

ROADBOOK

THE PILGRIMS' WAY

Tracing its route along the base of the North Downs, the Pilgrims' Way follows the course of the Old Road – perhaps the first recognised trunk road in Britain. Its route from Winchester to Canterbury means most of it has either disappeared under a blanket of tarmac or been barricaded behind a wall of 'private' signs, but in the middle of Kent there's a stretch which remains much as it was in the days when it was still a bustling thoroughfare.

This forms the backbone of a route which winds its way up and down the chalky downland that characterises an area which, more than any other part of Kent, is redolent of the county's nickname of the 'Garden of England.' Most of the time, you'll be picking your way along well surfaced farm tracks and field edges, though by turns you'll be pushing through dense woodland while wincing at the sound of undergrowth scratching at your paintwork.

Your route includes a clutch of the county's picturesque villages, too. Kent is not short of ugliness, but there's little sign of it here – even though much of the time you'll be within a mile or so of both the M20 and the Channel Tunnel railway.

You wouldn't think it. With great views across the Weald and lots to keep drivers and navigators entertained, this is a pretty, peaceful drive – and a perfect way to get away from it all for a few hours in one of the busiest parts of Britain.

USING TULIP DIAGRAMS



STICK TO THE ROUTE!

When using green lanes, you must **ALWAYS** stick to the right of way. **NEVER** drive off on to the verges or surrounding land. It's illegal, it's damaging and lanes are constantly being closed because of it. Playdays are for playing – lanes are for laning!

LOOKS FAMILIAR?

For various dull reasons, we've had to delay the roadbook we've been planning in South-West Wales. In the meantime, this is a revised version of the route that appeared back in September 2002, in the first ever issue of Total Off Road.

Since then, illegal obstructions have become a problem at Step 37. At the time of writing, the lane is clear, but you may need to navigate around it. The very next lane after that, at Step 38, is currently subject to an experimental permit scheme being run by the local authority; sadly, this was deemed necessary because of people trashing it in wet weather and, to the shame of all 4x4 drivers, using the war memorial next to it (a cross carved into the chalk down) as a playground.

Thus, before using the lane, you need to apply for permission by calling Kent County Council on 08458 247 247. You're also asked not to use the lane at all in wet conditions, and should be aware that the lane will be closed to all traffic for a spell this spring while the grass surface grows back following repair.

Start	Hollingbourne (TQ 843 551)
Finish	Westwell (TQ 989 474)
Distance	36.4 miles
Time	4 hours
Terrain	Farm tracks and chalky downs
Hazards	Scratching – sometimes severe
	Occasional ruts
	A few dodgy road junctions
OS Maps	Landranger 178 (Thames Estuary)
	Landranger 189 (Ashford and Romney Marsh)
	Explorer 137 (Ashford)
	Explorer 148 (Maidstone and the Medway Towns)
	Explorer 149 (Sittingbourne and Faversham)

