

The Plantation, Blackbrook Wood and St Helena Farm

A circular walk to the north west of Plumpton Green, starting and finishing at the village shop. Largely passing over fields and through local woods, it is a particularly beautiful walk at bluebell time.

FOOTPATH
TO PLUMPTON



PLUMPTON



This leaflet is one of 16 produced by the Plumpton Village Action Plan Footpaths Team. Copies can be downloaded free from www.plumptonvap.co.uk

Plumpton parish includes the villages of Plumpton and Plumpton Green. The parish lies at the foot of the South Downs, near Brighton and Lewes, in East Sussex. The southern part of the parish is within the South Downs National Park.

Public transport

Plumpton is served by two bus services (166 and 824, Monday to Saturday) and a frequent train service (London Victoria to Eastbourne, Hastings and Ore, daily including Sundays). There is also a daily train service from Brighton via Lewes.

For information about bus times telephone **0844 477 1623** or visit www.countryliner-coaches.co.uk For train times telephone **0845 127 2920** or visit www.southernrailway.com

Pubs and shop

Plumpton has four pubs: the Half Moon at the south end of the village, beneath the Downs; the Winning Post and Fountain Inn, both in the centre of the village, and the Plough, at the north end of the village. There is also a pub, the Jolly Sportsman, in East Chilmington. The Plumpton village shop is open daily and has a delicatessen.

Please follow the Countryside Code

- Be safe, plan ahead and follow any signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants and animals and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under close control
- Consider other people



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Wildlife notes



The overgrown hedge along Riddens Lane (point 1) is rich in species, including wild privet, field maple and spindle. Riddens is also the name of the wood on the right and a farm – the name is derived from an old Medieval term indicating a clearing for a farm.

As you walk through the Plantation (point 7) you pass through an area of mainly ash trees, which probably colonised when the wood was cleared. The orange colour on their trunks is due to an orange-pigmented green unicellular alga called Trentepohlia. After the area of ash there is a section of horse chestnut coppice with standard oaks, from where the Plantation presumably gets its name, but it is most unusual to see horse chestnut coppice – sweet chestnut is the more usual choice. Blackbrook Wood itself (point 8) is a designated ancient woodland and is mainly hazel and hornbeam coppice under oak, with a splendid ground flora of bluebells and wood anemones.

At point 19 the track is part of an ancient sunken drove road and there are ancient woodland species indicators on its boundaries, such as sessile oak, butcher's broom and wild service tree.

As you cross the field with the pond (point 20), there is a grove of aspen trees with their 'shivering' leaves just before you reach the fenced pond on your left. Sbarws (narrow strips of woodland between fields) are characteristic of Sussex and were managed in the past to provide firewood and timber.

The lumpy field at point 21 was once a brickmaking site.

18

Keep left of the house, cross a stile and follow the narrow track alongside the garden. Cross a footbridge over a ditch and take the track to the right of a large oak, coming out onto a driveway. Follow the drive to the left until you come out onto St Helena Lane.



21

Cross a set of double stiles with a plank bridge between them and continue straight on, heading towards the houses ahead. Cross another stile into a narrow path and shortly emerge onto Station Road, with the Fountain inn immediately on your right.

22

Turn right, heading south along Station Road to return to the village shop.

