

Walk 53 Variation, Wye to Chilham

Distance 17.7km (11 miles)

Difficulty 7/10

Trains: Day return to Chilham

Walking Instructions

1. Walk to the end of Platform 2 at **Wye Station** towards the footbridge to exit the station *through the white wooden gate* at the far end of the platform. *Turn left* and cross over the level crossing, your direction 90 degrees, to pass the station building on your left-hand side.
2. In 40 metres you cross a bridge over the **River Stour**, then pass the **Tickled Trout** pub on the other side. 30 metres past the pub, *turn left* on Churchfield Way, your direction 60 degrees.
3. In 80 metres, as the road curves right, ignore the first lane off to the left by a house called Kelston. In 55 metres *turn left* on an estate road (Abbots Walk), your direction 55 degrees.
4. The road swings to the right and in 115 metres, at a cross roads with a green space ahead and to your right, [!] *turn left* on a concrete road that looks like a dead end, heading due north, with house no. 44 on your left-hand side. In 30 metres, at the end of the road, *turn right*, due east, with house no. 52 on your left-hand side.
5. In 55 metres, the road bears left, and by a concrete public footpath marker, *go through a wooden gate*, cross a field enclosure and in 8 metres go through a wooden kissing gate. *Keep ahead* across a field, your direction 45 degrees, on a clear path.
6. In 160 metres go through a metal fieldgate and in 6 metres go through a wooden swing gate, *to go right* on a tarmac lane, your direction 130 degrees, and in 40 metres cross over a cattle grid. In 200 metres you pass another cattle grid. In 20 metres go over a tarmac road *to continue* on Occupation Road, following a North Downs Way (NDW) sign, your direction 100 degrees, straight on.
7. You pass buildings of Imperial College London on your left-hand side. *Keep ahead*, now with a tall hedge on your left and single storey business units on your right. In 175 metres the hedge ends and in a further 110 metres go through a metal gate to the left of a metal fieldgate, with a NDW sign on its post.
8. In 60 metres you cross Wibberley Way (a permissive path) to continue straight on, with an open field on your left and a tree line on your right, steadily upwards towards the Crown Memorial carved into the hillside.
9. In 270 metres, by a footpath post on your right, ignore the Stour Valley Walk going off to the left. In a further 275 metres cross a tarmac lane and *continue uphill*, with a hedge on your left and an open field on your right, your direction 85 degrees, signposted NDW.
10. In 250 metres there is a fine view back over the valley, as you enter a wood through a wooden swing gate, to continue steeply upwards. Follow the NDW post and in 20 metres cross a path junction and keep ahead.
11. In 90 metres ignore the Wibberley Way path off to the right. In 20 metres, as the path levels out, cross another path junction. In a further 20 metres you come to a tarmac road with a view ahead (northwards). Ignore the wooden kissing gate directly ahead *and instead* [!] *turn right* along the road following the NDW sign, uphill, your direction 125 degrees.
12. In 225 metres, [!] *go right, up steps*, signposted NDW, your direction 220 degrees.
13. In 30 metres go through a metal squeeze stile to the right of a wooden field gate to continue on a grassy farm track beside a line of trees. In a further 60 metres go through another metal squeeze stile (or go over the low wooden stile) to the right of a metal fieldgate, *and turn left*, following the NDW arrow, to continue along the Ridgeway, your direction 170 degrees, the valley out beneath you on your right-hand side.

