THE VANGUARD WAY

(SOUTH TO NORTH)

A different experience in the other direction!

SECTION J
Limpsfield Chart to Chelsham Common

Third edition (2025)

VANGUARD WAY ROUTE GUIDE

SECTION J

Limpsfield Chart to Chelsham Common

COLIN SAUNDERS

Third Edition (South-North) 2025
Version 3.0

This 3rd edition of the south-north route description was first published in 2025 and replaces the 1st edition published in 2011 and the 2nd edition published 2017. It is only available as an online resource.

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To find out about any late changes to the route, please visit www.vanguardway.org.uk and click on the 'latest news' button. Or visit our Facebook page (Vanguard Way Association).

Colin Saunders asserts his right to be identified as the author of this work. Whilst the information contained in this guide was believed to be correct at the time of writing, the author and publishers accept no responsibility for the consequences of any inaccuracies. However, we shall be pleased to receive your comments and information of alterations for consideration. Please email colin@vanguardway.org.uk or write to Colin Saunders, 35 Gerrards Close, Oakwood, London, N14 4RH, England.

Cover photo: cc-by-sa/2.0 – The Vanguard Way to Titsey (3) - © David Anstiss – geograph.or.uk/p/2719678

LIMPSFIELD CHART TO CHELSHAM COMMON
12.8km (7.9 miles)

Distances from Limpsfield Chart to:
From Westerham add 3.7km (2.3 miles)

A25 Moorhouse (bus)	1.5km	(0.9 miles)
>Grasshopper Inn (pub/bus)	2.7km	(1.7 miles)
>Titsey Place	5.5km	(3.4 miles)
>Botley Farmhouse (pub/bus)	5.7km	(3.5 miles)
>Oxted Station (via eastern or western link)	8.4km	(5.2 miles)
>Woldingham Station	10.8km	(6.7 miles)
Worms Heath (bus)	10.1km	(6.3 miles)
Chelsham Common (bus)	12.7km	(7.9 miles)

Distances from Oxted Station (via eastern link) to:

>Woldingham Station	7.1km	(4.4 miles)
Worms Heath (bus)	6.4km	(4.0 miles)
Chelsham Common (bus)	9.0km	(5.6 miles)

Distances from Oxted Station (via western link) to:

>Woldingham Station	6.2km	(3.9 miles)
Worms Heath (bus)	5.6km	(3.5 miles)
Chelsham Common (bus)	8.2km	(5.1 miles)

Distances from Woldingham Station to:

Worms Heath (bus)	3.7km	(2.3 miles)
Chelsham Common (bus)	6.3km	(3.9 miles)

Public transport
On route: Buses at Limpsfield Chart, Moorhouse, Worms Heath and Chelsham Common.
Links with Oxted and Woldingham stations, and with buses at Grasshopper Inn and Westerham.

Abbreviations and symbols

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 below)				
Rd	= road	m	= metres		
Tk	= track	km	= kilometres		
VGW	= Vanguard Way	>	= off route		

= Bus = Cafés etc = Toilets
= Train = Pubs = Phone box
= Taxi = Accommodation = Take extra care – see below

Route overview
This is one of the hilliest sections on the Vanguard Way, as it includes the Greensand Ridge and the North Downs, part of the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. You will encounter the two steepest ascents on the whole route, but there are some long, level stretches through farmland, and you will be rewarded by some outstanding views. Much of this section passes through the vast Titsey Estate, and you pass close to Titsey Place (worth a detour on opening days). Also the mystical Nore Hill Chalk Pinnacle. Unfortunately, for nearly 600 metres you will be walking right next to the M25 motorway – just grit your

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teeth and admire the wonderful view of Titsey Church and the North Downs. And look out for the Vanguards' contribution to the Millennium year with a plaque marking the Greenwich Meridian. There are two links with Oxted: please read their descriptions below before deciding which one to use.

Lowest and highest points. River Eden (108m); North Downs near Flint House (260m).

How to use this guide

Paragraphs are numbered for ease of reference. However, please note that this South-North version uses the same numbering system for locations along the route as the original North-South version, so they appear to run in reverse order, i.e. in this section from J(2.16) to J(2.1). (The individual route description paragraphs in this South-North section are preceded by the letter J to distinguish them from the North-South versions.)

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. Maps showing the correct route are appended to this route guide. 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.

In this route guide:

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 blue 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.

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

Distances and altitudes are given in kilometres (km) and metres (m); but if you are more familiar with miles and yards, remember that 1 km is about five eighths of a mile and that 100m is about the same as 110 yards. To roughly convert metres to feet, multiply by three and add 10 per cent.

⊗ **- Walking on roads and other potential hazards**
When walking, one should of course take care in all sorts of potentially hazardous situations, but especially when crossing or walking along roads. **Please read the 'Safety' chapter in our Introduction to the Route, which can be downloaded from our website vanguardway.org.uk.** We use this symbol ⊗ to draw your attention to situations that require extra care.

'**NP**' in the route description indicates that the road has no pavement or other provision for pedestrians. 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 light, luminous or reflective on top, and carry a torch.

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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.

ALL INFORMATION SHOWN IS SUBJECT TO ALTERATION WITHOUT NOTICE

This third edition of the South-North version of the Route Description is based on a completely new survey undertaken by members of the Vanguard Way Association in 2023.

