

# Ashurst to Eridge walk

Gently undulating High Weald walk in the low hills and valleys around Tunbridge Wells

**Length**      **Main Walk, via Speldhurst:** 18¼ km (11.3 miles). Four hours 30 minutes walking time. For the whole excursion including trains, sights and meals, allow at least 9 hours.  
**Short Walk, via Langton Green:** 14½ km (9.0 miles). Three hours 35 minutes walking time.

**OS Maps**      Explorers 135 & 147. Ashurst station, map reference TQ507388, is on the East Sussex/Kent border, between East Grinstead and Tunbridge Wells.

**Toughness**   4 out of 10 (3 for the Short Walk).

**Features**      From a remote station this walk climbs up the low hills between the River Medway and Tunbridge Wells, soon with some attractive views across a steep-sided valley reminiscent of wilder parts of Britain. A gently undulating route along field edges, country lanes and wooded valleys takes you to the village of **Speldhurst**, where the parish church of **St Mary the Virgin** contains a set of notable pre-Raphaelite stained glass windows.

After a lunch stop in the village's 16<sup>th</sup>C inn the walk loops back through more wooded valleys and fields, skirts around Langton Green and descends into the hamlet of **Old Groombridge**. The remainder of the walk is the same as the shortest ending to the Eridge Circular walk (#120). This goes past **Groombridge Place**, a beautiful Jacobean manor house surrounded by a medieval moat, then follows the course of the heritage **Spa Valley Railway's** extension from Groombridge to Eridge. Along the way you can often see climbers practising their skills on a massive outcrop of Ardingly sandstone, **Harrison's Rocks**.

*The soils in the High Weald do not drain well and you will need to be prepared for muddy or waterlogged paths after wet weather.*

**Walk**            Directions are also included for a **Short Walk** which omits the loop out to

**Options**

Speldhurst. Its lunchtime stop is in Langton Green, on the fringes of Tunbridge Wells.

On both walk options you could substitute one of the longer endings of Walk #120, through Broadwater Warren and past Eridge Rocks (an additional 3 or 4½ km).

*You would need to print those directions from the other walk document.*

**Additional Notes**

The original version of this walk included an attractive woodland section through the grounds of a convalescent hospital on the Burrswood estate. Walkers were encouraged to use these permissive paths and visit the tearoom attached to the hospital. However, the hospital went into administration in the spring of 2019, resulting in the loss of this useful tea stop. Although the grounds are currently still open to the public these routes have been withdrawn until future access has been clarified.

**Transport**

Ashurst and Eridge are adjacent stations on the Oxted–Uckfield line, which has an hourly service from London Bridge, taking 50 minutes to Ashurst. On Sundays you have to travel from Victoria and change at Oxted, with a longer journey time of around 70 minutes. Buy a **return to Eridge**.

If you want to cut the walk short several bus services go through Langton Green to Tunbridge Wells. The most frequent is Metrobus 291 (hourly Mon–Sat, two-hourly Sun & BH), which also goes through Groombridge. Less frequent services also go through Fordcombe and Speldhurst.

On days when the **Spa Valley Railway** (SVR) is operating you could also catch a steam train from Groombridge station, cutting out the last leg of the walk into Eridge (or travel in the other direction to Tunbridge Wells).

If driving, the station car park at Ashurst costs £2.90 Mon–Fri, free at weekends. The one at Eridge costs £2.90 Mon–Sat, £2.25 Sun (2020).

**Suggested Train**

Take the train nearest to **10:00** from **London Bridge** to **Ashurst (Kent)**.

**Lunch**

On both walk options a very early lunch is possible after about 4 km at the **Chafford Arms** (01892-731731) in **Fordcombe**, but the suggested places are about 45 minutes further on. On the **Main Walk** the suggested lunch stop is the highly-rated **George & Dragon** (01892-863125) in **Speldhurst**, after 7 km. This deservedly popular inn serves excellent home-cooked food, much of it locally sourced, to 2.30pm (4pm Sun).

The suggested lunch stop on the **Short Walk** (and a later option on the Main Walk, with a short detour) is **The Hare** (01892-862419) in **Langton Green**, after 6¾ km. This serves a wide variety of food all day.

