



where, on a clear day, there is good view of the QEII Dartford Crossing and Canary Wharf.

- 6** Bear left to take the footpath through a gap into a field. Follow the path across the field following arrows, until you reach a woodland boundary. Enter into a wooded area and follow the path travelling downhill. You should emerge from the wooded area on a fairly steep hillside overlooking a former golf course. Continue downhill to the stile at bottom.

*Once the site of the 18 hole Austin Lodge Golf Club, the area has been reverted and conserved for nature.*

- 7** Follow the enclosed path crossing a former golf course and emerge from the path into a field. Keeping to the left-hand side, continue uphill on what becomes a steep climb. Near the top there are views to the left and behind you. Go through the treeline to cross a short grassy area and go over a stile into a field. Continue straight ahead bearing right as you go uphill. Aim for the right-side of the house ahead which becomes visible as you near

the top of the slope. Cross the stile at the right-side of the houses to follow the footpath. Take the first path (bridleway) on the right after coming to the end of the enclosed path (do not continue following the wall straight on).

- 8** Go through the gate at the end of the path and bear left to follow it over a stile into a field. Follow the track on the left boundary of the field. When the track begins to bend sharply round to the left, do not follow round but cross a stile on the right. Cross another field and go over another stile to head down the slope on an enclosed path until you reach a road (Eastdown House should be on the right).
- 9** Turn left and follow the road uphill, being aware of traffic. Cross over the stile into a field and follow the path, heading for the edge of trees straight ahead. On reaching a gate, cross over the stile into another field. Follow the path downhill then cross over the stile into woodland and then follow a fenced woodland path, until you reach a road.

- 10** Being aware of traffic, turn right and follow the road. Come to a road junction and cross to the island in the middle. Cross the road to climb over the stile near the gate signposted as North Downs Way. In this field, follow the path along the left-hand boundary entering into a wooded area after approximately 350 metres.

*There are some impressive views from Otford Mount, one of eight peaks on the 153 mile North Downs Way National Trail.*

- 11** As the path emerges from the short wooded stretch, it begins downhill with steps in places. There are some good views of Otford through the trees ahead. Reaching the end of the path, you will be at a road. Cross over to the pavement and turn right following the North Downs Way sign. At a road junction, bear left and after a short distance, Otford station will be on the left.



The Darent Valley Rail Trails have been created by the Darent Valley Landscape Partnership Scheme. DVLPS is led by the Kent Downs AONB, working throughout the Darent Valley to conserve the area's rich heritage landscapes and encourage people to enjoy, explore and connect to them [www.darent-valley.org.uk](http://www.darent-valley.org.uk)

A selection of the Rail Trails are available to use on the Darent Valley Trails app, available free of charge on the App Store and Google Play. This route is based on the Otford trail devised by Explore Kent.



EUROPEAN UNION



Co-financed by the European Union and the European Regional Development Fund



Photo credit - John Miller photography.com and Andy Valler

# Valleys and Vistas

**A 5.3 mile walk exploring the stunning countryside around Otford, from the valley bottom along the Darent Valley Path to the panoramic vistas from the valley top of the villages and landscapes below.**



**Start / end point:** Otford station

**Length:** 5.3 miles / 8.5 km

**Terrain:** Mainly fields and tracks. Undulating path. Some steep slopes up and down. One section of road walking with no pavement. Crosses through a golf course. Follows a section of the Darent Valley Path and the North Downs Way

**Accessibility:** One uphill flight of 145 steps, one set of downhill steps, three kissing gates and nine stiles

**Toilets / refreshments:** In Otford village

**What3Words:** ///fnds.stable.with

**OS Explorer map:** 147

### On The Way

- Enjoy panoramic views of the Darent Valley landscape from the valley top and across Magpie Bottom
- Follow a section of the North Downs Way and also the Darent Valley Path
- Explore the historic villages of Otford and Shoreham