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 please refer to the Latest News page on our website vanguardway.org.uk for any changes that may have taken place meanwhile. You might also like to join our Facebook page, where news of developments affecting the Vanguard Way will be posted – just search Vanguard Way Association. Another way would be to join the Association, as members are kept up to date through the bi-monthly VGW News – details on our website.**

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

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.

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 route@vanguardway.org.uk.

Section J of the Vanguard Way (South-North) starts at Tally Road in Limpsfield Chart *[TQ 426 519] This is in Tandridge District in Surrey.*

Monday-Saturday to the Carpenters Arms from Westerham and Oxted.

TL for 100m along Tally Road for the Carpenters Arms pub.

150m to L along Tally Road, just past pub.

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

From Bromley, Sevenoaks and Tonbridge; also (Monday-Friday only) Three Bridges, Crawley, Lingfield, Dormansland, Crockham Hill and Edenbridge.

Several places in Westerham – see Vanguard Way Companion.

In Westerham.

This link coincides with that of the Greensand Way (GW), whose signs you will follow (though there are gaps).

a) As if leaving Kings Arms Hotel, TR towards Westerham Green.
b) In 100m, immediately after The Pheasantry, TR up steps and along tarmac alley (Water Lane) where you will pass the stone 'washing place' and stile over the infant River Darent.
c) At end go through KG then TR along foot of steeply sloping field, with the Darent to your right. ► ►

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d) At end of field go through KG, cross FB over the river and up steps to Mill Lane.
e) TL past Long Pond and gate to Park Lodge, where TL then immediately TR beside hedge to climb steep fenced Fp.
f) Through KG then follow fenced Fp to second KG, KA across field.
g) Through third KG and KA through copse to fourth KG.
h) Cross Tk, KA into wood and climb gently ascending Fp for 900m in same general direction (CB 210°), ignoring all side turnings.
i) Soon after a taller than usual GW waymark post, you reach a major junction where you TR along a Tk, joining the main GW route.
j) In 80m pass field-gate and cross Rd (Goodley Stock Road) with care.
k) At entrance to private Rd immediately bear R on Bw.
l) At five-ways junction (with GW halfway plinth go half L past fingerpost to follow major Tk (bearing 240°).
m) In 130m (at second five-ways junction) bear R (CB 260°) on lesser Tk.
n) Continue in this general direction, ignoring all crossing Tks, for 900m. May be muddy in places.
o) At area of embankments and earthworks, follow Tk as it lurches R to meet major Tk.
p) Bear R on major Tk for 300m to Rd (Moorhouse Road) at Limpsfield Chart, where TR to join VGW.

J(3.1) *[TQ 426 519]*
a) Pass The Mill House (Grade II listed) with its white fence then bear L along *Stoneleigh Road (**NP**), still with the Limpsfield Way for 900m.*
b) Pass *St Andrew's Way* and KA to bend in Stoneleigh Road.
c) KA on gravel drive past houses, with cricket field to your R.
d) At end of drive KA between posts on Tk (Bw) past playground to Rd *(Ridlands Lane)*.
e) Cross Rd to drive of Keepers Cottage then fork R down Bw through woodland (***Cronklands***).
f) TL at third junction, with open field to your L, bear R then immediately L, keeping close to field.
g) As Bw becomes narrower, KA at 1st junction (where Limpsfield Way turns L), then at 2nd junction TL to foot of hill.
h) KA through latch gate into field, crossing Bw which carries the ***London Countryway***.

The roar of traffic on the M25 motorway ahead now becomes more noticeable.

J(2.16) *[TQ 423 528]*
a) Cross narrow field to another latch-gate, crossing stream which is the infant ***River Darent***.
b) KA up worn Tk (Bw) beside fence and over mound in field.
c) KA on Bw between hedges/fences to Rd *(A25 Westerham Road)*. You are now on the ***Greensand Ridge***.

🚌 *To/from Westerham, Oxted, Edenbridge, Lingfield, East Grinstead, Dormansland, Three Bridges, Crawley.*

J(2.15) *[TQ 420 532]*
For the next 5km or so you will be in the vast Titsey Estate – see J(2.12) below.
a) Cross Rd ⊗ and KA on lane *(Broomlands Lane)* for 250m, past Brocken Wood, Melrose Cottage and the drive for Thriftwood, to junction with Fp, 25m before a 'Stop' sign. *The link with Clacket Lane Services starts here.*

Link to Clacket Lane Services (for Days Inn) *[2.5km / 1.5 miles, TQ 428 533]*

*If you wish to stay at Days Inn, the following is preferable to walking along the busy A25. You can also use this link if you wish to visit **Moorhouse Bank**. It used to provide a link to the Grasshopper Inn, but sadly that burned down some years ago and is no more.*

a) TR on Fp through wood for 400m.
b) Soon after huge water tank on your L, emerge into field by waymark post.
► ►

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c) The right of way goes half R across field (CB 120°, but may be blocked by a huge earth embankment, in which case bear L then R along L-hand edge of field passing ivy-covered brick shed.
d) Towards the end, bear L into trees and cross stream that feeds the River Darent, to reach layby beside A25 Westerham Road (may be overgrown at exit point) (picnic tables here).
e) TL to A25 Woldingham Road (passing entrance to Moorhouse Sand Pits (⊗ fast moving lorries).
*f) KA 300m (passing site of **Grasshopper Inn**) then TL along Clacket Lane (⊗ **NP**) for 1.2km.*

ã *Days Inn at Clacket Lane Services.*

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

Returning from Clacket Lane Services:
a) From service exit TR along Clacket Lane for 1.2km.
b) At A25 Woldingham Road TR for 300m then KA past entrance to Moorhouse Sand Pits (⊗ fast-moving lorries) along layby.
b) In 40m, at tall wooden pole. TR through trees into field (may be overgrown).
c) Follow R-hand side of field for 250m to ivy-covered brick shed.
d) Right of way crosses field half L here (CB 300°) but may be blocked at far end, so continue past ivy-covered brick shed along field edge.
e) At end of field, ignoring wide Tk ahead, bear L then R along narrow grassy Tk.
e) KA on Fp through wood, past large water tank, for 400m to Broomlands Lane where TR to rejoin VGW.

