

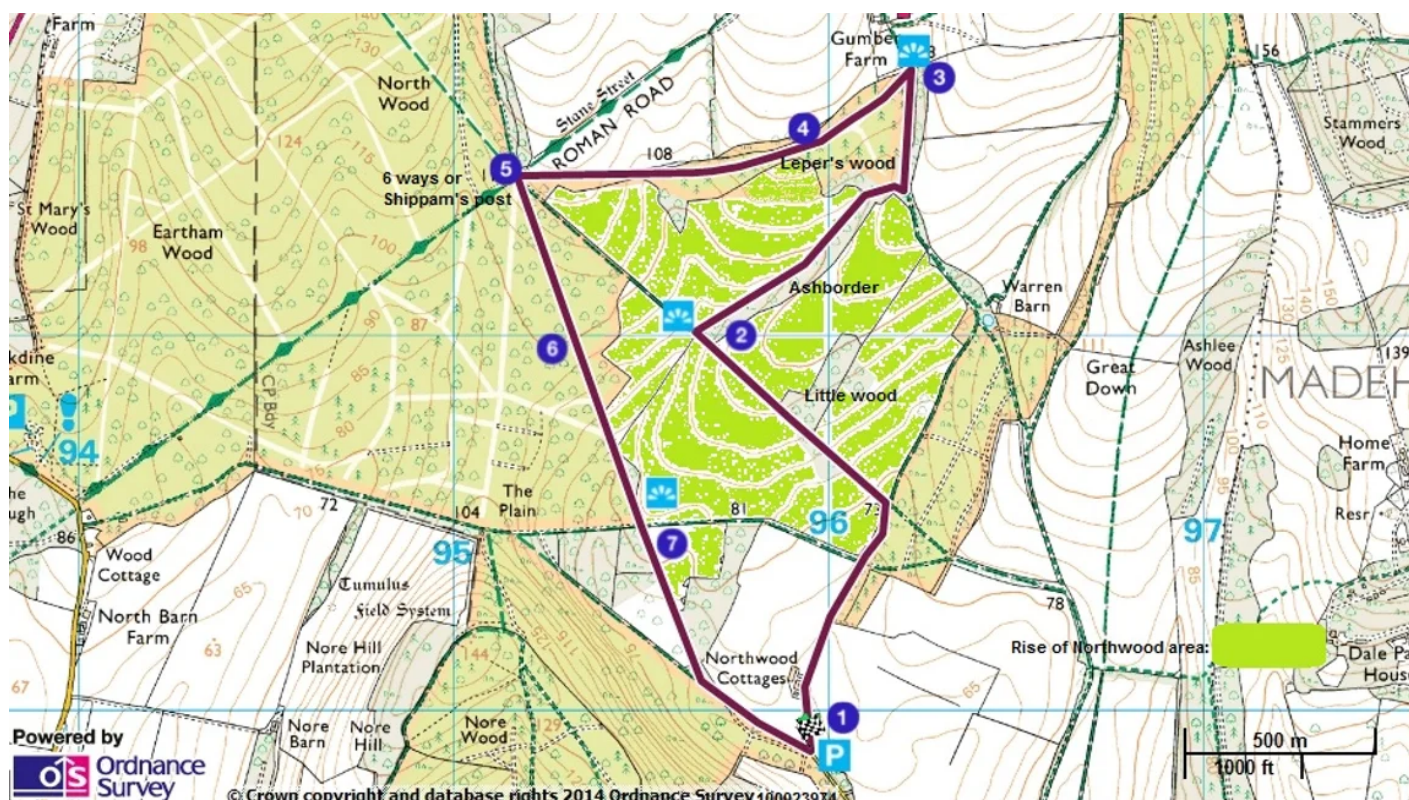
SUSSEX

The Rise of Northwood Ramble at Slindon

This circular walk has been created to take in part of the estate that has recently begun a new chapter. Over the next 10 years, watch as Northwood rises with new rides, glades and public access.

i Watch as Northwood is restored to woodland

During the First and Second World Wars, the area known as 'Northwood' was cleared first for timber and then to make way for war agriculture. Until 2013 these fields were farmed for arable production. The Slindon Ranger team now have the fantastic opportunity to return these fields back to woodland, in a project named 'The Rise of Northwood'.



