

Main walk morning last checked	Shorter morning last checked	Main walk afternoon last checked	Longer afternoon last checked
27 May 2017	6 October 2018	21 March 2018	27 May 2017
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East Grinstead Circular

Length:	Main walk	17.6km (10.9 miles)
	Short walk	15.5km (9.6 miles)
	Long walk	20.2km (12.5 miles)
	Short morning plus long afternoon	18.1km (11.2 miles)
	Short walks to Standen:	7.5km (4.8 miles) to 11.5km (7.1 miles)

Toughness: 5 out of 10

Maps: OS Landranger 187, OS Explorer 135

Features

This walk takes you around pleasant hilly countryside to the south of East Grinstead, with fine views and relatively gentle gradients, and the familiar Wealden mix of pasture, woods and ancient houses. East Grinstead itself, though now surrounded by modern suburbia, still has a quaint old town, perched on a hilltop.

Early in the walk you pass Standen, a National Trust-owned house and garden exemplifying the 19th century Arts and Crafts style popularised by William Morris and others (*see panel page 4*). If you want to make a visit to the house, three **short walks to Standen** are possible - see special section overleaf. Later the walk takes you pass the remains of Brambletye House, a romantic ruin almost since it was built in the 17th century (*see panel page 6*).

After lunch in Forest Row - lots of food options here - the walk takes you past the interesting Tablehurst Farm and up over gentle uplands to East Grinstead, whose old town has plenty of tea options. Walk options (see next section) include a shorter start and a longer afternoon, the latter circling around the Weir Wood Reservoir.

Both the main walk and options suffer from rather squelchy fields in winter, though all also have substantial sections on harder surfaces. But on balance, spring, summer or autumn are the best time to do them.

If only doing the main walk, you only need pages 1-6 and 8-11 of this document.

Walk options

a) Short walk: A shorter start to the walk (6.6km/4.1 miles versus 8.7km/5.4 miles for the main walk) takes you through the historic town centre of East Grinstead and down across fields to Forest Row, passing the Weir Wood Reservoir briefly and also the ruins of Brambletye House. Combined with the main walk route in the afternoon, this makes a walk of **15.5km (9.6 miles)**. This was the original morning route of the walk before the current option via Standen was created, but a drawback of it these days is that the path has been fenced where it crosses a series of fields just after leaving East Grinstead: consequently this section is very muddy in winter and hard-baked into awkward ruts in summer. *Directions for this option start in paragraph 53 on page 6. If doing this option you only need pages 1-3 and 6-11 of this document*

b) Long walk: An alternative longer afternoon route takes you along the southern edge of the Weir Wood. This route has fine views of the reservoir, though never actually getting down to its shoreline (to which there is no public access). It has one 2km section on a road which while not exactly busy does have some fast-moving traffic (more on weekdays than at weekends) and then passes the viewpoint of Stone Farm Rocks and Standen as a potential tea stop (though if you want time to visit the house the Standen morning or one of the **short walks to Standen** below is a better idea). After Standen it repeats a short section of the main walk route and reverses another back to the station, though this latter duplication can be avoided by going back into the historic town centre of East Grinstead instead. In the latter part of this walk you can also hear the puffing and hooting of Bluebell Line steam trains, and there are also bluebell flowers in the woods before and after Standen in late April and early May. Combined with the main walk route in the morning this makes a walk of **20.2km (12.5 miles)**. *To do this option follow the main walk to lunch and then follow the prompts in the directions. If doing this option you only need pages 1-6 and 11-15 of this document.*

c) Short morning, longer afternoon: You can combine the shorter start and the longer afternoon to make a circular walk of **18.1km (11.2 miles)**. This is useful if you want to make a later start or to give you a better chance of getting to Standen in time for tea in the afternoon, though you do repeat a short section of the route in and out of Forest Row. *To do this option start with paragraph 53 on page 6: you will need pages 1-3, 6-8 and 11-15 of the directions.*

Short walks to Standen

These are three short walks designed to give you the maximum amount of time and energy to do a full visit to Standen

i) Circular option: Follow the main walk morning for 3.5km (2.3 miles) until you get to Standen and then switch to the '**To continue the walk**' directions in paragraph 195 on page 13 to return to East Grinstead in 4km (2.5 miles). This makes a circular walk of **7.5km (4.8 miles)**. To avoid repeating the section of the route nearest to East Grinstead, use the town centre ending. *To do this option you only need pages 1-5 and 13-15 of this document.*

ii) East Grinstead to Forest Row: Use the main walk morning as far as Forest Row, a walk of **8.7km (5.4 miles)**. You reach Standen after 3.5km (2.2 miles) and can have lunch in its tea room. Then walk to Forest Row and take the bus back from there (note that buses are limited on Sundays: see **Transport** below). There are tea options in both Forest Row and East Grinstead. *To do this option you only need pages 1-6 of this document.*

iii) Forest Row to East Grinstead: Take the bus from East Grinstead to Forest Row, and then follow **longer afternoon** (*paragraph 147 on page 11*). It is 8.1km (5 miles) from Forest Row to Standen by this route, and then 3.4km (2.1 miles) to East Grinstead, making a total walk of **11.5km (7.1 miles)**. *To do this option you only need pages 1-3 and 11-15.*

Transport

Apart from two of the shorter walks to Standen (see above), these walks start and finish **East Grinstead station**. There are trains every half hour to this from London Victoria, with some extra trains to London Bridge in Monday to Friday rush hours. Get the train nearest to **9.50am** to get to lunch in Forest Row in time: if using the shorter morning route, the train nearest to **10.20am** would be fine.

