

THE VANGUARD WAY

'From the suburbs to the sea'

ROUTE DESCRIPTION
and points of interest along the route

SECTION 8 Golden Cross to Berwick Station



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Fifth Edition

This fifth edition was first published in 2014.
It is only available as an online resource.

It replaces previous printed editions published in
1980, 1986, and 1997 also the online fourth edition published in 2009.

Designed by Brian Bellwood

Published by the Vanguards Rambling Club
35 Gerrards Close, Oakwood, London, N14 4RH, England

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VANGUARD WAY ROUTE DESCRIPTION: SECTION 8

SECTION 8: GOLDEN CROSS TO BERWICK STATION

6.6 km (4.1 miles)

The Route Description is based on a completely new survey undertaken by club members in 2012 and 2013. 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.

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.

In this route description:

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

Links with railway stations and other key places off route are shown in boxes with a grey 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.

Distances are given 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 into feet multiply by 2 and add 10%.

Abbreviations

> = off route

Bw = bridleway

FB = footbridge

Fp = footpath

KG = kissing gate

Rd = road (NP = no pavement, see below)

Tk = track

VGW = Vanguard Way

KA = keep ahead

TL = turn left

TR = turn right

N = north

S = south

E = east

W = west

m = metres

km = kilometres

L = left

R = right

VANGUARD WAY ROUTE DESCRIPTION: SECTION 8

Roads with no pavement

'NP' in the route description indicates a road with 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 Golden Cross. Trains and buses at Berwick Station.
Link with bus stop at Chalvington.

Distances from Golden Cross (Deanland Road)* to:

>Yew Tree Inn, Chalvington	3.4 km (2.1 miles)
Berwick Station	6.7 km (4.2 miles)

*From the Golden Cross pub/bus stops on the A22 add 0.5 km (0.3 miles).

Overview

Most of this sparsely populated section goes through low-lying and generally level farmland, but some gentle ascents towards the end herald the approach of the South Downs, which you can see ahead.

Many stretches on this section cross large fields, often with no distinguishing feature to guide you. So we give a compass bearing as a guide - see the Equipment section of the Introduction to the Route.

Lowest and highest points. Chalvington Road (16m); Mays Farm (35m).

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.

IF YOU ENCOUNTER ANY PROBLEMS affecting the rights of way, such as obstructions, closures or diversions, your first course of action should be to contact the relevant highway authority, which on this section is:

East Sussex County Council.

Please also let us know about it by email to graham@vanguardway.org.uk.

VANGUARD WAY ROUTE DESCRIPTION: SECTION 8

Section 8 of the VGW starts 500m south of Golden Cross [TQ 533 120]

in Deanland Road, by the white railings. This is in Wealden District in East Sussex.

Link from Golden Cross pub and bus stops (500m). From the back of the pub and car park go southwest along Deanland Road for 500m until you reach the white railings.

[Transport 🚌] Buses (not Sundays) call at the Golden Cross pub from Uckfield, Eastbourne, Lewes, East Hoathly and Hailsham. There is also a daily express coach service from London, East Grinstead, Polegate and Eastbourne. The Cuckmere Community Bus (Monday only) serves Berwick Station, Hailsham, Polegate and Eastbourne from the Golden Cross car park see: www.cartogold.co.uk/eastsussextransport/map.htm

[Refreshments 🍴] Golden Cross pub.

8.1 [TQ 533 120]

For greater clarity we have numbered the fields over this stretch.

- TL over dilapidated stile just before stream with white railings.
- Bear slightly R (bearing 140°) over Field 1 and cross stile by gate in corner.
- Cross Field 2 and cross stile.
- Continue in same direction along R edge of Field 3.
- Cross stile and plank bridge then bear slightly right to skirt high ground of Field 4, beside stream lined with reed mace, and with large barn up to L.
- Cross two stiles connected by plank bridge and continue in Field 5 beside stream.
- Cross stile (or go through open gateway) into fenced enclosure used as rubbish tip then exit through gate on to Rd (*Chalvington Road*).

8.2 [TQ 536 113]

- TR along Rd **NP** past Bridlegate Poultry Farm and in 75m at white fence TL down drive through gate of **Limekiln Farm**.
- When drive turns R, KA on grass to cross stile by gate. *Look back to see inscription on gable end of farmhouse.*
- KA through narrow meadow, which swings L.
- Cross stile by gate on to lane (**Sheepcote Lane**) by Marnhull Farm House.