The pubs in Groombridge (see below) might also be able to provide a late lunch.



**Tea**

Several mid-afternoon refreshment stops are available in **Groombridge**. The **Crown Inn** (01892-864742) is at the top of the small village green and the **Junction Inn** (01892-864275) is in the main part of the village. When the SVR is operating you could nip into the nearby station, where there is a buffet on the platform.

At the end of the walk **The Huntsman** pub (01892-864258) is ideally placed, a stone's throw from **Eridge** station. However, the pub is closed all day on Mondays and might also be closed on other midweek afternoons.

**Help Us!**

After the walk, we would love to get your feedback

You can upload photos to the SWC Group on  Flickr, and videos to  Youtube. This walk's tags are:



---

**By Car**

**Start** TN3 9TL **Finish** TN3 9LE

---

**Help**

National Rail: 03457 48 49 50 • Travelline SE (bus times): 0871 200 2233 (12p/min) • TFL (London) : 0343 222 1234

---

**Version**

Jun-20

---

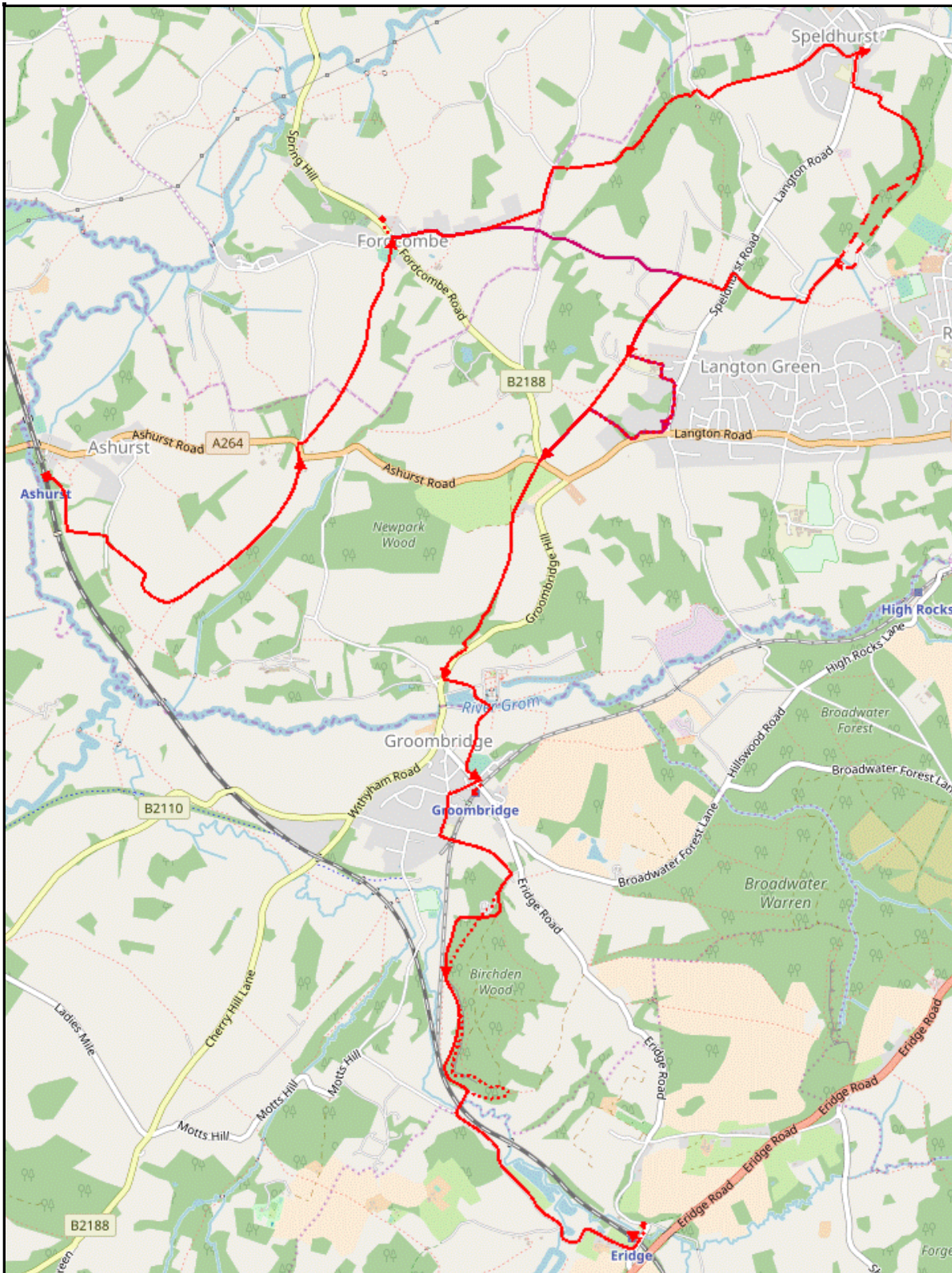
**Copyright**

© Saturday Walkers Club. All Rights Reserved. No commercial use. No copying. No derivatives. Free with attribution for one time non-commercial use only. [www.walkingclub.org.uk/site/license.shtml](http://www.walkingclub.org.uk/site/license.shtml)

## Walk Directions



# Walk Map



All maps © OpenStreetMap contributors

## Walk Options

- M. Main Walk, via Speldhurst (18¼ km)**
- a. Short Walk, via Langton Green (14½ km)**

# Walk Directions

## A. Ashurst Station to Stone Cross (2½ km)

*The first 600m is the same as Walks #29 & #110.*

1. From the station's small car park do not take the obvious way out to the A264, but **take the private road in the opposite direction**, heading **S** and briefly joining the **Sussex Border Path**<sup>1</sup> (SBP). This driveway winds uphill and curves to the right where a footpath joins from the left.
2. After 200m along a level stretch, **turn left** to go up a grassy track between hedges. At the top turn right briefly onto a track, then in 40m **turn left** through a wooden fieldgate into the bottom corner of a large field, leaving the SBP.