For the **Short walks to Standen** numbers **ii**) and **iii**) you will need to take a **bus** from Forest Row to East Grinstead station or vice versa. There are two routes - the **270** and the **291**, both hourly Monday to Saturday until the early evening. On Sunday only the 291 runs and its only every two hours, with departures from East Grinstead at 9.41, 11.41 and 13.41 (etc) at time of writing and from Forest Row at 15.29 and 17.29. For more up to date times see www.metrobus.co.uk. In **East Grinstead** the bus stop is by the roundabout 80 metres in front of the station. In **Forest Row** the stop is across the road from the Java and Jazz Cafe and Pizzeria, in front of the Brambletye Hotel.

Lunch

It is 8.7km (5.4 miles) from East Grinstead to Forest Row by the main morning route and 6.6km (4.1 miles) by the shorter morning. Obvious lunch choices are the **Chequers Inn Hotel** (01342 823333, www.chequers1452.co.uk) which serves meals, pizzas and ciabattas 12pm-5pm Tuesday to Saturday and from 12-4pm (roasts) on Sunday. There is no food on Mondays, but the pub is open all afternoon for drinks daily.

Next door to it on the left is the **Java and Jazz Cafe and Pizzeria** (01342 862699) which is open until 10.30pm Monday to Saturday, or 6pm on Sundays.

There are other pubs serving food in Forest Row including the **Brambletye Hotel** across the road from the Java and Jazz and the **Swan Inn**, 80 metres up the hill to the right, which advertises that it serves all afternoon

Forest Row also has various other cafes (including **Taffels**, whose location is marked in the main walk afternoon directions), restaurants and a convenience store or two. On the main walk afternoon just after the village, the **Tablehurst Farm Shop** has a cafe, open Tuesday to Saturday, 9am-5pm, serving sandwiches, savouries, salad and soup, and with some outside tables.

Tea

The most obvious option in East Grinstead is the large **Caffe Nero** in the historic High Street, which is open until 6pm Monday to Saturday and 5pm on Sunday. Around the corner in London Road, the rather smaller **Costa Coffee** is open till 7pm Monday to Saturday and 5.30pm Sunday.

Another nice option is **CJ's Cafe Bar** just before Caffe Nero, which is open until late in the evening Monday to Saturday, though only till 7pm on Sunday. It has a roof terrace with a fine view of the churchyard. Just beyond it on the left is the **Old Bank Cafe**, open to 5pm daily. Pub choices include the **Dorset Arms** opposite CJs, or the nearby **Crown**.

Closer to the station is **Bluebells** (01342 458 491) www.bluebellscafe.co.uk on the corner of Railway Approach, which has a pleasant ambience and good selection of cakes and is open till 5pm daily.

On the longer afternoon route, National Trust members can get tea at **Standen**, which is 8.1km (5 miles) beyond Forest Row. Its self-service restaurant is open till 5pm (or dusk if that is earlier) year round. Non-members may also be able to get tea at Standen without paying the entrance fee for the gardens (which is £4.80), as the self-service restaurant is immediately adjacent to the ticket kiosk. If you arrive towards the end of the day and are very sweet or persuasive (point out it is extra revenue for the NT) they may let you in. Don't spoil it for others by sneaking into the gardens, however.

Another possible tea stop on the longer afternoon route is the **Old Dunnings Mill**, which has outside tables and which seems to be open afternoons, at least in summer. A final backstop alternative is the **Starbucks Cafe** in the Sainsbury's by East Grinstead station, which has some outside tables (albeit overlooking the car park). This is open till 8pm Monday to Saturday, but only 4.30pm on Sunday.

WALK DIRECTIONS

East Grinstead station to Standen (3.5 km/2.2 miles)

This is the start of the main walk: for the short morning see paragraph 53 on page 6.

1. Coming out of **East Grinstead station** veer right to cross the road in front of Sainsbury's in 30 metres and turn left on the far side of the road.
2. In 70 metres, at the roundabout, turn right on a busy road with the rear brick wall of Sainsbury's now to your right and houses soon to your left
3. Keep downhill on this road, ignoring ways off, until in 500 metres it turns left to a roundabout. At the roundabout turn right up Turners Hill Road.
4. In 30 metres turn left up a narrow footpath to the left of a double metal fieldgate, partly blocked by a mini-pylon pole in 15 metres. *(If the path is overgrown, you can use the field instead, but it is **not** a right of way.)*
5. In 100 metres turn right through a gate into the field and then left to resume your former direction, initially between two fences and later across a grassy space with gardens to your left.
6. In 80 metres pass a redundant stile and carry on along a footpath between gardens left and a fenced duck pond right.
7. In 50 metres pass through a gate into a field. Carry on up its left-hand edge.
8. Keep on along the left-hand edge of this field and the next three fields, in the last two on a path separated from the field by a wire fence.
9. In 700 metres, at the end of the fourth field, pass through a kissing gate onto an enclosed path with a fence and building left and a hedgerow right.
10. In 150 metres ignore a car park to the left to stay on a path skirting around it.
11. In 100 metres pass through a gap into a residential cul-du-sac, following a footpath sign.
12. In 100 metres more, at a road T-junction, turn right uphill.
13. In another 120 metres turn right up a side road, signposted as a footpath.
14. In 170 metres, where the garden of a house ends left and just after a speed bump in the road, turn left up a tarmac drive ("Medway Drive"), a signposted footpath.
15. In 80 metres, where the drive ends, pass through a gap into a field and keep on up its right-hand edge.
16. In 150 metres pass into the next field and keep straight on up the middle of it.
17. In 150 metres pass into a third field. Fork left diagonally up across this, ignoring a path ahead along a wood edge. (Some **bluebells** in this wood in late April/early May.)
18. In 100 metres climb a short bank to go through a car-wide gap into the next field. Keep on up its left-hand edge.
19. In 90 metres pass through into the next field. Again keep to its left-hand edge, aiming for a telecoms mast ahead.
20. In 150 metres pass through a gap to the right of a metal fieldgate just to the left of the telecoms mast, and in 30 metres more turn left on a road.
21. In 50 metres turn right up the approach road to Standen.
22. In 400 metres, where the field ends left, turn left (**not right**) through a wooden gate up a signposted footpath

