



Self-Guided Walks

Hurst Green to Bodiam circular walk

Welcome to the High Weald National Landscape, an unspoilt medieval landscape. This walk starts from the village of Hurst Green, and includes part of the 'Sussex Border Path'. Refreshments may be taken midway at Bodiam Castle. The route can be muddy in winter and overgrown in summer, secateurs may be a useful accessory.

Distance and duration	An 11 mile walk, taking between 6 and 7 hours to complete
Level of ability expected	Moderate, but hilly
Start point & post code	The car park behind the village hall, off the A265. TN19 7QN
OS grid refrence What3Words location	TQ732271 https://what3words.com/elevated.delusions.calculating
Additional information	Click here to download a GPX file of the route

I-Spy Something to look out for on your walk



Two

If you arrive at the start of the walk in Hurst Green (a small community straddling the A21 north of Robertsbridge) by car, the best place to park is in the free public car park at the rear of the village hall, which is a short way along the A265 heading west out of the village.

Emerge from the car park and turn right, walk along the pavement to the A21 and cross over at the controlled pedestrian crossing. The footpath begins down the trackway to your left.

Do not go through the iron kissing gate, which leads to the cricket ground, but follow the track which goes round to the left. Continue on this track which will take you through a farmyard and beyond.

For a short while the track becomes a concrete surface, at the end of the concrete section you will come across a line of tall trees, for those in the know they are alders. With the trees on your left continue along the track and go through the gate.

The track crosses a field and ends in a clearing. In the clearing the footpath sign indicates straight on and the footpath becomes grassy.

Go to the opposite edge of the next field and turn left along the hedgerow. With the hedge on your right follow the line of the hedge, ignoring a gap on your right, until the path passes into a small, wooded area, then proceed through the wood.

On coming out of the wood turn to your left and walk around the edge of the field making for the left-hand corner. At this point turn right and continue along the bottom edge of the field.

Follow the track through the gap in the hedgerows into the small wooded area and into the next field.

With the treeline on your left follow the track around the edge of the field

When you reach the corner of the field, take the track which goes to your left and leads on to a minor road. Turn to the right on this road and cross over the fast B2244 with care.

Proceed along the minor road opposite, (Conghurst Lane), for approximately 1½ mile.

After a series of sharp bends turn to your right and go down the driveway leading to Conghurst Farm. You are now on the Sussex Border Path and will remain on this until Bodiam is reached. The footpath passes straight through the farm and continues along a track beyond

As you approach the bottom of the hill, ignore the footpath on the left-hand side, which goes through the first gap in the hedge on the left. The path you require is on the right shortly after this and is poorly marked. It runs at right angles to the path you are on and follows the line of the hedgerow on the right-hand side as you come down the hill, proceed with the hedge on your left. You should be heading for a white painted building directly ahead of you on the skyline

The path passes over a wooden footbridge and carries straight on, with the woodland on your right. Follow the footpath until you reach a fence, turn left here and continue on up the hill walking parallel to the fence on your right.

Carry on to the top of the hill, in the direction of the red-brick farm buildings/stables.

With the farm buildings in front of you turn to your left, the path comes to a T junction.

Take the path to the right walking alongside a post and rail fence on your right. When the fence ends the path continues along the edge of a wood passing through it briefly to arrive at a stile.

Three

Cross over the stile and follow the footpath between the two hedges. The footpath becomes a track, and you will pass farm buildings on your left. You will see a small gate in front of you, go through this gate and proceed along the made-up drive which takes you out onto the road. (Two things to be aware of, firstly this surface can be slippery in wet weather and secondly, if you are passing through during summer months, keep an eye out for a field of hops on the right-hand side, an rare sight in this country these days.)

When you reach the road the footpath continues slightly to your right on the opposite side, a small lay-by marks the start. The footpath goes diagonally up the field heading for the large oak tree in the centre of the hedge beyond.

Climb over a stile and follow the footpath round to the left keeping to the side of the wood and climb a small hill to a stile in the middle of a post and rail fence. Go straight across the driveway and over the stile in the corner of the paddock ahead of you

Proceed to your right with the fence on your right heading towards Bodiam Castle, which will come into view as you breast the hill. Follow the path, with vineyards on either side, down the hill to the castle grounds

Apart from being an ideal stopping place for lunch, you may wish to take time out to visit the castle, also the Kent & East Sussex Railway on the other side of the valley.

When you are ready to begin the homeward leg of the walk back to Hurst Green, begin by walking down the right-hand side of the Castle Inn as you face it from the castle entrance. You will be following a track that takes you past the playing fields on your left.

Pass through the gate by a small bungalow on your left-hand side and continue along the track, ignoring the next turning on your right, and then go over a stile to the left of a metal gate.

Ignoring the track/pathway to the right, the route now passes through what has become a business park. Continue along the front of the red brick building on your right and across the front of the next building.

At the end of this building, by the front entrance, take a path to your left over a small footbridge. Follow part way around the pond and then turn right along a path adjacent to a post and rail fence. Walk through this wooded area and cross another footbridge and a stile.

Turn to your right immediately after crossing the stile and carry straight on to the gate and stile ahead of you.