Information

Address: Slindon Estate, West Sussex, BN18 0RL

OS map: Explorer 121

Activity: Walking

Easy: A mixture of footpaths and bridleways, with some moderate gradients. For further details, please see Terrain section.

Dog friendly: Dogs welcome. Please keep under close control as livestock graze in surrounding fields. No dog bins so please take dog litter home

Full trail: Miles: 3.3 (km: 5.28)

Duration: 1 hour 30 mins

Terrain

This circular walk covers a mixture of footpaths and bridleways, with some moderate gradients.

Total steps: 7

Start point: Courthill Lane, grid ref: SU959099

1. Where Courthill Lane's tarmac ends at Northwood junction, take the furthest right of the three tracks and head north, past Northwood cottages and farm buildings. After approximately ¼ mile (400m), at the second set of bridleway crossroads, turn left onto a gently ascending bridleway with fields to your left- and right-hand sides: these two fields are the first you encounter of the land being restored to woodland in the 'Rise of Northwood' project. As the bridlepath reaches the crest of a hill, you pass a small woodland on your right, known as 'Littlewood' – a relic of Northwood as it was before First World War. Continue on the same track as it descends down towards more of the Northwood fields, with Eartham woods in the distance.
2. At the bottom of the hill, take the footpath to your right along the edge of a shelter belt of woodland known as a 'rew' in Sussex. This particular rew - 'Ashborder' - is a great place to spot badgers going about their business in spring and summer evenings. After ½ mile (800m), this path gradually merges with the approaching woodland - 'Leper's Wood' - in front of you. Before it reaches the woodland look out for a waymark post with a yellow arrow directing you to your right up a fairly steep path that leads to a surfaced track. You will pass a wooden pole barrier on your way and will briefly join a track that emerges on your left before you hit the surfaced track. Turn left onto the surfaced track.
3. After a couple of minutes along the track, with woodland either side, it reaches a gateway and opens out to fields, with Gumber Farm, its camping bothy and cottages

laid out before you. Just behind and to your left there's a narrow path back into Lepers' Wood.

4. The narrow path into Lepers' Wood opens out to become a pale grey forestry track, with Beech, Western Red Cedar and Douglas Fir to either side. Their thinnings and cuttings - known as 'brash' - have been left as shelter and habitat for wildlife.
5. At the end of Lepers' Path it joins 'Straight Track' for a few yards, then enters an open crossways of eight tracks - known locally as '6-ways' or 'Shippam's Poste'. This is a sizeable fingerpost, beside a bench underneath mature beech trees. Take the third path to your left, keeping the 'No Horses' sign to your right. In summer this airy way through the woods is alive with butterflies - notably the large, floating silver-washed fritillary and the discreetly spiralling speckled wood.
6. Continue along this woodland ride and after approximately ½ mile (800m) you will encounter a metal barrier gate. Over the next few decades, the view through the screen of trees to your left onto fields - known as 'War Ag' from their clearance in the First and Second World Wars - will gradually become a long rolling view into deep woodland.
7. Continue on the same path, as it gently rises to a crossroads of bridleways, marked with a fingerpost. If you look back left here, you will see the bulk of the 185-acre area where the Rise of Northwood project will restore and transform the fields back to woodland. Keep straight over the crossroads, eventually passing a small meadow to your right and woodland to your left. This woodland track is a delight in spring with woodland flowers dotted either side of the track. The track and this walk comes to a natural end again back at the Northwood junction where you started.

End point: Courthill Lane, grid ref: SU959099