Standen is a house built in the Arts and Crafts style of the 1890s, which sought to combine traditional materials and a respect for the landscape with modern design. The architect was Philip Webb, a friend and collaborator of William Morris, and the house is decorated throughout with Morris fabrics, carpets and wallpapers. The gardens cleverly blend into the Wealden landscape beyond, and – from a high terrace which can be found up the hill from the lawn – give wonderful views over Weir Wood Reservoir and the surrounding valley

The house and gardens are open all year from 10am to 5pm (or till dusk in winter), with last admission to the house an hour before those times. On weekdays admission to the house may be by guided tour only.

into Rockinghill Wood and refer to the next section.

- However, **if you wish to visit the National Trust property of Standen**, stay on the road for another 200 metres to get to the house. After your visit, emerge from the main gate, retrace your steps up the road and look for the path into Rockinghill Wood to your right.

Standen to Forest Row **(5.2km/3.2 miles)**

23. Having passed through the gate into Rockinghill Wood, in 70 metres go right down three steps and then left with the path, passing a bench with a view in 40 metres.
24. In another 120 metres the path comes down to a crosspaths by two benches, with a gate to the right. (Good **bluebells** here in season). Keep straight on downhill.
25. In 180 metres the path curves left and levels out, passing a pond on the right (not very visible in summer). Ignore a plank walkway to the right across the pond, and keep on along the footpath, following a two-armed footpath sign with a stream to your right.
26. In 180 metres the path starts to climb, coming in 40 metres more to a crosspaths, marked by a two armed footpath sign. Here go right, downhill.
27. In 40 metres the path curves left across duckboards. **[!]** In another 100 metres ignore steps to the right down to a footbridge, and instead keep straight on along a narrow path, initially with the stream to your right.
28. **[!]** In another 100 metres, at slightly indistinct T-junction (almost a crosspaths), with a gate into a field to your left, turn right downhill to cross a two plank footbridge in 20 metres. Carry on up the path beyond into the woods.
29. In 200 metres pass through a kissing gate and keep straight on across a field.
30. **[!]** In 80 metres, halfway across the field, turn left towards a fieldgate/car-wide gap visible 100 metres away to the left.
31. Passing through this gap/fieldgate, veer right uphill with the field edge.
32. In 80 metres, at the top of the hill, pass through a fieldgate and keep on through the next field aiming for a stile to the left of a double wooden fieldgate to the left end of a farm complex. *There is a view of East Grinstead on its hilltop to your left.*
33. In 120 metres cross this stile and a concrete track, and go through a gate into a very muddy field corner. Turn left downhill, heading for a metal gate at the bottom of the field.
34. In 150 metres pass through this gate and keep on down the left-hand edge of the field boundary beyond, with a wood to your left.
35. In 200 metres pass through a well-hidden fieldgate in the far left-hand corner of the field (*not the more visible one in the centre of the far edge, though in fact it doesn't matter if you use that one*) and again keep to the left-hand edge of the next field.
36. In 500 metres, **at the very far end** of the field, pass through a gate in its left-hand corner, hidden until the last moment, with a three-armed footpath sign before it. Cross a footbridge and keep straight on up a path under trees with a house garden soon to your left.
37. In 180 metres, just past the house, turn right on a tarmac drive that immediately becomes gravel.
38. In 120 metres, just before the drive comes to the metal gates of another house, fork left on a signposted footpath, with a wooden fence and garden hedge to the right.
39. In 120 metres the fence ends and the path turns left uphill, fenced off from a field edge.
40. In 200 metres you emerge into an open field and veer slightly right across it, aiming for its far right-hand corner.
41. In 200 metres pass through a gap 20 metres to the left of the right-hand corner of the field to emerge in 15 metres onto a path under trees.
42. In 150 metres you emerge into the open with a fenced orchard to your left. In 20 metres more the path forks right, but it does not matter if you stay by the fence because the path comes back to it in 80 metres or so.
43. In another 60 metres the path once again forks away from the fence, this time for 300 metres or so. At the end

of this distance you are reunited with the fence and the path becomes car-wide.

44. In 170 metres, at the end of a field, the path, now a track, passes farm buildings to your left. Veer left with the track here, ignoring ways off into fields to the left.
45. In 200 metres at a three-way junction, with a house visible up a tarmac drive to the left, fork right, also a tarmac drive.
46. Follow this drive for 180 metres as it circles around the gardens of the house, eventually straightening out again and reverting to gravel.
47. 70 metres after the end of the gardens, ignore a gravel track to a fieldgate left, and in 10 metres more ignore a track to the right.
48. In 100 metres more you pass the **ruins of Brambletye House** on your right.

Brambletye House was built in the Jacobean style in 1631, but seems to have enjoyed a rather short heyday. It was bought by Sir James Richards in 1683, but he was accused of treason shortly afterwards and fled the country. The house fell into decay and has remained here as a romantic ruin ever since.

49. Carry on beyond the ruins down what is now a tarmac lane. In 200 metres the lane turns uphill.
50. In 170 metres, where the lane crosses a part-gated gravel track, with the left-hand gate titled 'Brambletye Crossing', turn right onto the track.

This track is the bed of a **railway line**, which used to run from Tunbridge Wells to Three Bridges via East Grinstead. It was one of several lines in the area closed in 1967 as part of the Beeching cuts. (See "A miraculous survivor" in the *Railway History* section on www.walkingclub.org.uk).

