



Cissbury Ring and Findon High Salvington Windmill, The Gallops

Distance: 12 km=7½ miles

moderate walking

Region: West Sussex

Date written: 3-may-2018

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Refreshments: Findon

Map: Explorer 121 (Arundel) *but the map in this guide should be sufficient*

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Great open spaces, all-round views, church, country village, ancient hill fort

In Brief

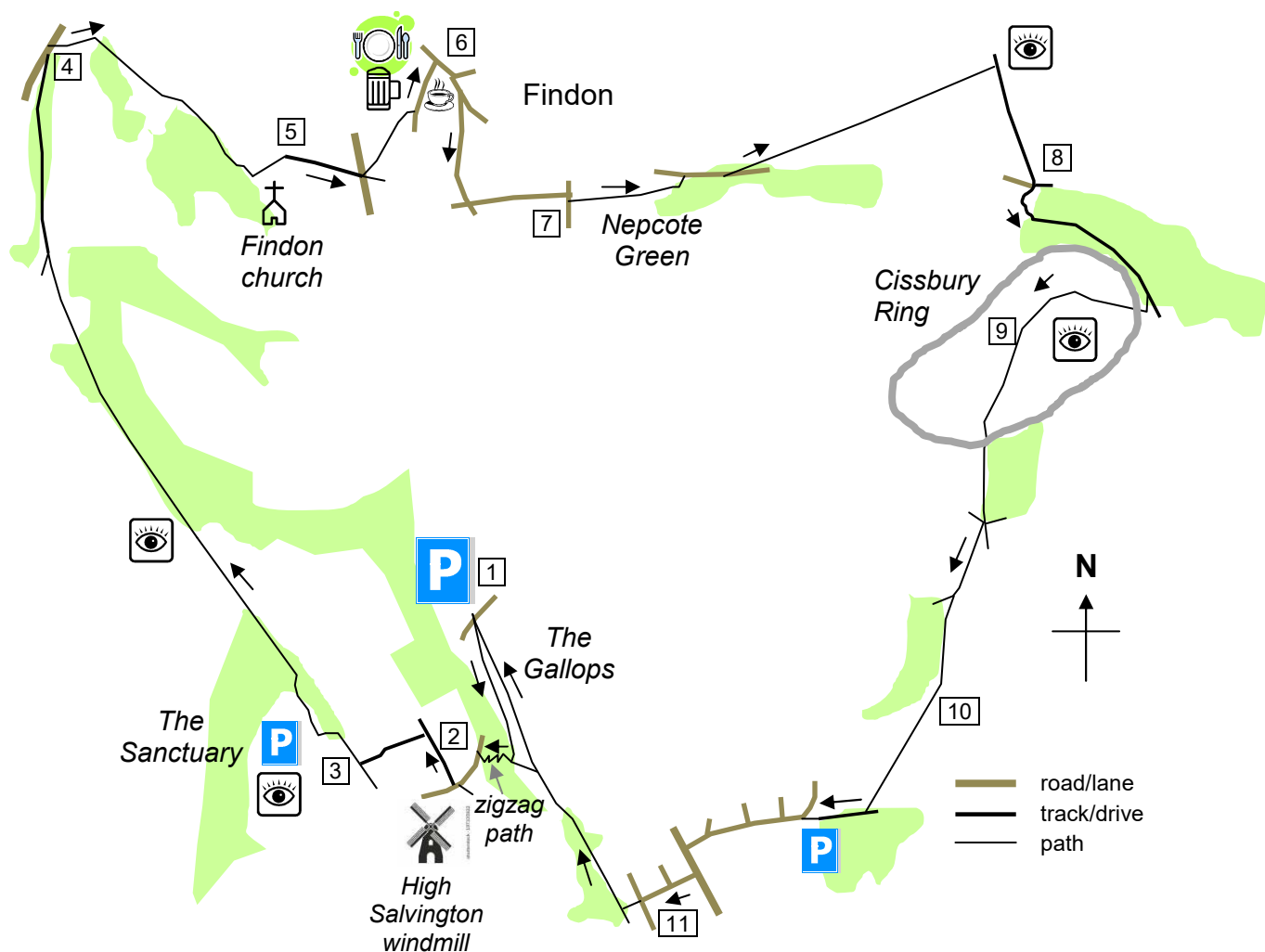
This is a walk for any lover of views and wide open spaces. If you are new to the location, several surprises await you, so it may be best not to do an early read-through but let each new wonder come unannounced. From the two high locations on this walk the views are wide-ranging. But although the walk is of “moderate” difficulty, in practise the gradients are quite easy, being assisted by a zigzag path and graded paths which take you there gently.