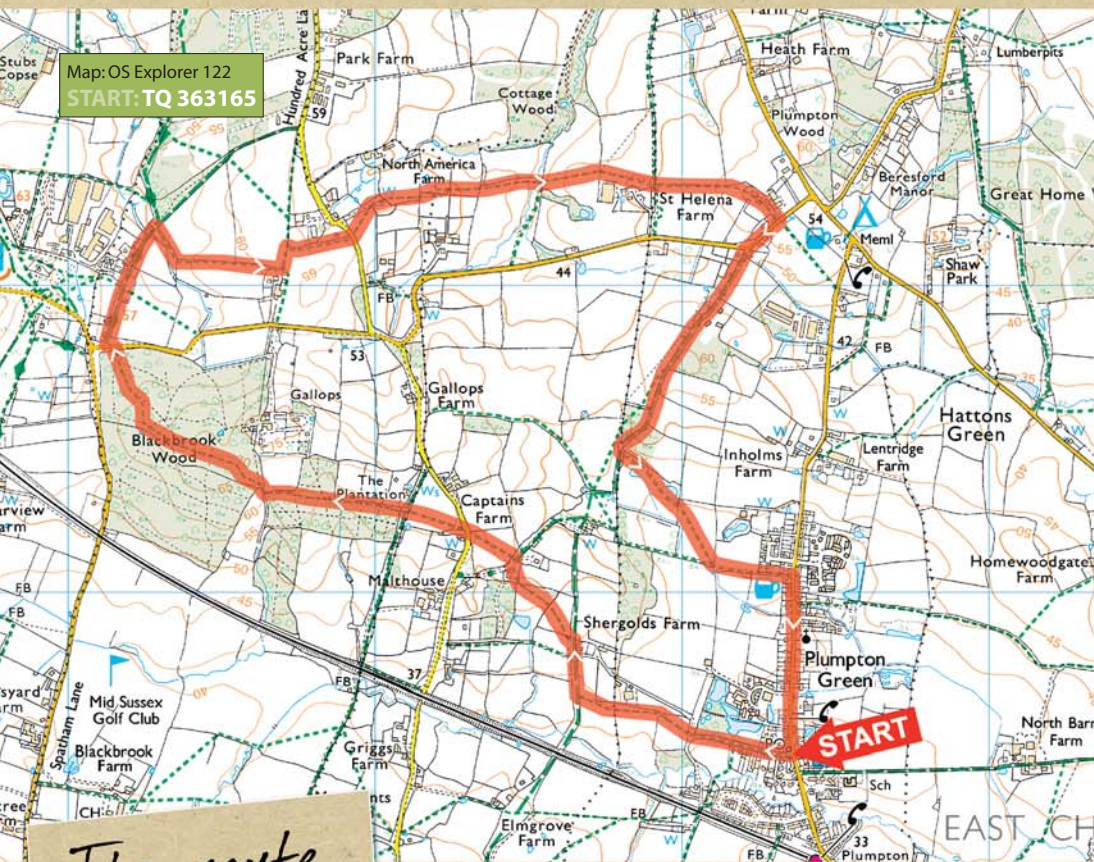


19

Turn right down the lane and walk downhill to the bend in the road. Take the bridleway on the left in front of a cottage. Continue on the bridleway through woodland for about half a mile.

20

At the corner of the wood, where the path bends at a fingerpost, follow the signposted footpath to the left, crossing over a stile into a field. Cross the field, keeping to the left of a pond almost completely obscured by trees. Continue towards the fenced corner up ahead on your left, follow the fence/boundary for a short while and pass through a gap into a second field. Follow the path diagonally across the field to the far right corner.



The route

1 Turn right out of the village shop and immediately right again and walk down Riddens Lane. Once past the houses, continue straight ahead on the stony track. Just as the track bends sharply to the right, cross a stile in the hedge ahead.

2 Go straight on across the field towards the stile in the opposite hedge. Cross this stile and continue straight across the next field to another stile beneath an oak tree. Cross the next field towards a stile beside a field gate.

3 Turn right heading north along the wide grassy bridleway towards Shergold's Farm. Go through a gate and, ignoring the track going left, go straight on past the farm and turn left over a stile tucked away in a tall hedge, just past another oak tree.

4 Cross the small field diagonally to a stile in the middle of the hedge. Keep on the same track across another small field to a stile in front of a large barn.

5 Go through the field gate to the left of the stables on your right, onto the narrow asphalt road. Turn right and, almost immediately, take the footpath on the left between a prickly hedge and a wire fence. Cross a stile and continue diagonally across the field towards the far right hand corner, where there is a gate and a stile into Streat Lane.

6 Cross the lane and walk a few yards to the right until you reach a gate/stile on your left. Cross this and follow the hedge on your left until you reach another stile about 25 yards right of the corner.

7 Cross the stile and immediately take the plank footbridge over the ditch, and then cross another stile onto a bridleway. Turn left through a gate into the wood, known as the Plantation.

8 Ignore the wider track going south towards the Downs, and take either of the smaller tracks to your right. Follow the track through the wood until you reach a small open area. Take the narrow track ahead between hedges, crossing a footbridge, then bearing right up a slight incline into Blackbrook Wood. Continue on the wide path through the wood as it slopes down and then levels out, eventually emerging onto Middleton Common Lane.

9 Cross the road and walk left, and then immediately right into a bridleway signposted to Wivelsfield Green. After entering the wood beyond the last house, continue for about 150 yards and then turn sharp right on a short track leading to a stile to the left of an old gate.

10 Cross the stile into a small, narrow field, walk straight on and then turn left through a stile/gap in the hedge between two electricity poles.

11 Walk straight ahead on a grass track between the hedge on your right and a fenced plantation on your left until you reach a stile straight ahead. Cross the stile into a field and continue straight ahead.

12 As you pass a farm on the right, turn left, ignoring the gap/track straight ahead, and walk beside the hedge for about 50 yards until you come to a stile on your right. Cross the stile and walk along the hedge on your left until you reach Hundred Acre Lane.

13 Cross the stile into the lane, cross the lane and climb a stile on the other side into a small paddock. Bear diagonally left towards the far corner, climbing a stile into a garden. Cross the gravel drive, walk to the left of the large willow trees, and cross a stile into a field.

14 Follow the path across the field to a stile at the foot of a tall tree in the far boundary. Cross the stile and walk on, keeping to the right of the small lake. Cross a stile into another small paddock.

15 Continue on to another stile opposite, leading into a large field. Bear slightly left and follow the path across the field, keeping to the right of an isolated oak tree. Continue down to a stile and a footbridge across the stream at the bottom. Cross these.

16 Take the path straight ahead, crossing the stile at the top of the small incline into a large field. Go straight across the field and cross a plank bridge and a stile into another field. Keeping the large cowshed of St Helena Farm on your right, take the path towards the right hand corner of the field.

17 Cross a stile between two oak trees and follow the path along the wire fence on the left towards a house.

