**London Green Belt Relay Stage 16 Route Instructions**

Dartford Station to Shoreham Station 11.4 miles

For a map of stage 16 see [MapMyWalk](https://www.mapmywalk.com/routes/view/3029186182) - This can be downloaded as a GPX or KML file

Start at Dartford Railway Station. Grid Reference TQ5427974359 Post Code DA1 1BP. See [Map.of Start](https://www.google.com/maps/place/Dartford/@51.4471578,0.216842,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x47d8b196db162f0d:0xf0fee03f5e759803!8m2!3d51.4471578!4d0.2190307).

The route is mainly flat and gently undulating, but does slowly climb going upstream along the Darent Valley Path – most is waymarked Darent Valley Path. There is one big climb at 7.6 miles, but if you wish to avoid this you can continue to follow Lullingstone Lane (see below).

**1.** Exit Dartford Station by main entrance. Turn left and left again to cross over Station Approach.

**2.** Turn right along pavement and, as pavement splits, stay left, signed Darent Valley Path. This leads to a footbridge. DO NOT cross the footbridge. Instead, turn right and down steps.

**3.** Go straight on along the path, with a wall and the river to your LHS, for 230 yards.

**4.** Turn right for a few yards at Dartford County Court, then before reaching the road (Home Gardens) turn left and follow the path down and through an underpass under the road.

**5.** Once through turn left along St Saviours Walk, signed Darent Valley Path.

**6.** After 100 yards the Walk comes out onto a road next to a bridge over the River Darent, turn right past Holy Trinity Church.

**7.** Continue straight on along the pavement, past The Wat Tyler pub, and into the pedestrian area of the High Street.

**8.** After 80 yards turn left into Market Place. Use the RHS pavement. At end of Market Place cross straight over Market Street using pelican crossing and signed Darent Valley Path.

**9.** Go straight on down some steps, signed Darent Valley Path, and into gardens. Turn left past the war memorial then right past Dartford Library / Dartford Borough Museum and into Central Park.

**10.** Follow Darent Valley Path signs through Central Park, and after 0.5 miles exit the park through a tunnel under the A225 (Princes Road).

**DIRECTIONS THROUGH CENTRAL PARK.** Go straight on for 150 yards. At junction turn left and follow path as it bends right. At next junction turn left, soon straight on past path to RHS. At next junction take right fork and straight on for 150 yards - the River Darent will be to your LHS and soon past a skate park to your RHS. At junction take right fork past footbridge to your LHS. Almost immediately, take left fork keeping river to your LHS. At next junction stay left past running track to your RHS. Stay straight on soon through a metal gate into the Prince's Tunnel.

**11.** On exiting the tunnel go through a second metal gate and then stay left past a path going off to the RHS.

**12.** After just a few yards stay left past another path going off to the RHS and across the lake. Then almost immediately, at fork, turn right and along the eastern side of the lake (at 1 mile).

**13.** Follow the path along the edge of the lake for 300 yards to a lane (Powder Mill Lane) next to an industrial estate.

**14.** Turn left along the lane and over the river. Immediately over the bridge, turn right onto a path signed Darent Valley Path.

**15.** Follow Darent Valley Path thru’ the woods and stay straight on, keeping the river to your RHS.

**16.** On exiting the woods, the path goes between the river, to your RHS, and large open fields through a fence to your LHS. At the end of the fields stay straight on through a small wood, then turn right to cross a footbridge over the river.

**17.** Turn left along the edge of the field, then after 250 yards turn right along a wide path.

**18.** After 120 yards cross a stile to a lay-by next to the A225 (Hawley Road).

**19.** Turn left along the pavement, staying on the left-hand side and under the A2 road bridge (at 2 miles), then past the entrance to an industrial site and Hawley Mill to the left.

**20.** Soon after Hawley Mill, directly opposite Mill Road and immediately before green metal gates, turn left onto an enclosed narrow path signed Darent Valley Path.

**21.** The path leads to a footbridge over the River Darent and then right along the side of the river (to your RHS) and after 240 yards under the M25 road bridge.

**22.** A few yards after the M25 there is a choice of three paths - one to the left, one which goes right through the trees and one which veers left along the LHS of the trees and then straight on across a field. Follow the last option, it is the most obvious and crosses the field diagonally (going almost directly east).