J(2.14) *[TQ 421 535]*
a) KA past 'Stop' sign on metalled farm drive for 150m across access Rd (⊗ *large earth-moving vehicles). This is the access road to the vast **Moorhouse Sandpits** on your L and works unit on your R.*
b) KA through Broomlands Farm (the home of ***Hurst Green Shires**; the farmhouse is Grade II listed*), and in 70m KA at Bw/Fp junction.
c) KA for a further 550m, with Titsey Wood on your R and passing tall mobile phone aerial, to cross ***M25 motorway*** on concrete bridge.

***Clacket Lane Service Station** is just 600m away on your R (you can see its slip roads), but there is currently no way that pedestrians can gain access to it other than on the 2.5km link described above*

J(2.13) *[TQ 417 544]*
a) On far side of bridge TL to descend steps. *If you wish to visit **Titsey Church**, you are advised to divert at this point by following the bridleway ahead to the road then turn left, rather than use the B269 further on, which is very busy and has no pavement.*
b) Follow Fp through 'hawthorn tunnels' beside fence and M25, soon emerging into a field. *Try to ignore the M25, instead admire the wonderful view of Titsey Church to your right, backed by the wooded North Downs.*
c) Go through KG in hedge, then in another 150m at fingerpost bear half R across field (CB 290°), gratefully leaving the M25 and heading for fence corner to L of lone tree.
d) Follow field edge with fence on your L and past gate to Rd *(B269 Titsey Road)* by water company building and power substation.
e) Cross Rd **(NP)** with care and TL along grass verge for 100m to find fingerpost and KG on R.

J(2.12) *[TQ 408 542]*
a) Go through KG and KA on Fp to cross wooden FB (stile at each end) over infant River Eden.
b) At field go half L (CB 300°) on faint worn path, heading for R-hand end of a line of fenced-off trees.
c) Pass broken stile and continue in same direction to cross stile.
d) KA to cross another stile by metal gate and small stream (may be very muddy here).
e) Follow L-hand fence to its corner then cross field half L (CB 290°), heading towards another fence corner to L of lodge.
f) Go L of water tank then through KG on to Tk (Bw) *(Pitchfont Lane)*.
g) TR to Rd junction *(Water Lane*) with entrance to ***Titsey Place*** and Pitchfont Lodge on your R.

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*The VGW crosses or coincides with the **Pilgrims Way** in this area. Note also the magnificent giant redwood tree in the car park.*

A Titsey Foundation Walk information board in the car park shows a network of trails in this area that are waymarked with plain arrows of various colours, which you should ignore.

Titsey Place, for visitors to house or gardens only. In 2023 the house was open Wednesday and Saturday afternoons, gardens and tearoom also Sundays, plus August Bank Holiday Monday.

J(2.11) *[TQ 401 544]*

a) KA up uneven farm drive (byway, still *Pitchfont Lane*) to pass between Pitchfont Farm and Limpsfield Lodge Farmhouse (both Grade II listed), beyond which the lane becomes a rough Tk and climbs steeply.
b) Ignore Tk to L up to gate, and in 250m at fingerpost TL up steps to join the **North Downs Way** (NDW) for the next 1.4km.

KA up Tk with NDW for 650m to B269 Limpsfield Road at Botley Hill, where a bus service operates during school journey times only from/to Redhill, Caterham, Warlingham, Chelsham Common and Tatsfield.

For Botley Hill Farmhouse (pub) (www.botleyhill-farmhouse.co.uk) follow NDW uphill for 650m to B269 Limpsfield Road, then TL along it for 300m.

J(2.10) *[TQ 398 548]*

a) Go through KG and KA along top (R) edge of field (beware large hole on your L), with M25 away to your L and Titsey Woods on your R. *The impressive red-brick building with spire on the hillside beyond the M25 is the former **St. Michael's School**.*
b) 200m after entering next very large field through KG, reach bench where plaque on your R indicates the ***Greenwich Meridian***.
c) KA for another 600m to fingerpost and barrier at end of field.

If you wish to go to Oxted, you have a tough decision to make: the Eastern Link is slightly longer and more complicated, but goes through attractive scenery. The Western Link is shorter and may be more suitable if you are in a hurry, but is almost entirely beside roads.

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

This is also a signed link between the NDW and the Greensand Way, and is partly shared with the Greenwich Meridian Trail (GMT, see Section G).

a) At NDW fingerpost TL on Fp leading down field with hedge on your R.
b) At bend, go through KG and continue along fenced Fp leading to FB over M25 motorway.
c) Go through scrub and continue on twisting Fp for 750m, following R side of large field beside trees.
d) Eventually Fp turns L to go through KG. TR along enclosed Fp, passing playing fields and gates of Oxted School, leading to Rd at bend.
e) KA along Rd (Park Road) to junction then TR (Bluehouse Lane).
f) In 200m TL along Gresham Road. (⊗ In heavy traffic use zebra crossing ahead.)
g) Rd bears R to pass Tandridge District Council offices and reach Station Road East, where TR for 200m via zebra crossing to reach Station Approach East and Oxted Station.