51. In 700 metres you come to a main road. Cross this at the traffic lights to your right and turn right on its far side
52. In 300 metres you are in the centre of **Forest Row**, with the **Java and Jazz Cafe and Pizzeria** and then the **Chequers Inn**, the recommended

lunch time stop, on your left-hand side, the **Brambletye Hotel** on your right, and the **Swan Inn** about 100 metres further up the road on the right.

*For **main walk afternoon**, 8.9km (5.5 miles) to East Grinstead, go to paragraph 93 on page 8.*

*For the **longer afternoon**, 11.5km (7.1 miles) to East Grinstead, go to paragraph 147 on page 11.*

***If finishing the walk here**, the bus to East Grinstead goes from the stop outside of the Brambletye Inn.*

East Grinstead to Weir Wood Reservoir (3.7km/2.3 mi)

*This is the **shorter morning** route*

53. Exiting **East Grinstead station**, go straight ahead, keeping to the left of the car park, with bus stops to your left.
54. In 70 metres go straight across a main road (which leads to a roundabout right) and on down a quieter road – Railway Approach – to the right of the Mid Sussex Timber company.
55. In 300 metres this brings you to T-junction with a mini roundabout, where you turn right onto London Road, the town's main shopping street.
56. In 100 metres, at a crossroads with traffic lights, keep straight on.
57. 250 metres beyond this, at another junction with a mini roundabout, you can see the historic High Street to your left. Rather than crossing to this directly, veer right for 20 metres or so and cross the road ahead on the zebra crossing towards a half-timbered building (Clarendon House). Turn left in front of this, passing to the right of a stone building, to emerge onto a high pavement running parallel to the High Street (which should now be to your left).
58. In 100 metres pass to the right of a stone and brick building into a side lane parallel to the High Street.
59. In 40 metres, where the pedestrian section ends, ignore a road to the right, but 20 metres further on turn right down the narrow Hermitage Lane. Follow this lane downhill and as it curves to the right.

60. In 400 metres turn left at a T-junction with The Rise for 20 metres to come to a main road. Go more or less straight across this and on down a lane (initially tarmac, later earth) called Harwoods Lane.
61. In 300 metres this comes to a suburban road, which you cross and carry on down a tarmac lane, still Harwoods Lane.
62. In 50 metres the lane turns right. In another 20 metres there is a gravel driveway leading to a farm on the left, and to the left of this a rusted metal fieldgate. Cross a stile to the left of this fieldgate and follow a fenced path across the field beyond.
63. In 300 metres follow the path into a wood.
64. In 60 metres emerge into the open and follow a fenced path downhill across a field.
65. In 200 metres, at the bottom of the field, cross a footbridge and follow the fenced footpath initially along the edge of the next field and then across its middle.
66. In 300 metres, at the end of this field, cross a footbridge and go right for 20 metres into another field. Turn left, keeping to its left-hand edge.
67. In 400 metres, in the far left-hand corner of the field, cross a stile and a footbridge. Ignore a larger footbridge to the left, and instead turn right through a metal gate into a field.
68. In 40 metres, where the field widens out, turn left to follow its edge, with the hedge to your left.
69. In 150 metres pass through a kissing gate and cross a footbridge, and then turn right across a stile into a large field. Turn left, slanting diagonally up across this field, aiming a bit to the left of the top of an electricity pylon visible on the skyline ahead.
70. In 300 metres, at the top of the hill, go through a wooden fieldgate into another field and keep straight on across it past two mini-pylon poles.
71. In 100 metres more you come to a chainlink fence with wooden gate in it and a three-armed footpath post. The dam of Weir Wood Reservoir is visible ahead.

Weir Wood Reservoir to Forest Row (2.9km/1.8 miles)

- The **original route** of the walk here was becoming very overgrown in October 2018 and the route given in the numbered paragraphs below, using a permissive paths in places, now seems more practical. The old route did **not** go through the gate in paragraph 71 but turned **left** along the fence and followed it as it curved downhill. In 400 metres, in a field corner, it passed through a kissing gate onto an enclosed and rather overgrown path that is also a positive quagmire in winter. In 100 metres it crossed a stile to carry on down a fenced path, with a field visible to the left. In 250 metres it crossed a footbridge and turned left at a three-armed footpath sign (ie ignoring the path straight ahead), along the field edge with the stream to the left. The next direction was then in paragraph 78 overleaf.
72. **The suggested new route** is to pass through the gate onto a permissive path that slants downhill past the dam of the Weir Wood Reservoir.
 73. In 300 metres, at the bottom of the hill, turn left with the fence to join a stony path leading away from the dam.
 74. In 60 metres cross a tarmac area to the right of the Weir Wood Reservoir pumping station. In 60 metres more pass through a wooden gate to the right of a fieldgate and carry on down a service road.
 75. In 150 metres the road crosses a bridge and starts to climb gently. In another 150 metres you pass houses and start to descend.
 76. In another 200 metres**, just past brick walls on either side, turn **very hard left**, almost doubling back on yourself, up a signposted footpath that goes between fences back along the service road you have just left. (** **80 metres before this point**, just after a service drive joins from the right, you can currently climb over the fence and shortcut this route a bit: if you do this, turn left along the path beyond the fence, doubling back alongside the service road you have just left).
 77. In 100 metres (20 metres if you have used the short cut route in the previous paragraph) cross a stile into a field and go diagonally across it to a

footbridge on its far side, ignoring a path along the left-hand edge of the field. *(Technically this path along the left-hand edge of the field is the right of way and you should follow it to a field corner and then turn right for 180 metres to come to the footbridge, but the way across the middle of the field seems in regular use).*