**23.** At the opposite side of the field the path goes through a kissing gate and out onto a road (Darenth Road South). Turn right along the road, signed Darent Valley Path and soon past the entrance to a care home.

**24.** At the end of Darenth Road cross straight over Darenth Hill and onto a very narrow path next to the entrance of a distribution depot, and to the left of a lane which leads to a fishing area called The Alders. Be careful as the narrow path is difficult to spot and this makes it is easy to go wrong here and end up at The Alders fishing area with its small intimate restaurant for the anglers.

**25.** The path soon becomes enclosed in on both sides and leads to a flight of steps (at 3 miles). Climb the steps and then follow the path as it turns right, and leads to the corner of a large field. Stay straight on along the bottom (RHS) edge of the field.

**26.** The path eventually goes through a wood, with the river once again to the right. Then emerges from the wood into an isolated park area in the corner of a large field.

**27.** Follow the well-defined path straight on across the large field (going directly south) and towards a tall chimney in the distance.

**28.** At the other end of the field (after 580 yards) the path again goes straight on and is enclosed between a fence and a hedge.

**29.** After 120 yards stay left along a lane which soon leads to a T-junction with a road (Holmesdale Hill) and in the village of South Darenth.

**30.** Turn right along the narrow pavement and follow Holmesdale Road as it turns left. Be careful as the pavement disappears at times.

**31.** 250 yards later follow Holmesdale Road as it passes Devon Road (and bridge) to the RHS. Then along the RHS pavement as the road veers left and later right and into the centre of South Darenth village (at 4 miles).

**32.** On passing East Hill, to your LHS, stay straight on along the RHS pavement and into Horton Road, soon past the entrance to a new housing development to your RHS and what until 2008 was the site of the large paper mill - the chimney is still standing.

**33.** After just 40 yards, and where the pavement ends, cross over to the LHS, then turn right to cross over New Road.

**34.** Stay straight on along the pavement and soon up steps and under a high viaduct to just past The Bridges public house to your RHS.

**35.** Turn right, signed Darent Valley Path, to cross Horton Road, past The Bridges pub and into Station Road (stay on the RHS pavement).

**36.** Follow the road for a short distance to just over the river, then turn left to cross Station Road and down onto a narrow footpath next to the river, signed Darent Valley Path.

**37.** The path follows the right bank of the river for half a mile to Westminster Playing Fields at Horton Kirby. Be careful to follow the main path (signed "Darent Valley Path") through here as there are lakes to the right with paths going off between them and around them and at one point a footbridge to the left over the river leads to a parking area.

**38.** On reaching Westminster Playing Fields follow the path south and along the LHS of the fields to a pavilion.

**39.** Stay left past the pavilion on the grass, keeping the car park to your LHS.

**40.** At the far end of the car park, veer left towards a kissing gate at the corner of the field. Go through the kissing gate and follow a well-worn path diagonally across the field to the opposite corner (at 5 miles).

**41.** On entering the next field follow the path along the left-hand edge and soon back to river.

**42.** For the next 400 yards the path continues through a narrow wood adjacent to the river. This area is very picturesque, but at points is uneven underfoot and can be slippery when wet.

**43.** The path comes out onto a road - Franks Lane. Turn left along the lane and across the bridge over the river.

**44.** After 220 yards and immediately before Horton & Kirby Cricket Club, turn right through a kissing gate and onto an enclosed footpath (signed Darent Valley Path) going directly away from the road and with the cricket field to your LHS. The river is now away to the right across the field and follows the line of trees in the distance.

**45.** Follow the path straight for 600 yards to go cross a wooden stile. Then turn right along on a fenced off path along the side of a field, after 40 yards turn left, with the River Darent to your RHS.

**46.** The footpath follows the river for 360 yards then passes under the M20 motorway (at 6 miles).

**47.** After another 250 yards the path passes through an arch under the A20 road. Once under turn right to cross a footbridge over the River Darent, then left to follow the path through woods along the opposite bank.

**48.** 250 yards later the path leads to and through the large riverside beer garden of the Lion Hotel and out onto the Farningham High Street.

**49.** Turn right along the High Street and through the village. The road soon starts to gently climb. Stay straight on over Dartford Road to the RHS and past The Chequers Pub.