To/from East Croydon, central London, East Grinstead and Buxted.
To/from Redhill, Westerham Edenbridge; also (not Sundays) Titsey, Botley Hill, Crawley, Lingfield, Limpsfield Chart.
Oxted Inn (J.D. Wetherspoon) beside station (west side).
Cafés near station on both sides.
In Oxted Station, in Morrisons supermarket and opposite Oxted Station entrance (all on west side of station).
In Oxted – see Vanguard Way Companion.

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***If starting from Oxted Station**:*
a) In the station subway, follow signs to Platforms 2/3 and/or Station Approach East.
b) KA to main Rd (Station Road East).
c) TR for 220m via zebra crossing, then TL along Gresham Road past Tandridge District Council offices, staying on L-hand pavement as Rd swings L.
d) At junction cross over with care (use zebra crossing to L in heavy traffic) and TR (Bluehouse Lane).
e) In 200m TL along Park Road, and when Rd swings R, KA along Fp to R of gate of Oxted School.
f) Pass playing fields to TL through KG then follow twisting Fp up L edge of large field beside trees for 750m.
g) Ignore paths into woodland and eventually bear L as field narrows to go through scrub and cross FB over M25 motorway.
h) Go through KG then KA up L side of field to reach NDW fingerpost and rejoin VGW by turning L through gap.

J(2.9) *[TQ 389 543]*
a) Continuing along VGW, bear R past gap then go through KG into the National Trust's ***Oxted Downs*** estate. *Note that the VGW heads W from this point, not diagonally up the slope as incorrectly shown on some OS maps. The Greenwich Meridian Trail (GMT, see Section G) rejoins the VGW for a while here.*
b) Follow uneven Fp beside bushes at foot of slope for 400m, still with NDW/GMT.
c) KA up to bench seat and fingerpost. *NDW continues down slope to L here, taking with it the VGW's Western Link to Oxted –*

***Western Link to Oxted Station** [2.0km / 1.3 miles, TQ 393 528]*
a) TL steeply down NDW, then just before reaching Rd (Chalkpit Lane), TL (ignoring KG on R).
b) TL again down rough, narrow Fp in bushes, parallel with Rd.
c) Soon emerge onto Rd, where follow verge to and under M25 bridge, leading to tarmac footway beside Rd.
e) In 275m at Rd junction, just before railway bridge, bear L along Gordons Way, now on pavements.
f) In 350m KA along Barrow Green Road.
g) In 300m pass under railway bridge then TL along Bluehouse Lane and immediately TR over zebra crossing and KA up Station Approach, which leads in 200m to Oxted Station.

See Eastern link above.

***If starting from Oxted Station**, from the station platforms:*
a) Follow signs to Ticket Office, and from there TR along Station Approach, past taxi office and parallel with railway line.
b) At end go over zebra crossing then immediately TR along Barrow Green Road, passing under railway bridge.
c) Bear L with Rd and in 300m, just before railway bridge, take right fork (Gordons Way).
d) In 350m TR up Chalkpit Lane to end of tarmac footway then follow verge beside Rd to pass under M25.
e) Keep to R-hand side of Rd for another 100m to reach double field-gate on R.
f) Locate rough, narrow FP in bushes ahead and follow it parallel with Rd
g) At junction (ignore gate down to L) bear R steeply uphill with NDW to reach fingerpost and seat, then TL uphill to rejoin VGW.

J(2.8) *[TQ 385 543]*
a) To continue on the VGW, TR outside trees up slope called Whistlers Steep – it is indeed very steep ⊗ and can be slippery if wet. *The VGW is joined here for the next 3.2km (2 miles) by the **Woldingham Parish Boundary Path.** At the top you 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.*
b) Go through KG by gate then TR and shortly TL in trees up to Rd *(Chalkpit Lane).* ► ►

c) KA along R-hand side of Rd (**NP**) to junction with major Rd (*The Ridge, but shown as Woldingham Road on some maps).*

J(2.7) *[TQ 386 546]*

a) Cross Rd ⊗ with great care as traffic comes fast round the bends. *Note the gazebo of Flint House, flanked by a long brick wall with globe-topped columns, all in brick.*
b) KA along lane *('**Flint House Lane'**, Bw, still GMT).*
c) KA at 'private road' sign, with Whistlers Wood on your L. *The route here follows a ridge between two deep valleys, which appear first on your R and later on your L.*
d) In 350m, where tarmac drive turns R to water tower and ***'WT Sta'*** (as marked on maps), KA on rough Tk (Bw).
e) Follow Tk for almost 1km. *100m after leaving the tarmac, at manhole covers beside gate, you pass the highest point of the whole VGW at 260m (850 feet) then pass **Greenhill Shaw** on your R.*
f) After passing two large gates, KA as Tk narrows and in 150m emerge from trees at top of sloping field. Beware barbed wire close by on your R.
g) Descend broad, grassy Bw between hedges and fields. *You are now in typical downland scenery, very similar to that of the South Downs, with broad, rounded slopes and dry valleys. The hillside on your right (Hovings Hole) is often used for hang-gliding, as indicated by several windsocks hereabouts.*
h) Pass metal gate at foot of hill and KA to Rd *(Slines Oak Road). The link to Warlingham Station starts here.*