There were no nettles or brushy undergrowth on the route so wearing shorts is not a problem. All the paths are either stony tracks or grass, so sensible walking shoes are adequate for this walk. This is definitely **dog country** but be careful crossing the A24 (made easy by the dual carriageway and crossing lights).

The walk begins at the free **Gallops car park** on Bost Hill, near **Worthing**, West Sussex. The nearest postcode, about 500 yds further along the road, is **BN13 3DA** and if you navigate to here from the A24, you will pass the car park on your right in the middle of a wide open space. There are other possible starting places along the route. For more details, see at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).

The Walk



- 1 Starting at the Gallops car park, cross over the road and head straight across the open grassy space (at a gallop if you like – it is so exhilarating). Gradually approach the right-hand edge where there are numerous commemorative bench seats. In 400m or so, you see a children's playground ahead. Immediately **before** the playground, turn **right** on a tarmac path which leads you up the **zigzag**. This is a splendid path built by Worthing Council, bringing to mind the famous zigzag path in Selborne. After six zigs and zags you reach Bost Hill. Turn sharp **left** on the road, reaching a road junction in 100m or so. Your route here is **right** on West Hill, but a short hop straight ahead is the High Salvington windmill, standing alone in its small field.

High Salvington windmill is possibly the most-restored mill in England, having been allowed to decay several times, followed by radical reconstruction. It is a post mill (compare "Jill" on the Clayton Downs) where the whole structure (above the roundhouse below) rotates. A gale in 1976 nearly wrecked it but, after a heroic rebuild, it survived the hurricane of 1987. Many mysteries surround the mill and at one time it was thought that the "post" was a living tree! The mill is still in working order! Following a tradition started by the miller's wife in the mid-1800s, you can visit and be served "dainty teas". The mill is open in the afternoon every first and third Sunday from April to September. All the work is done by volunteers but the mill is now owned by Worthing Council.

- 2** Follow West Hill, a quiet residential lane, for 200m to a junction on the left. Turn **left** here on an unmade road, Heather Lane. This road is the essence of upper-middle England, with lanternd gateposts, lawned fringes and scots pines. At the end, after a kink, turn **right** on Honeysuckle Lane. In 100m, turn **left** into the car park, beside a wide grassy area known as the Sanctuary. The sudden surprise of the wide westward views always draw a gasp from new visitors.



Incredibly, this 80-acre space of meadow and woodland, known as “The Sanctuary” was once earmarked for development. Nancy Price (1880-1970) was one of the greatest theatre and film actresses of her day and she lived close by on Heather Lane. She was the driving force in a campaign to save The Sanctuary and in the 1940s Worthing Council made it a public open space.

- 3** Turn **right** along the grass beside the car park. Exit in the far right-hand corner on a narrow path through trees and turn **left** to join a wide track. The woodland on the left of the track gives way to a large meadow with more great views. On your right is a bench dedicated to Nancy Price, set in a tiny piazza. The track runs between meadows and woodland and you are joined from the right by two bridleways. Soon you are out of the woods with great views eastwards to Cissbury Ring, your imminent destination. Very soon, you pass a king-and-queen bench with great views in all directions. A bridleway joins from the left. Follow the wide track down to the Longfurlong Road.



