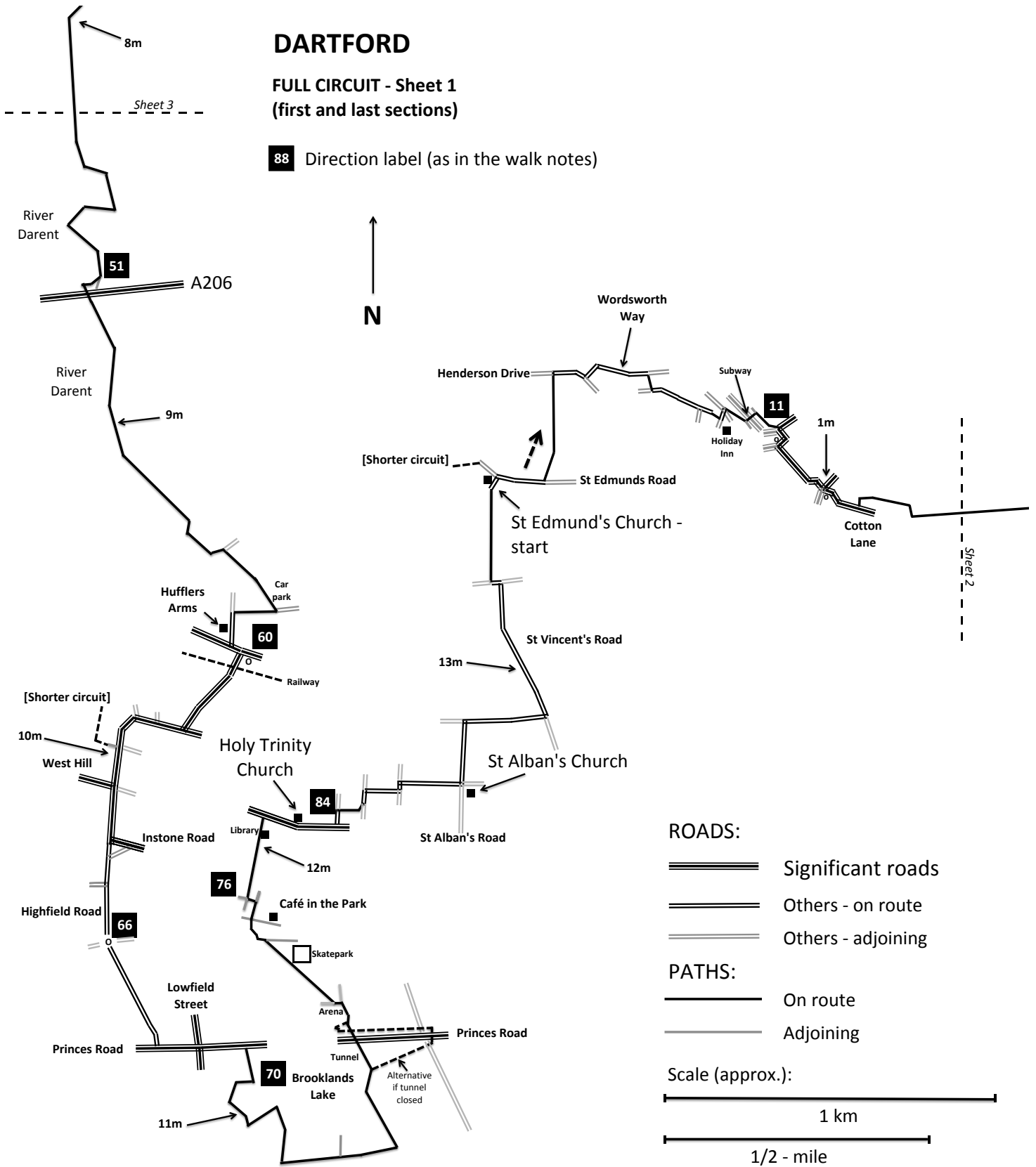


DARTFORD

FULL CIRCUIT - Sheet 1 (first and last sections)

88 Direction label (as in the walk notes)



ROADS:

==== Significant roads

==== Others - on route

==== Others - adjoining

PATHS:

— On route

— Adjoining

Scale (approx.):

————— 1 km

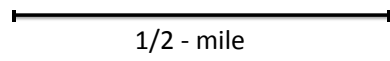
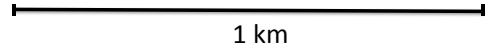
————— 1/2 - mile

---> Starting direction

DARTFORD

FULL CIRCUIT - Sheet 2
(continuation)

Scale (approx.):



88 Direction label (as in the walk notes)

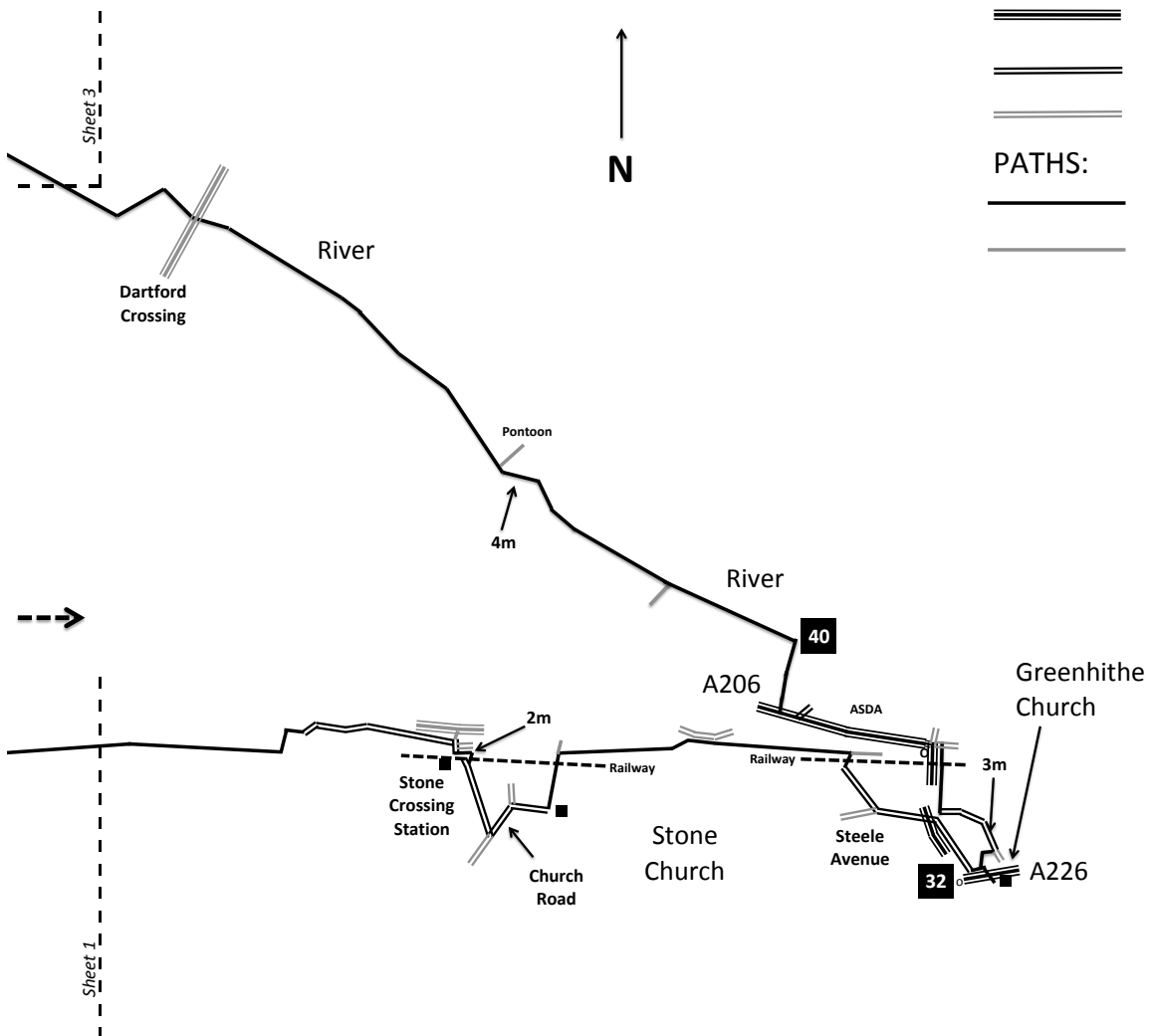
---> Cont. from Sheet 1

ROADS:

- Significant roads
- Others - on route
- Others - adjoining

PATHS:

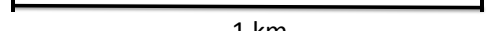
- On route
- Adjoining



DARTFORD

FULL CIRCUIT - Sheet 3
(continuation)

Scale (approx.):






1 km





1/2 - mile




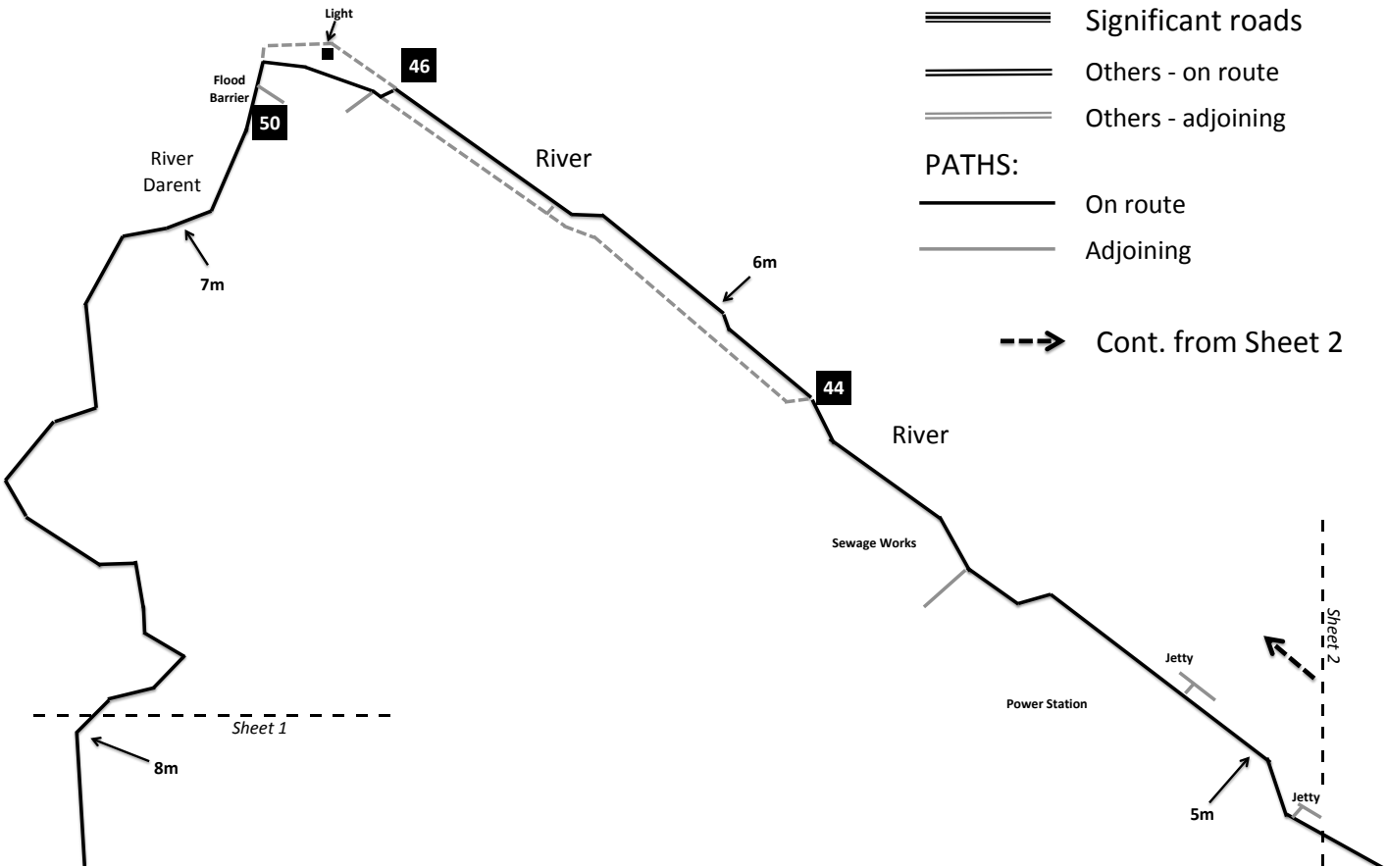
ROADS:

-  Significant roads
-  Others - on route
-  Others - adjoining

PATHS:

-  On route
-  Adjoining

 Cont. from Sheet 2



DARTFORD CIRCUIT - 13.37 miles

Churches in the full circuit:

Dartford St Edmund's (start and finish)

Stone (Direction 23)

Greenhithe (32)

Holy Trinity Dartford (81)

Dartford St Alban's (89)

Associated local circuits

- DA2: Swanscombe - Greenhithe Village - Stone - Greenhithe - Swanscombe
- DA1: Dartford - Christ Church - Brooklands - Dartford

Full circuit: After some careful (but entirely manageable) jousting with traffic at busy slip roads and roundabouts, the walk moves out to Stone and Greenhithe and then settles down into six miles along river-lines (Thames, then Darent), followed later by the Brooklands Lakes and Dartford's Central Park.

Roads and hindrances:

There is the crossing of the multiple tentacles of busy roads around the complex road interchange (Tunnel Approach meets A206) in Directions 11-14. It requires repeated care, but follows an official cycle track which helps to confirm the directions. Lights control the busiest of these crossings, and none is unduly fearsome.

There are several other places where a major road needs to be crossed, but all are well equipped to help pedestrians (islands, zebra crossings or lights).

The crossing of Princes Road (73) is through a tunnel (with recorded music if lucky). But if the Darent alongside is running too high the tunnel is closed, and an alternative (as described in the Appendix) is necessary, involving a sequence of road crossings - 73C-D - to get safely over Princes Road.

FULL CIRCUIT

Dartford - Stone - Greenhithe - Thames path - Darent Valley Path - circuit of Dartford

Notes taken: January to May 2020

The start and finish is at St Edmund's Church, St Edmund's Road, Dartford (DA1 5ND).

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
1		From the entrance to St Edmund's Church , turn right along St Edmund's Road.	550 750	
2	2	Turn left along the signposted tarmac footpath.		

* **"Mins." is very approximate!** See 'Introductory Notes' for an explanation of how this column is used.

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
3	6	Reach a crossing road, go over it, and turn right along its far side.		
4	7	Turn left down Wordsworth Way, and follow its rightward bend.		
5	9	Turn right right along a paved alleyway between houses, and at the top turn left along the road.		0.51
6	12	At the end of the road go straight ahead between the barriers, along a tarmac footpath.		
7	13	Turn left down the roadway leading away from the Holiday Inn.		
8		At the bottom, first go straight ahead along the little cycle-path, and then follow it as it bends to the right, to go parallel to the main road above on the left.		
9	14	Turn left to go briefly through the subway.		
10		At the end turn right to continue up along the cycle-path.		
11	15	[Map point] Still follow the cycle-path signs and take due care in crossing a series of main roads, which all offer good sightlines and some of which have helpful lights. First turn right to cross a busy slip road.		
12	16	Then, guided by the lights shown to traffic, cross the next road and turn right along the pavement opposite. Follow this as it bends to the left to go over the main tunnel-approach bridge.		
13	19	Cross two more slip roads.		
14		And finally go over another slip road, at which traffic is controlled by lights. Beyond, go briefly right, then left along the pavement, now going up Cotton Lane..		1.00
15	21	Turn left down a well-concealed footpath, away from the road, at first down steep steps, then right at the bottom. The path then turns right and left to go alongside the railway.	561 749	
16	27	Continue alongside the railway, ignoring the path on the left.		
17	31	At the end follow the path as it climbs a few steps, then turns left, and then right along the back of houses and their gardens.		
18	33	At the dead end of a cul-de-sac, carry on ahead, and slightly right, along the road, then bending gently left, then right.		
19	37	Follow the road as it bends right towards the railway.		
20	38	When the road turns left, instead go ahead a few yards further and then turn left up the steps and cross the railway over the footbridge.		1.99
21	39	Coming down from the bridge, turn left up the road, passing the Lads of the Village opposite.		
22	41	Turn left on to Church Road, and follow it as it bends slightly left to start with.		
23	43	Turn left down a footpath at the entrance to Stone Church .		
24	44	Cross a road and continue straight across to cross the railway over a footbridge.		
25		Immediately after the footbridge, turn right, parallel to the railway.		
26	48	Continue ahead, keeping over to the right and going along the narrow footpath, ignoring the road which has briefly come alongside on the left.	579 750	