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

*a) TL up Slines Oak Road (⊗ **NP** – take care especially at R-hand bends). In 650m at 'Candlewood' house, climb steps on L up to parallel side Rd (Clare Court) to use its pavement.*
b) At end (Nethern Court Road) TR then immediately TL to continue along Slines Oak Road, now on pavement, to junction with Station Road (village store 150m to R in The Crescent).
c) You can obviously TR along Station Road for the station, with a pavement all the way, but a pleasanter and mostly traffic-free route is to TR then shortly TL along Park View Road.
d) Follow this as it bears R, then at next bend in 250m (between Hardam House and The Red Cottage) bear L down enclosed Fp through wood to stile, down steep field and through KG to lane (Church Road).
e) TR and follow Church Road (unmade at first) for 750m past Church Road Farm and station car park to Woldingham Station.

To/from East Croydon, central London, East Grinstead and Buxted.

Infrequent buses from Woldingham village (Monday to Friday only) to Woldingham and Caterham Stations.

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

At Woldingham Station.

***If starting from Woldingham Station**:*

*a) From the main station exit TL in car park then immediately TR along Church Road **NP** (parallel to station car park and railway), which soon becomes unmade.*
b) In 500m pass Church Road Farm and cottages, then in 200m TL through KG and ascend steep Fp beside hedge in field.
c) At top of field cross stile and continue up enclosed Fp through wood to Rd.
d) TR along Park View Road bearing L to Station Road in village centre (village store 150m to L in The Crescent).
e) TR then shortly TL along Slines Oak Road, using R-hand pavement.
f) In 235m, where Rd forks, TR in Nethern Court Road then immediately TL along parallel Clare Court to use its pavement. ► ►

*g) At end, TL down steps then TR to rejoin Slines Oak Road, now ⊗ **NP** – take care especially at R-hand bends.*
h) Pass Southfields Road to rejoin VGW by turning L at bend.

J(2.6) *[TQ 376 565]*
a) Taking great care ⊗ **NP** KA along Rd (keep R but cross to L at R-hand bend).
b) In 220m TR up steps and through gate, entering the ***Graham Butler Mile***, *where seven stiles have been replaced by gates. Some are kissing gates but most are self-closing latch gates – please ensure that they are closed after passing through.*

J(2.5) *[TQ 376 567]*
a) KA up R-hand side of field beside hedge, with ***Warren Barn Farm*** away to your L, soon descending beware roots) to go through gate to farm Tk *(Upland Road).*
b) Go through another gate on far side of Tk and KA on R-hand side of fields, soon climbing very steeply through three more gates. *Near the top you may be relieved to find a bench seat, provided jointly by the Vanguard Rambling Club and the Vanguard Way Marathon.*
c) KA to corner of field by buildings (Worms Heath Cottages). *Please don't short-cut across the field as you will be trespassing. This is the second highest point of the VGW at 242m (794 feet) above sea level. The Greenwich Meridian Trail diverges from the VGW here, going ahead past the cottages.*

J(2.4) *[TQ 381 574]*
a) In order to keep on the right of way you need to go right up to the garden fence then turn sharp L.
b) Go quarter L across the same field (CB 290°), heading to the R of a clump of bushes. *On a clear day, away to your right you may see the arch of Wembley Stadium, the Crystal Palace transmitter, The Shard and buildings in the City of London.*
c) Pass first a pond (40m away to your L) then the fenced off ***Nore Hill Chalk Pinnacle***.
d) Follow faint Fp in same direction to go through KG, to L of two prominent oak trees.
e) KA on Fp through wood (beware exposed tree roots), soon forking R to go beside garden fence and Lodge Cottage with its tall, ornate brick chimney, to junction of drive *(Barnards Road)* and main Rd *(B269 Limpsfield Road).*
f) Cross Rd ⊗ with very great care – traffic comes around the bend very fast from the R.
g) TR along roadside path to junction with *Ledgers Road*.

J(2.3) *[TQ 376 579]99*
a) TL along Ledgers Road (**NP**), ⊗ taking great care as traffic comes fast off the main road and it can be dark under trees. Keep R but cross to L at R-hand bends.
b) Just after a R-hand bend, TL past metal barrier to follow Tk (Bw) along L-hand side of very large field for 900m, soon reaching the first of two paths leading into Henley Wood on your L. *The clock tower ahead is at Great Park, which you will pass on Section K.*
c) At end of field bear L into trees and follow Tk to Rd at junction of *Ledgers Road*, *Chelsham Common Road* and *Church Lane*.
d) Go through gate and TL along Chelsham Common Rd (**NP**) for 60m then bear R on Fp, between iron posts, across Chelsham Common, passing L of idyllic pond with several bench seats nearby.
e) When pond ends, ignore horse ride ahead, bearing R then L to follow faint Fp through grass for 100m then TR through car park to the Bull Inn.

The Bull has had several management and name changes during the life of the VGW: just 'The Bull' at the start, it became 'The Coach House', then briefly the 'The Bull Colosseum' and now the Bull Inn.

