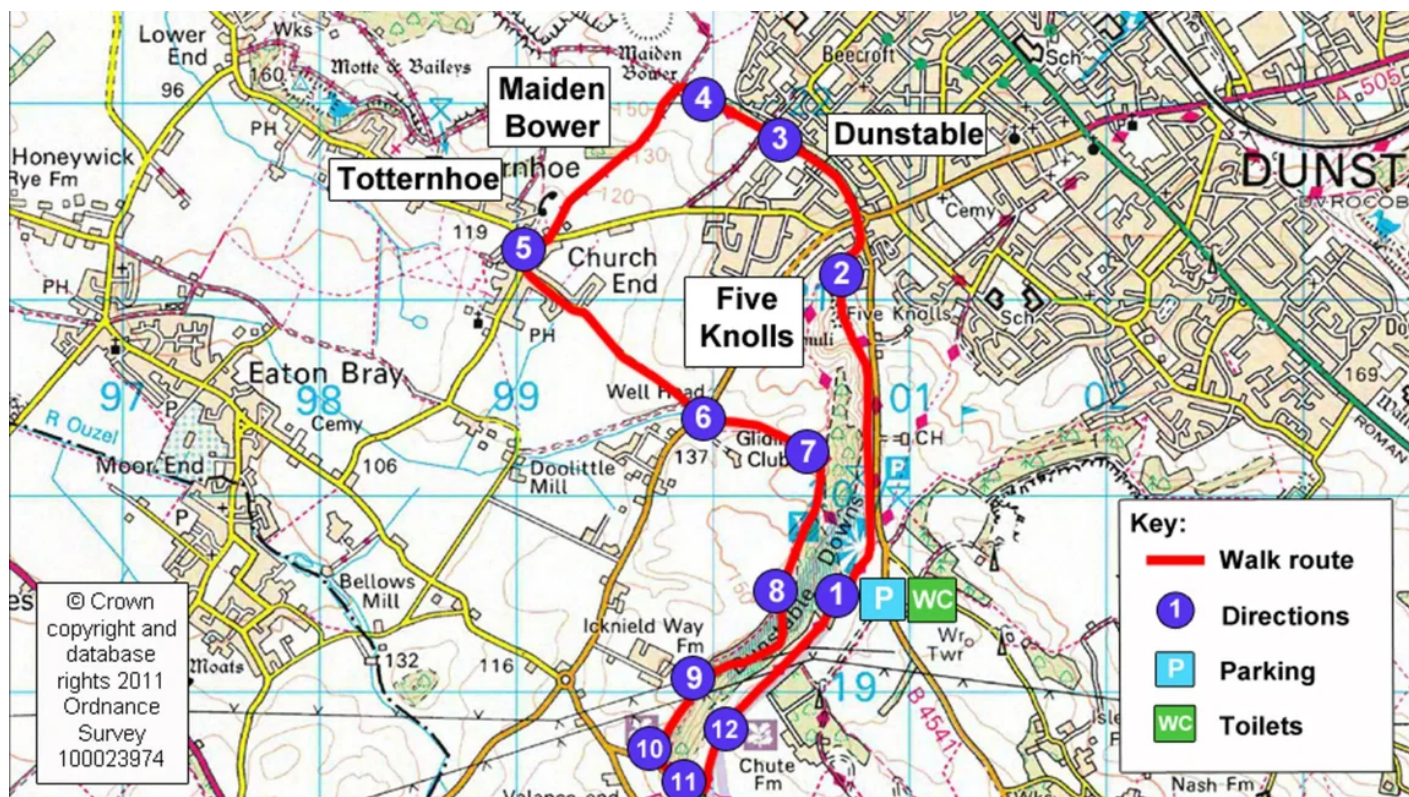


ESSEX, BEDFORDSHIRE & HERTFORDSHIRE

Dunstable Downs countryside walk

Follow this moderately difficult circular route through Dunstable Downs, discovering diverse wildlife, ancient tracks and burial mounds. Visit the Icknield Way and the ramparts of Maiden Bower, a Neolithic hillfort.



Information

Address: Whipsnade Road, Dunstable, Bedfordshire, LU6 2GY

OS map: Landranger 166; Explorer 181 and 193

Activity: Walking

Moderate: Rough terrain with some mild gradients. For further details, please see Terrain section.

Dog friendly: Dogs welcome under close control; please keep on leads near livestock.

Full trail: Miles: 6.5 (km: 10.4)

Access: Challenging

Duration: 3 hours 30 mins

Terrain

Earth paths with some gentle hills. Parts of the walk can become muddy and slippery after wet weather; sturdy footwear is advisable.

Total steps: 12

Start point: Visitor Centre car park, grid ref: TL008195

1. From the car park, walk slightly downhill over the grass area, then turn right following the path along the top of the slope, past the site of the medieval warren as far as the burial mounds at Five Knolls.
2. Continue downhill to West Street, which runs along the line of the Icknield Way.
3. At the base of the hill, use the set of traffic lights to the left to cross over West Street, you then turn right to a small car park which then leads to Green Lane, also known as Drovers Way. This is part of a network of tracks and paths in and around Dunstable, traditionally used by drovers to take livestock to market in Dunstable, but now popular with walkers and horse riders.
4. Continue along Green Lane, continuing straight over two crossroads. When you reach the third crossroad, where there is a field diagonally to the right, turn left down towards Totternhoe Village.
5. Cross Dunstable Road and follow Furlong Lane, then turn left onto Church Road and left again on to Well Head Road. Follow this as far as the Icknield Way near Well Head.
6. Cross the road and follow the bridleway opposite as far as the base of the Downs.
7. Turn right at the end of the bridleway. Follow the footpath at the bottom of the slope, through the fence, until you reach a track on the left. Alternatively, for a shorter walk, follow this track uphill and back to the starting point along an ancient hollow way.
8. Pass through a gate, turn left uphill for 50yd (45m), then turn right onto a sunken way. This path is an old cut way which would have offered travellers an easier way up the slope. Follow this path as it climbs up the Downs and then back to the bottom.
9. Join the footpath that follows the bottom of the Downs.
10. Just before the road, join the bridleway which climbs uphill, looking back at views of the Vale of Aylesbury and Ivinghoe Beacon.

11. With the car park on your right, carry on uphill and turn left into a large grass field. Please keep your dogs on a lead in this field as there may be sheep grazing.
 12. Follow the hedge line at the top of the field, with more views of the Vale of Aylesbury on your left. You're following the Ridgeway Link which joins Dunstable Downs to Ivinghoe Beacon. After walking under a number of beech trees and passing through a bridle gate, the Chilterns Gateway Centre soon appears on the right.
- End point: Visitor Centre car park, grid ref: TL008195
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