



# CENTURION WAY

## CHICHESTER TO WEST DEAN



## POINTS OF INTEREST

### ★ MIDHURST RAILWAY

The line opened in 1881 to improve access to London, including three tunnels and eight stations – the most notable being Singleton due to its proximity to Goodwood Racecourse. The railway's decline started with the withdrawal of passenger services in 1935 and the line north of Lavant was closed completely in 1957. However, the section between Lavant and Chichester was used for the transportation of sugar beet and gravel until 1991. The last of the tracks were finally removed in 1993.

### ★ BRANDY HOLE COPSE

Heading south on the Centurion Way, into the city of Chichester, you will cross Brandy Hole Copse. The Copse is a 6.5-hectare area of managed woodland mainly comprised of sweet chestnut and boasts three small ponds with viewing platforms. The area was made a Local Nature Reserve in 2001 to help protect and enhance its diverse flora and fauna, which include a sea of bluebells every spring and wildlife such as rare species of bats.

### ★ WEST DEAN

West Dean village includes a village store and tearooms, church, pub and the 6,400 acre West Dean Estate – owned by the Edward James Foundation, a registered educational charity set up in 1964, which runs West Dean College and Gardens. The estate is made up of both arable and pastoral farmland; timber is also grown commercially on the estate. Many of the cottages that sit on the estate are Grade II listed.

The estate supports a wide variety of flora and fauna, including many varieties of orchids, lichens and colonies of wild daffodils. The estate's wild mammal population includes dormice and five species of bat.

### ★ FISHBOURNE ROMAN PALACE

Keeping on the Roman theme and well worth a slight detour from the start of the trail, this 1st Century home and archaeological site has the largest collection of mosaic floors in Britain. If you want to take a tour or just a short wander around, you can learn about its in-depth history; from its construction in AD75 to its destruction in the late 3rd Century.

[sussexpast.co.uk](http://sussexpast.co.uk)



Common blue butterflies can be spotted on the route  
© Nigel Symington



West Dean Stores and Tea Rooms

# THE CENTURION WAY

The Centurion Way is a 5.5 mile (9km) path that runs between Chichester, Lavant and West Dean using the dismantled Chichester to Midhurst Railway, which closed in 1991. The name, Centurion Way, was suggested by a local schoolboy and is based on the fact that the path crosses the course of a Roman road. In December 2015, a new 1.5 mile (2.5km) path on the old railway line was opened giving year-round access to West Dean, for both walkers and cyclists.

**Distance:** 5.5 miles (9km)

**Allow:** 45 minutes cycling 2 hours walking (non-circular)

**Route:** Former railway. Quiet road section through Lavant. No stiles. Suitable for cyclists and walkers.

**Gradient:** Flat and wide path with minor slopes.

Explore some of the South East's rich history along the linear Centurion Way from Chichester to West Dean.

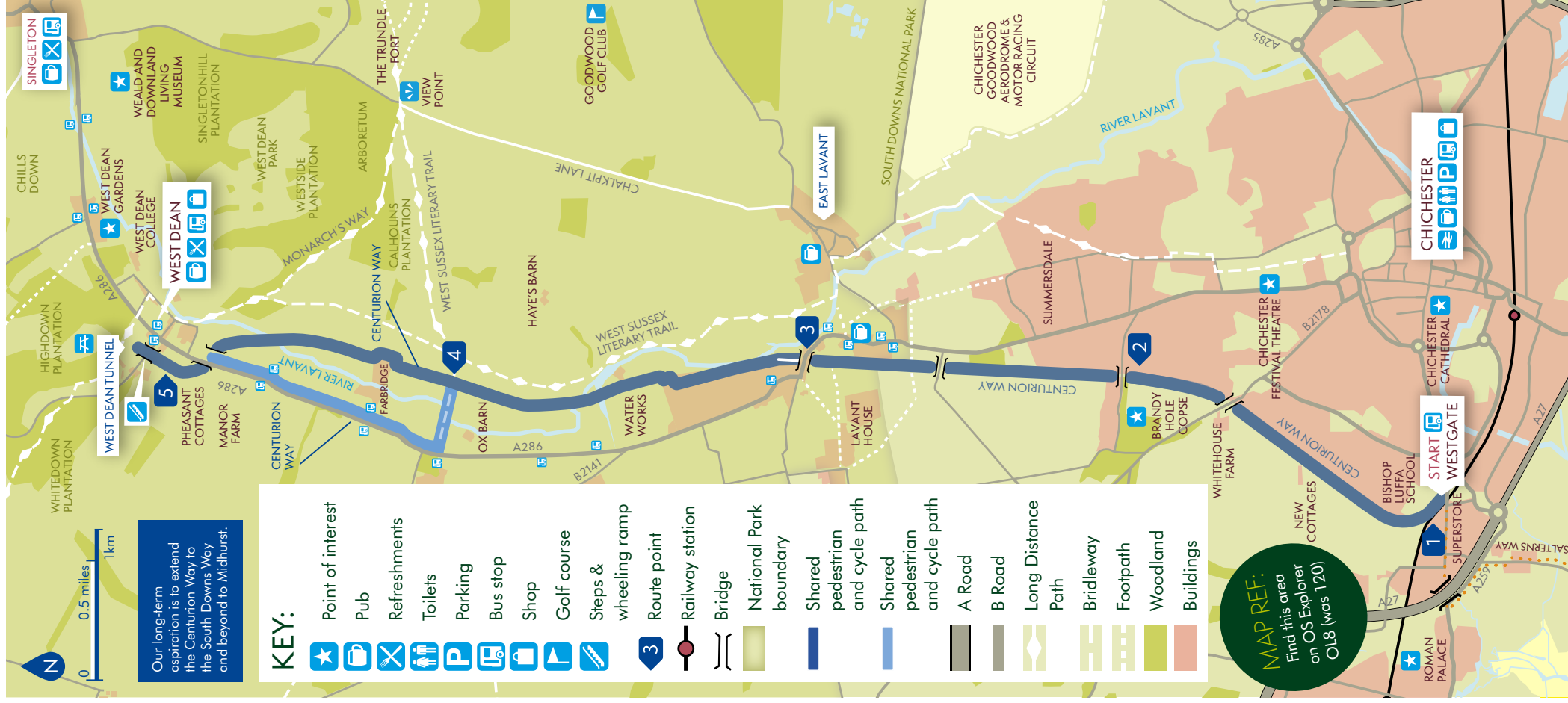
**1** Join the Centurion Way shared path to the left of the entrance for Bishop Luffa School.