LEGEND



1 0.0		TQ 843 551 Start outside All Saints Church in Hollingbourne. With the church behind you, pull forward to the end of the short lane and zero your trip as you turn left for the start of the route
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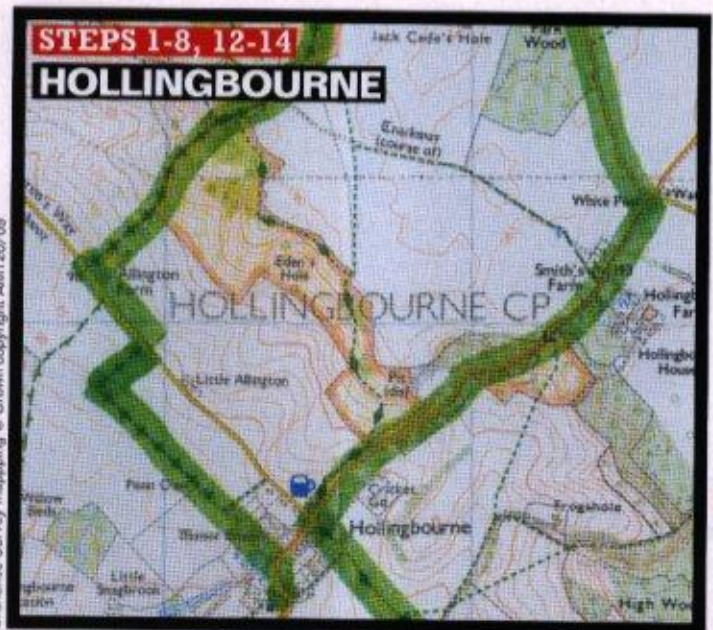
2 0.05		TQ 843 552
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3 0.08		
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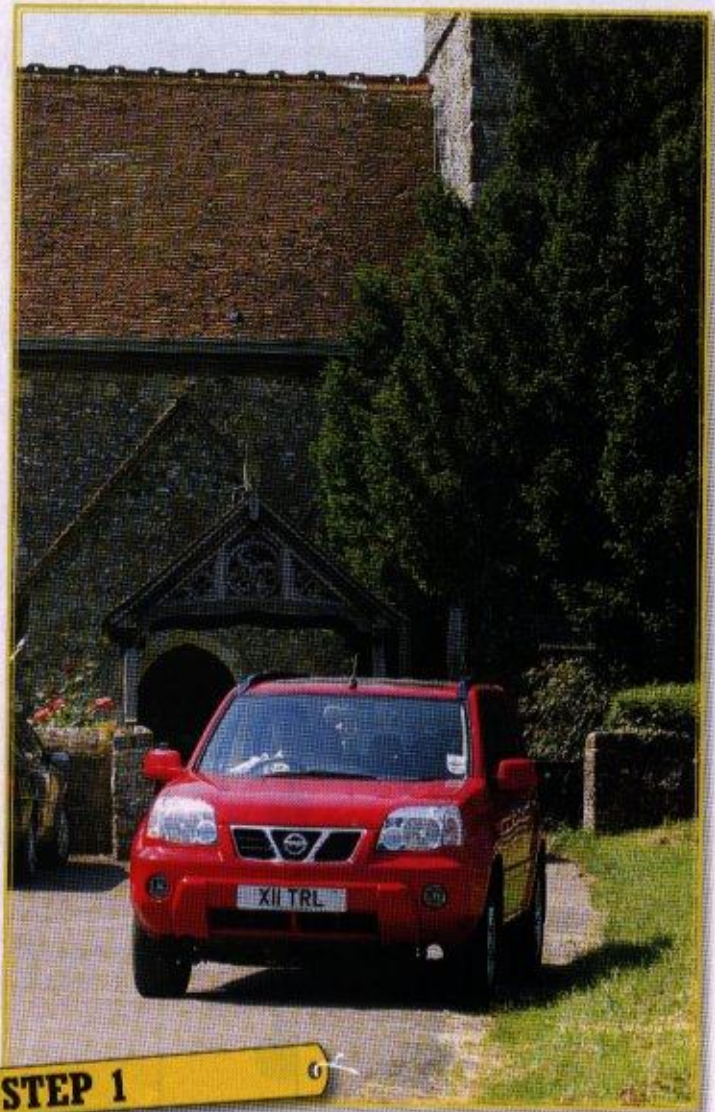
4 0.1		
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5 0.65		
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6 0.8		TQ 837 562
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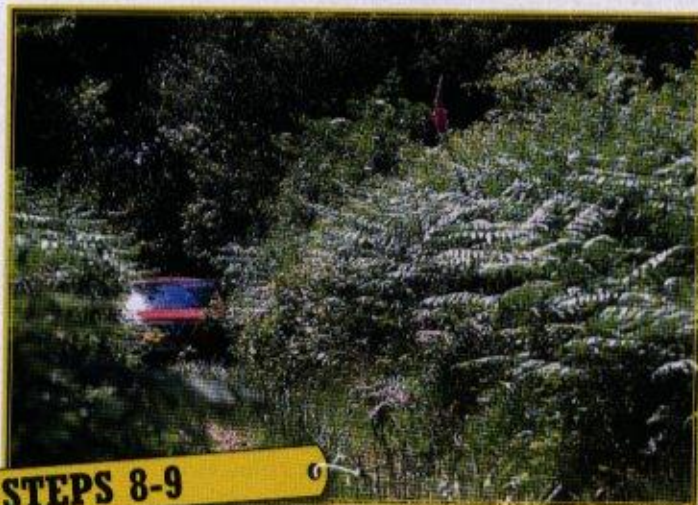