- 78. In 180 metres cross the footbridge and carry on up a path with a field fenced off to the right. In 70 metres follow the path as it slants left up a wooded bank.
- 79. In another 80 metres go right at a T-junction onto a grassy track, which climbs at first but soon starts to go downhill.
- 80. In 170 metres carry on past farm buildings to your left and veer left with the track, which soon becomes tarmac between hedges.
- 81. In 200 metres at a three-way junction, with a house visible up a tarmac drive to the left, fork right, also a tarmac drive.
- 82. Follow this for 180 metres as it circles around the gardens of the house, eventually turning to gravel and straightening out again.
- 83. 70 metres after the end of the gardens, ignore a gravel track to a fieldgate left, but in 10 metres more, turn right off the gravel track onto another gravel track, with a wooden garden fence to its left, signposted as a bridleway. *(However, it is worth before you do this carrying on along the track you are on for another 100 metres to see the **ruins of Brambletye House**: retrace your steps after doing this and turn left up the side track along a garden fence mentioned above).*

Brambletye House was built in the Jacobean style in 1631, but seems to have enjoyed a rather short heyday. It was bought by Sir James Richards in 1683, but he was accused of treason shortly afterwards and fled the country. The house fell into decay and has remained here as a romantic ruin ever since.

- 84. In 200 metres the track turns left and then right, until it is now leading away from a house.
- 85. In 70 metres more it crosses a stone bridge over a stream. 10 metres

beyond this turn left up through a kissing gate to the left of a fieldgate up a path fenced off from a broad strip to the right (where pipeline works took place in 2017), with a stream (unseen in summer) to the left and later trees.

- 86. In 250 metres cross a stile into a field. Walk diagonally across this towards a farm on a hill.
- 87. In 120 metres cross a stile to the right of a fieldgate and in 20 metres more cross a stile to the left of a fieldgate to carry on up a fenced path towards the farm.
- 88. In 80 metres, when level with the house right and **just before the black wooden barn left, turn left over a stile** and then turn right to walk up along the far side of the barn, with the barn to your right.
- 89. At the end of the barn cross a stile and then in 10 metres another one to the left of a rusty metal fieldgate, and turn left up the edge of the field beyond.
- 90. In 100 metres cross a stile and carry on downhill along a path through scrub.
- 91. In 150 metres emerge onto a gravel path, fenced off from a modern housing development and follow it around to the left.
- 92. In 130 metres, where the path ends, carry straight on across a parking space and go up steps under a block of flats to emerge onto the main road of **Forest Row**. Ahead of you are the **Chequers Inn Hotel**, and to its left the **Java and Jazz Cafe and Pizzeria**, both possible lunchtime stops. The **Brambletye Inn** is to the left on this side of the road and the **Swan Inn** is to the right.

Forest Row to Cansiron Lane (2.8km/1.7 miles)

*This is the the **main walk** afternoon route, 8.9km (5.5 miles) to East Grinstead.*

*For the **longer afternoon**, 11.5km (7.1 miles) to East Grinstead, go to paragraph 147 on page 11.*

- 93. Coming out of the Chequers Inn, turn left uphill and immediately fork left off the main road up a quiet shopping street that runs roughly parallel to it.

94. In 150 metres turn left down Hartfield Road, passing **Taffels** cafe on the left in 120 metres.
95. 40 metres after Taffels cross Station Road and turn half left diagonally across the grassy area beyond.
96. In 80 metres, on the far side of the open space, carry on up a car-wide earth path between lines of trees.
97. In 150 metres, at a T-junction in front of the stump of a large felled tree, go straight ahead up the length of the gradually narrowing field.
98. In 200 metres, at the end of the field, curve left up steps onto the old railway line.
99. Turn right along the railway line, but in 100 metres turn left off it down steps to a stile.
100. Beyond the stile veer right towards a footbridge 100 metres away in the corner of the field. Cross the bridge, and keep slightly to the right across the next field.
101. In 80 metres, on the far side of the field, cross another footbridge. Beyond this, keep straight on uphill.
102. In another 50 metres turn left into a small car park just before an interesting dove-cote, and then in 30 metres turn right before a large blue-grey building - the **cafe and farm shop of Tablehurst Farm** - to head directly uphill on a track.
103. In 450 metres you enter a wood. 30 metres after this **fork right at a track junction**, and then in 15 metres **fork right off the track** onto a grassy track between the wood edge to your left and a fenced-off field to your right.
104. In 80 metres pass through a fieldgate and keep on down the left-hand edge of the field beyond, with the wood edge still to your left.
105. In another 100 metres curve left through a fieldgate into the next field. Go diagonally across this, skirting to the right of some old freight containers.
106. 50 metres beyond these pick up a path fenced off from a field to the left and follow it uphill, with trees to the right. (*Take care as the fence to the left is sometimes **electrified** and the path is quite narrow.*) Follow this path all the way around the field edge, turning right and then left along its edge (the fence leaves you no choice in any case).
107. In 250 metres, at the very top of the field turn right for 30 metres towards a fieldgate. Pass through the fieldgate and turn left uphill to the top edge of the field 40 metres away. (*Just to the right here is a nicely placed **bench** with a pleasant view*).
108. Turn left along the top edge of the field. In 100 metres pass to the right of an electricity pylon and through a gap in the hedge.
109. 15 metres beyond this, at a path T-junction, go right over a stile.
110. Beyond the stile **turn left into an open field**, ignoring the path straight ahead. Go down across the dip, heading for the house on the hillside.
111. In 180 metres pass through a metal gate in front of the house and curve right around the edge of the house's garden for 80 metres to reach its gravel driveway and turn left along it.
112. In 100 metres you come to a tarmac lane (**Cansiron Lane**, though not named here) and turn left along it.
- Cansiron Lane to border of East Grinstead (4.2km/2.6 mi)**
113. In 100 metres follow the lane round to the right.
114. In 150 metres more the lane passes between houses left and right and then turns sharp left. **Immediately after the bend**, turn right off the road up an earth track, passing the entrance to Grove Farm on your right.
115. In 200 metres a gated tarmac drive merges from the right and you veer left with it past a house.
116. In another 80 metres, 20 metres after a post box to the right, turn right at a lane T-junction, marked 'Thornhill Private Road' (but still a right of way for walkers).
117. Follow this tarmac lane, ignoring ways off. In 350 metres you pass a large grey stone house right and in another 250 metres there is a wooded area to the left and the lane curves right.
118. In another 100 metres, where the lane straightens out, it seems to be wooded both sides, though the right side is in fact the garden of a house.

