lower southern slopes of the North Downs among the headwaters of the River Eden, it is the administrative centre of Tandridge District, whose council offices are here. The charming original village (Old Oxted) lies on the A25, 1 km west of the modern town, which has developed around the railway station, with its main shopping centre in Station Road East. You will need to keep your wits about you while negotiating the station's maze of subways and exits. The Barn Theatre in Bluehouse Lane was opened in 1924; built with timber from the 13th century Saw Mill Barn in nearby Limpsfield, it is the home of two community groups, Oxted Players and Oxted Operatic Society.

The **North Downs Way** (NDW) is a national trail, managed by Surrey and Kent County Councils on behalf of Natural England, and the Vanguard Way shares its route for the next 1.5 km. Almost equally divided between the crest of the North Downs and the lower terrace that carries the Pilgrim's Way (see below), it extends for 201 km (125 miles) from Farnham to Dover by its shortest route via Folkestone, with a longer option of 211 km (131 miles) following a loop via Canterbury. A guide to the North Downs Way, published by Aurum Press, has been written by Vanguard Way author Colin Saunders, and can be bought on his website www.colinsaunders.org.uk.

The **M25 motorway** is the outer of London's two ring roads, extending 188 km (117 miles). It was built in stages from the early 1970s and was completed in 1986, with three or more lanes in each direction. People either love or loathe it: there are frequent accidents and delays, and it has blighted the scenery and peace of much of the countryside, yet at the best of times it provides a relatively quick and easy way of avoiding the clogged main roads of Greater London, and enterprising coach companies even offer day trips around it!

The **Pilgrims Way** is one of the best known long-distance routes in Britain, though its origins have been the subject of much contention. The name is often written with an apostrophe (Pilgrim's or Pilgrims') but as there is confusion about whether it should be singular or plural we have chosen to omit it! The route used to be widely regarded as having been a prehistoric trading route between Wessex and Kent, with possible termini in the vicinities of Southampton and Folkestone. Generally following an ancient trackway along a terrace roughly halfway down the southern slope of the North Downs, it was said to have been used later by medieval pilgrims travelling to or between the tomb of St Swithun (died c 862) in Winchester, the old capital of England, and those of St Augustine (died c 604) and St Thomas Becket (died 1170) in Canterbury Cathedral.

However, doubt has been cast on these stories by those who claim that both traders and pilgrims would surely have preferred either the easier and more logical route along the Thames valley via London, and that the idea of a Pilgrims Way along this lower route was the misconception of influential Victorian antiquaries and, possibly, an imaginative Ordnance Survey mapmaker. Others maintain that the low ground was too heavily forested, and frequented by dangerous animals, while the ridge of the North Downs provided a clearer and safer route. Whatever the truth, the Pilgrims Way is shown on maps as following the northern rim of The Weald and the southern slopes of the North Downs. Much of its length is now on roads or inaccessible to the public and therefore, though passing many places of interest, not very suitable for a walking tour.

2.8

St. Michael's School, on the hillside beyond the M25, was built in the late 1800s for the children of missionaries; former pupils include the radio and television presenter Anneke Rice. The school closed in

Vanguard Way Route Description: Section 2

2002 and the Grade II listed building has been converted into 20 luxurious apartments.

2.9

The **Greenwich Meridian** (from the Latin *meridianus* meaning midday) is indicated by a plaque commissioned jointly by the Vanguard's Rambling Club and Surrey County Council, to mark the Millennium in 2000. Your current coordinates are therefore officially longitude 0° 0' 0", latitude 51° 16' 25" N. In effect, a meridian is a line of longitude, i.e. any line with the same radius as the Earth that passes through the North and South Poles. The Greenwich Meridian, also known as the Prime Meridian, was established in 1884 at the International Meridian Conference in Washington DC. Passing through the Old Royal Observatory in Greenwich, it is now internationally accepted as the line from which all other longitudes are measured, after a period when various countries each had their own meridian lines, with much confusion as a result.

2.10

The Titsey Estate covers a huge area north and south of the M25, and the VGW passes through it for 4km. **Titsey Place** (900m NE) can be reached by following the drive to the left through the gateway. The original manor house was built in the 1530s for Sir John Gresham, a leading financier, founder of the Royal Exchange and Lord Mayor of London. In 1776 Sir Thomas Gresham replaced it with the present building, rather disparagingly described by Pevsner: 'The outward appearance is all now indifferent; there are hundreds of country houses like it'. The estate remained in the Gresham family, and its descendants the Leveson Gowers, until 1992, when it was turned into a charitable foundation. Containing four paintings by Canaletto, the house (together with its formal garden, kitchen garden and tea-room) is open to the public on certain days from Easter to September, but the woodland walks in the estate are normally open all year round. Much of the surrounding farmland is owned by the Titsey Estate. Some signs on the estate bear its coat of arms with the motto, 'Frangas non flectes – Latin for 'You may break but not bend me'.