STEP 1

7 0.9		As you reach the farm, continue ahead on to a track which disappears into the trees and up a steep, bumpy hill
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STEP 7



STEPS 8-9



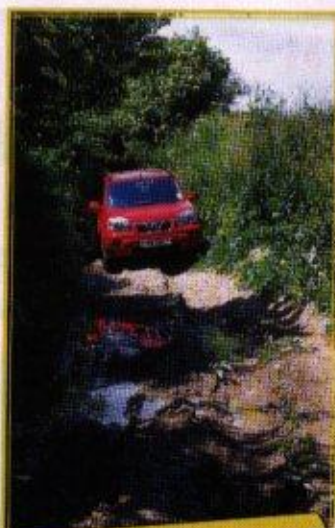
STEP 15

8 0.92		
9 1.8		
10 2.2		
11 2.25		
12 3.0		
13 3.95		TQ 844 554 Turn left at the Dirty Habit, back in Hollingbourne again

14 4.3		
15 5.25		CAUTION – there's a hidden tree stump on the right
16 5.6		Dead slow at the side slope, which will lean you into the bushes
17 5.8		It can get sloppy and slippery here in wet weather
18 6.1		
19 6.2		

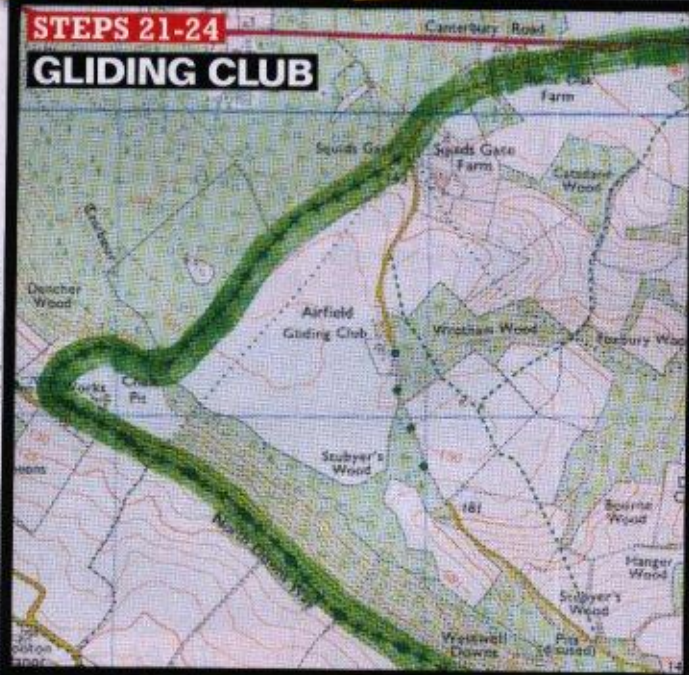


STEP 16



STEP 17

STEPS 21-24
GLIDING CLUB



DRIVING ON RIGHTS OF WAY

- ▲ Keep your speed right down
- ▲ Pull over to let walkers, bikers and horse riders pass
- ▲ Don't travel in large convoys. More than about six vehicles, and you should split into smaller groups to avoid hassling other users
- ▲ Leave gates as you found them
- ▲ Don't drop litter
- ▲ Fords are not there for washing your vehicle
- ▲ Fix that oil leak before you go
- ▲ Mud is not a playground
- ▲ Scrupulously obey all closure and voluntary restraint notices
- ▲ Don't cause a noise nuisance, particularly after dark
- ▲ Ensure you have a right to be there. We research the routes on our roadbooks very carefully, but the status of any route can change without notice
- ▲ Be prepared to turn back if the route is blocked, even illegally
- ▲ If you find an illegal obstruction, notify the local authority