3. Continue up its left-hand edge, climbing steadily for 300m with increasingly fine views across the Medway valley. At the top ignore a gap in the hedge ahead and **turn right** to go around the top of the field, curving left alongside the hedge. In 100m go through a new metal gate in the hedge (replacing a dilapidated stile on its left) to continue along the top of another field.
4. In 150m, just before the next corner, **go over a stile on the left** into the top of a steep-sided valley, soon merging with the **Wealdway**<sup>2</sup> (WW) coming in from the right. Follow a grassy path near the top of this picturesque valley, with **Burrs Wood** off to the right. In 400m go through a metal kissing gate to the left of a wooden fieldgate to continue along a narrow field.
5. At the far end go through another metal kissing gate onto a short path through some trees and continue on a grassy strip alongside a wooden fence. Where the way ahead is blocked by trees veer right as indicated onto a narrow path beside a brick wall. Follow this out through another gate to emerge onto the A264 at a bend.

## B. Stone Cross to Fordcombe (1¼ km)

6. Keep left for an awkward little stretch alongside the A264, still on the WW. The onward route is the minor road branching off to the right where the A264 bends sharply left, so where you have a clear view in both directions **cross the main road with great care**.
7. At this junction turn right into Broad Lane and almost immediately **turn right again** into the driveway to Stone Cross Farm, a public footpath. Follow this round to the left and onto a farm track. In 25m **go over a stile on the left** and continue in the same direction along the right-hand edge of three large fields for 1 km.
8. The footpath continues with a hedge separating you from a fourth field and comes out in the corner of a village green. Make your way around the cricket pitch to the opposite corner, aiming just to the right of the pavilion, to reach the B2188 near the village sign for **Fordcombe**<sup>3</sup>. Unless you want to detour to the early lunch pub, cross the road onto Fordcombe Lane opposite.

### 9. Detour to the Chafford Arms (+250m)

- Turn left onto the main road, passing the village school and crossing over at some point; the pub is on the right-hand side of the road opposite the church. Return the same way.