The magnificent giant redwood tree (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*) at the entrance is a mere youngster at 150 years and 20m (65 feet) tall. It could live for several more centuries and grow at least twice as high – some can reach 90m (300 feet). The species was imported into Britain in 1853 by John D. Matthew, and is also known as sequoia, wellingtonia or just 'the big tree'!

The Roman road from London to Lewes passed nearby - it went slap bang through the middle of what is now **Clacket Lane Service Station** - look left as you cross the motorway. You will cross this Roman road twice as you progress along the VGW (see paragraphs 3.3 and 5.10). Titsey seems to have been a religious site in Roman times, and the remains of two Roman villas and a Celtic temple have been found on the estate. Artefacts from these can be seen on the anticlockwise side of the service station, in a display case outside the toilets. The tiny village of Titsey (from the Saxon Tydiceseg = Tydice's meadow) and its church lie close to the house.

2.11

The **River Eden** is formed from several streams that rise in the Titsey area. It flows first south through Oxted then east through Edenbridge to join the Medway near Penshurst. The river took its name from the town of Edenbridge (which in its original form Eadelmesbregre meant the bridge of a person called Eadhelm) not the other way round. The VGW encounters the Eden again in Sections 3 and 4.

2.12

Titsey Church (St. James the Great) lies in the tiny village of Titsey (from the Saxon Tydiceseg = Tydice's meadow). The village used to lie further west, by Titsey Place, but was moved to its present site around 1860. The present church was built in 1861. There seems to have been a religious site here in Roman times, as the remains of two Roman villas and a Celtic temple have been found nearby.

Moorhouse Sandpits are owned by the Titsey Estate. Roman and medieval artefacts have been found here. This clearly demonstrates that you have moved from the chalk of the North Downs to the sand of the

Vanguard Way Route Description: Section 2

Greensand Ridge, the term commonly used for the range of hills that runs parallel to and south of the North Downs for about 160 km (100 miles) from Haslemere in Surrey to Folkestone in Kent. However, you can see that a layer of chalk lies on top of the greensand. The greensand rock is made of sand that was deposited 100-130 million years ago under vast freshwater lakes, then compressed into rock. Though called greensand, due to the high content of a green mineral called glauconite, you may be hard pressed to detect a greenish hue in the sand quarried from this area. A layer of greensand rock underlies the chalk one that forms the better-known North and South Downs, though the Greensand Ridge reaches greater heights than the downs – Leith Hill in Surrey is the highest point in southern England at 294m (965 feet) above sea level. The altitude here at Moorhouse is 157m (515 feet). There are equivalent ridges of greensand on the far sides of both The Weald in Sussex and the London Basin in Bedfordshire, but they are not as extensive or as prominent as this one. For more information, see our guide ‘Flora, Fauna and Geology of the Vanguard Way’ under the ‘Directions & Maps’ button on our website.

2.13

Clacket Lane Services opened in 1993. It consists of two separate service stations, one for each direction, on either side of the M25, both operated by RoadChef, and includes a Premier Inn on the south side. The original proposed name was Titsey Wood Services. The Roman road from London to Lewes, which you have encountered twice already, went slap bang through the middle of the service stations. Artefacts from the Roman buildings that lay in the Titsey estate can be seen in the anticlockwise (north) service station, in a display case outside the toilets.

Broomlands Farm is the home of Hurst Green Shires, a leading centre for heavy horse riding, driving and hacking, with nine shire horses currently stabled here – you may see them grazing in the fields opposite the centre. The shire horse is a tall breed reaching 17 hands (1.73m or 11 feet two inches), which was formerly used for farm and other heavy work. It had been on the verge of extinction but is now enjoying a revival.

The **Grasshopper Inn** dates back to the 13th century, when a small cottage here called the Plough served as the beerhouse for the hamlet of Moorhouse. It is thought that the original Grasshopper Inn stood at Titsey - a grasshopper being part of the coat of arms of the Leverson-Gower family - and when this closed they ordered that the Plough should be renamed. The inn offers ‘boutique’ hotel accommodation.

Moorhouse Bank (1 km E up side road opposite Grasshopper Inn) is the remains of a remarkable bank and ditch, probably built by King Ethelbert of Kent after an invasion by men of Wessex in 568 AD (CE). Moorhouse probably refers to the home of John de la More who lived here in the 14th century.

