

South Downs Way Challenge...Virtually

Week 6 –Washington to Truleigh Hill... 8.4 miles.

A mile down the A24, south of the Washington roundabout, is a small car park which is at the bottom of a sharp rise, up a windy chalk and flint track.

This is our startpoint for week #6 of our South Downs Way odyssey.

Set off gently and pace yourself up this 1 in 5 gradient, pass the old disused chalk pits and upwards to be rewarded with open views of the coastal plain to the south and a little further on, to Chanctonbury Ring.



The ring is now looking a little disshevelled after the Great Storm of 1987 which brought down a significant number of mature beech trees, but trees planted since are now coming on well.

The site of an Iron Age fort, Chanctinbury Ring was first planted with trees by Charles Goring, heir to the Wiston estate, when just 20 years old in 1760.

Evidence of the Romans have also been found here, and it is said that if you run backwards around the ring six times you will summon the Devil.

Moving on we follow the ridge of the Downs for a mile or so, with often expansive views in all directions.

Look north and you may catch a glimpse of Wiston House (now a Government conference centre), and to the south lies the enormous Cissbury Ring.



Cissbury Ring is the second largest Iron Age fort in Britain. A large network of flint mines evidence earlier use of Cissbury Ring which was also important to the Romans, and may have been continually in use for over 2000 years.

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Keep walking and the impressive Steyning Bowl opens up overlooking Steyning itself.



Walking past pig pens you can pick out the finger remains of Bramber Castle, poking through the trees, and the huge chimney of the disused Shoreham Cement plant.

A sharp descent takes us through Boltolphs, then over the River Adur. Looking from the bridge imagine the scene before the river silted up, when Bramber was a busy port, and the river would have been busy with boats and ships of all sizes.

From here, Beeding Hill is a long slow climb from sea level to 168 metres. Stop and look back from time to time and take in the glorious views of the Adur Valley, and the Downs beyond stretching into the distance from whence you have come.

Then the march continues up Truleigh Hill, with the Radio masts in sight, and today's walk finishes with a welcome rest and refreshment at the Youth Hostel, just before the Radio Station at the summit.

So today's walk, of another 8.4 miles, means we have now completed 62.4 miles of the South Downs Way

We're nearly two thirds of the way with some of the most classic South Downs terrain ahead of us.