*If you are doing the Short Walk (via Langton Green), go to §G.*

## C. Fordcombe to Speldhurst (3¼ km)

10. Leave the village on Fordcombe Lane, heading **E** and going past a long string of cottages. Follow this quiet lane for 900m, all the way to a T-junction where you turn left. After a further 250m of road walking along Poundsbridge Hill, **turn right** onto a signposted footpath opposite Coopers Lane.
11. Go over a stile, through a belt of trees and over another stile. Follow a grassy path diagonally across a field, over a stile and keep ahead across a larger field. In the far corner go over yet another stile into **Avery's Wood**.



12. The woodland path heads **NE** along the top of a wooded valley, gradually descending. In 100m it turns right and drops further downhill, then bends left to continue in the same direction as before. In a further 300m a tricky little descent over tree roots takes you down to a footbridge across the stream at the bottom of the valley.
13. On the far side follow the path up and round to the right. At the top of some steps you come to a path junction and **turn left**, joining the **Tunbridge Wells Circular Walk<sup>4</sup>** (TWCW). A short path alongside a wooden fence takes you out to a minor road (Bullingstone Lane).
14. Turn right to go uphill on the lane for 100m, then **turn left** onto a signposted footpath. Simply follow this fenced path for 800m through a wooded area, across the middle of a large field and finally between houses to a street (Penshurst Road) in the village of **Speldhurst**.
15. Turn right onto the street and follow it round a left-hand bend to a road junction, with the church of **St Mary the Virgin<sup>5</sup>** (which is well worth a visit) on the left. You will be leaving the village along Langton Road to the right, but to visit the suggested lunch pub go down Speldhurst Hill for 50m to find the **George & Dragon** on the right.

#### D. Speldhurst to Farnham Lane (1¾ km)

16. From the pub go back up the hill and turn left into Langton Road, finally leaving the WW but staying on a link route for the TWCW. In 175m **turn left** into a tarmac driveway leading to a number of houses, which is also a public footpath.
17. In front of the last house follow the path round to the right and back to the left. Go through a squeeze gate onto a narrow path initially between hedges, then downhill into a wood. Follow the path across a stream on a narrow footbridge and up a slope on the other side, now heading **S**.
18. At the top the path merges with a bridleway from the left. Stay on the main path as it drops downhill again, leaving the TWCW which branches off to the left. After the path swings round to the right and levels out you come to a fork, where you can take either route. If the slightly nicer lower route looks excessively muddy it is advisable to take the higher route in [20].

#### 19. Lower route

- a. **Fork right** onto a footpath through the middle of the wood, in places on boardwalks where it runs close to a stream. In 450m keep ahead at a path crossing, then shortly afterwards go over a stile to leave the wood.
- b. Continue in the same direction along a field edge, over the stream and up a slope in a second field. At the top go over a stile and bear right onto a minor road (Farnham Lane).

#### 20. Upper route

- a. **Fork left** onto a bridleway along the edge of the wood, climbing gently at first. In 600m it comes out onto a minor road (Farnham Lane) at a hairpin bend.
- b. Keep right to go downhill on the lane, round a right-hand bend and back uphill. At the top the lane bends left where the lower route rejoins from a field on the right.

#### E. Farnham Lane to Ashurst Place (1¾ km)

21. Go along Farnham Lane and keep ahead at a road junction after 250m. In a further 50m, with footpaths on both sides, **go over a stile on the right** and down across a small field. At the bottom cross a stream on a footbridge and **turn half-left**, following a faint grassy path slanting gently uphill.
22. At the top of the slope go past the left-hand end of a line of trees and bear right to continue along the top of the field, with trees on your right and heading **W**. In the next corner **veer right and left** through a gap in the trees to continue in much the same direction (slightly to the right) across another field.
23. On the far side go through a belt of trees, passing a pond on your left, into a small field with a cottage ahead. **Turn half-right** to go past the right-hand end of its garden hedge and bear left to go alongside it. A stile in the hedge ahead takes you out onto Speldhurst Road.