* ***"Mins."*** is very approximate! See 'Introductory Notes' for an explanation of how this column is used.

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
27	51	Go ahead over a bridge, and down the other side.		2.63
28	52	At the bottom turn right to go under the railway bridge, then swing left along the roadway.		
29	54	Turn left towards the traffic lights and the main road.		
30	55	Reaching the dual carriageway, use the light-controlled crossing to go across.		
31		Once across, turn right, not immediately along the dual carriageway, but parallel to it along Ivy Villas.		
32	58	[Map point] At the end follow the road round to the left, to the light-controlled crossing. The entrance to Greenhithe Church is a few yards further on opposite, but to continue on the route carry on along the left-hand side of the road, opposite the church.		
33		About 20 yds. after the crossing, turn left up a narrow tarmac alleyway, following it as it turns right at the top.	585 747	
34	59	Then turn left into an estate road, and then swing further left with it towards the dual carriageway below.		
35	61	Turn right at the bottom, along the access road just before the dual carriageway (A206) to go ahead under the bridge.		
36	62	Instead of turning left with the roadway, go straight ahead down steps, and start anti-clockwise round the roundabout by crossing the road ahead and then the one on the left, to reach the right-hand side of the A206 as it continues on its way, now westwards.		
37	63	Go ahead alongside the A206, with ASDA on your right.		3.25
38	66	Continue ahead, crossing the ASDA access road.		
39		Turn right, away from the road, along the signposted footpath.	581 750	
40	68	[Map point] Turn left along the riverside path.		
41	77	Continue ahead, passing under the approach to the pontoon.		4.04
42	86	Pass under the Dartford Bridge road and continue ahead.		
43	93	And still go ahead, passing two more jetties, and then simply continuing along the obvious riverside path.		4.85
44	111	[Map point] There comes a point at which the landscape opens out on the left and in particular there are two paths, both still following the line of the river – a broad one swinging up on to an embankment on the left, and a narrower one going straight ahead next to the river. Both go parallel to each other for nearly a mile. On the whole the latter is preferable, and is assumed in these notes if only because the embankment top is rather rutted and uneven.	553 771	5.74
45	120	Again it is possible to cut across to the embankment on the left, but there is no reason to do so.	548 776	
46	126	[Map point] But a little before the light-installation it will make sense to move over to the left, to save some distance on the coming bend. (But, apart from that, staying straight ahead would work equally well.)	544 778	
47	127	Now on the embankment, continue ahead, ignoring the footpath which leads away over the marshes down to the left.		
48	129	Alongside the light-installation on the right, start on the gentle curve round to the left to begin the route along the Darent.		

* **“Mins.” is very approximate!** See ‘Introductory Notes’ for an explanation of how this column is used.