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J(2.2) *[TQ 372 590]*

a) KA to Rd *(Ledgers Road* again), TL then immediately TR to follow Fp through trees (may be overgrown) behind bus shelter, where Section J of VGW (South-North) ends at:

J(2.1) *[TQ 372 592]. Note the City of London* ***coal tax post*** *at the crossroads near the bus stop.*

Daily except Sundays to Caterham Station via the Harrow pub at Farleigh, also Warlingham (1.1km) and Selsdon, from where frequent buses go to East Croydon Station.

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

J(3.1)
Cronklands, the woodland north of Limpsfield Chart, though apparently one entity, is actually divided between two owners, but the boundary is unclear. Most of the area traversed by the VGW is National Trust property, but the area to your right is part of the massive Titsey Estate (see below), through which the VGW will pass for the next 5.5km (3.5 miles), from here northwards across the M25 to the Oxted Downs.

The **London Countryway** is an unsigned long-distance path (328km / 205 miles) forming a complete circle in the countryside around London, nearly always outside the M25. It was the idea of Keith Chesterton, a co-founder of the Long Distance Walkers Association.

The **Greensand Ridge** is the term commonly applied to the range of hills extending for about 100 miles through Kent and Surrey. The greensand rock is made of sand that was deposited 100 - 130 million years ago under vast freshwater lakes. Though called greensand, due to the high content of a mineral called glauconite, you may be hard pressed to detect a greenish hue in the sand quarried from this area. A layer of this greensand rock underlies the chalk one that forms the better-known North and South Downs, though the Greensand Ridge reaches greater heights than the chalk – Leith Hill in Surrey is the highest point in southern England at 294m / 965 feet above sea level. 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.

J(2.16)
The **River Darent** (sometimes Darenth) rises in Limpsfield then flows for 34km (21 miles) past Westerham and Sevenoaks to join the River Thames near Dartford. The name is thought to derive from Celtic words meaning 'oak river'.

J(2.15)
The **Grasshopper Inn** closed several years ago following a fire. It dated from 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 Grasshopper offered 'boutique' hotel accommodation.

Moorhouse Bank (1km 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 CE (AD). Moorhouse probably refers to the home of John de la More who lived here in the 14th century.

J(2.14)
Moorhouse Sandpits are owned by the Titsey Estate. Roman and medieval artefacts have been found here.

Hurst Green Shires is 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, and occasionally pulling floats in ceremonial processions. 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 **M25 Motorway** encircles London at an average distance of 26km (16 miles) from the centre and is 188km (117 miles) in circumference. Construction started in 1975 but the motorway took 10 years to complete, opening in unlinked stages, with its formal full opening by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher on 29th October 1986.

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 Days Inn on the south (clockwise) side. The original proposed name was Titsey Wood Services. The Roman road from London to Lewes,

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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.

J(2.13)
The Grade II* listed **Titsey Church** (St James the Greater) 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 in 1776 to improve the view from Titsey Place (see below) and provide a grand garden. The church was built in 1861 near a religious site dating from Iron Age and Roman times (the remains of two Roman villas and a Celtic temple have been found nearby).

J(2.12)
The Titsey Estate (www.titsey.org) covers a huge area of farmland 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 right through the gateway, which is a permissive footpath. 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 and kitchen garden) is open to the public on Sundays and Wednesdays from mid-May to late September, also bank holiday Mondays. The woodland walks in the estate are normally open all year round.

The magnificent giant redwood tree (*Seqoiadendron giganteum)* at the entrance is a mere youngster at maybe 150 years and 20m (65 feet) tall; it could live for several more centuries and grow at least twice as high. Imported into Britain in 1853 by John D. Matthew, it is also known as sequoia, or wellingtonia, or the Big Tree, and can grow to over 90m (300 feet).

The **Pilgrims Way** (we deliberately omit the apostrophe as its position denoting singular or plural is contentious) is one of the best known long-distance routes in Britain, though its origins have also been the subject of much contention. Its general line is very similar to that of the North Downs Way (see below), though the two routes do not always run together. The Pilgrims Way 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. It was said to have been used later by medieval pilgrims between Winchester, the old capital of England, and the tomb of Thomas Beckett in Canterbury Cathedral - King Henry II is said to have been the first of these in 1174. However, doubt has been cast on these stories by those who claim that both traders and pilgrims would surely have preferred the easier and more logical route along the Thames valley via London, and that the idea of a Pilgrims Way along this route was the misconception of influential Victorian antiquaries. 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 and therefore, though passing many places of interest, not very suitable for a walking tour. The exact route of the Pilgrims Way in this area is not indicated on the Ordnance Survey map, but it seems likely that it coincides with the Vanguard Way across Oxted Downs.

J(2.11)
The **North Downs Way** (NDW, www.nationaltrail.co.uk/northdowns) is a national trail, managed by a partnership of several local authorities and conservation bodies. It runs for 227km (142 miles) from Farnham to Dover, mostly following the crest of the North Downs. The VGW shares its route for the next 1.5km. A guide to the route (written by Vanguard Way guide author Colin Saunders) is published by Aurum Press.

J(2.10)
St. Michael's School, on the hillside beyond the M25, was built in the late 1800s for the children of

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missionaries; former pupils include Anneke Rice. The school closed in 2002 and the Grade II listed building has been converted into 20 luxurious apartments.

The **Greenwich Meridian** (from the Latin *meridianus* meaning midday) is indicated by a plaque commissioned jointly by the Vanguards 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, much to the chagrin of the French, who believed it should pass through Paris. 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. For more information visit the National Maritime Museum website www.rmg.co.uk/national-maritime-museum.