24. Turn left and go along the pavement past the cottage, then **turn right** at a road junction into Leggs Lane. Go along this lane for 300m, passing footpaths on both sides along the way (where you rejoin the TWCW), then **turn left** through a wooden kissing gate onto the second footpath on this side of the road.
25. Follow a grassy path across the field, gradually moving away from the left-hand edge. On the far side go through a wooden kissing gate in a belt of trees and continue in the same direction across two more small fields, crossing the driveway to Shirley Hall via more kissing gates in the middle.
26. After passing through another belt of trees keep ahead along a broad grassy strip for 200m, with a recreation ground behind the trees on your left. At the end of the trees you are level with **Ashurst Place** on your right and there is a small open area on your left.

## F. Ashurst Place to Fordcombe Road (1 • 1¾ km)

*If you want a late lunch stop at The Hare, follow the alternative directions in [28].*

### 27. Main route (1 km)

- a. Continue along the grassy strip, now with a school playing field behind the trees on your left. In 100m go over a stile, across the driveway to Ashurst Place and through an old squeeze gate to continue along the left-hand edge of a field.
- b. In the next corner go over the left-hand of two stiles to maintain direction on a short path between fences, then along the left-hand edge of another field. On the far side keep ahead over a pair of stiles, where the longer route rejoins from the fenced path on the left.

### 28. Route via Langton Green (1¾ km)

- a. **Veer left** across the open area, towards the far right-hand corner.
  - You could also go along the right-hand side of the recreation ground ahead on your left (past Langton Pavilion and the Village Hall), but would then have a longer stretch along Speldhurst Road.
- b. On the suggested route go through an old gate onto a tarmac path between a basketball court and the school field. At a path T-junction **turn right** and follow it out to a residential street. Keep ahead past houses to a T-junction and **turn left** onto Lampington Row. This goes past more houses and bends round to the right to meet Speldhurst Road. **The Hare** is 250m ahead at the T-junction with the A264.

*Although the pub is on the right-hand side of Speldhurst Road it is safer to cross over and use the footway on the far side, then cross back again when opposite the village green.*

- c. On leaving the pub turn right to go alongside the A264 for 150m (you can detour through the churchyard of **All Saints**<sup>6</sup> for a brief respite from the traffic). At the end of the pavement **veer right** through a wooden kissing gate onto a woodland path.
  - d. Keep right through this small wood, at first alongside a wooden fence and then some sandstone rocks. Continue on a potentially muddy fenced path between fields for 125m to a path crossing with stiles on both sides and **go over the stile on the left**.
29. Follow a clear path for 400m, heading **SW**: between fields, through trees on the edge of a copse and finally straight ahead across another field. At the end go out through a metal kissing gate onto the B2188 (Fordcombe Road), near its junction with the A264.

*Continue the directions at §I.*

## G. Fordcombe to Langton Green (3 km)

30. Leave the village on Fordcombe Lane, heading **E** and going past a long string of cottages. In 600m, shortly after passing 'National Speed Limit' road signs, **go over a stile on the right** and follow a grassy path near the right-hand edge of a field.
31. At the far end pass to the right of a hedge surrounding a house. Go through a small metal gate and over a stile onto a minor road (Old House Lane) at a junction. Cross the road carefully to continue in the same direction on Leggs Lane, leaving the WW.

32. In 600m you pass Shirley Lodge on your right, then in a further 250m the driveway to Danemore Farm on the left. Shortly afterwards **turn right** through a wooden kissing gate onto a signposted footpath, joining the **Tunbridge Wells Circular Walk<sup>4</sup>** (TWCW).
33. Follow a grassy path across the field, gradually moving away from the left-hand edge. On the far side go through a wooden kissing gate in a belt of trees and continue in the same direction across two more small fields, crossing the driveway to Shirley Hall via more kissing gates in the middle.
34. After passing through another belt of trees keep ahead along a broad grassy strip for 200m, with a recreation ground behind the trees on your left. At the end of the trees you are level with **Ashurst Place** on your right and there is a small open area on your left.
35. **Veer left** across the open area, towards the far right-hand corner.
  - You could also go along the right-hand side of the recreation ground ahead on your left (past Langton Pavilion and the Village Hall), but would then have a longer stretch along Speldhurst Road.
36. On the suggested route go through an old gate onto a tarmac path between a basketball court and the school field. At a path T-junction **turn right** and follow it out to a residential street. Keep ahead past houses to a T-junction and **turn left** onto Lampington Row. This goes past more houses and bends round to the right to meet Speldhurst Road. **The Hare** is 250m ahead at the T-junction with the A264.
 

