

A-B : CHICHESTER to HUNSTON

From the rear of the public house, walk around the canal basin to the canal tow-path. Follow the path to the point just before the canal makes a sharp turn to the right at Poyntz Bridge. Cross the canal using the footbridge.

Length: 1 ½m (2.4km) Time: ¾-1hr

CUTFIELD BRIDGE to SALTERNS LOCK

To the west of the main road (A 286) the path follows the northern side of the canal. This area is part of Chichester Harbour which is designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. For more information about the harbour and its walks, ring 01243 512301

Follow the path for a short distance until it merges with the road that leads to Chichester Marina. Continue along canal path to Salterns Lock which is at the end of the canal. Along the route are the remains of Manhood End Lock and the site of the Egremont Bridge. As at Ford, there were two sets of locks at Birdham. Salterns Lock is still operable.

Length: 1m (1.6km) Time: ½-¾ hr

CHICHESTER MARINA

The Marina was formerly a salt works although there is now no trace of the mill. Manufacture ceased in about 1840 when removal of duty on imported salt made it uneconomic. The marina can berth nearly 1000 boats.

DONNINGTON to CUTFIELD BRIDGE

Having crossed the road at Donnington continue alongside the canal to Cutfield Bridge.

The canal between Birdham and Chichester was closed in 1928 when the culverts at Donnington (Crosbie Bridge) and at Apuldram (Cutfield Bridge) were built. The remains of Dudley Bridge can be seen between these two.

Length: ¾m (1.2km) Time: ¾-1hr

HUNSTON to DONNINGTON

From Poyntz Bridge, turn right along the main road for a short distance before rejoining the canal path. Midway between Hunston and Donnington on the opposite bank is the abutment of the drawbridge that formerly carried the Selsey Tramway. The drawbridge was raised using two hand winches.

Length: ½m (0.8km) Time: ½-¾hr

B-C : HUNSTON to RUNCTON

Cross the main road (B2145) and turn left towards Chichester using the footpath. Follow footpath across field to road (B2166). Turn right, towards Runcton, for about 1mile (1.6km) and at the crossroads turn left towards Merston along Marsh Lane.

Length: 1 ½ m (2.4km) Time: ¾-1hr

CHOICE OF ROUTES

At point B of the walk there are three choices. Continue walking alongside canal to Chichester Harbour, follow the route of the Portsmouth/Arundel Canal to Ford, or take the more picturesque route to Ford via North Mundham.

BRIDGES AND BASINS

Between Hunston and Ford there must have been more than a score of bridges to take roads and farm tracks over the canal. They were built of brick and made to the same design to cut costs. Their simple curved lines gave them a particular beauty. Today only two remain - both at Yapton.

B-C: HUNSTON to RUNCTON via NORTH MUNDHAM

Turn right at the main road (B2145), and follow it past the shops. Turn left at footpath over stile, continue along the footpath around Hunston Copse to North Mundham. At Church Road turn left past St. Stephens Church. Turn right at Post Office Lane, passing the post office to the footpath on the left. The path runs around the edge of a meadow and two fields before joining Runcton Lane. Turn left then right along Saltham Lane and at 'T' junction turn left into Brookside. Follow Brookside to crossroads then follow the route to Merston.

Length: 1 ¾m (2.8km) Time: 1-1 ¼hr

C -D : RUNCTON to MERSTON

Follow Marsh Lane to the pond at Manor Farm. THERE IS NO PAVEMENT/FOOTPATH ALONG MARSH LANE.

Length: 1m (1.6km) Time: ½-¾ hr

D-E : MERSTON to LIDSEY

From the pond follow the footpath alongside the farm buildings to the T-junction. Turn left, where the remains of a brick bridge may be seen, and continue along the footpath to the main road (A259). Follow the footpath, directly opposite, across two fields to Colworth. When the lane is reached turn left, then follow the footpath on the right to a large field. Cross the field to the high embankment on the far side. Follow the footpath to the road (A29). Along the way the canal crosses the Aldingbourne Rife. The canal is overgrown for much of this section, but there are some interesting stretches containing water.