- 119.** In 100 metres more, opposite an overgrown entrance to this house, **turn left onto a footpath**, indicated by a concrete ground-level signpost.
- 120.** The path leads across a stile in 10 metres: keep on down the right-hand edge of the field beyond.
- 121.** In 150 metres, at the bottom of the field, cross a stile and carry on down a path fenced off from a field to the left (*watch out for **rabbit holes** on this path*).
- 122.** In 250 metres you come to a tarmac lane, where you go left. Follow this lane between picturesque half timbered houses and barns
- 123.** In 300 metres you come to a main road. **Take care crossing this:** even though it is quiet at times, traffic comes down it very fast.
- 124.** On the far side of the road go 20 metres to the left to find a stile (hidden by bracken and brambles in summer). Beyond, go half right uphill across a mini-golf course, aiming for the far end of a stone wall you can see ahead (that is, the far corner of the field, which is currently marked by a tall white post).
- 125.** In 200 metres, when you get to this field corner, cross a stile in the hedge and turn left along the top edge of a field, with a stone wall to your left.
- 126.** In 150 metres cross a stile, a track and another stile into the next field. Keep straight on across this.
- 127.** In 170 metres pass through a gap in the tree boundary into another field. Veer slightly right across it, to exit it in 130 metres via its far right-hand corner. (An inconspicuous footpath sign here).
- 128.** Veer right across the next small field, to cross a stile at the far right-hand end of a wood in 80 metres.
- 129.** 10 metres beyond the stile, at another corner of the fence, a footpath sign points up the edge of the wood to your left, but brambles and a fence block the way in this direction. Instead, carry on for another 10 metres and then turn left up the middle of a long grassy field, on a faint grassy path.
- (The above route is the right of way as far as I can discern it, but a previous landowner fenced off the field so that walkers had to use the track up its right-hand edge.) Either way, you are heading for the top of the field, in 180 metres, where the track leads out into the next field.*
- 130.** Immediately you pass into the next field, veer right off the track, passing two redundant stiles and going uphill with a wood edge to your immediate right.
- 131.** In 80 metres, where the wood edge curves right, keep straight on uphill across the grass.
- 132.** In another 70 metres cross a track and keep on along a footpath into an area of young trees and brambles, following an arrow on a post.
- 133.** In 130 metres cross a stile between a three-armed footpath sign and a fieldgate, and go straight ahead on a path into the woods (some **bluebells** here in late April and early May).
- 134.** In 120 metres, at a fork marked with a footpath sign fork left *. Ignore a faint path to the right in 10 metres and instead carry on uphill for 40 metres to the corner of an open field (less visible in spring and summer). Veer right along the edge of this field to merge with (or turn left on) a much clearer car-wide bridleway in 40 metres more.
- * **If you miss this fork**, then you will come to the car-wide bridleway anyway: once again simply turn left onto it.*
- 135.** In 200 metres merge with a track coming from a field to the left and keep straight on.
- 136.** In 150 metres more cross a tarmac driveway and go straight on up the footpath beyond, to the right of a house.
- 137.** In 200 metres this fenced path turns right into an open space: there is a bench straight ahead with a fine view.
- 138.** Turn left along the top of the open space, with a brick wall to the left initially. Follow the path gently downhill towards the houses ahead.
- 139.** In 120 metres exit the open space by its left-hand corner and follow the path between a wooden fence left and a tall leylandii hedge right for 50 metres to emerge into a cul-du-sac. Go straight on for 40 metres to cross Woodbury Avenue and merge with the main road.

To East Grinstead town centre and station (1.9km/1.2 miles)

- 140.** Follow this road for 450 metres (crossing to its left-hand side where it is convenient) until you come to a roundabout. Here go straight ahead, uphill towards the church.
- 141.** In 250 metres you pass a mini roundabout and keep straight on, passing **Sackville College**, an old almshouse, to your right.
- 142.** Beyond this you are in the old centre of East Grinstead. In 150 metres you pass **CJ's Coffee Bar** on your right, with the **Dorset Arms** opposite. In 60 metres more the road widens out into the old High Street of East Grinstead, with the **Crown** pub on your right and the **Old Bank Cafe** on your left, and in another 50 metres, **Caffe Nero** is on the right.
- 143.** 70 metres beyond Caffe Nero turn right at the mini roundabout into London Street. **Costa Coffee** is in 100 metres on the left.
- 144.** In another 120 metres keep straight on at the traffic lights.
- 145.** In 120 metres more, at a mini roundabout, turn left into Railway Approach. **Bluebells** is on this corner.
- 146.** In 300 metres, at the end of Railway Approach, you come to the large roundabout. Pass to the right of this to cross three main roads with care and go up to the of the station car park beyond to get to **East Grinstead station** in another 120 metres.

Forest Row to Spring Hill Farm (2.5km/1.5 miles)

This is the start of the longer afternoon.

