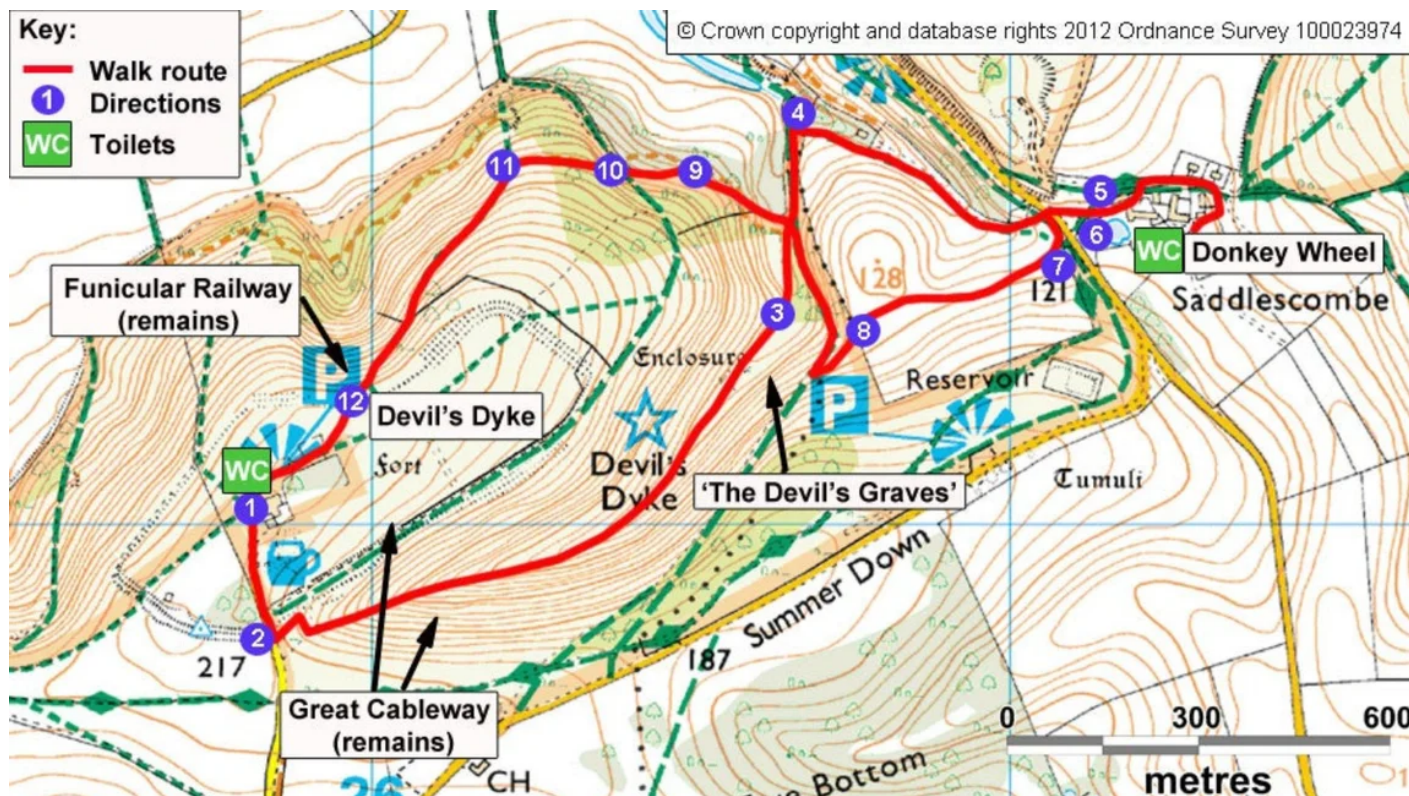


SUSSEX

Devil's Dyke histories and mysteries walk

Watch kestrels soar above you as you explore ancient chalk downland and the deepest dry valley in the country and discover where the Devil and his wife are said to be buried. Towards the end of the walk, you'll visit an ancient farmstead with over 1,000 years of history and experience stunning views over the Sussex countryside.