Length: 3m (4.8km) TIME: 1¾-2hr

E -F : LIDSEY to BARNHAM

Cross the main road and follow metalled track. Here the canal is largely overgrown, although still visible. Where the metalled track ends, carry on along the path to the railway. WHEN CROSSING THE RAILWAY LINES USE EXTREME CAUTION. Follow the path towards Barnham. Near Barnham Court, the canal becomes more apparent and contains water for short stretches. Continue along the footpath around the southern edge of Barnham, where the line of the canal has been obscured by more recent farm buildings.

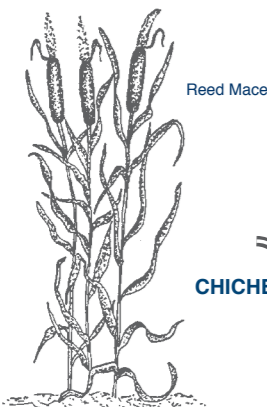
Length: 1 ¾m (2.8km) Time: ¾-1hr

WILDLIFE

Canals attract wildlife, particularly where there is little disturbance. Kingfisher, coot, moorhen, swans and dragonflies can all be seen. The margins below Hunston are a good habitat for Reed Warblers and Water Voles. Yellow Flag and Water Forget-Me-Not are among the many plants that can be seen along the water's edge.

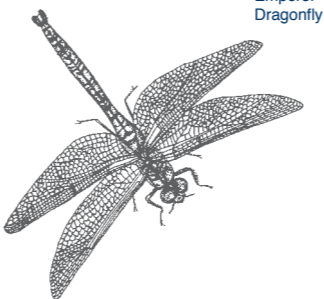
BUILDINGS

Formerly there were bridges where the roads crossed the line of the canal. The alignment and the site of several houses indicate they were probably built as canalside cottages. The Walnut Tree public house possibly catered for canal traffic. Sections of the canal still contain water here.



Reed Mace

Wild Cherry



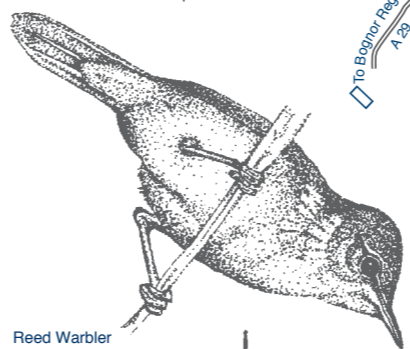
Emperor Dragonfly



Blackthorn



Honeysuckle



Reed Warbler



Lapwing

F-G : BARNHAM to YAPTON

Approaching 'Tile Barn' Farm the path passes close to a collection of modern farm buildings before continuing alongside the clearly visible depression that was the canal. PLEASE KEEP DOGS ON LEAD AS STOCK MAY BE FEEDING ALONG THIS SECTION. The embankment contains a number of species of grasses and flowering plants. Grassland such as this, neither reseeded nor treated with chemicals, is becoming increasingly rare on the modern farm. PLEASE REMEMBER THAT THIS IS A CROP.

The path leads to an embankment built to enable the canal to cross a shallow valley and now provides good views for miles across the coastal plain. Follow the path across Drove Lane and along field edge to the bridge. This is one of two

remaining bridges, as the canal from Hunston did not carry sea going craft, bridges could be built with a fixed span, and those at Yapton are typical. The path continues alongside the gardens of a housing estate. The line of hawthorns within the gardens is probably the original hedge, marking the boundary of the tow path. At Canal Road turn left, and at the main road, turn right. Follow the main road. The single storey building on the right was used as a stable for the horses that pulled the barges. Cross the main road to the recreation ground. The large shop was formerly a foundry. Turn left into large car park, which was a canal basin, and bear right through a pathway on the right that leads into Downview Way.

