



North Downs Way - Section 11: Chilham to Canterbury

7.2 miles (11.5 km) allow 3 hours

Wander from the medieval town of Chilham through community No Man's Orchard to the impressive Cathedral City of Canterbury. Explore the heritage and history of Canterbury.









View of Canterbury from the trail

How to get there -

Parking: Taylors Hill car park, Chilham and Canterbury City Centre car parks

Train: Nearest stations: Chilham, Canterbury West

Bus: 1A from Canterbury to Ashford

S	Start	Chilham Square CT48BY
///	what3words	costumed.await.resting
F	Finish	Canterbury CT1 2EH
///	what3words	river.metals.stable
	Gates	4
	Stiles	0
	Steps	0
	Terrain	Bare earth, gravel tracks, grass, surfaced tarmac roads, chalk.
	Views	Great views of Stour Valley
	Refreshments	Cafes/pubs in Chilham, lots of options on arrival in Canterbury

Route description

1. Pass the church and take the footpath on your left. Join the small road and continue straight crossing two roads onto Long Hill. Continue uphill for 0.5 miles to Old Wives Lees. Turn right after the village hall onto Lower Lees Road, continue straight for 0.5 miles.
2. Turn left onto a small road and shortly turn right and cross the road through a gap into an orchard. Follow the path straight downhill into woods then a field. Turn right then immediately left uphill. Follow this footpath around the edge of the field. Turn right into an orchard.
3. Continue straight through orchard passing caravans. The path will veer to the right along a railway line. Turn left through the tunnel and at the small junction turn right on a gravel path uphill through a gate and left onto a concrete road.
4. Follow the road keeping right. With the hedge on your left continue on the path as it leaves the road. Ahead are some houses, take the alternative route bypassing the accommodation. It is well signposted and joins a gravel road leading to a country road.
5. Turn left then immediately right. Continue along the road taking care as there is no pavement. Pass houses on each side as you enter Chartham Hatch. At the junction turn left and cross straight over down an alleyway. Continue straight and at the end cross over onto a driveway.
6. Turn right after 20 metres and follow the fenceline passing a playground and field on your left. The wooded path will lead downhill into No Man's Orchard. Continue straight passing apple trees on your right. You will soon reach a metal gate at the bottom of the field.



Modern apple orchards

7. Continue on this footpath for 0.5 miles as it weaves through the woods. Pass the site of Bigbury Camp up on your right, the footpath opens up here into a clearing, keep left, until you reach a wooden gate. Turn right and continue through a gate onto a road.
8. Cross the road and turn left over the road bridge and turn right immediately after the motorway. Continue on this path as it climbs a short steep hill then further along to a sharp left turn down through woods. Pass orchards and continue straight across a small bridge.



The Westgate, Canterbury

9. Follow the footpath up the steep hill joining a tarmac road. Keep straight on the road leading down to a roundabout. Cross straight over and walk down the underpass. On the other side turn right and join London Road. Continue straight reaching a mini roundabout with St. Dunstan's Church on your right.
10. Turn right onto St Dunstan's Street and follow this road downhill over a railway crossing. Continue straight on at two roundabouts and under Westgate Towers. Walk straight up St. Peter's Street and turn left on Best Lane where your walk finishes.

Points of interest

6. No Mans's Orchard

This unique community orchard called No Man's Orchard because it straddles the boundary between two parishes. It was the first 'old' orchard to be designated a Local Nature Reserve in 2002. Each tree is sponsored by a local family or community group who are then allowed to pick those apples.



Serpent sculptural bench in the orchard

7. Bigbury Camp

Bigbury Camp was an Iron Age Hillfort occupied from about 350BC. It is thought to have been attacked by Julius Caesar and his Roman army in 54BC. There is little sign of the camp now, but climbing up the hill allows you to admire the position of this ancient settlement.



Kent Wildlife Trust are using goats to graze this site

10. Canterbury Cathedral

Close to the end of your walk sits Canterbury Cathedral, a World Heritage Site and the oldest Christian structure in England. Founded in 597 and rebuilt by the Normans between 1070 and 1077. The Cathedral was a major pilgrimage destination during Medieval England.



