

Last walk check			
Sat 19 th October 2019			
Current status	Document last updated Saturday, 29 th February 2020		
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<p>This walk has been checked twice in the last year, however the publisher cannot accept responsibility for any problems encountered by readers.</p>			

Cowden to Eridge

Start: Cowden station

Finish: Eridge station

Length: 19.5km (12.1 miles). For a shorter walk, see *below* **Walk options**.

Time: 6 hours. For the whole outing, including trains, sights and meals, allow at least 9 hours.

Transport: Trains on Monday to Saturday go from London Bridge to Cowden, journey time 45 minutes. On Sunday there is no direct train service. Take the East Grinstead train from London Victoria and change at Oxted, journey time just over an hour. Buy a day return to Eridge. If driving, park at the station car park at Cowden, which is two stops up the line from Eridge.

OS Landranger Map: 188

OS Explorer Map: 135 and 147

Cowden, map reference TQ 476417, is in **Kent**, 11km west of Tunbridge Wells.

Toughness: 4 out of 10

Walk Notes: At weekends, if intending to dine at the Huntsman at the end of the walk, booking in advance is strongly advised.

Walk options: It is possible to shorten the walk by 3km to 16.5km (10.3 miles) by taking the Weald Way short cut to Withyham at [3]. This walk may also be shortened by 5km by starting at Ashurst. (Ref: Starting the walk at Ashurst, at the end.) Combining these two short cuts will shorten the walk by 8km to 11.5km (7.1 miles).

Saturday Walkers' Club: Take the train nearest to 9.40am from London Bridge or London Victoria.

WALK DIRECTIONS

[1] [Numbers refer to the map.]

Coming out of the ticket hall *turn right down the station drive to reach a T-junction with the main road after 70 metres. Turn right and after 15 metres turn left over a stile (just before the railway bridge) to go along a footpath along the lower right-hand side of a field, your direction 130 degrees. In 320 metres cross a stile and a 2 plank bridge into the next field. In 20 metres turn right through a metal gate down a footpath under the railway. In 50 metres cross a footbridge and turn half left to go through a fieldgate gap after 70 metres, to continue along the bottom left-hand side of a field, your direction*

110 degrees.

In 140 metres go over a stile to the left of a metal fieldgate to go along the left-hand side of this next field. After 400 metres cross over a stile to the left of a metal fieldgate (50 metres from the left-hand corner of the field). Cross a lane to go through a metal gate into the next field to go along a bridleway, your initial direction 150 degrees. After 50 metres you pass by a pond on your right-hand side as the bridleway curves to the right to continue along the right-hand side of this narrow field, your direction south. In 220 metres (having crossed a gated car wide track along the way) at the right-hand corner of this field *go through a wooden gate and cross a footbridge to turn left next to a 4 armed footpath signpost*, to join the Sussex Border Path (SBP). After 15 metres you come out into the corner of a field to go along its left-hand side in an easterly direction.

After 140 metres at the left-hand field corner, go through a gap to the left of a metal fieldgate and continue on the footpath with a stream on your left and a hedgerow to your right. In 180 metres cross a wooden footbridge and another after a further 70 metres, followed by a stile, to go along the left-hand side of a field, your direction 100 degrees. After 100 metres by the left-hand corner of the field cross a wooden footbridge into the next field to go along its left-hand edge. In 130 metres *turn left through a metal fieldgate to go down under a railway bridge. In 50 metres by a 2-armed wooden footpath signpost turn half-right across a field**, your direction 80 degrees. After 220 metres you cross over a grass field boundary into the next field and continue in the same direction aiming for the far left-hand corner of the field, 200 metres distant. [*In boggy conditions / recently ploughed / high crop, you may find it easier to follow the right-hand edge of the fields all the way round to the far field left-hand corner.]

At the left-hand corner of the field, cross over a stile (TQ4946 4079) and go along the left-hand side of this next field. In 50 metres turn left across a wooden footbridge to turn right along the right-hand side of a field, your direction 100 degrees. In 120 metres go through a car-wide gap into the next field and continue along a wide fenced-in footpath field boundary (with the stream on your right). In 100 metres (the path having narrowed), ignore a metal gate to the left and continue ahead across a narrow field, your initial direction 130 degrees, with the stream off to your right-hand side. 150 metres further on, go through a narrow section of the field, to then fork right, aiming for the far right-hand corner. In 140 metres cross a metal railing footbridge and continue along the right-hand side of this next field. In 200 metres at the right-hand field corner *cross a stile and turn right along a lane to then turn left through a gap after 15 metres*, to continue along the right-hand side of a narrow field with the stream on your right, your direction 140 degrees.