Information

Address: Devil's Dyke, South Downs, West Sussex, BN1 8YJ

OS map: Landranger 198, Explorer OL11

Activity: Walking

Moderate

Dog friendly: Dogs are welcome but must be kept on leads, as livestock in surroundings fields. Please take all dog waste home.

Full trail: Miles: 3 (km: 4.8)

Access: Challenging

Duration: 2 hours

Terrain

This is a challenging walk with some fairly steep ascents and descents. Some people may find the escarpment path a bit exposed.

Total steps: 12

Start point: Devil's Dyke car park, grid ref: TQ258110

1. From the car park at the pub, go back towards the big Devil's Dyke pub sign and onwards past the bus turning circle. Follow the path alongside the road. On your left is a gate with a sign on a post. Look at the banks on either side of the road – these are the remains of the ramparts of the Iron Age hillfort.
2. Head straight down into the valley for 55yd (50m, or about a minute's walk), then make a sharp hairpin bend right and go through a gate which leads into the deep valley. (From here, look up to your right on the side of the valley and you can see the concrete footings of the Great Cableway.) Walk to the bottom of the valley, follow it as it curves left and you can see the Devil's Graves ahead (two humps in the ground). Continue round to the left until you reach a fence across your route.
3. Go through the small bridle gate in the right-hand end of the fence, continue along the bridle path for 130yd (120m; three minutes' walk) and turn sharply right up a steep footpath which leads to a stile.
4. Go over the stile and follow the path up the incline which then takes you along the edge of a field, with telegraph poles in it. Head up the tarmac track and through the gate at the top.
5. Cross the road and go into Suddlescombe Farm, past the pond on your right. The Wildflower Café (not National Trust) is in the courtyard after the first barn on your left. After tea you can visit the Donkey Wheel (one of only four in the county). Go left out of the café with the barn on your right and the cottages ahead on the left. At the end cottage there is a stile on your right leading to the small, black, wooden-clad building with a steeply-pitched slate roof.
6. Return to the café and continue on the second half of this figure-of-eight walk. This time the walk takes you up through woods which lead to fabulous views. Retrace your

steps out of the farm, back across the road and back through the gate at the top of the tarmac track.

7. Turn left immediately, walk past the trough and then turn right above the fence and ditch. Walk beside the ditch for 55yd (50m; about two minutes' walk). Go straight over the field, coming away from the ditch. You will be able to see a view of the Dyke Valley that you walked earlier. At the top of the slope you reach a stile.
8. Go over the stile and turn immediately right down a very steep bank. If the weather is wet this can get muddy – you can avoid this by continuing along the path then doing a hairpin bend, turning right and going down into the valley. You can see the bridge gate you went through earlier.
9. This time take the stile at the left-hand end of the fence and climb the steps up through the wood. Follow the path to a crossroad.
10. You will see six steps across the path. Go up these and follow the path through the woods until you reach a kissing gate.
11. Go through this gate and up a steep incline which has 63 steps. It's worth it, though. Halfway up, have a look through the bushes to your right – the view is amazing. You can see the village of Poynings below. Take care following the narrow path up and across the escarpment. The views continue to be stunning, with Fulking village in the distance. If you're lucky you can spot birds and hang-gliders soaring above you. If you look carefully at the ground, there is a wide gulley crossing this path – this used to be the site of the funicular (steep grade) railway. Continue up this path until you reach another kissing gate above you on your left.
12. This is the last gate on the walk; you can either head straight back to the pub car park, or follow the fence left to see the remains of the funicular railway station. Have a drink at the pub, enjoy the view outside and take a look at the stone lookout with a map of the whole area and a telescope nearby. In the car park there is a National Trust information board with ideas for other great walks and things to do in the area.

End point: Devil's Dyke car park, grid ref: TQ258110