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
49	131	Turn left at the flood barrier and its information board.	541 779	
50	132	[Map point] Do not follow the wide path round to the left, but go straight ahead to walk alongside the Darent (despite having to pass through a very narrow gap between concrete and metal barriers). <i>From this point there is for about 2 miles (until you reach the A206 dual carriageway) no problem in finding the way: simply follow the clear path (Darent Valley Path), even though it swings wildly from side to side.</i>		6.78
51	171	[Map point] Eventually coming close to the dual carriageway at a right-hand bend, first ignore the track leading up leftwards to the road.		
52		Then, below and parallel to the road, go down a narrow passageway which then turns left to go underneath it, and on beyond, towards the remains of a wooden kissing gate.		8.68
53	173	Go through the gate, and ahead along the raised path.		
54	175	And through another gate, still following the line of the river down on the right.		
55	184	Go through a squeeze gate and then to the right on to a newly constructed walkway to continue ahead alongside the river.		9.30
56	186	At the end move back over to the left, and resume the walk along the riverside path. (The signpost at this point is currently misleading, with the Darent Valley Path arrow pointing in the wrong direction. Ignore it, and continue alongside the river.)		
57	189	Reach the corner of a parking area and continue along its right-hand edge.	543 747	
58		At the end turn right over the footbridge, and go ahead along the tarmac path beyond.		
59	191	Turn left at the end, passing the Hufflers Arms.		
60	193	[Map point] Reaching the main road, cross it by the zebra crossing. On the other side turn left for a few yards, and then swing right to go under the railway bridge on the footway shared with cyclists.		
61	195	At the end follow round to the right (signposted A226).		
62	196	Go ahead crossing both sections of the shopping park access road.		
63	198	Cross both sections of Priors Road (South), and then follow the road as it bends to the left.		
64	201	START OF THE SPINE SECTION Reach the major junction with West Hill, and use the lights to go across and ahead in the same direction, along the right-hand side of Highfield Road.		10.06
65	204	Continue ahead, ignoring the main road as it goes down to the left.		
66	207	[Map point] Go straight ahead at the roundabout (Highfield Road South).		
67	212	Follow the walkway on the left to turn left alongside Princes Road.		

* *“Mins.” is very approximate! See ‘Introductory Notes’ for an explanation of how this column is used.*

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
68	213	Reach the major crossroads with Lowfield Street, and use the lights to cross to the diagonally opposite corner of the junction. Then continue ahead along the right-hand side of Princes Road.		
69	215	Immediately after Homebase, turn right through a gap into the car park, and head towards the hedge on its far side, diverging about 40 yds. from the side of the Homebase building and aiming at a Brooklands Lakes information board at that point.		10.75
70	216	[Map point] There turn right to start on an anti-clockwise circuit of the main lake, following wild swings as the path hugs its shore.		
71	223	Turn left to go, still next to the water, along a straighter path with new industrial buildings now on your right. Keep straight on along the main path (not leftwards down to the water's edge).		
72	226	At the end of the path, in front of railings, turn left, still alongside the lake. END OF THE SPINE SECTION	547 730	
73	229	<i>The route described here relies on the tunnel under Princes Road being open – not always the case, depending on the river level. If it is closed, use the detour in the Appendix instead.</i> At a fork swing left at first, and then half-right at an angled junction to go down a concrete path and then through the tunnel under the main road.	546 732	
74	231	After emerging from the tunnel, turn right at an information board and follow the path as it bends to the left to go alongside an athletics arena.		11.60
75	233	Passing the corner of the arena, turn left briefly alongside it, then after about 25 yds. turn half-right to go diagonally across the big grass area. Aim, first, 20 yds. to the left of the corner of hedged skatepark. Then, approaching the tarmac path which borders the field at its far side (about 100 yds. short of the Café in the Park), join it at the furthest left point you can see. There follow it rightwards past fitness equipment.		
76	237	[Map point] After a final bend to the right, go ahead over the crossing path, keeping the bandstand about 70 yds. away over on the left.		
77	238	At the end follow the main path left, ignoring the one which goes straight ahead.		
78		Then, at the signpost for 'Town Centre', turn right, away from the bandstand, and go straight ahead towards the red-brick Dartford Library building, visible ahead.		
79	240	Pass the library entrance and continue ahead to the main road.	543 739	
80		Cross the main road, and go ahead along a short roadway ('Market Place'), along the left-hand side of the 'Iceland' store.		
81	241	At the end turn right along the pedestrian roadway, and go ahead, as the main road joins from the right, to pass Holy Trinity Church on the left.		
82	243	Go straight ahead, taking on, with the help of the lights, the double crossing of the busy road junction, and go briefly up the left-hand side of the road ahead (East Hill).		12.24

* "Mins." is very approximate! See 'Introductory Notes' for an explanation of how this column is used.

