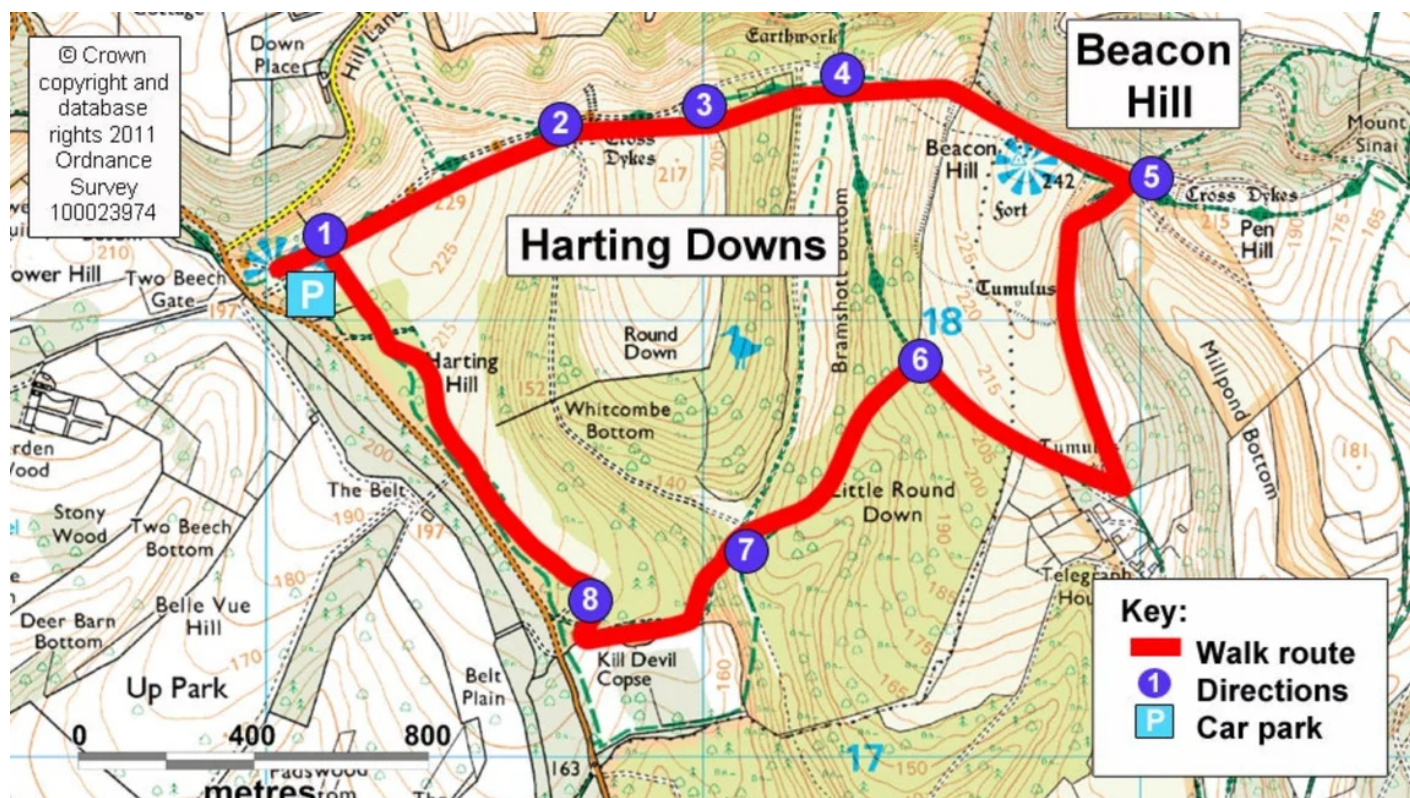


## SUSSEX

# Harting Down wildlife walk

This moderate walking trail takes you around Harting Down, one of the largest areas of ancient chalk downland in our care and a Site of Special Scientific Interest. You'll enjoy panoramic views over the Weald to the North Downs, before descending into secluded valleys of natural and historic interest. Look out for rare wildlife and grazing sheep.



## Information

Address: Harting Down, near South Harting, South Downs, West Sussex

OS map: Landranger 197; Explorer 120

Activity: Walking

Moderate: Grassy paths with several hills to climb. For further details, see section marked Terrain.

Not suitable for dogs

Full trail: Miles: 4 (km: 6.4)

Access: Challenging

Duration: 1 hour 20 mins

## Terrain

The route follows grassy paths with several hills and rather steep ascents and descents. It can be muddy in places after wet weather and in winter.

## Total steps: 8

Start point: Harting Down car park, grid ref: SU791180

1. Start in Harting Down National Trust car park. Walk through a gate and cross Harting Hill following the South Downs Way.
2. Go over the undulating cross ridge dykes. These parallel mounds date back to the Iron Age, and may have been boundary markers or a checkpoint across the ridgeway.
3. Follow the right-hand track up Round Down hill, keeping a hedge on your left. Just over the top of the hill, turn left and go through a gate, before walking down into the next valley. After another gate at the bottom, walk across to the base of Beacon Hill.
4. Here is the ridge of an Iron Age hillfort, probably created as an animal enclosure and symbol of status, rather than a defensive stronghold. Either climb up to the summit of Beacon Hill or turn right and skirt across its lower slopes.
5. If you do walk over the top, turn right at a cross-roads of paths on the other side and skirt back round the lower slopes of Beacon Hill until you meet the short cut route again.
6. At a signpost turn away from Beacon Hill on a path down to a dew pond and a little hill, 'Granny's Bottom', on your right.
7. Pass the pond and cross into a yew wood, known as the darkest place on the downs. Its cold in here, even on a hot day. Yew trees are home to birds like wren, thrush and finch.
8. Climb up through the shade back onto Harting Hill. Follow the path until you emerge through an opening (not gate) on the right. Stay on a grassy path back to the car park.

End point: Harting Down car park, grid ref: SU791180