2.15

The **London Countryway** is an unsigned long-distance trail (328 km / 205 miles) forming a complete circle in the countryside around London, nearly always outside the M25. It was the idea of Keith Chesterton of the Long Distance Walkers Association. His book is now out of print but a detailed blog written by Des De Moor can be found at desdemoor.blogspot.com, then scroll down the left-hand column to ‘London Countryway’.

2.16

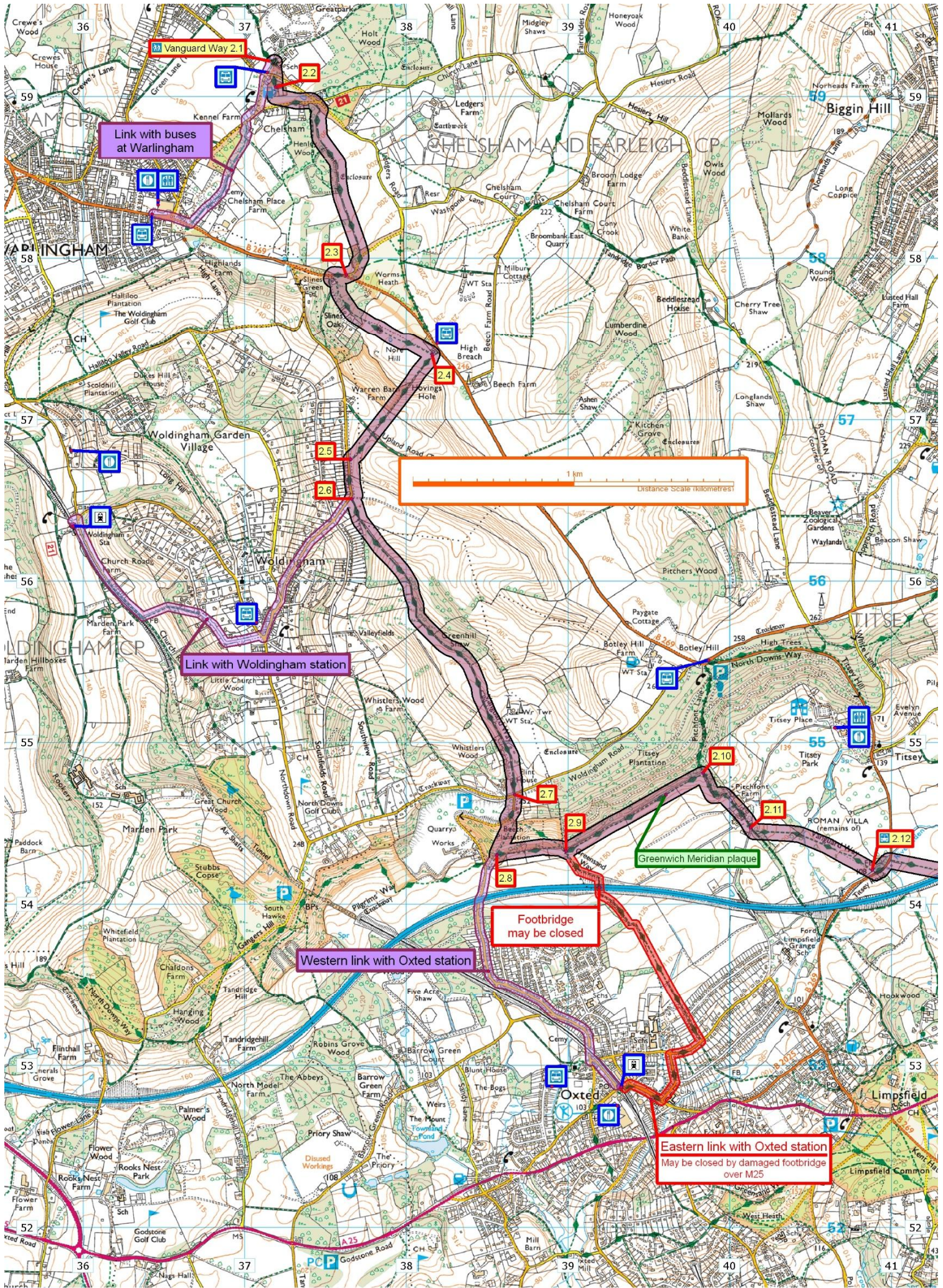
The village of **Limpsfield Chart** is also known as The Chart, which is local dialect for overgrown common land, from the Saxon ‘cert’ - not to be confused with Limpsfield Common, 1½ km to the northwest. Confusingly, the chart is part of a group of several separate National Trust properties in the area, which the NT administers in one unit under the name Limpsfield Common. During the coaching era of the 18th and early 19th centuries, the B269 here used to be the main road from London to Lewes.