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
83	244	Turn left up Mount Pleasant Road.		
84	245	[Map point] Turn right up the footpath. This consists of very steep steps, particularly difficult as they are of irregular height!		
85	247	Just below the top, cut off the corner by taking the left fork.		
86		At the top, merge leftwards into the road.		
87	248	Turn right, at the top of the gentle rise, into Tufnail Road.		
88	250	At the end, continue in the same direction, by turning left, then immediately right, along Colney Road.		
89	252	At the first crossroads, St Alban's Church is over at the far right-hand corner. But to continue the walk turn left (St Alban's Road).		
90	254	At the end turn right (Fulwich Road).		12.75
91	257	Reaching the major road at the end (St Vincent's Road), turn left along it and cross to its right-hand side as soon as convenient.		
92	262	At the end go over the crossing road, with the help of the island, and turn briefly left along its far side. Then, after a few yards, turn right along the signposted footpath, leading alongside the school to the church at the end.		
93	266	Reach St Edmund's Church , the starting point of the walk.	550 750	13.37

* *"Mins." is very approximate! See 'Introductory Notes' for an explanation of how this column is used.*

APPENDIX to Full Circuit

Detour, if Princes Road tunnel is closed

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
73A	0	At the fork in Direction 47, keep right, then turn right to cross a bridge, take the obvious left fork over a second bridge and carry on upwards, up steps to start with.	546 732	0.00
73B	1	Continue up the hill, ignoring the path on the left.		
73C	3	After a final bend to the right, emerge at the top at a junction. Here Darenth Road meets the busy A225 (Princes Road), which you need to cross. For the safest crossing go around anti-clockwise with the help of lights, first crossing the minor Darenth Road to reach them.		
73D		Then cross, in turn, the three sections of the main road, and, once over, turn left to cross, finally, the northern section of Darenth Road (beware traffic coming from both sides) and the bus lane.		
73E	4	And go ahead along the right-hand side of Princes Road.		0.16
73F	6	Go through the gap on the right, signposted for the Darent Valley Path, and descend the steep hairpin path towards the river below.		

* *"Mins." is very approximate! See 'Introductory Notes' for an explanation of how this column is used.*

	Mins.*		OS	Miles
73G	8	At the bottom, where the path from the tunnel joins from the right, continue straight ahead next to the information boards, and follow the path as it bends to the left to go alongside an athletics arena. Add 6 minutes to subsequent total times and 0.24 miles to cumulative distances.		0.32

* **“Mins.” is very approximate!** See ‘Introductory Notes’ for an explanation of how this column is used.

FOR THOSE WHO WALK WITH THEIR DOGS

I do not venture to give advice about walking with your dog. As well as the joys, you will be well aware of the issues involved, and particularly that relationships between dogs and other countryside animals potentially involve mutual suspicion, or worse.

But what this footnote does try to do, in response to requests, is to give some indication of the nature of the walk from a dog’s point of view, to enable you to decide whether it is suitable.

The percentage distances on the right (on the next page) should be self-explanatory.

The information in the middle column may look a bit cluttered, but I think it should enable you (if the detail is of interest) to mark up within a few minutes a print-out of the walk notes, so that you have some idea what might be round the next corner.

The risk in all this is that **things change so quickly** in the agricultural working world; and what I describe might become misleading after subsequent changes. I have done my best, but there is no guarantee that you will find the information up to date!

DARTFORD - FULL CIRCUIT	Direction numbers	% of walk
Busy road	3, 11-14, 29-30, 32, 36-38, 60-68, 80, 81b-82, 91	17
Quiet road \$\$	1, 4, 5b, 7, 18-19, 21-22, 28, 31, 34-35, 59, 79, 83, 86-90, 92c	14
Open field with livestock		0
Edge of field with livestock		0
Field (or edge) without livestock **	2, 40-42, 44-50a, 50c, 53, 54b, 74-78, 92b	39
Path (hedged, or otherwise forced)	5a, 6, 8-10, 15-17, 20, 23-27, 33, 39, 43, 50b, 51-52, 54a, 54c-58, 69-73, 81a, 84-85, 92a	30
Woods		0

** This is not a promise, just a statement of fact - that, having walked these sections perhaps two or three times, I have found no animals or any sign of them.

\$\$ Again, not a promise that there will be no traffic to worry about. Just a personal judgement of conditions as I have found them.

STILES: There are currently no stiles on this walk.