

THE VANGUARD WAY

(SOUTH TO NORTH)

A different experience in the other direction!

ROUTE DESCRIPTION and points of interest along the route

SECTION J

Limpsfield Chart to Chelsham Common

COLIN SAUNDERS

First Edition (South-North)
Version 1.0

This first edition of the south-north route description
was first published in 2011.
It is only available as an on-line resource.

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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.

LIMPSFIELD CHART TO CHELSHAM COMMON

12.8 km (7.9 miles)

The Route Description is based on a completely new survey undertaken by club members in 2010. 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. 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. Downloadable maps in pdf format showing the correct route are available on our website. 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 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.

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.

Abbreviations

VGW = Vanguard Way	KA = keep ahead	> = off route
Bw = bridleway	TL = turn left	N = north
Fp = footpath	TR = turn right	S = south
Rd = road	L = left	E = east
Tk = track	R = right	W = west
m = metres	km = kilometres	

VANGUARD WAY *SOUTH-NORTH* ROUTE DESCRIPTION: SECTION J

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.

Distances from Limpsfield Chart to:

From Westerham add 3.7 km (2.3 miles)

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

Distances from Oxted Station (via eastern link) to:

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

Distances from Oxted Station (via western link) to:

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

Distances from Woldingham Station to:

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

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. Along the way you pass close to Titsey Place (worth a detour, but its open days are limited) and the mystical Nore Hill Chalk Pinnacle. And look out for the Vanguards' contribution to the Millennium year with a plaque marking the Greenwich Meridian.

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

VANGUARD WAY *SOUTH-NORTH* ROUTE DESCRIPTION: SECTION J

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.

[Transport] A bus service operates Monday-Saturday to the Carpenters Arms from Westerham and Oxted.

[Refreshments] TL for 100m along Tally Road for the Carpenters Arms pub (closed Monday lunchtimes).

[Phone box] 150m to L along Tally Road.

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

[Transport] Buses from Bromley and Tonbridge; also (Monday-Friday only) East Grinstead and Edenbridge.

[Refreshments] Several places in Westerham.

- a) As if leaving Kings Arms Hotel, TR towards Westerham Green.
- b) In 100m TR up steps and along paved alley (Water Lane) between Owl House and Comodor Restaurant.
- c) At end go through kissing gate then TR along foot of field.
- d) At end of field go through kissing gate, cross footbridge and up steps to Mill Lane.
- e) TL to Park Lodge, where TL then immediately TR beside hedge to climb steep Fp.
- f) Cross first stile then follow fenced Fp to second stile, KA across field.
- g) Cross third stile and KA through sparse copse to fourth stile.
- h) KA into wood and follow Fp for 900m in same general direction (bearing 210°).
- i) Pass tall GW waymark post at T-junction, then 50m further (at broader, muddy T-junction) TR to join GW main route. (GW waymark post here broken at time of writing, March 2008.)
- j) In 80m cross stile by fieldgate 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 and tank, go half L on major Tk (bearing 240°).
- m) In 120m (at second five-ways junction) bear R (bearing 260°) on lesser Tk.
- n) Continue in this general direction, ignoring all crossing Tks, for 900m to National Trust sign for Limpsfield Common.
- o) KA at next crossing Tk and stay with main Tk bearing L at fork.
- p) At next fork bear R for 100m to Rd (Moorhouse Road) at Limpsfield Chart, where TR to join VGW.

J(3.1) [426 519]

- a) Pass The Mill House with its white fence then bear L along Stoneleigh Road.
- 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 then fork R down Bw through Loampit Wood.
- f) Fork L as you come to a junction with open field on your L.
- g) At next junction (with waymark post), KA as Bw becomes narrower.
- h) Descend to foot of hill and cross Tk (Bw), which carries the London Countryway.
The roar of traffic on the M25 motorway ahead now becomes noticeable.