Length: 1m (1.6km) Time: ½hr

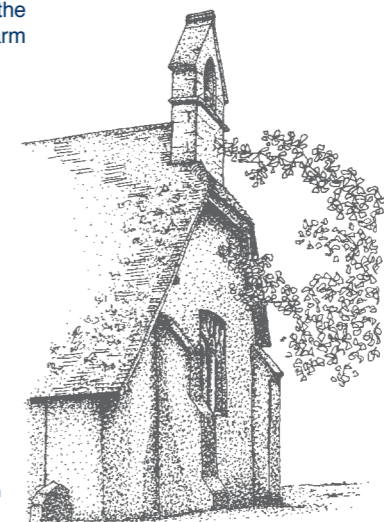
G-H : YAPTON to FORD

Follow Downview Way to the T-junction. This was the original line of the canal. Continue along the footpath opposite, where there is the second canal bridge. From the bridge follow the path to the T-junction. The depression on the left is the old canal. Turn left to follow the field edge. Ford Airfield is on the right. Follow the field edge, cross over a disused runway and continue through a small spinney. At the end turn left and follow the field edge to a pair of flint cottages. On reaching Ford Lane turn right, follow lane to T-junction with main road. Continue along the footpath opposite to the River Arun.

Length: 1 ¾m (2.8km) Time: ¾-1hr

BARNHAM MILL

Barnham Mill was built in 1829 to replace the old post mill which was blown down in 1827. It is a tower mill, which has sweeps and a fan stage. The mill was wind powered until 1920 when an engine was installed.



St Giles Church, Merston



Ford Church



Walks Route of canal

0 km 1 0 miles 1

LONDON'S LOST ROUTE TO THE SEA

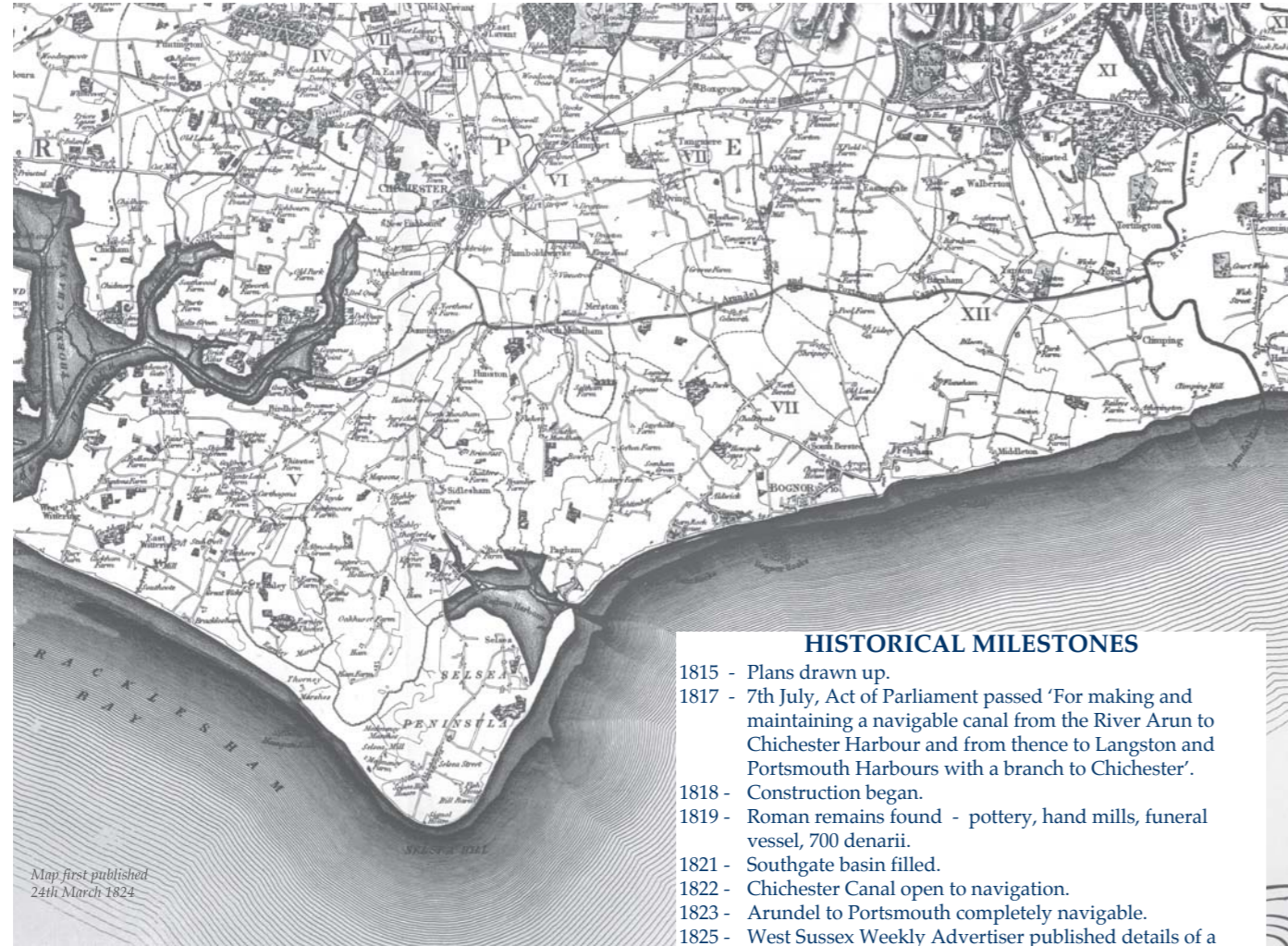
The 18th Century rise of the Industrial Revolution saw the development of a system of canals throughout the country enabling heavy, bulky loads to be transported with ease. They became even more important during the Napoleonic Wars because inland routes were much safer than the exposed waters of the English Channel. A route linking London with Portsmouth was of vital importance and the link from Arundel to Chichester was the final section to be built.