**2** After 1.5km (just under 1 mile) pass underneath the bridge. The picturesque woodland of Brandy Hole Copse is on your left and can be reached directly from the Centurion Way by exiting the path onto Brandy Hole Lane.

**3** Continue on the path for 2.5km (or 1.5 miles) to reach the village of Mid Lavant and the former Lavant Station. Follow the signed route through the quiet housing estate for 1 km, bear right onto Churchmead Close and then right again onto Springfield close. Continue along Lavant Down Road and pick up the route on the other side of the green.

**4** At the bridge you can either continue straight on following the path to a set of steps to access West Dean, or turn left along the bridleway and then follow the segregated path alongside the A286.

**5** After a further 2.5km (1.5 miles) you will reach the turning point at West Dean Tunnel. You can access West Dean village for refreshments via a set of steps and a wheeling ramp for bicycles.



# SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK

From rolling hills to bustling market towns, the South Downs National Park's landscapes cover 1,600km<sup>2</sup> of breathtaking views, hidden gems and quintessentially English scenery. A rich tapestry of wildlife, landscapes, tranquillity and visitor attractions, weave together a story of people and place in harmony.


For your guide to everything there is to see and do in the National Park visit [maps.southdowns.gov.uk](https://maps.southdowns.gov.uk)

 Keep up to date with the latest news and events from the South Downs National Park. [southdowns.gov.uk/join-the-newsletter](https://southdowns.gov.uk/join-the-newsletter)



## YOUR COUNTRYSIDE CODE: RESPECT. PROTECT. ENJOY.

### Respect other people

- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Keep to the paths unless on Open Access Land 

### Protect the natural environment

- Take your litter home
- Keep dogs under effective control

### Enjoy the outdoors

- Plan ahead and be prepared
- Follow advice and local signs

## NEARBY LONG DISTANCE ROUTES

### LIPCHIS WAY

Discovered by a group of ramblers in the 1980s, the New Lipchis Way connects Liphook and Chichester Harbour over a 39-mile (62km) path. This diverse route crosses all manner of geologies, spanning greensand ridges, river valleys, heathlands, high chalk downland and coastal plains. With this range of habitats you will be able to experience an amazing diversity of both flora and fauna along the way.

### MONARCH'S WAY

This mighty 615-mile path from Worcester to Shoreham-on-Sea is based on the route taken by King Charles II during his escape after defeat in the final battle of the Civil War in 1651.











### WEST SUSSEX LITERARY TRAIL

Running from Horsham to Chichester, this historic route takes you across West Sussex through Bury Village. The scenic walk is lined with woodland and is 55 miles (88km) long. Interesting points along the way include Bury House, the home of novelist and playwright John Galsworthy and Field Place, where Percy Bysshe Shelley was born.



## FIND YOUR WAY

Follow the arrows on waymarkers along the route.

Footpath		
Bridleway		
Restricted byway		
Byway		
Open access land		National Trail Acorn 

## TAKE THE LEAD

For a safe and fun visit with your dog please remember to keep them on a lead around livestock and wildlife. Always bag and bin your dog poo – any public bin will do!

## GETTING THERE

**By bus:** There are regular services to Chichester and West Dean, visit [traveline.info](https://www.traveline.info) to plan your journey.

**By rail:** The nearest railway station is Chichester, visit [nationalrail.co.uk](https://www.nationalrail.co.uk) to plan your journey.

## CONTACT

South Downs National Park Authority: **01730 814810**

 @SDNPA  /SDNPA  
 southdownsnp

Special thanks to the Edward James Foundation for granting permissive access over the land from Lavant to West Dean.

## SOUTH DOWNS.GOV.UK

Details correct at time of print. Please be aware that routes are shared with other users (vehicles, pedestrians, dogs, horses etc.) and users of this route do so at their own risk. We do not accept any responsibility for loss, damage or injury, however caused, arising directly or indirectly from use of this leaflet. Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2013. SDNPA/The Way Design/November 2022. © SDNPA Crown copyright