J(2.16) [TQ 423 528]

- a) Go through latchgate on left and cross narrow field to another latchgate.
- b) KA up worn Tk (Bw) over mound in field
- c) KA on Bw between hedges/fences to Rd (A25 Westerham Road).

[Transport] Infrequent buses to/from Westerham, Oxted, Edenbridge, Lingfield, East Grinstead.

VANGUARD WAY *SOUTH-NORTH* ROUTE DESCRIPTION: SECTION J

J(2.15) [TQ 420 532]

- a) Cross Rd with great care and KA past Melrose Cottage on lane (*Broomlands Lane*), which then bears R, for 250m, passing the drive for Thriftwood, to junction with Fp, just before a 'Stop' sign.

The link with the Grasshopper Inn starts here.

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

If you wish to visit the **Grasshopper Inn** the following is preferable to walking along the busy A25. You can also use this link if you wish to visit **Moorhouse Bank**. Along the link there were easily-avoided fallen trees in the wood at time of writing and the field may be ploughed (i.e. muddy).

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 for 1.3 km (with care as this road has no pavement).

- a) TR on Fp through wood for 400m.
b) Soon after large water tank, emerge into field by waymark post.
c) Go half R across field (bearing 120°) to second waymark post.
d) TR along field edge to layby beside A25 Westerham Road (may be overgrown at exit point).
e) TL to A25 (usually a mobile refreshment kiosk here) and entrance to Moorhouse Sand Pits and KA for 75m to Grasshopper Inn.

[Refreshments] Grasshopper Inn (grasshopperinn.co.uk).

[Accommodation] Premier Inn, Clacket Lane Services (www.premierinn.com).

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

Returning from Grasshopper Inn:

- a) TR along A25 for 75m, then KA past entrance to Moorhouse Sand Pits along layby.
b) In 75m, at tall wooden pole (almost opposite mobile refreshment kiosk which is usually here), TR through trees into field (may be overgrown).
c) Follow R-hand side of field for 150m - look out for waymark post to R by stream.
d) Go half L across field (bearing 300°) to second waymark post.
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. Beware large earth-moving vehicles. This is the access road to the huge **Moorhouse Sandpits** on your L and works unit on your R.
b) KA through Broomlands Farm, and in 70m KA at Bw/Fp junction.
c) KA for a further 550m, with Titsey Wood on your R, down to cross **M25 motorway** on concrete bridge.

Clacket Lane Service Station is just 600m away on your R, but there is currently no way that pedestrians can gain access to it other than on a 2.3 km detour via the VGW link to the Grasshopper Inn described above.

J(2.13) [TQ 417 544]

- a) On far side of bridge TL to cross stile and 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.
c) In 300m cross stile, then in another 150m at fingerpost (soon after SOS phone beside M25 hard shoulder) bear half R across field (bearing 290°), heading for fence corner to L of lone tree. Note **Titsey Church** away to your right.

Continued on next page. ►

VANGUARD WAY *SOUTH-NORTH* ROUTE DESCRIPTION: SECTION J

- d) Follow field edge with fence on your L to Rd (*B269 Titsey Road*) by water company building and power substation.
- e) Cross Rd with care and TL along grass verge for 100m to find fingerpost and stile on R.

J(2.12) [TQ 408 542]

- a) Cross stile and KA on Fp to cross wooden footbridge (stile at each end) over infant River Eden.
- b) KA to follow faint Fp across field, bearing 315°, to right of a lone tree (ignore white post).
- c) Pass redundant stile and continue in same direction to cross another stile.
- d) KA to cross stile by metal gate and small stream.
- e) Follow L-hand fence to its corner then cross field half L, heading towards another fence corner to L of lodge.
- f) Go L of water tank then cross stile on to Tk (Bw) (*Pitchfont Lane*).
- g) TR to Rd junction (*Water Lane*) with entrance to **Titsey Place** and Pitchfont Lodge on your R.

VGW crosses the course of the **Pilgrims' Way** here. 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.

[Refreshments] *Titsey Place Tea Room* (see *Titsey Place* in Commentary section for opening times - www.titsey.org/index_fs.htm).