8.3 [TQ 538 110]

- TR and follow gently rising lane **NP** for 1.4 km, passing rambling barns of **Mount Pleasant Farm**.
- Continue 300m to end of surfaced Rd by Selmeston Croft.

The link with the Yew Tree pub at Chalvington starts here. Beware that, at the time of writing, the paths and stiles were in a very poor state.

Link with Yew Tree Inn at Chalvington [650m, TQ 525 100]

- Take Fp to R over stile by gate opposite Selmeston Croft.
- Cross field half L (260°) then cross stile and pass through trees.
- Go 45m along L side of field to cross with care a rusty wreck of a metal field gate on L.
- Cross field half R (bearing 250°) towards line of trees.
- Cross stile and KA across playing field to Yew Tree Inn.

[🍴] Yew Tree Inn, Chalvington.

Returning from Yew Tree Inn:

To save having to return to the VGW at an acute angle, this link follows a different route from the outward one.


- a) Return across playing field to cross stile, where you divert from outward route.
- b) Bear slightly R across field to fingerpost and go through gap.
- c) Bear slightly R across next field to wide gap in hedge with another fingerpost (fallen and not very visible at time of writing).
- d) Go through gap into next field and continue in same direction half R, aiming for far R corner.
- e) Bear L through hedgerow to cross stile.
- f) KA across field to stile on to Tk (Sheepcote Lane) where TR to rejoin VGW at point 8.5.

8.4 [TQ 530 099]

KA along raised crushed stone Tk. It is a byway, open to pedestrians, cyclists, horses, motorbikes, sidecars and farm traffic, but other motorised vehicles are excluded from October to March.

8.5 [TQ 527 094]

- a) In 500m the return route from the Yew Tree Inn comes in from the R.
- b) KA to eventually emerge at bend on Rd (*Poundfield Road*) near Chalvington. (TR for village centre - 500m.)

 From Chalvington village centre the Cuckmere Community Bus serves: (Fridays) Berwick, Wilmington & Seaford; (Wednesdays & Fridays) Berwick, Hailsham; (mondays) Berwick, Eastbourne; also Berwick Station, Alfriston, Firle & Brighton on 1st & 3rd Thursdays each month.

[Phone box] 300m to R along Poundfield Road.

8.6 [TQ 524 091]

- a) KA on Rd **NP**, passing Blackberry Farm (formerly Bungalow Farm as shown on some maps) and Meadow Cottage.
- b) TR at Rd junction (*Langtye Lane*).
- c) Pass North Mays and Mays Corner then go through squeeze stile on L.

8.7 [TQ 519 085]

- a) Follow L side of field to cross plank bridge and go through another squeeze stile in corner (behind electricity pole).
- b) Cross next field (bearing 160°), aiming for buildings to R on horizon and passing 20m L of L-hand telegraph pole.
- c) Cross plank bridge and stile into next field, then continue in same direction (possibly through crop) up to fingerpost in front of lefthand barn.
- d) Follow Tk beside barn into yard of **Mays Farm**, then cross farm drive diagonally towards 'office' type building.
- e) Go through gate L of 'office'.

8.8 [TQ 521 079]

- a) Follow Tk to R past pond then go through metal gate.
- b) At fingerpost TL through gate opposite Mays house, then half R through field (bearing 170°).
- c) Aim for large barn behind trees to locate stile and bridge in field boundary.
- d) Continue in same direction towards house (**Ludlay**) to L of barn.
- e) TR before stile and go round trees to stile near barn of Ludlay Farm.

8.9 [TQ 522 073]

- a) Cross stile, KA along Tk and go through gate by entrance of Ludlay.
- b) Follow drive for 300m, crossing cattle-grid, then just past barn TR through KG into field. *Here the VGW joins a trail called **To Arlington with the Ramblers**.*
- c) Go half L, following strip of grass between field and scrub.
- d) Go through gate into wood then follow clear Fp through wood and behind garden fences.
- e) Cross squeeze stile at end of fences and TL beside station car park to Rd (*Coldharbour Road*) opposite Berwick Stores.
- f) TR to **Berwick Station**, where Section 8 ends at:

9.1 [TQ 526 067]

[🚂 🚌] *Trains from Berwick Station to Eastbourne, Hastings, Lewes, Brighton, Gatwick Airport, East Croydon and central London. Trains to Eastbourne and Hastings go from the Down platform (this side of the lines), where the ticket office is also located. Take care if crossing the railway lines to the Up platform (towards Lewes, Brighton, Gatwick Airport, East Croydon and London).*

Note that if there is no through train towards London it may be quicker to change at Brighton rather than Lewes. You can also travel back one stop eastwards to Polegate, which has frequent direct services to East Croydon and London, though this may incur a higher fare.

