

**14** Freshwater Way

An easy walk along the estuary of the River Yar, that splits to give two alternative endings, one continuing along the flat river valley the other rising up Afton Down to finish above the cliffs at Compton Bay.



**1** The trail starts, 350 metres (385 yards) west of Yarmouth Bridge and is sign posted along Gasworks Lane for the first 400 metres (440 yards). The road bends to the left shortly after entering woodland, ignore the first opening on the right and continue to the sign by a staggered barrier. Through the barrier there is a wide path through Saltern Wood. After climbing for about 120 metres (135 yards), the woodland on the left gives way to a field with wire fence. The path continues to a stile at which point the wood on the right ends.

**2** Over the stile, continue downhill with a wire fence on the left and open fields on the right. Cross the stile in the corner of the field and continue with woodland now on your immediate right. Ignore the opening onto a track but proceed to the stile. Cross the stile to a small footbridge, pass through a short belt of woodland to a second footbridge with stile then onto a grassy uphill track. A signpost here confirms your route and another points the way to the hamlet of Norton Green to the right on Footpath F8.

**3** Continue in the same direction up the grass track. At the top of the rise the track bends away to your left with the hedge now on your immediate left. Continue to the gate with the stile on left side. Here you cross the entrance to King's Manor Farm with cattle grids to the left and right. Cross straight over and on the track opposite find a metal kissing gate on the right with signpost to confirm your route. Follow the enclosed path until it reaches a field after 50 metres (55 yards) then bear slightly left into the field and aim for the far end of the barn on the left.

A short way past the farm buildings there are two stiles separated by a small footbridge, in the hedge boundary. Turn right on the level tarmac farm lane and follow for 450 metres (500 yards) to the point where it takes a sharp turn to the right. Continue ahead over a stile and between wire fences, past the churchyard on the left to emerge onto road in front of Freshwater's All Saints Church.

**4** Turn left into The Causeway and follow the road the short distance down to the causeway bridge over the River Yar. Be cautious as the road is narrow and has three blind bends. Just before the bridge over the River Yar, the Freshwater Trail spur to Freshwater Bay begins on the right, sign posted as Footpath F58. Continue over the bridge, cross the former railway track which is now a bridleway. Continue along The Causeway for 650 metres (715 yards), passing Bridleway F25 to Wilmington on the left, then cross a stream before reaching the road (B3399).

**5** Turn left for 30 metres (35 yards) then cross into Manor Road for 50 metres (55 yards) and follow the sign Bridleway F31 to Afton Down on the left. The track climbs steadily for 650 metres (715 yards) through open fields to the foot of Afton Down where it crosses the boundary into the golf course. Ignore Bridleway F32 to Shalcombe to the left but continue ahead for 100 metres (110 yards), climbing steeply and passing to the right of a barn. Join the road to the Golf Club, take the sharp, almost U turn, to the left and follow the access track, which is now Bridleway F54 up the slope of the Down for approximately 500 metres (550 yards) to the point where it takes a right hand bend around the perimeter of a covered reservoir. Follow a ground level sign to the right (Bridleway F34 to Compton). On reaching the Military Road (A3055) you have come to the end of The Freshwater Way.

*Freshwater Causeway to Freshwater Bay (alternate route)*







**6** After leaving All Saints Church continue onto The Causeway, and just prior to passing over the stone bridge spanning the River Yar, take Footpath F58 sign posted over a stile on the right. After 475 metres (520 yards) the path rises up the bank into a copse and follows between wooden fences to exit into the Crundles then the road beyond. Turn left on reaching the road, the Freshwater shops and town are along School Green Road on the right. Cross over the main road into Stroud Road. Approximately 120 metres (130 yards) along Stroud Road and opposite Stroud Playing Fields, take the footpath signed F37 Easton Lane on your left. It starts through a metal gate along the front of Stroud Cottages for 30 metres (35 yards). Exit through a kissing gate into a field and continue straight ahead to stile on the far side. Continue in the same direction over the stile through the edge of a garden to a further stile. Maintain the same direction with overhead electric cables running alongside. Where the overhead cables finish, cross the stile into a small paddock then over another stile located on the far side at Easton Lane.

**7** Turn left along Easton Lane and follow road for about 300 metres (330 yards) to crossroads. Turn left here and follow road for a further 110 metres (120 yards) to Footpath F36 running off to your right by the last electric cable pole. Follow path which at first runs up a tarmac access road but soon descends gently to run along the edge of a stretch of marshland.

**8** Continue along the path to steps leading up to a kissing gate and field at higher level. The path then runs between fields on the right and woodland on the left to a stile. Pass over the stile and follow the path skirting marshland still on your left to Coastguard Lane which runs between buildings to the main road at Freshwater Bay.

Warning - the path joins the road at a dangerous bend and care must be exercised when emerging.

**ROUTE INFORMATION**

-  Start location: Freshwater Bay
-  Difficulty: **Moderate**
-  Walk distance: **6 miles**
-  Places to stop for food & drink
-  Viewing & rest stops on route
-  Family friendly route