- 147.** After lunch, cross the road from the **Chequers Inn** and take the signposted footpath that passes under the buildings of Ashdown Court, to the left of a shop called Forest Row Barbers.
- 148.** Keep on through a courtyard and on down steps into a parking area.
- 149.** On the far side of the parking area keep on up a gravel footpath, which in 30 metres veers left, passing new houses to the left.
- 150.** In 100 metres follow the path to the right across a footbridge and uphill through an area of scrub
- 151.** In 150 metres cross a stile and keep to the right-hand edge of the field beyond.
- 152.** In 100 metres, in the corner of the field, cross a stile to the right of rusted metal fieldgate (the stile is a bit hidden by a hedge), and then cross another stile to the right of a black wooden barn in 10 metres more.
- 153.** In 30 metres, just beyond the barn, go left over a stile and then in 5 metres right downhill on a car-wide grassy track
- 154.** In 80 metres cross a stile to the right of a fieldgate and in 20 metres more cross a stile to the left of a fieldgate to enter a field. Carry on slightly to the left across this, heading for stile 120 metres away in the field corner.
- 155.** Cross the stile and carry on down a path, with a fence and a strip cleared for the pipeline works in 2017 to your left and trees to your right.
- 156.** In 250 metres pass through a kissing gate to the right of a fieldgate, cross a broad path (leading to a stone bridge to the right) and pass through another kissing gate to carry on down the right-hand edge of the pipeline strip, with a fence to your right.
- 157.** In 350 metres go through a kissing gate and over a car-wide concrete footbridge over a stream. Beyond this veer left uphill, with a hedge to your right).
- 158.** In 250 metres, at the top of the hill, go through a squeeze gate and down a bank to cross a tarmac lane.
- 159.** On the far side, go straight on up a path into a wood, turning right and then left with a wooden fence in 15 metres (bluebells here in season).
- 160.** In 30 metres, where the fence ends, keep on along the path, following it to the left in 25 metres when it passes under mini-pylons.
- 161.** In 120 metres turn right onto a concrete lane.
- 162.** In 200 metres pass a side turning to South Park Farm and The Old Barn and curve left with the lane.
- 163.** In 150 metres fork left to bypass a house to the right.

- 164. In another 200 metres fork right to bypass a house to the left.
- 165. In 180 metres more ignore a turning to Springhill Orchard left.
- 166. 70 metres later you enter a farm complex. In another 70 metres, just past an open barn to the right, **fork right through a gate** up a gravel side track, with a new wooden building to the right.

Spring Hill Farm to Stone Farm Rocks (3.7km/2.3 mi)

- 167. In 100 metres you come to a dovecote with an older wooden building (Dove Barn) to its left. Pass to the right of the dovecote on the track. 10 metres beyond it **turn right over a stile** into a field and head uphill, aiming to the left of a tree midfield in 80 metres.
- 168. Past the tree veer slightly left with the path to a gap in the hedge 150 metres away at the crest of the hill, where there is a kissing gate and a footpath post. (*Note the view of Weir Water to the right and East Grinstead beyond it*).
- 169. Pass through the gate and carry straight on heading to the left of the clump of trees on the horizon 80 metres ahead.
- 170. Curve to the right around the clump, downhill at first and then along the line of the ridge. Aim for a fieldgate 150 metres ahead in the **middle** of the field edge (and near the top of the ridge), ignoring one on the lower field edge in the valley to your left.
- 171. Once you reach the fieldgate, pass through a metal gate to the left of it. Keep on along the line of the ridge across the next field.
- 172. In 150 metres the field narrows slightly between two wooded areas. Beyond this veer slightly left on a faint grassy path, just to the left of the top of the ridge.
- 173. In 150 metres more, just after the path enters a wood, you come to a T-junction with a car-wide bridleway and turn left on it.
- 174. Follow the bridleway under trees. In 20 metres it starts to descend between banks. (*This is a classic English holloway – a cutting into the hillside made by generations of users of the*

*path: there are **bluebells** here in season).*

The bridleway you are on must have been an important one for many centuries, but was cut off by the creation of Weir Wood Reservoir reservoir in the 1950s. Judging from the map, it originally linked into the quiet lane you took this morning down from the Old High Street in East Grinstead and was one of the major ways into the town from the south.

It would be nice to report that if you turn right on this bridleway it would lead to a secluded spot on the lakeside of Weir Wood Reservoir. But in fact, after about 300 metres you come to a locked gate, from where there is still no view of the lake.

So frustrating though it is to be so close, there is really no point in making the diversion....except perhaps to walk with the ghosts of generations of countrymen who once used this route to get to town.

- 175. In 100 metres more there is a large pond to the left. **[!]** In 40 metres, **leave the pond edge** and veer right on an initially not very clear path into a wood. The path soon becomes more distinct.
- 176. In 150 metres you come to the end of the wood and pass through a rusted metal kissing gate. In 15 metres more pass through a wooden fieldgate and carry on up the grassy hill ahead, heading to the left side of a house in its top right-hand corner.
- 177. Towards the top of the hill, look backwards for a **fine view** of Weir Wood Reservoir and East Grinstead beyond (and also, if go a bit to the right, Standen, the NT property).
- 178. Pass to the left of the house at the top of the hill, and beyond it, in the very top corner of the field, cross a stile and turn right. Follow the path as it turns left with the fence and pass a collapsed stile to emerge onto a road, where you turn right.
- 179. **Take care on this road, which you follow for the next 2km (1.3 miles)** Though a country lane, it is also a bit of a rat-run: that means **cars are moderately frequent and sometimes come down it quite fast**. So keep into the verges, and keep your ears and eyes open.