- ▲ If someone challenges you, be polite and stay calm. If you're driving sensibly on a public highway or byway, they don't have a leg to stand on
- ▲ If someone gives you abuse (it does happen, though much less frequently than some laners' tales might make you think), don't give it back
- ▲ Stick absolutely scrupulously to the right of way

23

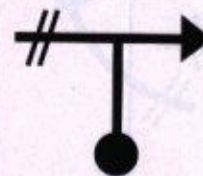
9.15



ZERO TRIP

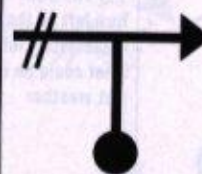
24

1.4



25

2.25



26

2.7



TQ914563

The turning on to the track is pretty tight and appears out of nowhere, so keep it slow as you approach. It's shortly after an electricity pylon on your right

20

7.0



21

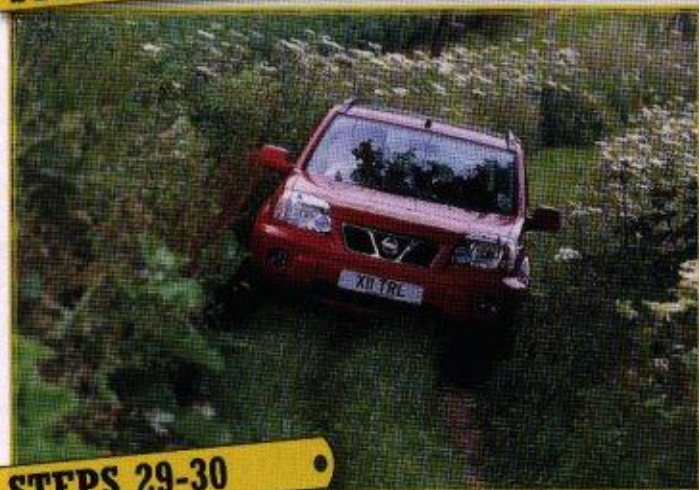
7.9



22

8.2




STEPS 26-27

STEPS 29-30

27 2.95		
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28 3.2 CAUTION		CAUTION – blind exit
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29 3.35		TQ 907 566 Turn left on the track then immediately left again, down what could be a slippery drop in wet weather
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30 3.5		It gets a little rutted at the bottom of the hill
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31 3.6		
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32 3.7		
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33 4.85		
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34 5.3		ZERO TRIP
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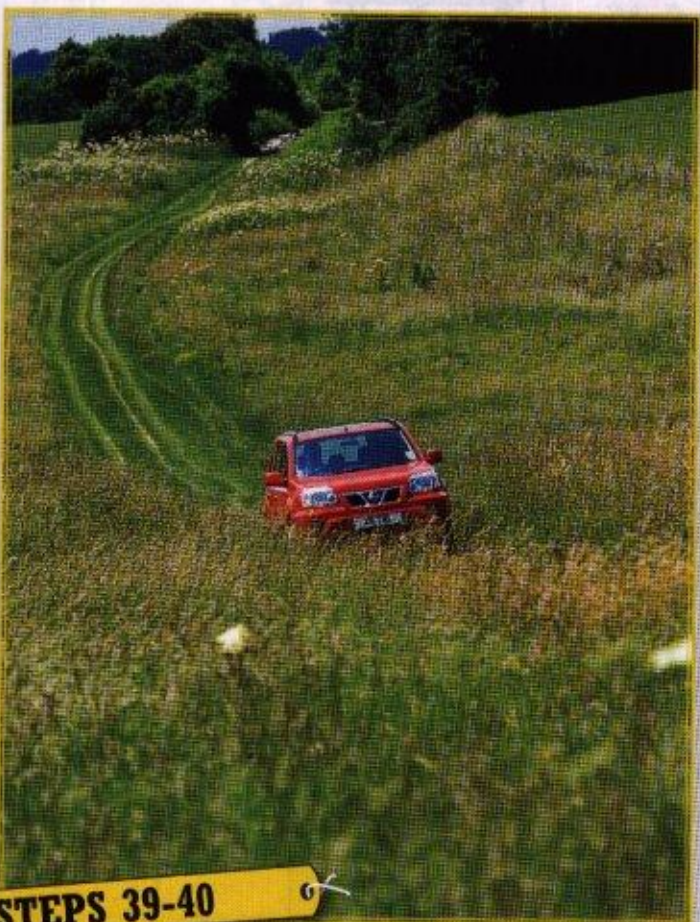
35 0.7		
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ABOUT OUR ROADBOOKS