*Although the pub is on the right-hand side of Speldhurst Road it is safer to cross over and use the footway on the far side, then cross back again when opposite the village green.*

#### H. Langton Green to Fordcombe Road (1 km)

37. On leaving the pub turn right to go alongside the A264 for 150m (you can detour through the churchyard of **All Saints<sup>6</sup>** for a brief respite from the traffic). At the end of the pavement **veer right** through a wooden kissing gate onto a woodland path.
38. Keep right through this small wood, at first alongside a wooden fence and then some sandstone rocks. Continue on a potentially muddy fenced path between fields for 125m to a path crossing with stiles on both sides and **go over the stile on the left**.
39. Follow a clear path for 400m, heading **SW**: between fields, through trees on the edge of a copse and finally straight ahead across another field. At the end go out through a metal kissing gate onto the B2188 (Fordcombe Road), near its junction with the A264.

#### I. Fordcombe Road to Old Groombridge (1½ km)

40. At this awkward road junction bear left to **cross both roads with great care**. On the far side of the A264 go up a strip of grass and over a stile into a large field. Follow a grassy path straight ahead, aiming to the right of some distant cottages and passing an isolated oak tree in the middle of the field.
41. In the far corner make your way across a potentially muddy area and go through a couple of fieldgates to a T-junction with a farm track. **Turn right** briefly onto the track, then in 30m **fork left** onto another tree-lined farm track heading **S**.
42. Follow this enclosed path in much the same direction for 500m, negotiating gates and stiles as necessary. The path goes between fields, past a cluster of farm buildings on the left and finally alongside a copse. At the end go over a stile into **Beech Wood**.
43. Continue on a faint woodland path, which soon swings right to go past a large oak tree. It then veers left to stay near the left-hand edge of the wood, passing a few yellow waymarkers on its descent.
44. In 250m the footpath emerges onto the B2110 where you turn right to go along its pavement, still downhill. In 200m you come to the **Crown Inn** on your right, at the top of a sloping village green<sup>7</sup>.



## J. Old Groombridge to Groombridge Station (1 km)

*The remainder of the walk is the same as the shortest ending to Walk #120.*

45. Cross the B2110 carefully by the pub and go through a wooden gate onto a footpath, still on the TWCW. The path goes between an attractive cottage and the brick-built church of **St John the Evangelist**<sup>8</sup>.
46. Go through another gate into a field and follow a grassy path sloping gently downhill, with a glimpse of **Groombridge Place Gardens**<sup>9</sup> ahead on your left. In the bottom corner go through an iron gate, across an old driveway and onto a path alongside a lake.
47. At the end go down a few steps on the left to head directly towards **Groombridge Place**<sup>10</sup>, framed by four giant redwood trees. Bear right as indicated and cross a tarmac driveway to continue between the moat and the **River Grom**<sup>11</sup>. Near the back of the house **turn right** and cross the river on a stone bridge.
48. On the other side of the bridge continue briefly along a track, then take a potentially muddy path between low wire fences, slanting off to the right. Follow it round to the left and uphill. At the top of the slope go through a gate and continue near the left-hand side of a recreation ground.
49. After passing a children's playground on the right leave the ground through a side gate and turn left onto Station Road, with the **Junction Inn** opposite. Fork left into a side street (Newton Willows), towards the old **Groombridge station**<sup>12</sup> building.
  - Before continuing the walk (back to Station Road via a flight of steps on the right) you might like to make a short out-and-back detour through the station building and round to the new platform for the **Spa Valley Railway**<sup>13</sup> (SVR) on the other side of the road bridge; there is a kiosk on the platform serving snacks when trains are running.