Grand Opening - Bad Investment

Costing £170,000 the canal was opened in 1822 with much pomp and ceremony, booming of cannon and wining and dining. 304 people had invested in the Arundel to Portsmouth Canal Company including such notables as the Duke of Norfolk, Earl of Egremont and Viscounts Keith and Exmouth - but the timing was bad. As early as 1825, plans for a Surrey and Hampshire Railway were published and with the coming of the railways, the canal went into rapid decline. By 1840, through traffic from London had ceased and no dividends were ever paid by the company to its investors.

Today

Owned by West Sussex County Council, much of the route from Birdham to Chichester has been restored in conjunction with the Chichester Ship Canal Trust. The whole length provides interesting walking, where a rich variety of wildlife can be seen. The Canal flows into Chichester Harbour which is managed by the **Chichester Harbour Conservancy (01243 512301)**. Good coarse fishing, especially between Chichester and Donnington is available by purchasing a day ticket from the Canal Trust. Bream, roach, carp, tench, rudd, and perch abound. Boats can be hired during the summer months at the Canal Basin from which a trip boat operates.



19th CENTURY PLANNING PERMISSION
-ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES ARE NOT NEW-
An important condition of the Act of Parliament allowing construction of the canal was that vessels had to 'consume their own smoke'. No steam was to be blown into the atmosphere but had to be passed through condensers.

HISTORICAL MILESTONES

- 1815 - Plans drawn up.
- 1817 - 7th July, Act of Parliament passed 'For making and maintaining a navigable canal from the River Arun to Chichester Harbour and from thence to Langston and Portsmouth Harbours with a branch to Chichester'.
- 1818 - Construction began.
- 1819 - Roman remains found - pottery, hand mills, funeral vessel, 700 denarii.
- 1821 - Southgate basin filled.
- 1822 - Chichester Canal open to navigation.
- 1823 - Arundel to Portsmouth completely navigable.
- 1825 - West Sussex Weekly Advertiser published details of a proposed Surrey and Hants Railroad Company.
- 1840 - Through traffic from London had ceased.
- 1856 - Section Ford to Hunston disused.
- 1892 - Ownership transferred to Chichester City Council.
- 1906 - Last recorded cargo to Chichester.
- 1957 - West Sussex County Council purchase the Canal.
- 1984 - Anglers relinquish their lease which is taken over by Chichester Canal Society.

SALES PITCH OF 1823
The canal forms a short means of conveyance by water from the Metropolis to the British Channel, whereby the tedious and often dangerous passage through the Downs can be avoided enabling the Merchant to forward his goods from London to either of the ports westward of Arundel with nearly as much despatch as usually attends the common roads waggons incurring in no case so much as one third of the expense (sic) and in several cases not even one sixth.'

