

# Black Down & Hindhead Supporters of the National Trust

## Four Walking Trails Starting at The Devil's Punchbowl Car Park

### 3) Highcombe Hike

A moderately demanding and well sign-posted walk initially skirting the Punchbowl before dropping down into the valley for the return journey with the last quarter of the walk involving quite a steep incline albeit in delightful ancient woodland. If wet, some muddy sections can be expected.

**This walk is through rare ground-nesting bird habitat. Please keep dogs on a short lead during the nesting season (March to September)**

**Moderate**

**Good footwear / walking boots recommended**

**1 ¼ Hours**

**3.2 Miles (5.2 km)**

**OS Explorer OL 33**

**Start: Devil's Punchbowl Car Park GR 890357**

- 1. From the car-park proceed northwards towards to the view-point overlooking the Punchbowl. Bear left and follow the obvious footpath, identified by the **yellow** disc signage, through the trees. The path is skirting the southwest edge of the Punchbowl.*
- 2. After 10.00 minutes reach a major junction with an electricity substation diagonally on the left. At this junction bear right and proceed through the gateway/cattle grid onto the common/Highcombe Edge. Follow the signposted track with the Punchbowl to the right. Ignore any paths breaking away to the left.*
- 3. After 15 minutes reach a split in the path; take the smaller right hand path off the main track and pass by the Robertson Memorial and also enjoy the view of the Punchbowl.*

#### **The Robertson Memorial**

William Robertson (d1937) left a bequest to the National Trust to acquire property 'within reasonably easy access of London' as a memorial to his two younger brothers who died during the First World War. Second Lieutenant Laurence Robertson (36), King's Own Scottish Borderers, was killed in action during the Battle of the Somme on 30 July 1916. His name is recorded on the Thiepval Memorial. Captain Norman Robertson (40) of 2nd Battalion, Hampshire Regiment, died on 20 June 1917. He is buried in a Hamburg cemetery.

Nine memorial properties were purchased with William Robertson's bequest. With the exception of Sutton House, each memorial property incorporates high ground in accordance with William Robertson's wishes. A marker records the details of each bequest: eight markers are obelisks with dedicatory plaques, the ninth is a wall plaque. Highcombe Copse, incorporating an obelisk, was purchased in December 1938, includes c84 hectares of heath, farmland and coppice woodland with two cottages on the western side of the Devil's Punch Bowl.

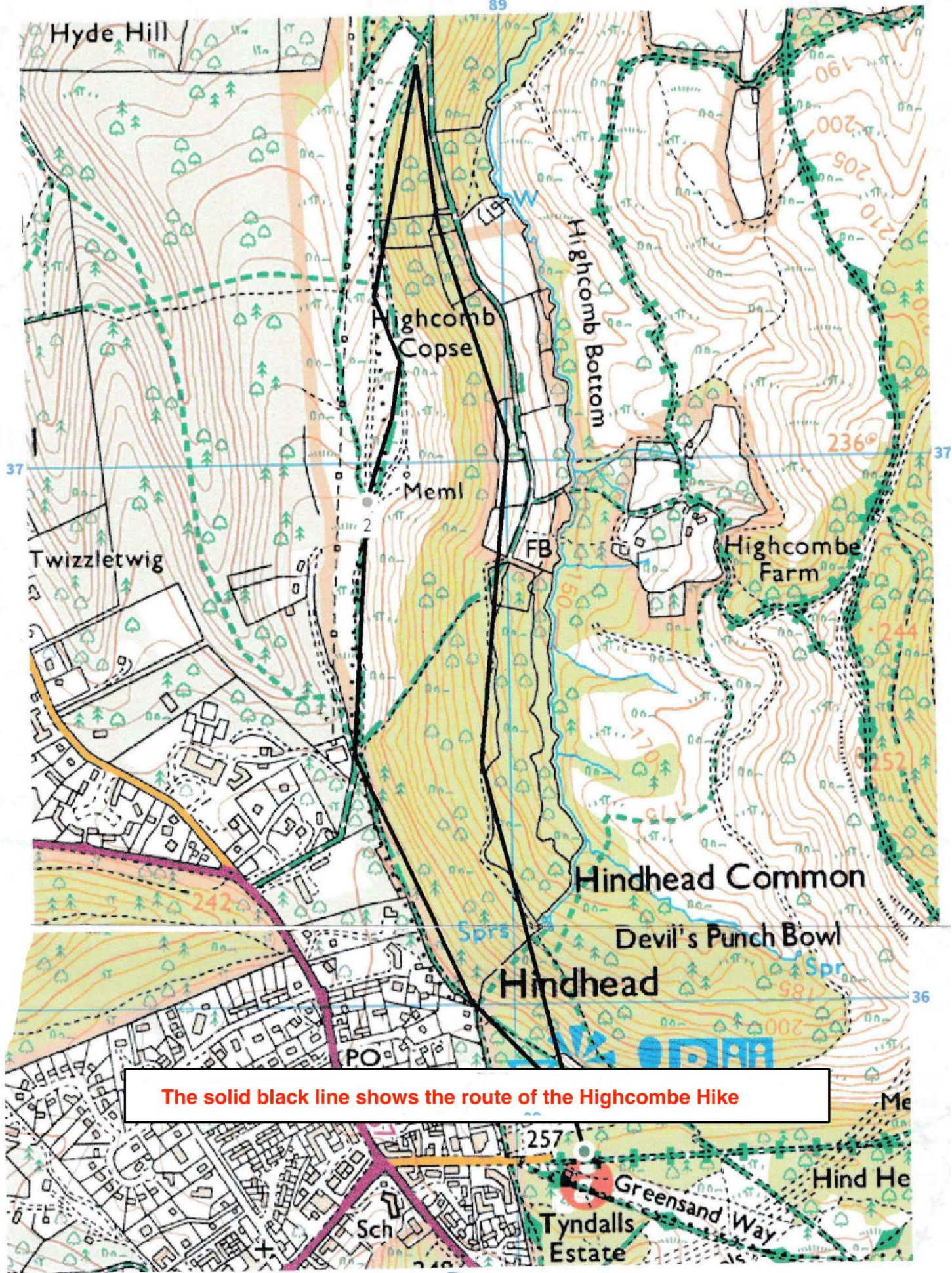
*Continue past the obelisk rejoining the main gravel surfaced track on a gentle downward incline to arrive, after 30 minutes, at a major intersection.*

- 4. Turn hard right and continue downhill ignoring, after 300 metres, the track falling away to the left leading to Keepers Cottage. The path flattens out in a southerly direction en route back to the car-park. If wet, the track here can be muddy! At 40 minutes come to a gateway on your left. Ignore and continue, as signposted, forward through a glade of Beech and Silver Birch trees before reaching an open area. Aim for the gateway into the woods ignoring the path going steeply up to the right. Continue on the path through ancient woodland and eventually the path will become an upward incline as you ascend out of the Punchbowl. At 45 minutes encounter a footpath sign for a (steep) trail to the right; ignore this and continue straight ahead and, after 100 metres, ignore a footpath signed away to the left. Continue straight ahead and onto the now demanding uphill element of the walk taking care towards the end of the ascent where the trail surface becomes quite rough underfoot. Once at the top bear sharp right going through the gateway bringing you back to the view-point with the Punchbowl car-park away to the left.*

*Well done, you will have definitely earned some refreshment at the Punchbowl cafe!*

**The Black Down & Hindhead Supporters of the National Trust would like to thank Philip Currie for compiling these guides**





The solid black line shows the route of the Highcombe Hike