J(2.11) [TQ 401 544]

- a) KA up farm drive (still *Pitchfont Lane*) to pass between Pitchfont Farm and Limpsfield Lodge Farmhouse, beyond which the lane becomes a rough Tk (byway) 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** for the next 1.4 km.

[Transport] 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.

[Refreshments] 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 kissing gate and KA along top (R) edge of field, with M25 away to your L and Titsey Woods on your R. *The impressive red-brick building with tower on hillside beyond the M25 is the former **St. Michael's School**.*
- b) 200m after entering next very large field through kissing gate, reach plaque on your R indicating **Greenwich Meridian**.
- c) KA for another 600m to barrier at end of field.

*The Eastern Link with **Oxted** Station starts here – see next page. ►*

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

This is also a signed link between the NDW and the Greensand Way.

- a) *Before barrier TL on Fp leading downhill with hedge on your R.*
- b) *At bend cross stile and continue along Fp leading to footbridge over M25.*
- c) *Follow this twisting Fp for 1 km through small wood and beside fields, ignoring side turns through hedges. Beware of shallow ditch on lefthand side, which may be hidden.*
- 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.*
- f) *In 200m TL along Gresham Road, which bears R.*
- g) *At its end TR along Station Road East to Oxted Station in Station Approach East.*

[Transport] *Trains to East Croydon, central London, East Grinstead and Buxted.*

Buses to/from Redhill, Westerham and Edenbridge; also (not Sundays) Lingfield, Limpsfield Chart.

[Refreshments] *In Oxted - see next page.*

[Toilets] *In Oxted - see next page.*

[Accommodation] *In Oxted - see next page.*

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.*
- 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 towards M25. Beware of shallow ditch on righthand side, which may be hidden.*
- g) *Cross M25 on footbridge then TL and continue on Fp for 250m.*
- h) *Cross stile and KA along L side of field to barrier, where TL to join VGW and NDW.*

J(2.9) [TQ 389 543]

- a) *Continuing along VGW, bear R past barrier then go through kissing gate 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.*
- b) *Follow Fp beside wire fence for 400m, still with NDW.*
- c) *As fence bends L, KA up to bench seat and fingerpost. NDW continues down slope to L here, taking with it the VGW's Western Link to Oxted – see next page. ►*

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

- a) TL steeply down NDW.
- b) TL on Chalkpit Lane through tunnel under M25. There is no pavement at first - keep right and take care.
- c) At foot of hill (just before railway bridge) bear L along Gordons Way.
- d) In 350m KA along Barrow Green Road.
- e) In 300m pass under railway bridge then TL along Bluehouse Lane and immediately TR along Station Approach, which leads in 200m to Oxted Station.

[Transport] Trains to East Croydon, central London, East Grinstead and Buxted.

Buses to/from Redhill, Westerham and Edenbridge; also (not Sundays) Lingfield, Limpsfield Chart.

[Refreshments] Oxted Inn beside station (west side), also cafés in Station Road East.

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

[Accommodation] 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 parallel with railway line.
- c) At end 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).
- e) In 350m TR up Chalkpit Lane and follow this for 500m. Pavement runs out as you pass under M25, then you should keep R and take care.
- f) 125m after M25 TR up steps, joining NDW and Woldingham Millennium Walk, and climb steeply for 100m, where 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. 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) Cross stile by gate then TR and shortly TL in trees up to Rd (Chalkpit Lane).
- c) KA along R-hand side of Rd 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 lodge of Flint House, flanked by a long brick wall and globe-topped columns, all in brick.
- b) KA along lane (Whistlers Wood Lane).
- 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 500m, 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 1 km. 100m after leaving the tarmac you pass the highest point of the whole VGW at 260m (850 feet) then pass Greenhill Shaw on your R.
- f) After passing stables and Springfields Animal Rescue Centre, KA as Tk narrows and in 150m emerge from trees at top of sloping field.
- g) Descend broad Bw between fields. You are now in a different kind of typical downland scenery, very similar to that of the South Downs, with broad, rounded slopes and dry valleys. The hillside on your right is often used for hang-gliding.

