

Map Walk:
Forest Row Circular

Length: 16 kms (10 miles)

Time: From 4 to 5 hours walking plus lunch plus travel. Allow 8 to 9 hours for the whole outing from London.

Note: This is called a Map Walk for the reason that they should be read in conjunction with an Ordnance Survey map as opposed to a Book Walk where the walk instructions are usually more detailed and do not require the use of an OS Map.			
1 st walk check	2 nd walk check	3 rd walk check	
28 th July 2007	5 th August 2007		
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Start: Forest Row - Brambletye Hotel.

Finish: Forest Row - Chequers Hotel.

Saturday Walkers' Club: On a Saturday take the 09:23 train from Victoria, then 10:29 Bus (291) at arriving at Forest Row 10:42, walk to lunch at 13:00.

Late Option: 09:53 train, Bus at 11:05 arriving 11:18 will get you to lunch at 13:30.

Sunday or Bank Holiday take 09:22 train and 10:40 Bus (270) arriving 10:58 for lunch at 13:15 hours

Transport: Trains from Victoria go to East Grinstead. Journey Time 55 mins. Allow 30 mins for transfer to and onward journey by Metrobus 270, 291 or Eastbourne Bus 54.

Car Drivers: Park in the Community Centre car park (free) alongside the council offices on the B2110 Hartfield Road then walk back to the Lewes Road for the start of the walk.

OS Explorer Map: 135

Toughness:

Walking 4 out of 10

Map Reading 6 out of 10 because you have to interpret trails across Open Access land, trails which are not marked as Public Rights of Way on the map but which are available for access by the public.

Walk Notes:

Ashdown Forest is a gem of a place but it's also a long way from train stations, that's why we need to take the bus. Thankfully they run approximately every half hour Monday to Saturday and hourly on Sundays from East Grinstead

To do the walk, you need OS Explorer Map 135 Ashdown Forest and a compass. The route has been planned to incorporate the best pub, route and views available within a reasonable time scale. Please note that the directions below are insufficient to complete the walk by themselves. You or one of your party will need the correct map.

Walk options: You can shorten the walk by taking the bus back to Forest Row or East Grinstead either from the Red Lion Pub, Chelwood Gate or from Wych Cross.

The first 3 kms of this walk are shared with the longer Forest Row to Sheffield Park (Bluebell Line) walk which also has a longer and different Forest Row circular.

Walk Directions before lunch:**Forest Row to Chelwood Gate (7 kms)**

From the main Lewes London Road, take the public footpath heading west out of Forest row, marked by a metal sign high on a lamp post next to the hairdressers. Follow foot path for 2.5 kms until Spring Hill Farm and Mudbrooks House where the path takes a severe right hand turn over a stile up across a field over the brow of a hill. (Ignore another path indicated that continues due south.)

Continue initially westwards (FP not accurately shown on OS map) to cross a field boundary before heading south to cross a stream and enter woodlands shown on the map as Lavender Platt.

Head for a cross roads next to Goat Farm and take the Wych Cross road (direction 130 deg) Ignore the private road to Cripps Manor. Take the next opportunity to get off the road then pick up the firebreak path inland of the road that runs direction 140 deg. After approx 750 m take the path that runs due south and after 200 m it emerges next to a minor road at map ref: TQ407318. Cross this road to take the bridle path to Press Ridge Warren. Emerge from the woods and follow the firebreak through a barrier and onto heath land crossing the A275 to the Red Lion Pub at Chelwood Gate.

Walk directions after lunch:

Cross back over the A275 road to follow the fire break in a northerly direction for 750 m then re-cross the A275 to carry on in the same direction for a further 250 m then turn sharp right and head south for 150 metres to pick up a trail that then runs initially due east and then north east for 800m. (This is to avoid an excessively boggy area). Your next boundary is the A22 road. Map ref: TQ429309 near Raven Wood.

There is a firebreak / horse ride path that runs parallel to the road separated from it by a band of trees. Your visual cue is a long gravel car park between the path, the trees and the road called 'The Long' car park. From the southern end of the car park and a notice board, walk 150 metres along the forest path to turn east along a poorly defined path to the edge of the A22 road.

