

# 05 EAST SUSSEX CUCKMERE VALLEY

▶ Distance: 10 miles/16km ▶ Time: 5 hours ▶ Grade: Moderate

SOUTH EAST

# 05 EAST SUSSEX CUCKMERE VALLEY

▶ OS Explorer map OL25 ▶ Buy maps at: [ordnancesurvey.co.uk/shop](http://ordnancesurvey.co.uk/shop)

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The Cuckmere River winds its way south of Alfriston.

PHOTO: FIONA BARTROP



CHOSEN BY...  
**FIONA BARTROP**

From Alfriston this walk heads north-west along an exhilarating ridge-top stretch of the South Downs Way. The views are excellent: downland to east and west, the coast to the south and the Weald to the north. The walk takes you up to Firlie Beacon - the highest point along this section of the South Downs. Thereafter you leave the South Downs Way to head south and east to a superb viewpoint above the Cuckmere Valley at High and Over. On the way you'll also enjoy good views of the Rathfinny Estate's extensive vineyard. Once again, a river bank walk - this time on the

west side of the Cuckmere - provides a gentle finish to the day. (NB Walk can be shortened by 1¼ miles/2km by omitting extension from pt 2 to Firlie Beacon.)

**1 Start**  
From car park turn L to village centre and at Star Inn turn R along Star Lane. Follow this road - route of South Downs Way (SDW) - and go straight across at next crossroads, now climbing up past houses. Soon road comes to an end and you continue in same direction along a broad track which carries on uphill. Keep ahead at intersection of tracks still following SDW. Views improve all the time as you ascend. The SDW reaches

## PLAN YOUR WALK



### ROUTE

**Start/parking** Willows long stay car park, Alfriston, BN26 5UQ, grid ref TQ521033

**Is it for me?** One long steady ascent at start following South Downs Way; thereafter, downhill or on the level. Riverbank can be muddy

**Stiles** 5

### PLANNING

**Nearest town** Seaford

**Refreshments** Plenty of choice in Alfriston

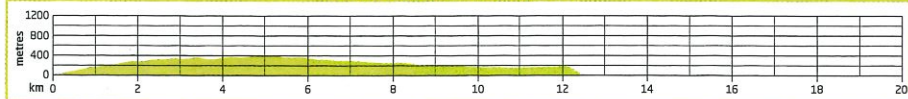
**Public toilets** Alfriston

**Public transport**

Cuckmere Buses, no 126 between Berwick and Seaford (railway stations at each) via Alfriston, Mon-Sat and between Eastbourne and Seaford via Alfriston, Sun & public hols. Also Cuckmere Valley Ramblerbus. [www.cuckmerebuses.org.uk](http://www.cuckmerebuses.org.uk)

**Maps** OS Explorer OL25; Landranger 199

## GRADIENT PROFILE

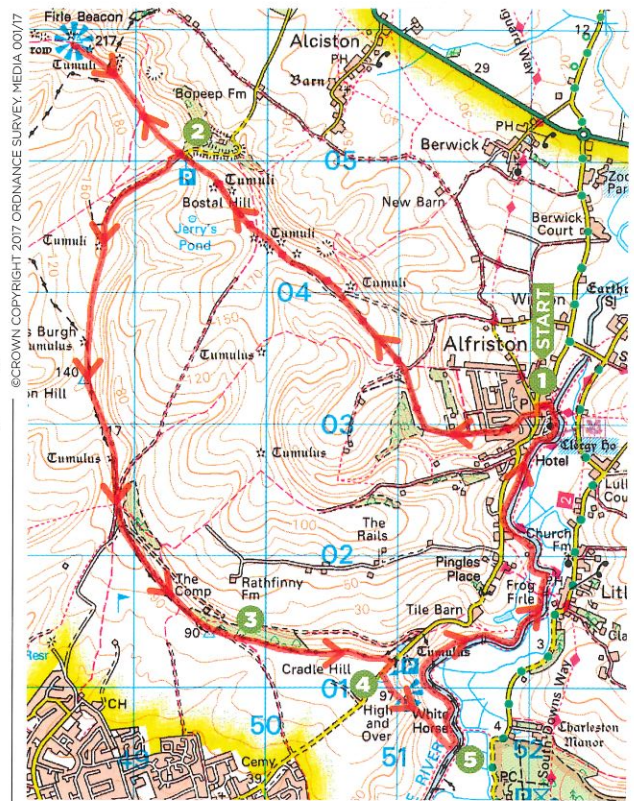


a high point at Bostal Hill - a popular spot with paragliders and hang-gliders - before a short descent to the Bo Peep car park.

**2 2½ miles/3.75km**  
Carry on up from car park to 217m Firlie Beacon (trig point) - a particularly fine vantage point - then turn round and walk back down to car park. Turn R and follow bridleway signed for the High & Over (L fork). Keeping to high ground, follow bridleway south, then south-east ignoring paths and tracks on either side. (At fork, keep ahead/ie L fork, passing to L of reservoir.) Along stretch of track marked as The Comp there are good views to your L of the Rathfinny vineyard.

**3 3½ miles/10.5km**  
At a fork just beyond the Camp Hill trig point go L through a bridle gate and follow path on L edge of open field to continue over Cradle Hill (more good views of Vineyard on L). Don't go through next bridle gate but keep alongside fence (on L) to the road. Cross stile, turn R and walk up grass verge, then cross road to High and Over car park.

**4 4 7/8 miles/11.7km**  
Just to L of information board go through trees and along the paved path that leads to viewpoint. There's a toposcope here indicating



the direction to surrounding places. In the valley below lies the meandering Cuckmere, flowing gently down to the sea. On hillside beneath you (not visible from up here) is carved a white horse, first cut in 1836, and re-cut in 1924. Carry on down, descending to grassy slopes quite steeply (there are steps for some of way) to valley and at the bottom bear R (fence on the R) to river bank.

**5 5 7/8 miles/12.5km**  
Turn L and walk along the river bank path back to Alfriston. **CW**

VIEW THE WALK ON OS MAPS ONLINE:

[lfto.com/cwroutes](http://lfto.com/cwroutes)

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



DATE WALKED

TIME TAKEN

YOUR RATING