Continued on next page. ►

VANGUARD WAY *SOUTH-NORTH* ROUTE DESCRIPTION: SECTION J

- 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 [2.7 km / 1.7 miles, TQ 359 564]

- TL along *Slines Oak Rd* for 1 km, ignoring side turns, to *Station Road* in *Woldingham* village centre, where there are shops to your right.
- You can obviously TR along *Station Road* for the station, but a pleasanter and mostly traffic-free route is to TR then shortly TL down *Park View Road*.
- Follow this as it bears R, then in 250m (between *Hardam House* and *The Red Cottage*) TL along Fp between hedges/fences downhill and through wood to lane (*Church Road*).
- TR and follow *Church Road* for 750m past *Church Road Farm* and station car park to *Woldingham Station*.

[Transport] Trains to *East Croydon*, central London, *East Grinstead* and *Buxted*.

Buses from *Woldingham* village (Monday to Friday only) to *Warlingham*, *Caterham* and *Redhill*.

[Refreshments] Near *Woldingham Station*, the *Dene Coffee Shop* at *Knight's Garden Centre* (300m past station) (www.plantandlife.com/Nags_Hall_Centre.aspx).

If starting from Woldingham Station:

- From the main station exit KA then immediately TR along *Church Road*, parallel to station car park and railway.
- In 500m pass *Church Road Farm*, then in 250m TL and ascend Fp.
- At top of field bear R through wood then KA to Rd.
- TR along *Park View Road* bearing L to village centre.
- TR then shortly TL along *Slines Oak Road* for 1 km.
- At foot of hill, where Rd bears L, TR on to Tk then immediately TL through gap by gate to join VGW.

J(2.6) [TQ 376 565]

- To continue along VGW, do not go on to Rd but squeeze through gap by gate on your R (beware barbed wire on post).
- TL to follow hedge inside field and parallel to Rd (permissive path) for 250m to stile. *Note: if permissive path not available for any reason, TR along Rd for 250m, cross stile on R and go half L to follow R-hand side of field as below.*

J(2.5) [TQ 376 567]

- At stile turn half R to follow R-hand side of field for 200m, with **Warren Barn Farm** down to your L, then cross stile to farm Tk (*Upland Road*).
- Cross stile on far side of Tk and KA on R-hand side of fields, soon climbing very steeply and crossing two stiles.
- At top of hill KA to corner of field by buildings (*Worms Heath Cottages*). *This is the second highest point of the VGW at 242m (794 feet) above sea level.*

[Transport] A bus service operates at school journey times only from *Tatsfield* to *Warlingham*, *Caterham* and *Redhill* along the *B269 Limpsfield Road* on the far side of *Worms Heath Cottages*.

J(2.4) [TQ 381 574]

- In order to keep on the right of way you need to go right up to the waymark post then turn sharp L.
- With your back to the hedge beside the waymark post, cross the field half R (bearing 300°), heading to the R of a clump of bushes. *On a clear day, away to your left you should see the arch of Wembley Stadium, the Crystal Palace transmitter and buildings in the City of London.*

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VANGUARD WAY *SOUTH-NORTH* ROUTE DESCRIPTION: SECTION J

- c) As you approach the bushes veer R a little towards a fingerpost beside the fenced off *Nore Hill Chalk Pinnacle*.
- d) Follow faint Fp to stile. *Look L to see what appears to be either a very tiny cottage or some very tall trees – it is in fact a horse jump.*
- e) Cross stile and KA on Fp through wood, soon forking right to go beside garden fence and Lodge Cottage with its tall, ornate brick chimney on your L, to junction of drive (*Barnards Road*) and main Rd (*B269 Limpsfield Road*).
- f) Cross with very great care – traffic comes around the bend very fast from the right.
- g) TR along path beside Rd to junction with *Ledgers Road*.

