

EK

LULLINGSTONE TO PRESTON HILL CIRCULAR WALK

7 MILES
11.5 KM

Kent Country Parks

- 14 TAKE CARE:** This section of path is a very steep climb and can be very slippery when wet
- 15** Near the top, you will pass the old flagpole on your left, once used to signal when the Prestone Hill rifle range was active.
- 16** At the top, bear left and follow the path into Preston Hill, a Site of Special Scientific Interest.
- 17** Continue to a junction with a track opposite an open field. Turn left down the track, then right at the next junction.
- 18** Go through the kissing gate and follow the path with the field on your right.
- 19** At the next junction, bear left slightly downhill and follow the path through yew and coppice woodland until you reach the end.
- 20** Bear left and stay on the path as it goes downhill to the chalk grassland field.
- 21** Go through the kissing gate into the field. This viewpoint offers excellent views across the Darent Valley.
- 22** Head downhill through the field and turn left just before a noticeboard.
- 23** Follow the path to the fence and pass through a kissing gate into woodland. Continue to the next kissing gate, with the railway cutting on your right.
- 24** Go through the kissing gate into the field and continue straight ahead, keeping with the railway line on your right hand side.

- 25** At the track, turn left and go through the kissing gate. Follow the track to the field entrance.
- 26** At the top of the track, bear right and go through the kissing gate into Rifle Range Field. This field contains firing points and old target structures from an 18th century rifle range. The white pole ahead marks the former target location.
- 27** Turn right through the first kissing gate on your right and follow the path gently uphill.
- 28** Turn right at the junction and follow the path to the track. Go through the kissing gate and turn left.
- 29** Follow the track uphill through woodland and take the first path on the right at the top of the hill, just before the open fields.

You now retrace your steps back the Country Park car park.

How to find us

Lullingstone Country Park
Castle Road, Eynsford, Kent, DA4 0JF
Telephone: **03000 411811**
Email: **kentcountryparks@kent.gov.uk**
Web: **www.Kent.gov.uk/kentcountryparks**

By car – signposted on the A225 towards Otford, after the entrance to Lullingstone Castle.

By bus – take the Go Coach 421 service between Sevenoaks and Swanley. Please ask the driver to stop at Lullingstone Country Park. Phone Traveline: 0871 200 22 33.

By train – the nearest train station is Eynsford (1.1miles, 1.8km). For rail enquiries phone 08457 48 49 50.

This leaflet is available in other formats and can be explained in other languages.
Phone **03000 413500** or email:
kentcountryparks@kent.gov.uk

07/26

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The Lullingstone to Preston Hill Circular Walk is a challenging 7-mile route through some of the most striking landscapes in the Kent Downs National Landscape. Beginning in the tranquil setting of Lullingstone Country Park, the walk follows the gentle curves of the River Darent, before climbing through ancient woodland to panoramic viewpoints high above the valley.

This route features steep ascents, rugged tracks and dramatic descents, making it ideal for experienced walkers seeking a more demanding adventure. While the terrain can be testing, the effort is richly rewarded with sweeping views, abundant wildlife, and a profound sense of peace and escape in the heart of the countryside.

Lullingstone Country Park

Lullingstone Country Park is internationally recognised for its extraordinary collection of over 300 veteran trees, including oak, beech, ash, hornbeam and sweet chestnut – some reaching an age of up to 800 years. In spring and summer, the park's chalk grasslands burst into colour with rare orchids and wildflowers, creating a vibrant backdrop for wildlife lovers and photographers.

The park has proudly held the prestigious Green Flag Award every year since 2009 and has received a Gold Medal in the Country Parks category of the South and Southeast in Bloom campaign annually since 2010 – a testament to the dedication and care of the park's team.

Visitors can enjoy excellent on-site facilities, including a café, toilets (including an accessible

Changing Places facility) and a fully equipped classroom supporting learning for all ages. Forest School sessions are also available.

Just north of the park lies Lullingstone Roman Villa, an English Heritage site renowned for its spectacular mosaics and rare Roman wall paintings. Nearby too is Lullingstone Castle and the World Garden, home to the National Collection of Eucalyptus.

About Preston Hill

A designated Site of Special Scientific Interest, Preston Hill offers spectacular views across the Darent Valley towards Lullingstone Country Park. Set atop a steep escarpment, the site is a striking mix of chalk grassland and woodland, awash with wildflowers during the summer months.

The grassland supports a rich variety of wildlife, including chalkhill blue and dark green fritillary butterflies, while its quieter, less-visited nature makes it a refuge for species such as adders and grass snakes. Traditional land management plays a vital role here, with grazing by a small herd of goats from the Cheviots – Cheviot goats are Britain's oldest primitive breed of goats - helping to encourage biodiversity, alongside coppicing and careful woodland management.