Total Off Road is proud to be the only magazine in Britain ever to have published 4x4 roadbooks. These routes take you through the British countryside on a mixture of rights of way and public highways, both surfaced and unsurfaced.

Our roadbooks are designed to be safe to drive in a solo vehicle, and are largely suitable for standard 4x4s on road tyres. We do recommend travelling in tandem wherever possible, however, not just because it's safer but because it's also more fun. The risk of getting stuck can be far greater than it appears – and whatever you're driving, having help at hand can make the difference between a breakdown being inconvenient and potentially life-threatening.

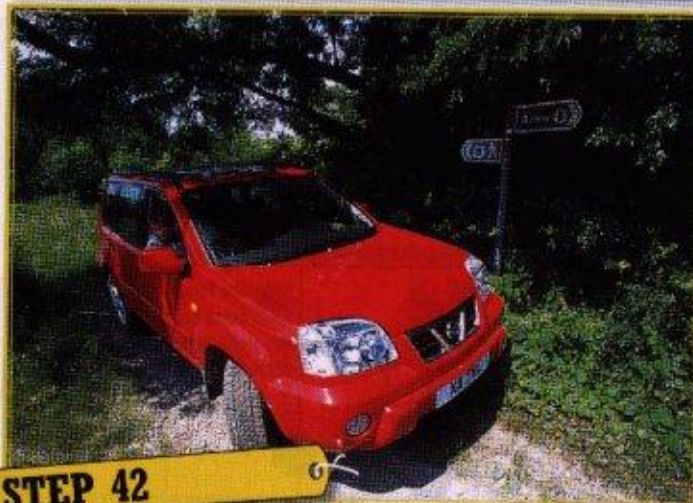
We always try to warn you of any potentially difficult sections you'll encounter, but the nature of any unsurfaced right of way can change quickly and dramatically. Wet weather can make a huge difference to the conditions underfoot, and what's wide open in winter can be tightly enclosed and paintwork-rippingly scratchy in summer.



STEPS 39-40

36 1.1		
37 1.4		TQ 894 531 This lane has been blighted by illegal blockages in the past. If you find one, report it to Kent County Council on 08458 247247 and navigate your way round it by road to pick up the route at Step 38 or 43
38 1.85		TQ 901 529 This lane is currently subject to a permit system and will be closed for a spell during the spring to let the grass re-grow. For permits and more info, contact Kent County Council on 08458 247247; to miss it out, navigate by road to step 43

39 2.1		On your left just after the gate is the Lenham Cross, a 200-foot memorial to the fallen of both world wars
40 2.3		After the gate, the track gets much more enclosed and could be slippery in wet conditions
41 2.4		



STEP 42

42 2.7		The junction with the road is blocked off, save for a small opening with a hump for you to drive over
43 2.9		TQ 916 525
44 3.2		