After 500 metres, cross over a wooden railing footbridge to go across a golf course. In 70 metres go through a metal kissing gate to leave the golf course and continue in the same direction along the right-hand side of a narrow field, (passing under some National Grid cables). After 240 metres at the right-hand corner of the field, cross a metal railed footbridge to turn right along the right-hand side of this next field, your direction 170 degrees. [!]In 60 metres *turn right across a metal railed footbridge and veer slightly left up across a field, aiming to the left of a large corrugated metal farm building* on the far side, your direction 220 degrees. In 200 metres *go up a car wide earth track* to continue ahead through the farm. *In 220 metres (by a mini pylon pole with a grey transformer box on your right-hand side), the drive curves to the right. After 70 metres turn left, your direction 170 degrees*, down across a field. After 80 metres you *pass by a pond on your right-hand side*, to continue down across the field, aiming for a gap in the trees at the bottom, your direction 160 degrees.

In 200 metres go through the gap to go along the right-hand side of a small narrow field, (passing by a pillbox up to your right along the way). After 140 metres go through a lightly wooded area with the river Medway on your immediate left. In 30 metres (with another pillbox to your right) you emerge into the next field. Go diagonally across this field aiming for the far right-hand corner, your direction south. In 200 metres go through a metal fieldgate to go along a footpath with the river on your left and the railway embankment to your right, your direction 170 degrees. After 80 metres having gone under a railway bridge you reach a field to continue along its left-hand edge, your direction 220 degrees.

After 200 metres at the field corner *go over a stile* to the left of a double metal fieldgate, *to come out onto the A264*. Cross the A264 with care *to reach a lay by*. Turn right and after 25 metres turn left over a stile. **[2]** In 30 metres turn half-right slightly up a footpath, through trees, your direction 230 degrees. In 100 metres cross a plank footbridge and turn right up an enclosed footpath along the right-hand edge of a field. In 220 metres cross a stile to go diagonally up across a field, aiming for the far upper left-hand corner, next to a house with a clock tower and weather vane atop (not initially visible), your direction 230 degrees. In 230 metres go over a stile to the left of a metal fieldgate to go up a concrete drive. In 50 metres *go up a flight of steps and turn left down a concrete drive* to continue straight ahead through a wooden gate to join a fenced in footpath, along the left-hand edge of a field, your direction south. After 120 metres cross into the next field and continue along its upper right-hand side, your direction 210 degrees.

After 110 metres go down through a wood in the same direction. In 70 metres go through a metal gate to the right of a metal fieldgate, to go down the left-hand side of a field, your direction 160 degrees. In 300 metres *at the left-hand corner of the field, turn half right to reach a lane junction at the bottom after 80 metres, and veer right up a lane*, your direction 220 degrees.

After 350 metres where the lane curves to the right, continue straight up a car wide track through a wood, (marked by a bridleway signpost on the left), your direction south. After 220 metres the track levels and joins a lane; your direction 190 degrees. In 200 metres (having passed 2 houses on your left) the lane descends passing by a pond on your right-hand side. In 80 metres *at a lane junction veer left down a lane*. In 400 metres *at the bottom and immediately past a building on your right, turn right* into the driveway of Summerford Farm to join the Weald Way (WW), your direction west. In 90 metres follow the driveway as it veers up to the right, marked by a WW footpath post. After 260 metres *go through a metal fieldgate and turn left along a fenced in car wide grass track*, your direction 250 degrees, to then after a further 20 metres go to the left of a metal car-barrier.

[!] In 100 metres turn left through a wooden gate and down some steps to continue along an enclosed footpath. In 150 metres you enter a wood after 50 metres. In 20 metres you reach a footpath junction marked by a post. **[3]** Now there are two alternatives. **(i)** Take the short cut to Withyham, reducing the main walk by 3km, or **(ii)** continue with the main walk for lunch at Hartfield.

(i) Short cut: *Veer left* down the footpath (WW), your direction 220 degrees. In 30 metres go over a stile to emerge from the wood, with the river Medway on your left-hand side. After 50 metres, head diagonally across a field aiming for a wooden footbridge on the far side, your direction 210 degrees. In 180 metres cross a footbridge and veer left to cross a stile (to the left of a wooden fieldgate) after 50 metres. Cross

the Forest Way to go over a stile after 30 metres. Continue straight ahead across a field, your direction 170 degrees.

In 350 metres go over a stile to the right of a metal fieldgate to continue across the next field, your direction south, towards the B2110. In 250 metres cross a stile to the right of a metal fieldgate and *turn left onto the B2155 to cross a bridge after 10 metres. After 25 metres veer right up a lane* leading to Withyham Church. *After 100 metres the lane starts to level at a small lane junction.* If not visiting the church, *turn sharp left down a driveway*, your direction 10 degrees. Rejoin the route at the asterisk [*] below.