THE GREAT PUMP AT FORD
In order to lift water from the River Arun into the canal, an enormous pump was constructed. Contained in a building the size of a four storey house, it had a brick-built factory-style chimney in order to build up the necessary head of steam to lift 5,000 gallons or 96 hogsheads of water per minute. Only fresh water was used, so pumping could only take place for an hour or so either side of low tide.

CARGOES
Coal, iron, building materials and grain were transported along the canal routes but perhaps the most interesting cargo of all was gold bullion. Every month until 1826, precious cargoes of bullion left Portsmouth bound for the Bank of England. 25 - 30 tonnes was the usual consignment but one day the 'Union' and 'Portsea' went through together with 72 tonnes on board. Armed guards stayed on board at all times and an old inhabitant of Birdham was reported to have remembered seeing redcoat soldiers on guard duty.

ARUNDEL TO PORTSMOUTH CANAL

The guided walk follows the line of the Chichester Ship Canal and Arundel/Portsmouth Canal closely for much of its length from Birdham to Ford. Mostly it is on public footpaths across private land but with short sections on roads and lanes. Please take care to follow the route closely even where it is diverted away from the line of the canal itself. Where the land has been ploughed, the canal may be seen as a slight depression in the ground; where the land is grazed the shape of the canal bed is frequently more readily visible. Elsewhere it sometimes remains as a tract of dense vegetation growth, while in other sections it still holds water.

A bold dotted line outlines the route to be followed. The descriptions should be read in conjunction with the maps, and also with the Ordnance Survey Explorer Series 120 & 121.

The route from Birdham to Ford is about 12 ½ miles (20km). This leaflet divides the canal into several sections which, either individually or in combination, would be suitable for shorter walks. A circular walk based on Chichester is possible. Bus routes cross the line of the canal at several points and there are three railway stations, less than a mile from the canal. Public transport could also be used to avoid retracing your steps.

Suggested walks not involving public transport

1. Yapton to Ford and back G-H-G.
2. Barnham to Yapton and back F-G-H.
3. Hunston to Runcton circular walk.
4. Chichester to Runcton and Donnington and back to Chichester A-B-C-B-A.
5. Chichester to Chichester Harbour and back.

The Chichester Ship Canal Trust, which leases the canal from the County Council, manages the length from Chichester to Birdham and ensures the retention of its value for recreation and wildlife. For further information telephone (01243) 771363.

The Countryside Code

Be safe-plan ahead and follow any signs
 Even when going out locally, it's best to get the latest information about where and when you can go; for example, your rights to go onto some areas of open land may be restricted while work is carried out, for safety reasons or during breeding seasons. Follow advice and local signs, and be prepared for the unexpected.

Leave gates and property as you find them
 Please respect the working life of the countryside, as our actions can affect people's livelihoods, our heritage, and the safety and welfare of animals and ourselves.

Protect plants and animals, and take your litter home
 We have a responsibility to protect our countryside now and for future generations, so make sure you don't harm animals, birds, plants or trees.

Keep dogs under close control
 The countryside is a great place to exercise dogs, but it's every owner's duty to make sure their dog is not a danger or nuisance to farm animals, wildlife or other people.

Consider other people
 Showing consideration and respect for other people makes the countryside a pleasant environment for everyone - at home, at work and at leisure.