STEP 45

45 3.3		TQ921 523 The track is immediately before the turning into Highbourne Park	51 6.3 		CAUTION – it's a very tight turning, so indicate and start braking well in advance
46 3.4 		CAUTION – there's a sharp drop-off into the field to the right	52 6.45		ZERO TRIP
47 4.15		After the farm buildings, as the main track swings off round to the right, take the much less distinct route ahead	53 0.4		
48 4.9		TQ 940 505 Immediately after the staggered cross-roads, watch out for sleepers placed along the left of the track	54 0.9		
49 5.9			55 1.0		
50 6.1 		CAUTION – this is a major road and cars come up the hill very fast	56 4.3		
			57 4.7		
			58 4.95		

59 3.75		
60 6.65		
61 6.95		
62 7.2		TQ996 528 As you drop on to the track, there's a ditch that will rattle your teeth if you hit it too fast
63 7.3		Take care as you drop down towards a rutted section; if you're on standard tyres, it's worth checking it out on foot before you commit yourself
64 7.9		
65 8.1		ZERO TRIP
66 0.05		TR007 518

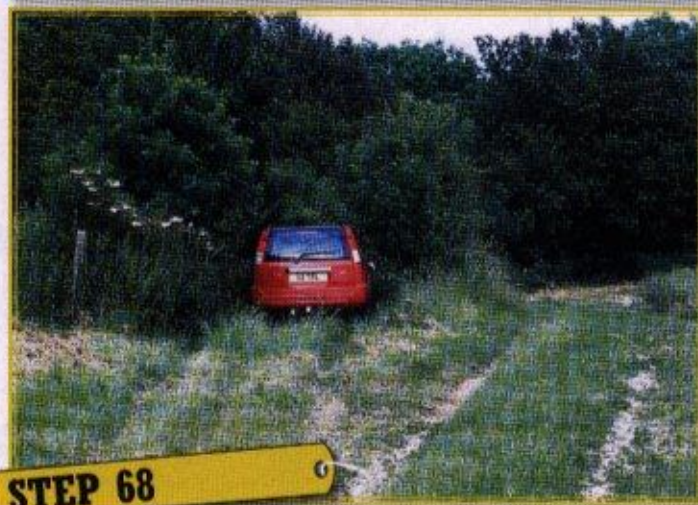
FOLLOWING THE ROUTE

Our roadbooks use a mixture of tulip diagrams, maps, grid references and instructions to help you navigate. We deliberately make it as easy as possible to follow the route; you might well find that we've given you more information than you need, but we'd sooner do that than not provide enough and risk getting you lost.

We normally only include 'active' junctions – that is, those at which you have to make a turning or don't have right of way. If we think there's any doubt, we'll include it rather than leaving it out, but as a general rule you can safely assume that you're meant to stay on the main road or take the most straight-ahead option unless we tell you otherwise.

If you're unfamiliar with six-figure grid references, you'll find a guide to using them on the legend of any OS Landranger, Pathfinder or Explorer map. We include portions of these maps for certain sections of each roadbook, but strongly advise buying the real thing for any route you intend to follow.

67 0.4		
68 0.55		As the main track head round to the right, continue ahead into a wall of bushes. It's very tight indeed to start with, but opens out quickly
69 0.85		




STEP 83

70 0.95		
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71 1.4		
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72 2.2		
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73 3.8		
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74 4.3		TQ 979 498 As the road swings left, take the track headed more or less straight ahead
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75 5.3		ZERO TRIP
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76 0.1		TQ 967 490 As the road bears left into the quarry, carry on ahead on the larger track
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STEP 78

77 0.5		
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78 0.65		Just after the bench on the left, the track starts getting more enclosed
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79 1.2		
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80 1.3		
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81 1.75		
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82 2.0		
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83 2.1		Pull into the Wheel Inn car park for the end of the route
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