(ii) Main walk route: At the footpath junction *veer right* up the footpath, your direction 250 degrees, to leave the WW. In 100 metres go through a wooden gate to emerge from the wood and continue along the upper right-hand side of a field, your direction 240 degrees. In 300 metres go over a stile to the left of a metal fieldgate to continue along a fenced in car wide track. In 150 metres *cross a stile to the left of a metal fieldgate and turn left down a track.* In 130 metres cross a wooden footbridge followed by a stile to cross over the Forest Way (a disused railway) to then go over a stile (to the left of a wooden fieldgate) into a field. Go diagonally across this field aiming for the left-hand corner. (The spire of St. Mary the Virgin Church, Hartfield is clearly visible.) In 200 metres *go through a fieldgate wide gap and turn right along the lower right-hand side of a field*, your direction 260 degrees. In 110 metres cross a stile to the right of a metal fieldgate and continue along the right-hand side of this next field.

After 220 metres *at the lower right-hand field corner, cross a stile and turn left to reach the corner of a field after 10 metres. Turn half right to go across this field*, your direction 220 degrees, passing to the left corner of a garden boundary after 120 metres. After a further 80 metres cross a stile to the left of a metal fieldgate, *to cross over the B2110 and a stile (to the right of a metal fieldgate) after 25 metres. Go up the right-hand side of a field*, your direction 230 degrees.

In 200 metres *at the right-hand corner of the field cross a stile and turn right up a footpath through a wooded boundary*, your direction 320 degrees. In 80 metres veer left onto a car wide driveway to reach the **Anchor pub** after 130 metres. (Continue further on to the T-junction with the High Street and turn left for the Haywaggon Inn.)

Coming out of the pub *turn left up the driveway. In 100 metres turn right up some brick steps*, marked by a footpath post (Withyham) to cross a stile *and turn left along the field edge*, your direction 120 degrees. In 120 metres cross a stile to the right of a metal fieldgate and continue along the left-hand edge of the next field. After 170 metres cross a stile into the next field to *reach a footpath junction marked by a post.* Ignore a footpath further to the left to *take the footpath veering slightly left across the field*, your direction 110 degrees. In 150 metres cross over into the next field, to continue in the same direction aiming for the far bottom field corner. In 250 metres *go through a fieldgate gap, and veer right along a car wide track to go through a fieldgate entrance after 60 metres into the next field. Veer left* along its left-hand side, your direction 120 degrees. In 350 metres at the left-hand field corner, go through a wooden gate to *cross a car wide bridge and turn left*, your direction 40 degrees. *In 40 metres fork right*, to go up through a wood, your direction 110 degrees. In 200 metres you emerge into a field, to continue ahead aiming for the upper far corner of the field, your initial direction 60 degrees. In 280 metres *cross a stile*, marked by a 3 armed footpath signpost *and turn left along a lane.*

In 280 *at a small lane junction* (having passed 2 houses up to your right), if not visiting

the church, *fork right, down a driveway*, your direction 5 degrees.

[*] After 60 metres you pass Rectory Cottage on your right and after a further 80 metres reach a wooden fieldgate, to continue on a pavement along the B2110. After 70 metres where the pavement gives out, cross over to continue on the other side. In 40 metres the pavement ducks for 30 metres behind a hedge by the village hall. In a further 25 metres *turn right*, (indicated by a footpath signpost,) *up an initially sand shingle driveway passing the **Dorset Arms*** (lunch stop for the short cut walk) *on your left-hand side*, your direction 150 degrees. After 500 metres cross a bridge over a stream and after 60 metres pass by a white painted clapboard house on your left-hand side, where the driveway curves up to the left, your direction east. In 350 metres you *pass by a lake on your left*, (ignore a lane off to the right), *to continue up the lane which veers up to the right*, your direction south.

[!] *In 100 metres turn sharp left to leave the driveway*, (as marked by a footpath post) to go up a car wide grass track, your direction 80 degrees. In 80 metres where the track levels, continue ahead with a fence and field beyond to your right and a wood down to your left, your initial direction 120 degrees. In 400 metres *just before a metal fieldgate, turn right over a stile and veer left up the side of a field* (with the wood off to your left), your direction 170 degrees.

In 160 metres ignore a stile on your left to continue across a field, aiming for a stile to the right of 2 houses in the distance, your direction 210 degrees. In 250 metres cross the stile into the next field and veer left down its left-hand edge, your direction 190 degrees. In 170 metres turn left over a stile into a wood to continue down the right-hand edge of the wood in the same direction.

After 150 metres you *come out onto a B2188 / lane junction. Cross the B2188 and continue* in the same direction (170 degrees), *up the lane. After 300 metres with Whitehouse Farm further up to your right, turn left* (marked by a 2 armed footpath signpost) *over a stile* (to the left of a metal fieldgate) to go along the right-hand side of a field, your direction 120 degrees.