J(2.3) [TQ 376 579]

- a) TL along *Ledgers Road*, keeping L and taking care as traffic turns fast off the main Rd.
- b) Just after a R-hand bend, TL past faded red and white barrier to follow Tk along L-hand side of very large field for 900m, soon with *Henley Wood* on your L. *The clocktower ahead is at Great Park, which you will soon pass on Section K.*
- c) At end of field KA into trees and follow broad Bw to Rd at junction of *Ledgers Road, Chelsham Common Road* and *Church Lane*.
- d) TL along *Chelsham Common Rd* for 60m then bear R on Fp across *Chelsham Common*, passing L of pond and metal seat to follow an ‘avenue’ of fence posts.
- e) Soon after passing the first house on your L, bear R on worn Fp to pass between posts into car park of the *Coach House pub*.

[Refreshments] *At the Coach House pub (formerly the Bull).*

J(2.2) [TQ 372 590]

- a) KA to Rd (*Ledgers Road* again), cross and follow Fp through trees to bus stop, where Section J of VGW (South-North) ends at:

J(2.1) [TQ 372 592]

[Transport] *Bus services operate (except Sundays) to here from stations at East Croydon, Upper Warlingham, East Grinstead, Caterham and Lingfield; also from Tatsfield, Warlingham Green and Redhill. A more frequent service operates (including Sundays) from West Croydon Bus Station to Sainsbury’s Warlingham store, 1.1 km to the south along Chelsham Road.*

COMMENTARY

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

J(3.1)

The **London Countryway** is an unsigned long-distance path (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, a co-founder of the Long Distance Walkers Association (www.ldwa.org.uk). Further information at: www.ldwa.org.uk/ldp/members/show_path.php?menu_type=S&path_id=278.

J(2.15)

The **Grasshopper Inn** (grasshopperinn.co.uk) 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 Leveson-Gower family - and when this closed they ordered that the Plough should be renamed.

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. 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. This clearly demonstrates that you have moved from the chalk of the North Downs to the sand of the Greensand Ridge. 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.

The **M25 Motorway** encircles London at an average distance of 26 km (16 miles) from the centre and is 188 km (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 Premier Inn (www.premierinn.com) 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.

J(2.13)

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.

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 4 km. **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

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September, also bank holiday Mondays. The woodland walks in the estate are normally open all year round.

The **Pilgrim's Way** is one of the best known long-distance routes in Britain, though its origins have 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 Pilgrim's 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 Pilgrim's 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 Pilgrim's 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.

J(2.11)

The **North Downs Way** (NDW, www.nationaltrail.co.uk/northdowns) is a national trail, managed by Natural England. It runs for 227 km (142 miles) from Farnham to Dover, mostly following the crest of the North Downs. The VGW shares its route for the next 1.5 km.

J(2.10)

St. Michael's School, on the hillside beyond the M25, was built in the late 1800s for the children of 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 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. For more information visit the National Maritime Museum website www.nmm.ac.uk.

Oxted (2.0 km S on link) is an expanding small town whose population at the 2001 census had reached 15,200, 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, 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 (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.

J(2.9)

Oxted Downs, part of the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (www.surreyhills.org), is an area of chalk downland owned by the National Trust (www.nationaltrust.org.uk). 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

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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(2.7)

'**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 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 a horse-jumping centre where show-jumping and point-to-point events take place. It is also the base of Warren Chasers, one of the national chain of cross-country horse-riding centres, UK Chasers (www.ukchasers.com), whose waymarks you pass. The field and combes to your left are regularly used by hang-gliders. In 2006, the steep field ahead was designated as access land under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, which means you can wander anywhere within that field - but most VGWayfarers will just be concentrating on getting to the top of the hill! To your left is the last view of London along the VGW.

J(2.4)

Nore Hill Chalk Pinnacle is registered as a Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Site (RIGS) and is managed by Surrey Wildlife Trust (www.surreywildlifetrust.co.uk). 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. 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!