Buses: On Mondays to Fridays the Cuckmere Community Bus only departs from Berwick Station on mornings, so is unlikely to be of use to VGW walkers arriving here at the end of their walk. On Saturdays and Sundays from March to October there is a regular circular service to Alfriston, Exceat and Seaford. There is also a regular service on Mondays to Fridays to Eastbourne, Polegate, Alfriston & Seaford. For details see www.cartogold.co.uk/eastsussextransport/map.htm

[🚶] *By Berwick Stores.*

[🍴] *At the Berwick Inn. Convenience store on north side of level crossing.*

COMMENTARY

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

8.2

Limekiln Farm includes a handsome, L-shaped brick farmhouse and a converted former oast house. There was a brickyard here in the 18th century, run by the Guy family of Chiddingly. Note the Latin inscription under the gable end of the house: ‘DUM SPIRO SPERO’ (literally ‘While I breathe, I hope’; or more loosely ‘Where there’s life, there’s hope’). A popular family motto, it was apparently added in the year 2000 as it appears below ‘MM’.

Just after Limekiln Farm, the VGW follows **Sheepcote Lane**, a straight road and track, for just over 3 km. A glance at the map shows that it runs parallel to several other roads and tracks, which together with many parallel crossing tracks form a grid divided into multiples of the Roman actus. An actus was 120 Roman feet, and as human feet were slightly smaller in those days this corresponds to approximately 116 modern English feet (about 35 metres). You are in fact following the eastern boundary of a huge Roman agricultural estate, stretching from here southwestwards towards Ripe. The individual fields created by this grid were each five acti square, so covered 25 square acti (about 30,000 square metres). They were laid out more than sixteen centuries ago, and records indicate that the estate still existed in Norman times, so the grid remained in use for at least six hundred years. Time has warped or obliterated some of the Roman farm tracks but the pattern is still recognisable.

8.3

We believe that one of the cottages near **Mount Pleasant Farm** is called Vanguard Cottage, though we have yet to establish its exact location, and whether it was named after the VGW. Note the unusual wind vane on a barn near the gate: it seems to consist of a red winged horse, which is being ridden by a cockerel.

8.7

The isolated hilltop community of **Mays** consists of an impressive Georgian brick house, a farm and some farmhands’ cottages. The Sussex breed of cattle originated here. Nowadays much of the farm is used as a business centre, occupied by small, specialist companies. The house was built in the mid 17th century for the Reverend John Nutt, rector of Berwick. It was the birthplace in 1835 of Nathaniel Blaker, the stern author in 1906 of a collection of moralising essays that were typical of the late Victorian and Edwardian period.

8.8

Until 1966 the area northeast of **Ludlay** was the site of a brickworks, using clay from local pits and served by a narrow gauge railway, now disappeared. Ludlay Farm occupies a compound within a high flint wall, within which all the buildings are made of flint.

8.9

To Arlington with the Ramblers is an unsigned 12.3 km trail designed by Travel Log Lewes. It follows a circular route from Berwick Station, visiting Arlington Reservoir and village, Michelham Priory and Lower Dicker. A route description can be downloaded from the Walks and Walking pages at: www.travelloglewes.co.uk/index.php?page=to-arlington-with-the-ramblers.

Although this small settlement has no official name on the map, we refer to it as **Berwick Station** to distinguish it from Berwick Village further south. The pronunciation is ‘Berrick’. The community developed around the railway station and includes the Berwick Inn, the proposed original final destination for the VGW (see *How it all began* on our website). The inn was originally called the Fuller’s Arms, then became the Berwick Arms before reaching its current name.

*Brass plaque on
outside wall of the
ticket office at
Berwick Station.*

**VANGUARD WAY
LONG DISTANCE PATH
FROM CROYDON TO NEWHAVEN
RELAUNCHED BY
KATE ASHBROOK
NATIONAL CHAIRMAN OF THE
RAMBLERS' ASSOCIATION 1995-1998
ON
6 MAY 1998**



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