In 160 metres you go over a stile to *go down through a wood*, your initial direction 80 degrees. *After 40 metres cross a footbridge and turn left over a stile*, your direction 50 degrees. After 150 metres at the corner of the wood, cross a stile to emerge from the wood to go along the left-hand side of a field in an easterly direction. After 250 metres at the left-hand field corner go through a gap to go down a car wide track. In 80 metres by the corner of a garden on your left-hand side, continue straight ahead up across a field, your direction 80 degrees.

After 140 metres cross the stile and continue in the same direction up across the next field. After 100 metres *go through a squeeze stile* next to a 2-armed footpath signpost *to cross the Crowborough road and turn left* along the grass verge.

In 80 metres turn right, down a driveway leading to Park Grove (marked by a wooden footpath signpost, plus concrete footpath marker on the right-hand side of the entrance), your direction east.

In 250 metres you pass by the entrance to Park House on your left-hand side as the driveway curves to the right and becomes sand shingle. In 35 metres go to the right-hand side of a white door garage, and after 30 metres go through a car wide brick post entrance to a small open space. Veer left to go through a car wide entrance after 25 metres, to continue along the right-hand side of a small open space, your direction 80

degrees. In 80 metres *go through a metal kissing gate and turn left down the left-hand side of a field bordering a wood, your direction north.*

In 400 metres (having gone through a high metal gate along the way) go through a high metal gate and continue ahead following a line of trees, and subsequently a fence, your direction 20 degrees. After 250 metres at the right-hand field corner you pass by some large rocks on your left-hand side and after 40 metres go past a redundant stile to go down through a wood, your direction 20 degrees. In 150 metres go over a stile to the left of a wooden fieldgate to go down across a small field. After 80 metres go over a stile to the left of a padlocked wooden gate to enter a wood. In 25 metres go over a footbridge and turn right after a further 25 metres, your direction 60 degrees. In 20 metres cross a tarmac driveway passing by a post after a further 50 metres, to continue ahead down through the wood. In 200 metres cross a wooden footbridge and go through a wooden gate to leave the wood, to cross a small field, aiming for its far side, your direction 80 degrees. (In boggy conditions it is easier to follow the left-hand edge of the field.).

After 100 metres, turn right onto the SBP to go up the left-hand side of this field, crossing into the next field after 40 metres, your direction now 150 degrees.

In 140 metres at the top left-hand corner of this field go through a metal gate to the right of a wooden fieldgate to reach the lower corner of the next field after 30 metres. Continue up (passing to the right of a wooden pylon pole) aiming for a stile next to a wooden pylon pole on the far field boundary. In 130 metres cross a car wide track and continue across the next two fields following the line of pylon poles, your direction 110 degrees. After 200 metres having crossed the two fields go through a car wide gap into the next field following the pylon poles, although now along the left-hand edge of this field.

After 180 metres at the left-hand field corner, with an oast house to your left, cross a stile to go down across this next field, (leaving the line of pylon poles which veer off to the left), your direction 120 degrees. In 100 metres go through a fieldgate gap past a redundant stile, and continue down across this next field in the same direction, aiming for a stile 50 metres to the left of the bottom right-hand corner of the field. In 250 metres *go over the stile and a wooden footbridge to turn left along a car wide bridleway, your initial direction 70 degrees. Follow this bridleway (ignoring all turn offs), which subsequently becomes shingle then tarmac, before entering a wood. After 800 metres at a T-junction turn right down a lane, your initial direction 140 degrees. After 500 metres at a T-junction with the main road, turn left to reach Eridge station after 35 metres. For the recommended tea stop continue for a further 80 metres to reach The Huntsman.*

Starting the walk from Ashurst

From Ashurst station come out into the station car park and turn left along the station drive for 180 metres to reach a T-junction with the main A264. Turn left to go under the railway bridge after 100 metres. After a further 150 metres you reach a lay by on your left. In 25 metres turn left over a stile. Rejoin the main walk directions from [2].

Lunch and Tea places:

The Anchor Inn *Church Street, Hartfield, TN7 4AG (01892 770424)*. Food served noon – 2pm Mon - Sat (to 1.45pm Sun). Located 10 km from the start of the walk

The Dorset Arms *Withyham, TN7 4BD (01892 770278 / www.dorset-arms.co.uk)*.

Food served noon – 2pm Tue - Sun. Located 7 km from the end of the walk

The Haywaggon Inn *High Street, Hartfield, TN7 4AB (01892 770252)*. Food served.

The Huntsman *Groombridge Lane, Eridge, TN3 9LE (01892 864258)* Serves tea, coffee etc. 5.30pm – 11pm Tue - Sat, 7pm – 11pm Sun. (Closed on Mondays.)