14. In a further 100 metres, at the corner of a fence on your left-hand side, carry straight on, *slightly to the left*, then turning right, with a small hollow on your right and the **Crown Millennium Stone** just below you, above the **Crown Memorial** on the hillside below.
15. Carry on, along an undulating grassy path, your direction 150 degrees, keeping the hillside on your right. In 165 metres go through a metal kissing gate, to follow the NDW arrow, with a fence on your left-hand side, your direction now 145 degrees.
16. In 250 metres leave the North Downs Way [!] *to go through a metal kissing gate on your left*, marked with a yellow circular walk arrow, your direction 80 degrees, to cross a field on an indistinct path. In 110 metres go through a metal kissing gate to the left of a metal fieldgate, to go down into a wood on a footpath used by horses, your direction 135 degrees.
17. In 115 metres, at the other end of the wood, *go straight on* with the edge of the wood now on your right-hand side, and **Coombe Manor** ahead on your left-hand side, initially downhill.
18. The path levels out and in 275 metres you come to a tarmac lane, with a metal fieldgate opposite and a post with yellow arrow on your right. Here, *turn left* down the lane, your direction 25 degrees.
19. In 145 metres, *turn right* through an open wooden fieldgate, following a footpath sign, gently uphill, your direction due east. In 120 metres, at the top of the field, *turn left* through a metal fieldgate. In 30 metres, ignore the gate 20 metres directly ahead, and instead *follow the footpath sign, to your right*, up the hillside on a wide, grassy path, with the edge of the wood over to your left.
20. In 225 metres (and 15 metres before the metal fieldgate ahead of you), drop down the bank to your left and *go over a stile into the wood*, your direction 25 degrees. In 35 metres exit the wood through a metal kissing gate to continue down a field with the edge of the wood on your left-hand side, your direction 60 degrees.
21. In 140 metres pass through a field boundary and keep ahead. Stay close to the field edge and in a further 340 metres go through a metal kissing gate and come out on to an earth lane.
22. *Go left and then [!] immediately fork right*, by a new Byway sign, along a byway (a car-wide earth lane), your direction 350 degrees. Stay on this byway, uphill, through the wood of beech and chestnut trees, ignoring all ways off. The path eventually levels out and passes through several muddy sections (passable by detouring into the wood on your left-hand side).
23. In 680 metres you have a view out over the valley to your left. In a further 150 metres, you come to an open field on your right-hand side, with views now over to your right. In a further 160 metres ignore a stile on your right-hand side.
24. In 20 metres go through a metal fieldgate ahead of you and keep straight on, your direction 345 degrees, between field fences. The path at first goes downhill, then uphill, and then downhill again, in 700 metres coming out into the car park of the **Church of St Mary, Crundale**, on your right.
25. After visiting the church, leave the churchyard by its main gate, by the war memorial, and *turn right* on the tarmac lane, downhill, your direction 105 degrees.
26. In 450 metres, at a T-junction, follow the sign to the Compasses Inn *to the left*, along a tarmac lane. In 600 metres, having climbed steeply for the last part, you come to a T-junction *where you turn right*, due east. In 250 metres this brings you on your left to the suggested lunch pub, **the Compasses Inn**.
27. Coming out of the pub after lunch, turn right on the road. In 300 metres ignore a road downhill to the left, but in 150 metres more fork right up a track into the woods.
28. In 200 metres, where another track crosses the one you are on diagonally, keep straight on, as indicated by a yellow arrow, on a path under trees between two fields.
29. In 200 metres go through a kissing gate to the left, and go half left from your former direction, heading through the trees towards an open field 70 metres ahead.
30. Once in the field, keep to its left-hand edge, ignoring any apparent path that contours the slope to the right.