The path you require is down the driveway of 'Lewes Park Cottages' between two large stone pillars and then wooden gates. If you cannot yet see the pillars then look for the sign for 'Crofters' another house on this main road. The pillars are further south on this main road.

Follow the footpath down through Raven Wood and out on to open fields with Ashdown Park Hotel visible in the distance. This footpath is well defined and goes past Llamas grazing in the field, a driving range and streams.

Emerging into the hotel grounds, walk past tennis courts, take a left, right and left again to follow the fingerposts up a broad path past cottages to the main 'B' road.

(At this point you could take a shortcut to Forest Row by following the metalled road / footpath opposite down through Broadstone Warren Scout Camp. This is not the recommended route however as you will miss a good view on a clear day if you take that direction.)

The recommended route is to turn east along this road for approximately 100 metres to enter the Forest Row Conservators Information Centre. (WC's and information available including a map of the Forest that show fire breaks, boundaries and horse rides which are accessible to walkers in addition to FP's £2.20). The conservators manage the Forest on behalf of East Sussex County Council.

Coming out of the information centre follow a path eastwards but do not drop completely down the hill at this stage. Walk along at high level until the last car park where the paths drop into woodland. You could take one of many paths here; your destination is map ref: TQ441334 a point just south of Water Farm where the path leaves the open heath and enters woods. If you wish to follow detailed directions then here they are. Find your way back onto the Coleman's Hatch Road (also known as The Ridge) and look for the sign and track leading to 'Birches' at map ref: TQ445329. Follow this to the south west edge of the property and looking across the fairway in a north westerly direction you will see a yellow Fire Hydrant sign. Cross the fairway to this marker and continue in the same direction (300 deg) down the slope to the concave corner of the woods. At point TQ441334.

The original footpath which carried straight on appears to have been obliterated by undergrowth at this point. Follow the path straight ahead to cross a stream and then round on to the driveway of Water farm. Continue in a north westerly direction. Where the driveway cross the fairway turn left (west) to head up past a green through a gap in the woods along a track to pick up the original direction of the footpath, north east behind Yew Tree Hall and eventually Bank Cottage. You should now be able to see the top of the Royal Ashdown Golf Course Clubhouse at this point. Walk to the left hand side of this, your bearing 300 deg. Walk past the clubhouse up the main driveway to its entrance at the edge of the Forest at map ref: TQ429344 Chapel Lane.

Follow the signs for Vanguard Way; they disappear down a passageway between houses 150 metres before the bottom of the road. The road then takes you westwards back to the Community Centre car park, and beyond past the Co-op supermarket to the Lewes-London Road and the tea stops.

Finish at the Java and Jazz Café or the Chequers Hotel and bar opposite the bus stop.

Lunch and Tea places:

Morning coffee and provisions at the understated Angela's bakery in Forest Row.
Lunch at The Red Lion, Chelwood Gate. RH17 7DE Open 12:00 to 20:30 for food
Telephone: 01825 740265 (main meal £8.50 – £12.95) which has a beautiful garden

Tea stop at the 'Java and Jazz' Coffee Shop in Forest Row (open 10:00 till 22:00 pm Mon-Sat and 10:30 to 19:30 Sundays)

Or Angela's Bakery (Mon-Sat only) or the Chequers Hotel Bar opposite the bus stop at Forest Row. Other places are The Llama Park Café near Wych Cross and the Roebuck Hotel at Wych Cross (provided it is not closed for a private function)

Return bus Information:

Saturday Walker's Club who have come by train to East Grinstead.

Buses from Forest Row to East Grinstead leave Mon-Sat at :11 and :44 past the hour until 15:11 then :14 and :43 from 16:14 with an extra bus at 17:54. The last bus is 21:57. Fare £1.70 to East Grinstead. (Sundays there is an approximately hourly service).

Tel: Metrobus 01293 449191

Or Traveline: 0871 200 22 33