Oxted (2.0km S on link) is an expanding small town whose population at the 2011 census had reached just over 11,000, 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 located here. The charming original village (Old Oxted) lies on the A25, 1km 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 (www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk) 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 Oxted Inn, adjacent to Oxted Station, is a J.D. Wetherspoon pub.

J(2.9)

Oxted Downs, part of the Surrey Hills National Landscape is an area of chalk downland owned and managed 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. It has been rated by the Butterfly Conservation as one of the best sites in Surrey for rare and declining chalk grassland species including the green hairstreak, dingy sipper and grizzled skipper. The NT carries out rigorous scrub management, including grazing by cattle.

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.

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.

J(2.8)

The **Woldingham Parish Boundary Path** was established in 2022 to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II. The idea of 1st Woldingham Scouts, and set up with the help of Surrey County Council's Countryside Access Team, it is 16km (10 miles) long, encircling the village of Woldingham and passing close to Caterham.

J(2.7)

'**Flint House Lane**' is the name given by the Vanguards to this seemingly ancient ridgeway, in the absence of a name on maps or any records that we have seen. Linking Chalkpit Lane with Slines Oak Road, it may have been part of a route from Croydon to Oxted. We asked a resident what the lane was called, and he said 'Vanguard Way', which was complimentary but not very helpful! If anyone has further information, please get in touch.

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'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.

Greenhill Shaw is an SNCI (Site of Nature Conservation Importance) and one of many shaws in Surrey. Often used 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.

J(2.5)

As well as being a working farm, **Warren Barn Farm** is an equestrian centre, the home of Warlingham & District Horse Club, where events such as show-jumping, point-to-point and dressage take place – a horse-drawn carriage may pass at any time. It is also the home of Green Dragon Airsports, which organises courses in paragliding, paramotoring, parascending and hang-gliding. Warren Barn Farm is under the same ownership as Church Farm, which you pass on the Vanguard Way link with Woldingham Station.

J(2.4)

As you reach the cottages at the top of **Nore Hill**, the area to your left was a late Bronze Age enclosure, thought to date from around 900-700 BCE. Bounded by ramparts, it would have provided a refuge during hostile incursions. Almost all traces have been erased, but a possible entrance through the ramparts has been identified on the southern side, near the location of the seat.

What little remains of **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 likely to be covered in shrubbery, and is gradually being worn away by rain (it was at least twice the height when the Vanguard Way was launched in 1981). It was the first geological local nature reserve to be established in Britain. You can enter the site through a gate on the right-hand 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!

J(2.1)

About 260 of the distinctive **'coal tax posts'** were put up in 1861 by the Corporation of London to mark the points where tax had to be paid on all coal brought into the 'Metropolitan Police District', an area about 15 miles from the City of London. The mainly cast-iron posts are just over a metre tall and bear the City of London's coat of arms. Although the tax was abolished in 1890, some 200 posts remain in place and many of them, like this one, are designated Grade II listed structures.

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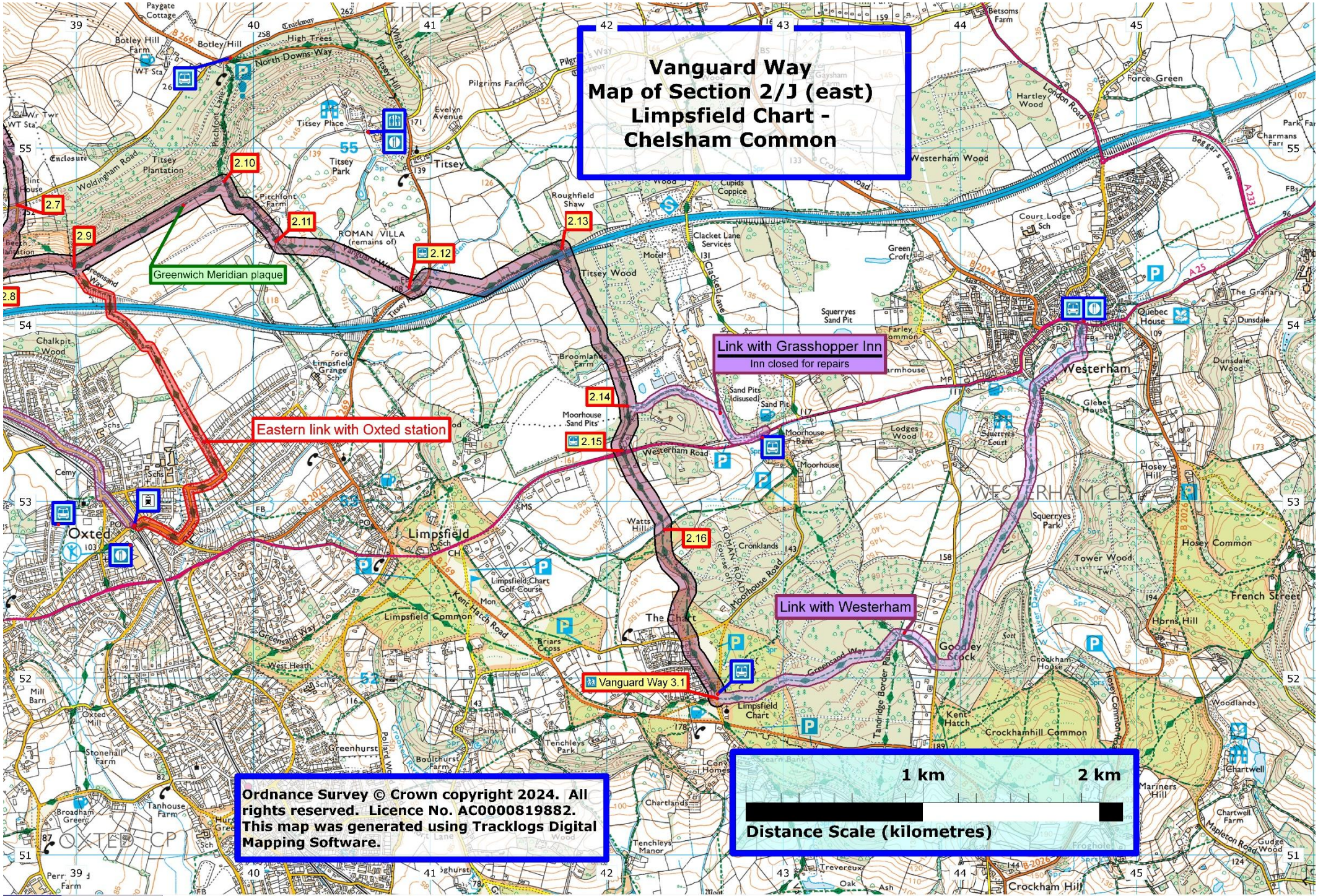