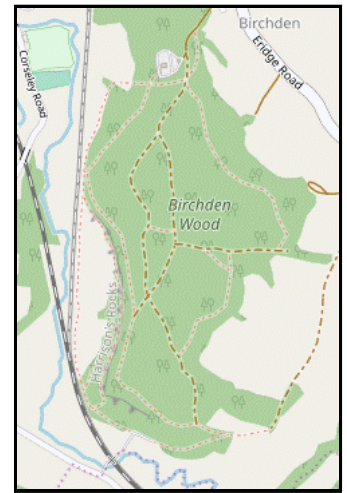
## K. Groombridge Station to Harrison's Rocks (1¾ km)

50. After going up the steps cross over Station Road and go through the small wooden gate opposite onto a tarmac path. Keep ahead along a cul-de-sac (Gromenfield) and turn right at the end to come out onto Corseley Road. Turn left and follow this tree-lined street for 250m to a sharp right-hand bend, passing the church of **St Thomas the Apostle**<sup>14</sup> and a primary school on the left.
51. At this bend **turn left** onto a tarmac path alongside the school, joining the **High Weald Landscape Trail**<sup>15</sup> (HWLT). Cross the railway on a long footbridge and continue on an enclosed path between fields for 400m.
52. At the end go through a kissing gate and turn right onto the access road for Aytton's Wood car park. In 150m there is a footpath signpost pointing left into the trees. Unless it looks impossibly muddy **turn left** and follow this footpath downhill and round to the right.
  - You could stay on the access road and rejoin the public footpath behind the car park.
53. The public footpath crosses over a forestry track and heads **W** along the edge of **Birchden Wood**, passing the car park on the right. Unless you want to cut through a corner of this open access wood, follow the footpath out into a more open area.
  - These woodland paths between the car park and Harrison's Rocks are used by climbers, but they are crossed by tiny streams and can be tricky after heavy rain.
54. Outside the wood, the public footpath veers left and crosses a stream at a potentially muddy spot. It gradually approaches the embankment carrying the SVR and at its closest point there are two openings into the wood: the short cut from the car park and (50m further on) a wooden gate with a sign for **Harrison's Rocks**.

## L. Harrison's Rocks to Eridge Station (2½ • 3 km)

55. Go through the gate for the rocks and turn right, leaving the HWLT & TWCW. This path gradually diverges from the public footpath alongside the railway embankment and soon reaches the start of the sandstone outcrop. After about 250m it forks, with the right-hand (lower) path being the one intended for walkers.

*For a closer look at the rocks you can take the longer and slightly awkward alternative route in [57].*



## 56. Main route

- Fork right** onto the "walkers' path", which runs a little way below the rocks and gradually curves back towards the railway line. Eventually you go through a gate and turn left, rejoining the public footpath (now some way above the tracks).
- In 200m go through a gate at **Birchden Forge**<sup>16</sup> and **turn right** at a footpath junction in front of the attractive Forge Farm Oast.

## 57. Alternative route (+½ km)

- Fork left** onto the "climbers' path" alongside the base of the rocks. If you persevere with this uneven path (rather than taking one of the narrow link paths down to the lower route) it eventually turns sharply left at a corner in the outcrop.
  - A little further on you cross a small dip on a plank bridge with a wooden handrail and go up a short slope. At this point (where you can see the end of the outcrop, about 50m ahead) **veer left** towards what looks like a dead end but actually leads to a flight of stone steps cut into a cleft in the rocks.
  - Go up these steps and veer left onto one of the paths through the undergrowth to reach a broad forest track in Birchden Wood. Turn right onto this track, soon with a fence on your right. In 150m, after the track has curved left, **turn right** onto a path heading **ESE**.
  - The path gradually approaches a public footpath coming up from the right: you need to **turn sharp right** onto it (almost doubling back, to head **WSW**), either via a short link path after 50m or where the two paths merge at the end of the wood.
  - Follow the footpath downhill past an old metal fieldgate, then round to the right and onto the driveway for Forge Farm House. Immediately after passing the attractive Forge Farm Oast **turn left** at a footpath junction.
58. Follow the driveway out towards the railway line, with **Eridge Stream**<sup>11</sup> flowing over a weir in the garden on the left. After going over a level crossing (where the first track is the SVR and the second is the main line) you come to a T-junction with a lane (Forge Road).
59. Turn left and go all the way along this quiet lane, parallel to the railway. In 1 km the lane skirts around some large ponds and on the final 400m you can see the platforms of Eridge station across the fields on your left. Forge Road ends at a T-junction where you turn left.
60. If you want some refreshment while waiting for a train, **The Huntsman** pub is on the left-hand side, 100m past the station entrance (return the same way). Trains to London and Uckfield both leave from the platform down to the left; the one on the right is for the SVR.