31. You soon start descending, and in 100 metres you come to a kissing gate on the left hand edge of the field. Go through this, and beyond carry on slanting down the slope towards a clump of blackthorn bushes, ie roughly the same direction as before, with a fine view to your left. Anywhere on this next section is a fine **picnic spot**.
32. In 30 metres follow the path through the blackthorn clump (on the far side **watch out for a large badger hole**) and take the upper of two paths that contour the slope.
33. In 130 metres the path goes back into the woods, but in 40 metres more you emerge again, and continue to contour the slope
34. In 200 metres more pass through a kissing gate into the woods again. **[!] In winter at least, the path is initially indistinct**, but keep straight ahead, still contouring the slope. *(More yew trees here.)*
35. In 250 metres the path starts to descend. 60 metres after this, and just before the slope suddenly gets very steep, the path makes a turn to the left, along the line of the escarpment. **[!] In winter (and any other season when there is no vegetation on the woodland floor) this turn in the path is not at all obvious**, but as long as you turn left before the slope gets sharply steeper, and keep the steep slope to your right, a more distinct path appears.
36. 150 metres after the turn, you emerge into an open field. Your onward route here is half right, diagonally across a very large field to a stile which you may just be able to see to the right of a house 400 metres away.
37. When you get to this stile, cross it and keep on the right-hand edge of the field beyond to another stile in 100 metres, just beyond and to the left of a shed.
38. Beyond this second stile, keep on up a slight slope. In 80 metres cross a third stile and a track to keep on along the left-hand edge of a field, with a tree boundary to your left.
39. In 200 metres pass into the next field and keep on gently uphill.
40. In another 150 metres, at the crest of the hill, turn left downhill through the field boundary, following a footpath sign.
41. Follow the path straight downhill across the next field, a distance of 400 metres.
42. At the bottom of the field, turn right on a road.
43. In 500 metres the road turns decisively left alongside the railway line (up the embankment to the right).
44. In another 250 metres, at a road T-junction, turn right, signposted to Chilham and Canterbury. **Take care on this road** which has some fast traffic. After the bridge there is a verge and then a pavement to the left.
45. 100 metres after the bridge, cross the very busy A28 with great care, and keep straight up a minor road, signposted Godmersham Church and Godmersham Park.
46. In 350 metres you cross the River Stour on an elegant brick bridge. Beyond go straight ahead through the right hand of the two formal gates (the pedestrian gate is to the right of the main gate) into **Godmersham Park** (signposted "Abdo College".) **[!] Immediately beyond the gate, go right through a wooden gate onto a signposted footpath. Keep straight ahead into the park, initially with a metal fence to your left.**
47. In 150 metres at a 'Private No Public Right of Way' sign, turn left through a wooden fieldgate onto a grassy track between hedges. *(To the left just before this gate, you have the first of several fine views of Godmersham Park house)*
48. In 300 metres, at a track crossroads, with a brick house visible ahead, go right, still on a track between hedges.
49. In 150 metres ignore a track uphill to the left. In another 150 metres ignore a track to the right, and keep on, now with trees to the right. In 80 metres you pass through a fieldgate (usually open).

50. In another 300 metres, 30 metres beyond the end of the field, pass through a wooden gate to the left of a fieldgate and keep straight ahead at a track junction, now on the North Downs Way. *(To the right is a view of the hills traversed earlier in the walk.)*
 51. In 300 metres you emerge onto a road. Go straight along this.
 52. You now follow this quiet pleasant lane for nearly 2 kilometres until it brings you to the centre of Chilham. In 1km you start to pass houses on the right, and in another 300 metres or so the high brick wall of **Chilham Castle** estate starts to your left. In 200 metres there is a section of wall topped by a metal fence and towards the end of this you get a good view of the castle (a stately home with a castle ruin next to it) on the hill across the lake.
 53. Shortly after the view described above, the road bends left and in 300 metres more you come to a three way road junction.
54. **** To go direct to the station** here, go right at this junction, and in 200 metres you come to a T-junction with the Woolpack Inn on your left. *Go right* here and pick up the directions at paragraph **58** below.
55. Otherwise, to continue into **Chilham village** for tea (or just to see its very pretty main square), go straight ahead at the three way junction, up School Hill.
 56. In 150 metres you emerge into the central square of Chilham, with the castle gates to your left. Diagonally across the square is **Shelly's Tea Room**, and between that and the church is the **White Horse**, both possible tea stops. *Note that it is 900 metres from here to the station, so allow 15-20 minutes after tea to walk this.*
 57. To continue the walk, come out of Shelly's or the White Horse and turn left (or if coming down the square from Chilham Castle, go to its end and turn right) to exit the square down an unnamed road at the opposite end of the square to the one you used to enter it. (Chantry House is on the corner of this road, and in 20 metres it is named as "The Street")
 58. In 200 metres you pass the **Woolpack Inn** on your right, and beyond it keep straight on, ignoring ways off.
 59. In 400 metres the main road is just to the left of the road you are on. Turn left up a 10 metre side turning to join this, and turn right (that is, more or less resuming your former direction).
 60. In 150 metres cross a side road – the A28 to Ashford – **taking care**, as cars turn at some speed onto this from the main road.
 61. In another 150 metres, opposite a white house to the left, turn right up a side road, signposted to Hope View School, which leads in 70 metres to the station.
 62. Cross the bridge for trains to London. Note that **trains to Canterbury sometimes leave at the same time as the London trains**, so do not get confused and take the wrong one.