traveline
 public transport info
 0870 608 2 608

For all your local bus, coach and rail enquiries

LINE OPEN FROM

8.00am to 8.00pm

8.00am to 8.00pm

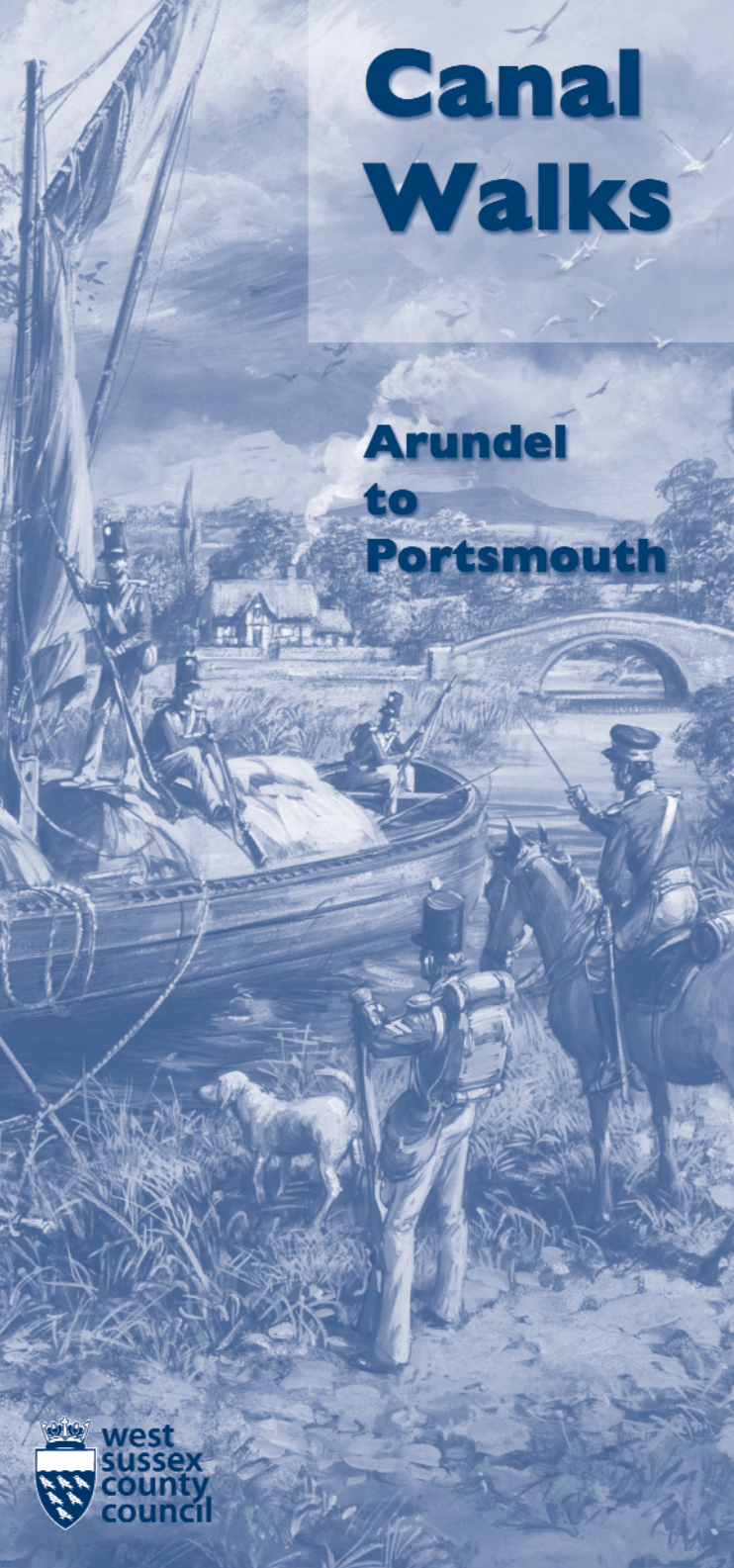
Monday-Saturday

Sundays

Front cover image: The scene depicts soldiers guarding over forty tons of gold and silver bullion, which was transported from Portsmouth to London for the Bank of England. Painting by Mike Codd.

If you would like a copy of this publication in another format (audio, Braille, large print, another language) please contact the Communications Officer, Environment and Development, West Sussex County Council, The Grange, Tower Street, Chichester, West Sussex PO19 1RH. Telephone 01243 777544 or email env.dev@westsussex.gov.uk www.westsussex.gov.uk

Designed and published by West Sussex County Council, Environment and Development, Design & Cartography Team. Printed by Pica Design and Print Ltd. Kieran Stigant, Director for Environment and Development August 2004



Canal Walks

Arundel to Portsmouth