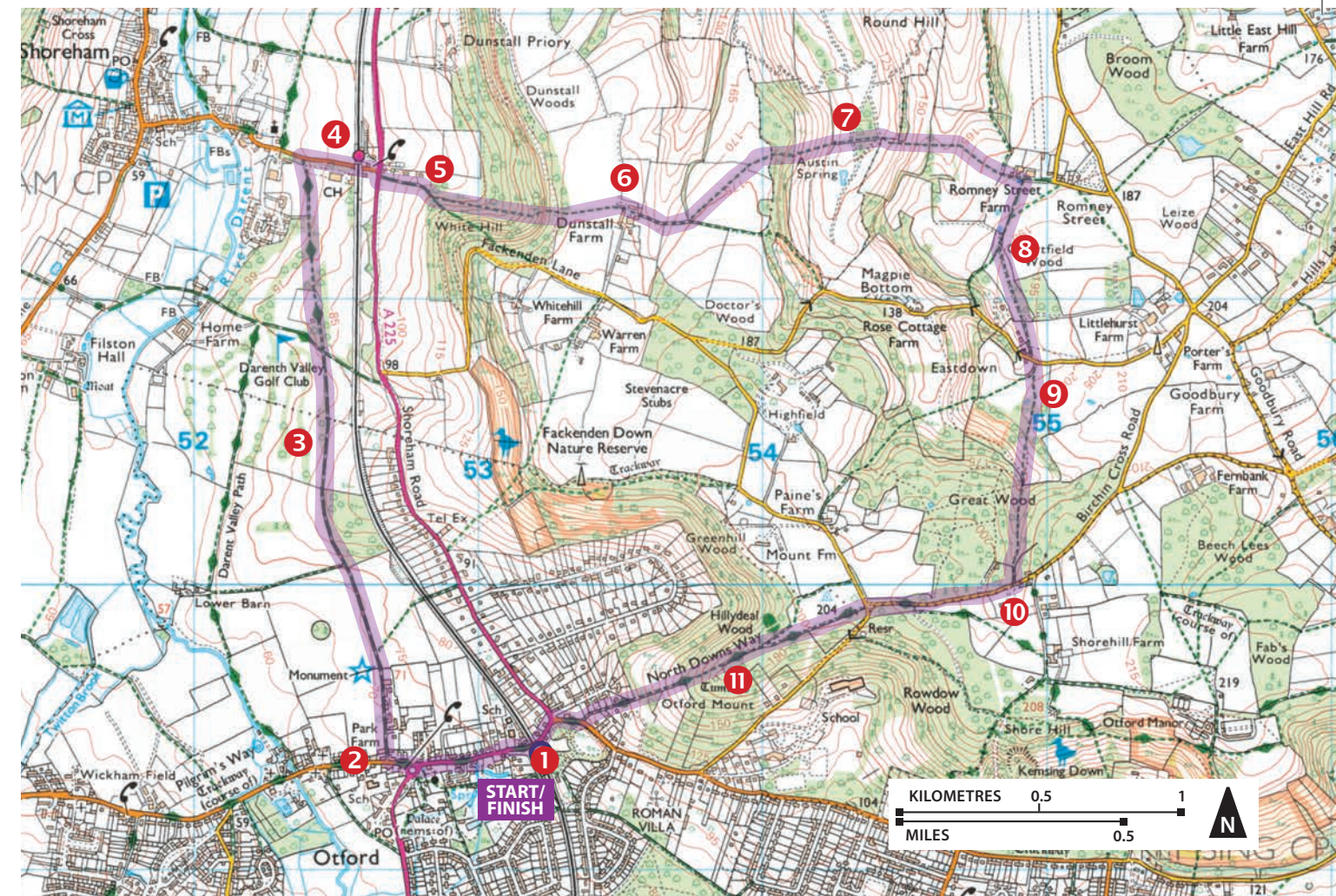
- 1 Turn left out of Otford station and head down the road towards Otford village. Before reaching the duck pond, cross over the main road and continue straight along the High Street.

*Otford village boasts a wealth of heritage to explore including the Archbishop's Palace, Otford Heritage Trail and even a listed duck pond! The North Downs Way National Trail also passes through Otford as well as the Darent Valley Path which hugs the River Darent through this stretch. Look out for the 10 information panels around the village along the Otford Heritage Trail.*

- 2 Take the footpath on your right and follow this for about 500 metres, going through the gate. Continue along the path treeline and onto the Darenth Valley Golf Course. Take care here and keep to the path at all times. On reaching a road crossing the path, cross over to take the path showing the Darent Valley Path waymarks.

*The Darent Valley Path is a promoted route and currently runs for 19 miles between Dartford and Sevenoaks. Hugging the River Darent for much of it, the waymarked route offers panoramic views through a mix of stunning landscapes of marshes, woodland and chalk grassland.*

- 3 Continue along the Darent Valley Path onto a cricket ground and follow the path around the edge to a kissing gate. Look right before crossing the fairway and continue along the footpath until you come to a main road (Station Road). Turn left, following the signs for the Darent Valley Path and walk down the edge of the road. Take extra care here as there is no pavement. After approximately 50 metres, carefully cross over the road and instead of continuing straight ahead along the Darent Valley Path, turn right along the permissive path on the field edge to head north towards Shoreham station. Alternatively, Shoreham village can be explored via a five-minute walk through the churchyard.



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*There are many heritage and cultural points of interest in Shoreham including the medieval church, the explorer Cameron, the iconic Shoreham Cross etched in the hillside and the visionary artist Samuel Palmer. The waymarked Samuel Palmer Trail with accompanying smartphone audio guide, is worth a listen to appreciate how the Darent Valley landscape truly inspired Palmer.*

- 4 Passing Shoreham Station on your left, cross the A225 (with care) and turn left up the track past Copt Hall. Continue past White Hill Cottage, then bear left. Consider a short detour along the right-hand path to take you into White Hill.

*White Hill is a haven for butterflies in the summer who thrive on the wildflowers of this steep chalk grassland site. It is managed by Butterfly Conservation and its importance is recognised in being a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).*

- 5 Continue along the path until you reach some steps and start to climb them (it becomes steep and there are approximately 145 steps to climb). At the top, cross over a path, cross three more steps and cross a field towards Dunstall Farm. Follow the footpath sign through the farm buildings and walk down the hill to a dry valley. Look to the left