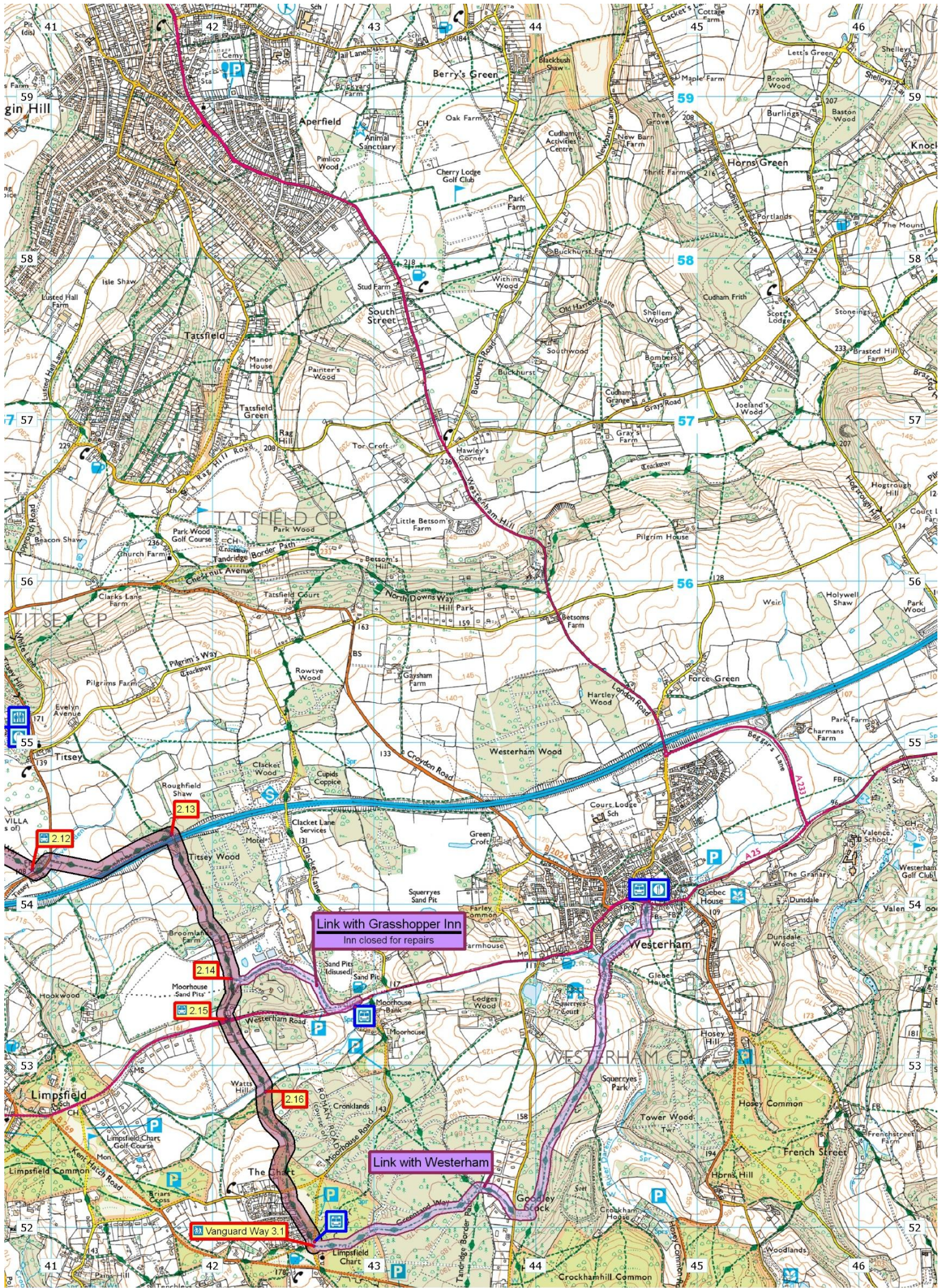
At 169 km (105 miles) the **Greensand Way** is one of the longest walking routes in southern England. It follows the Greensand Ridge (see above), running parallel to and south of the North Downs, from Haslemere in Surrey to Ham Street in Kent.

Vanguard Way Route Description: Section 2

The small town of **Westerham** provides a convenient break point between Sections 2 and 3 as it is served by a rather long but pleasant VGW link (shared with the Greensand Way) and has many places for refreshment and good bus connections with Bromley and Sevenoaks. It also has associations with General James Wolfe and Sir Winston Churchill, who both have statues on Westerham Green.

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Link with Grasshopper Inn
Inn closed for repairs

Link with Westerham

Vanguard Way 3.1