**50.** After another 80 yards turn left to cross over and into Sparepenny Lane.

**51.** After 210 yards, and almost immediately after the entrance to Hampton Court Cottage, turn left through a gap in the hedgerow, signed Darent Valley Path. The path crosses a stile (or kissing gate) into a field, turn right and follow the worn permissive path along the top edge of the field and parallel to Sparepenny Lane.

**NOTE:** If you if you continue straight on along Sparepenny Lane, you’ll still achieve the same result, but you’ll miss some great views over the Darent Valley.

**52.** After 330 yards the path passes through a wooden kissing gate and into a second field. Continue straight on along the top edge of the field.

**53.** The path continues for 0.6 miles - along the top edge of a second field, then through a small wood (at 7 miles) managed by the Woodland Trust (Nine Hole Wood), then along the edge of a third field.

**54.** At the end of the third field it exits onto the lane through a kissing gate. Turn left along the lane and past the Eynsford sign.

**55.** Follow Sparepenny Lane downhill, soon past Crockenhill Lane to the RHS, and eventually to a T-junction at Riverside.

**56.** At T-junction turn right onto Lullingstone Lane and stay on RHS. The lane soon turns left. Then after passing a metal gate, turn right onto a signed Footpath, uphill and diagonally across a large crop field.

**NOTE:** I did state at the top, if you wish to not climb this steep hill, then just continue along Lullingstone Lane and re-join the route, just after Lullingstone Roman Villa, at point 61 below.

**57.** After 300 yards cross the railway (with great care) and continue straight on, uphill and across another large crop field for 420 yards (now going directly west).

**58.** The path enters another field. Stay straight on for 90 yards to exit the field to a lane. Cross straight over the lane into another crop field and go straight on along a well-defined path (at 8.1 miles).

**59.** Follow the path for 300 yards to a hedge - Hulberry Farm is just to the right. Stay straight on, keeping the hedgerow to your RHS.

**60.** 300 yards later, at corner of the field, turn left and steeply downhill along the field edge. Towards the bottom the path becomes enclosed, and eventually down steps to re-join Lullingstone Lane.

**61.** On reaching Lullingstone Lane turn right and follow for 550 yards to a red-brick building with two towers and a central archway. This is the gatehouse and entrance to Lullingstone Castle.

**62.** After passing the gatehouse go straight on through a kissing gate and along a path into the woods, with the river and lake to the left.

**63.** The path follows the River Darent for just over a third of a mile to behind Lullingstone Park Visitor's Centre. Go straight on for a few yards behind the visitor’s centre and with the river still on your LHS. Go through a kissing gate and turn right along the road past the entrance to the car park.

**64.** Once over the entrance, stay right to go over a stile and into the field. Follow the path along the bottom edge of the field and parallel to the lane and then straight on into a second field.

**65.** On entering the second field, stay straight on for 250 yards to the corner bottom corner of the field, then turn left and down some steps to Redmans Lane. Veer left to cross the road to a gate. Go through a gap next to a gate and onto a path/track signed Darent Valley Path.

**66.** Follow the path straight across fields for just over a mile to Shoreham. It is relatively easy to follow the Darent Valley Path through the fields just above the river which is off to our LHS.

**67.** A short distance from the village the path drops down to the river, but soon climbs up to cross Mill Lane and then stay left around the old Mill House to a footbridge over the river.

**68.** After crossing the footbridge turn right to follow the path along the river to Darenth Street, coming out next to Water House (at 11 miles).

**69.** On passing the bridge, veer left along Church Street staying on the LHS pavement. After a short distance follow the road left and uphill past some old cottages.

**70.** As the road turns right stay left through the Lych Gate of the church and straight on along a yew-lined brick path past the church to your LHS.

**71.** At the top of the path, exit the churchyard via a gate into a field. Turn right along a wide track and soon to a road (Station Road).

**72.** Turn left along the road and after 100 yards turn right onto a narrow and enclosed footpath, signed Darent Valley Path.

You continue along Station Road for another 230 yards to finish at Shoreham Railway Station, or you may decide to continue further along the Darent Valley Path on stage 17.

[Shoreham Station](https://www.southeasternrailway.co.uk/travel-information/more-travel-help/station-information/stations/shoreham-kent) does not have a direct line back to Dartford. I’ll also give you a link to [National Rail](https://www.nationalrail.co.uk/stations/SEH/details.html). You can also search for bus services from here at [Bustimes](https://bustimes.org/localities/shoreham-kent)

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