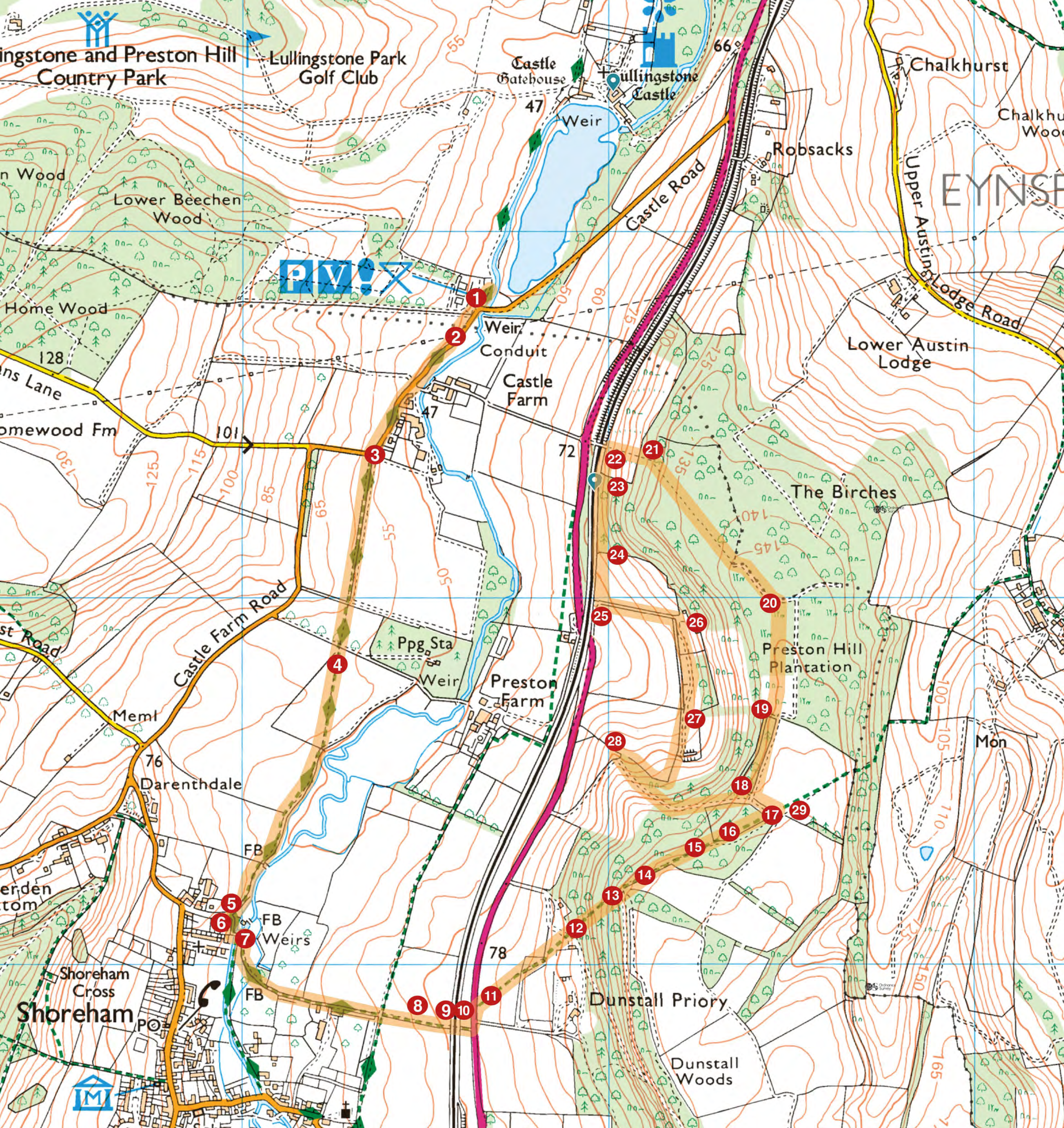
Preston Hill also has a fascinating past, having once been used as a Ministry of Defence rifle range, traces of which can still be seen today. Woodland paths weave across the hilltop, though some sections are steep and occasionally overgrown, making this landscape best suited to walkers comfortable with uneven or steep terrain.

Directions for the Lullingstone and Preston Hill circular walk

The route is waymarked from the Lullingstone Country Park Car Park

- 1** From the car park, follow the path to the right of the front gate.
- 2** Go through the kissing gate and follow the surfaced path beside the road with fields on your right, until it meets the road.
- 3** Go down the steps, cross the road and follow the footpath sign opposite into the fields.
- 4** Continue straight through the fields until you reach the River Darent on your left..
- 5** Follow the path with the river on your left and fields on your right until you reach a tarmac road.
- 6** Turn left onto the road, then take the path to the right in front of the Mill House gates.
- 7** Cross the bridge, go straight down the steps, and follow the footpath bearing sharply right.
- 8** Stay on this path, continuing straight at the junction, until you reach the railway crossing.
- 9 TAKE CARE:** Cross the stile, then cross the railway using the pedestrian crossing
- 10** Continue on the footpath up to the A225 road..
- 11 TAKE CARE:** Turn left and walk along the left-hand verge for approximately 70m. Cross the road and take the footpath into the field. There is a small paved area where the footpath meets the road.
- 12** Head diagonally across the field and stay on the footpath into woodland.
- 13** Follow the path through the wood, cross a tarmac drive, then follow the path up into the woods.





Lullingstone and Preston Hill
Country Park

Lullingstone Park
Golf Club

Castle
Gatehouse

Lullingstone
Castle

Chalkhurst

Chalkhurst
Wood

Robsacks

Upper Austin Lodge Road

Lower Austin
Lodge

The Birches

Preston Hill
Plantation

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Dunstall Priors

Dunstall
Woods

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