- 4** Staying on this side of the road, go **right** for just 15m, then **right** up a bank, over a stile, into a field with the slope of Church Hill on your right. Go straight ahead on a level path across the centre of the field. *Note that you are on part of the Monarch's Way (see the description in the neighbouring walk “Clapham, Patching and the Monarch's Way”).* Your path takes you over a stile and steeply down (*care! may be slippery*). When you reach an open green patch, turn **right** on a narrow level grass path. Ignore a private stile on your left (leading to the 150-year-old Findon Cricket Club) and go over a stile ahead (squeezable if you are thin enough). The path leads out to run beside a field and soon takes you through an old kissing-gate to a track. Cross straight over into the precincts of Findon Church. This unique church is usually open and definitely worth seeing. There are two doors, both with a slightly awkward catch, so persevere!

There was a church at Findon in 1086, much of which survives in the current building. In the 1200s the North Aisle was added and in the 1400s a new high roof was added which makes this church unique because it spans the nave and the aisle. A wall painting and some small fragments were found under the Cromwellian whitewash. In 1867 the church was restored under the direction of Sir George Gilbert Scott (architect of St Pancras Station), which included the large William Morris tiles which you see by the altar.

- 5** Turn **left** beside the church, go out through the lichgate and keep **right** along the drive. *On your right is the 18th-century mansion, Findon Place.* Continue to the main road and cross both carriageways carefully, using the footway just to your right. At the other side, avoid the white gates and fork **left** by a fingerpost on a path which goes diagonally across the grass. Go through a disused wooden gate in the far corner, along a narrow path and out to the road in Findon, opposite the *Findon Manor* hotel. Turn **left** on the road, quickly reaching the crossroads in the centre of this historic village, where you have a choice of two pubs, plus a Post Office / confectioners, an “Indian” restaurant and, as you will see, a tea room.



The name "Findon" is Anglosaxon made up from "fin" = "heap (of wood)" and "don" = "hill". For many centuries the dirt-poor cottagers made a living from sheep. In contrast, the manor (which included the village) was passed on between relatives of the king (Edward I stayed here), until self-made riches descended on the parish. Just west of the village, where the crematorium stands now, is the site of Muntham Court, rebuilt in 1742 and purchased by a great eccentric adventurer and collector William Frankland. Born in India, he amassed a huge fortune by the age of 40. He made his way to England by dressing as a Tartar messenger, wangling Persian, Armenian and Turkish travel documents. Buying Muntham Court, finding it nearly empty, having no wife or family, he embarked on a journey across the land buying every kind of mechanical invention, spending over £20,000 (20 million in today's money) and cramming the house full of them.

-  **6** After a possible sojourn in the village, turn **right** on The Square with the butchers on your left. At a signpost, keep **right** on Nepcote Lane, passing on your right *Julia's Kitchen*, a welcome spot for a pleasant snack. At the *Old Post Office*, fork **right** on Cross Lane. Where the lane divides, keep left. After 300m on this lane, you reach a crossroads. Turn **left** here on Steep Lane (whose steepest part is behind you, thanks to the diversion through the village). In 300m, suddenly you are confronted by the green expanse of Nepcote Green which acts as a village green for Findon, a place for fêtes and summer fairs.
- 7** Go **right** on the road and quickly **left** at a fingerpost to walk along the right-hand edge of the green, alongside the flint wall, passing the flint *Wattle House*. *The Wattle House is a unique survivor from the end of the 1700s when it was used to store wattle hurdles for the sheep pens during the annual sheep fair. The fair still takes place every September.* At the far side, keep round to the left, passing some tempting bench seats, to meet a tarmac lane. Turn **right** on the lane and, in 100m or so, just after *Ring House*, fork **left** on a bridleway. You have constantly widening views including one of the best views of the Cissbury Ring which you are about to surmount. After nearly 1 km, where the large meadow on your right ends, you reach a crossing track. Turn **right** on the track, thus leaving the Monarch's Way, soon arriving at the small car park and the tarmac lane.
-  **8** Cross over to a small metal gate beside a large one, to a National Trust sign for Cissbury Ring. *There are many ways up to and around the Cissbury Ring and you may find your own route – provided that you come out at the other side on the main track between the ramparts where there are steps on each side. The route used here is a suggestion as it is kind to weary legs.* Go straight ahead on a very wide track which wheels **left** (most walkers take a short cut across the grass). Ignore a small wooden gate on your right and stay on the track for 350m to the top where the fence on your right ends. Fork **right** here, go **right** through a small wooden gate and keep straight ahead between two mounds. *The "mounds" are in fact the ramparts of the hill fort and many visitors climb them to make a semi-circular tour.* Go straight on, keeping a fraction right, up to the trig point where you have great views, at least as far as Portsmouth, with its Spinnaker Tower, and beyond to the Isle of Wight.