## Walk Notes

- The **Sussex Border Path** runs for 240 km along the length of West & East Sussex, from Thorney Island on the Hampshire border to Rye.
- The **Wealdway** runs for 130 km through the Kent and Sussex Weald, from Gravesend on the Thames estuary to the outskirts of Eastbourne.
- Fordcombe** developed to support a large paper mill on the River Medway. In its heyday the town's shops included a cricket ball maker, as can be seen on the village sign.
- The 44 km **Tunbridge Wells Circular Walk** (formerly the High Weald Walk) was established by the Borough Council as one of its centenary events in 1989.
- St Mary the Virgin, Speldhurst** is the same design as an earlier 15<sup>th</sup>C church which had been destroyed by fire in 1791. Its 'wretched' replacement had fallen into disrepair and the present church was built in 1871 to a much higher standard. It is decorated throughout with pre-Raphaelite stained glass windows from Morris & Co, designed by Edward Burne-Jones.
- All Saints, Langton Green** is a Gothic Revival church in Early English style, built in 1863 to a design by Sir Giles Gilbert-Scott. Like its larger neighbour at Speldhurst it contains some pre-Raphaelite stained glass windows, including one by William Morris.

7. The cluster of houses around the village green is the original settlement ('old' **Groombridge**, in Kent). The railway led to the development of the new village across the River Grom, in East Sussex.
8. **St John the Evangelist, Groombridge** (in the diocese of Rochester) was built in 1625 as a private chapel for Groombridge Place, only becoming the parish church in 1872. It has some unusual features, such as a one-handed clock.
9. **Groombridge Place Gardens** are a popular visitor attraction, combining 17<sup>th</sup>C formal walled gardens designed as 'outside rooms' of the house, and the **Enchanted Forest** which aims to "intrigue, amuse and entertain".
10. The present house at **Groombridge Place** was built in the early 17<sup>th</sup>C on the site of a medieval moated house (and possibly an earlier Saxon fort). A 12 year-old French Count was held hostage here in the Hundred Years War until his ransom was paid 30 years later. It was the setting for Peter Greenaway's 1982 film *The Draughtsman's Contract* and was used for Longbourn in the 2005 adaptation of *Pride & Prejudice*.
11. The **River Grom** and **Eridge Stream** are tributaries of the **River Medway**, joining the main river 2 km west of Groombridge.
12. The line through **Groombridge station** used to carry trains to London, Three Bridges, Brighton and Eastbourne. The SVR platform had to be re-sited on the other side of the road bridge because the station building had been converted into a private residence.
13. The **Spa Valley Railway** began operating steam and diesel trains from Tunbridge Wells West in 1997, at first to Groombridge and then Eridge in 2011. The line had been closed by British Rail in 1985, some years after the Beeching Report.
14. **St Thomas the Apostle, Groombridge** (in the diocese of Chichester) was designed by the famous architect Norman Shaw. It was built to serve the new community which developed after the arrival of the railway and opened in 1884.
15. The **High Weald Landscape Trail** runs for 145 km across the length of the High Weald, mostly near its northern edge, from Horsham in West Sussex to Rye.
16. Ammunition was manufactured at **Birchden Forge** until the mid-18<sup>th</sup>C.

» *Last updated: June 23, 2020*

© [Saturday Walkers Club](#). All Rights Reserved. No commercial use. No copying. No derivatives. Free with attribution for one time non-commercial use only.  
[www.walkingclub.org.uk/site/license.shtml](http://www.walkingclub.org.uk/site/license.shtml)

[Saturday Walkers Club](#) • © 2000-2020 All Rights Reserved • [saturdaywalkers@walkingclub.org.uk](mailto:saturdaywalkers@walkingclub.org.uk)