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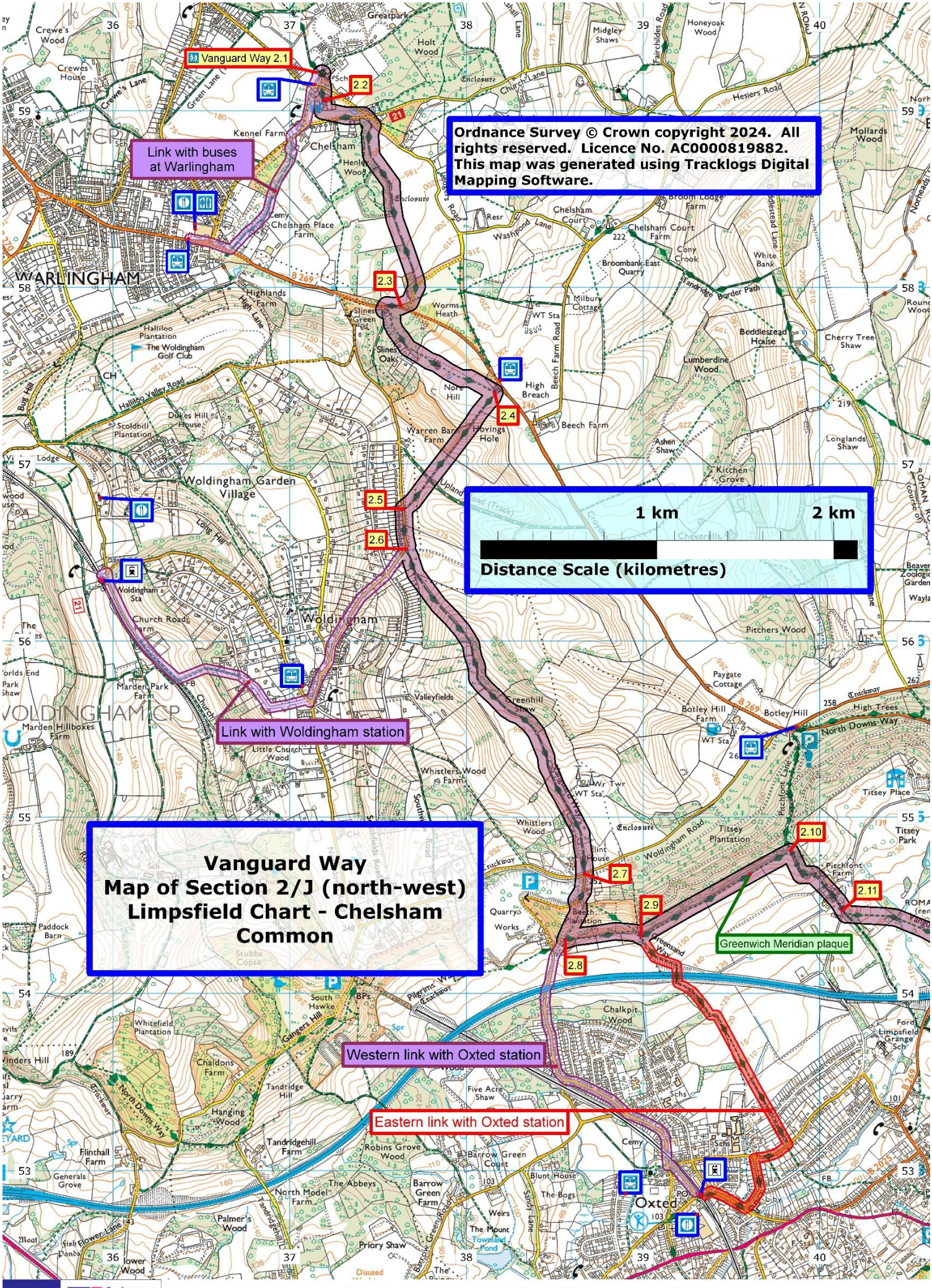

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