Cissbury Ring is a neolithic hill fort covering 60 acres=24 ha. The area was also a flint mine with hundred of pits dug into the hillside. The single ditch and rampart were built around 2,500 years ago during the late Bronze Age. There were two entrances, no doubt guarded by heavy wooden gates. Just outside

the ring a number of barrows have been found, making this an important burial site.

- 9 Keep dead straight between gorse, keeping left a fraction to stay on the level, always on the main path. You come between two “mounds” with steps on each side. [This is your target if you did a tour of the ramparts.](#) Follow the stony path, gradually downhill under trees. After a large kissing-gate, you come out of the trees to an open space with two fingerposts. Take the **right** fork, the path pointed to by the old-fashioned fingerpost, in the direction “Findon Valley”. This path goes through a wooden swing-gate beside a large wooden gate and runs gently downhill. In 200m, as the path enters woods, ignore a small wooden gate and ignore a waymarked path that forks right. Instead, keep to the very knobbly, fairly level, path which runs beside the wood on your right. In 250m you come through a wooden gate onto an open hillside.
- 10 Take a path diagonally across the centre of the hillside, very gradually descending. (There is only one exit from this meadow, so the path is quite well marked.) At the far corner, go through a small wooden gate and keep **right** over roots downhill. You come through a gap to a small car park at the corner of Coombe Rise and Shepherds Mead. Cross straight over on a narrow path through the bushes and keep ahead on Coombe Rise. Welcome to Bungalowland! Follow this road through bright and blossomy middle-England down to the main road. Turn **left** to cross this busy road by crossing lights.
- P** 11 Go up Hillview Rise opposite and at a T-junction go straight over on a driveway, leading to a tarmac path and some steps up. Turn **right** at the top by a notice for *The Gallops*. Follow this wide path through sylvan shrubbery, coming out onto the long wide open space of The Gallops. [If you did *not* begin this walk at the Gallops car park, veer a little to the left, passing a children's car park, and turn **left** up the zigzag, winding back to the middle of section 1, otherwise ...](#) Walk the length of the grassy space, finally arriving back at the Gallops car park where the walk began.

Getting there

By car: the Gallops Car Park is on a narrow road on the right just as you enter Worthing from the north on the A24. 3 miles after the Washington Roundabout, you reach the Findon Roundabout, with its tall trees, where the A280 splits off to the right. Keep straight on here. 1 mile later, after a zigzag in the road, look for a small signpost pointing **right** to *High Salvington Windmill*, very easy to miss. It is shortly after a 40 mph limit and a welcome sign for **Findon Valley**. The car park is ¼ mile on the right.

Other possible starting points on the route are (a) the Honeysuckle Lane car park, approximate postcode **BN13 3BT** (b) Coombe Rise / Shepherds Mead car park, approximate postcode **BN14 0ED** where, if full, there is loads of parking on the side road. Do *not* park at the Cissbury Ring car park which is tiny and, if full, you're stuck. Or in Findon village which gets crowded.

By bus/train: **bus 23**, between Horsham Railway Station and Worthing, stops opposite Lime Tree Avenue on the A24 (ask the driver for Findon Valley Library, start at section [11](#)); it also runs on **Sundays**. Check the timetables.

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