This road you are now on (the B2244) is fast and can be busy at certain times of the day so take care when crossing it. Climb the stile directly opposite and turn immediately left.

When you reach the fence turn to your right and follow the fence to the top of the field, the next stile is in the corner.

The path crosses a slippery footbridge and carries straight on, heading for the right-hand side of the small copse you can see in front of you. It then goes straight across the field.

The stile to be crossed can be seen in the hedge on the far side, bear slightly to the right, staying at the top of the hill.

Go through the gate to the right of the bushes on the opposite side of the field just under the power cables.

Four

When you clear this area, follow round to the left with the edge of the wood on your left. Go over the stile and out onto the road.

Turn to your left and proceed along the road, ignore a footpath at a house called 'Abbots Lake'. You will pass a turning on your left, signed Robertsbridge and Salehurst, the footpath you require is on your left adjacent to Jollies Farmhouse, which is a large cream painted building close to the road. (Be careful here as there is another property earlier on called Jollies Farmhouse.)

Go over the stile and along this enclosed path, often overgrown and muddy, climb over the stile at the end and go into the wood. Please note: to avoid having people walking through their garden the landowners have provided a permissive path a bit further along the road, on the left, go over a stile into the field and follow the tree line down the field until you regain the formal route**

Go over two more stiles and keep following the footpath straight ahead of you into another wooded area.

Over another stile and turn to the right going down the hill to the woods at the bottom.

**Go into the woods and cross over the stream by use of bridge into the next field.

Turn left and follow the treeline, on the left, continuing with the fence on your right. The next stile is in the middle of the treeline opposite and passes through into the wood beyond.

Go over a stile and across a footbridge. Carry on through the next field keeping the wood to your right-hand side all the way.

Go over the next stile and carry on straight ahead through the field keeping the hedge on your left-hand side all the way up, continue on the path.

Go through an enclosed fenced path onto the road and turn right, the footpath you require is the next one on your left and is directly opposite a property called Brushwood.

Go straight ahead here keeping the hedge on your left and follow on down to the bottom of the field, where the footpath goes through a gap in the treeline. Go past a dilapidated barn on the right.

Continue round the edge of the next field with the trees on the left until you reach a stile leading on to a private drive.

Cross the drive and go through the gate opposite and head for the stile in the hedge at the bottom of the field.

You are now alongside the very busy A21, turn to your right and walk for about 20 yards until you are directly opposite a driveway on the other side of the road. You need to cross to this driveway, taking extreme care in doing so as this is a fast and busy main road.

Follow the drive until you reach a property called Melrose, this is the last property along here, do not go through a gate that you will see straight ahead of you at one point.

The footpath goes across the front of the house (the house will be on your left) down a grassy slope, through a green gate into some woodland and continues until it crosses an old stone bridge. The path should go to your right as soon as you are over the bridge, but recently heavy overgrowth has made this inaccessible. Instead go straight ahead around the pond/lake, over two footbridges and then turn right to regain the planned route.

Five

Proceed along this path for about 1 mile keeping the watercourse on your right. You will eventually come to a very old and very dead tree trunk, which makes an ideal spot at which to have the walks final refreshment break.

Shortly after this point, on the right, you will reach another bridge across the water.

At this point the footpath you require goes across the field to the far right-hand corner close to the railway line. Go over the stile and follow the path parallel to the railway until it turns to the right and emerges from this area of undergrowth.

Head towards the left of this next area of open space towards the trees. The path becomes a track and goes between a new stone building and a converted oast house.

As you pass the oast the track leads out on your left and passes onto a driveway leading past another house.

Follow this drive until you reach a junction, take the left fork and continue until you reach the main road.

This road is the busy A265 and the footpath comes out on an awkward bend. Turn left and go down the hill a short distance looking for the footpath on the opposite side of the road. A post marks its beginning and there are steps going up the bank. Do not attempt to cross until you are directly opposite the footpath.

Once you are out into the open again turn left and proceed up the hill keeping the hedge close to your left-hand side.

Turn to your right when you reach the road and look out for a footpath on the opposite side about 200 yards further up, between Beagles Boundary and Seldon Lodge.

Follow the most well used of the paths in this wooded area, pass through a clearing and carry straight on. Eventually you will come to a convergence of paths at the rear of some lock up garages. Take the path straight ahead walking parallel with the housing estate.

As the path reaches the church, walk through the churchyard and on to the A21.

Turn to your right and follow the A21 to the junction with the A265 and retrace your steps back to the car park.

At all times please follow the Countryside Code



Respect everyone

- be considerate to those living in, working in and enjoying the countryside
- leave gates and property as you find them
- do not block access to gateways or driveways when parking
- be nice, say hello, share the space
- follow local signs and keep to marked paths unless wider access is available

Protect the environment

- take your litter home – leave no trace of your visit
- do not light fires and only have barbeques where signs say you can
- always keep dogs under control and in sight
- dog poo – bag it and bin it – any public waste bin will do
- care for nature – do not cause damage or disturbance

Enjoy the outdoors

- check your route and local conditions
- plan your adventure – know what to expect and what you can do
- enjoy your visit, have fun, make a memory