- 180.** In slightly more detail: in 700 metres you pass a no-through road right (the former route of the road, cut off by the creation of the reservoir), and in another 500 metres there is a nature reserve to the right (a wood, but unfortunately fenced off from public access).
- 181.** 150 metres beyond this there is a **car park** right which has picnic tables: here you at last get a **direct lakeside view** of the reservoir (though it is still fenced off!). This spot is popular with bird watchers and there is a bird hide to the left of the car park.
- 182.** After another 250 metres on the road there is another good view of the reservoir to the right. Ignore the footpath uphill to the left here (which sadly goes nowhere useful).
- 183.** In 300 metres you come to a road T-junction with a somewhat busier road. Turn right here, following the sign to East Grinstead and Saint Hill Green.
- 184.** **Even more care is needed on this road** but your time on it is short. Keep to the verge until in 150 metres you come to a sign on the left welcoming you to West Sussex. **Turn left just before this sign** and take the unsignposted path that climbs uphill into a wood, with a wire fence to the left.
- 185.** In 40 metres pass through a metal gate to emerge in 10 metres into a field. Follow the path uphill along the left-hand edge of a vineyard.
- 186.** In 180 metres, at the top of the field, pass through a gate hidden by vegetation. **Stone Farm Rocks** are now right in front of you. Follow the path uphill to the rocks and turn right along the path along their base. You can pass through the rocks at several points and then turn right on the car-wide bridleway beyond, but if you go to the very end of the rocks you get a nice **view** of the reservoir to the right (you need to peer around the foliage in summer), and you can then veer left to come to the bridleway and turn right on it, downhill.
- Stone Farm Rocks to Standen (1.9km/1.2 miles)**
- 187.** In 130 metres you come to the road again and turn right (**taking great care of the potentially fast traffic** coming round the blind bends).
- 188.** In 40 metres turn left up a side lane (the other half of the road cut off by the reservoir).
- 189.** Carry on down this lane for 400 metres until access to the reservoir is blocked by high metal gates. Here turn left to follow a footpath, signposted West Sussex Border Path.
- 190.** Follow this path, with a chainlink fence to the right, passing into a wood in 120 metres (more **bluebells** here in season).
- 191.** In 100 metres pass through a gate onto a path fenced off from a field to the left.
- 192.** In another 80 metres, just after passing under a mini-pylon, and before a full-sized electricity pylon, **turn left up across a field** at a three-armed footpath sign.
- 193.** In 150 metres, at the top of the field, pass through a metal gate and carry on up a path into a wood.
- 194.** Keep on uphill, ignoring two paths to the right and in 100 metres passing into more dense wood.
- 195.** In 120 metres you come out on the edge of an open field. In 40 metres more you come to a crosspaths, with a gated path to the right
- **For National Trust members who want to visit Standen**, there is the option of taking the path through a gate to the right. Keep straight on, ignoring ways off and in about 400 metres you come to a gate into the house's gardens. If these are open to the public, there is usually a sign here saying that members can use this as a way in: see the panel for details of how to resume the walk after your visit. **If you are not a member, please do not use this as a way to get into the gardens without paying:** the official visitor entrance to the house is indicated in the paragraph 198 overleaf.
- To continue the walk after entering Standen by this route, leave by the car road that starts by the tea room and follow it uphill for 150 metres past a sandstone cliff on the left. Where this ends, at the top of the hill, you pass two houses on your left, and 25 metres beyond the last of*

these, turn right through a gate up a signposted footpath into Rockinghill Wood. Resume the directions at paragraph 199.

- 196. If not visiting Standen, or to get to its official visitor entrance**, carry straight on uphill at the crosspaths, with the field boundary to your right.

National Trust-owned **Standen** is a house built in the Arts and Crafts style of the 1890s, which sought to combine traditional materials and a respect for the landscape with modern design. The architect was Philip Webb, a friend and collaborator of William Morris, and the house is decorated throughout with Morris fabrics, carpets and wallpapers. The gardens cleverly blend into the Wealden landscape, and – from a high terrace which can be found up the hill from the lawn – give wonderful views over Weir Wood Reservoir and the surrounding valley.

The house is open daily throughout the year from 10am to 5pm, or until dusk in winter. Last entry to the house is one hour before closing, and on weekdays may be by guided tour only.

- 197.** In 300 metres, at the top of the field, ignore a locked gate into the wood to the right, and go through a rusty kissing gate, to follow a path fenced off from a field.
- 198.** In 400 metres, at the end of this field, you come to a road. **The official entrance to Standen** is 200 metres down the road to the right, but to continue the walk, cross the road and carry on down the signposted footpath ahead, passing through a gate into Rockinghill Wood.

Standen to the edge of East Grinstead (1.3km/0.8 miles)

- 199.** In 70 metres go right down three steps and then left with the path, passing a bench with a view in 40 metres.
- 200.** In another 120 metres the path comes down to a crosspaths by two benches, with a gate to the right, marked by a two-armed footpath sign. (Good **bluebells** here in season). Keep straight on downhill.
- 201.** In 180 metres the path curves left and levels out, passing a pond on the right (not very visible in summer). Ignore a plank walkway to the right across the

pond, and keep on along the footpath, following a two-armed footpath sign, with a stream to your right.

- 202.** In 180 metres the path starts to climb, coming to a crosspaths marked by a two-armed footpath sign in 40 metres. Go right downhill here.
- 203.** In 40 metres the path curves left across duckboards.
- 204.** In another 100 metres ignore steps to the right down to a footbridge, and instead **keep straight on along a narrow path**, initially with the stream to your right.
- 205.** In another 100 metres, **at an easily missed path T-junction** (almost a crosspaths) with a stepped footpath leading up from a two plank footbridge 20 metres to the right, turn left uphill.
- 206.** In 20 metres pass through a gate into a field, turning right along its edge.
- 207.** In 250 metres exit the field at its far end through a permanently open fieldgate, and carry on up a car-wide track for 30 metres into the next field. Bear slightly right across this field, aiming to the right of East Grinstead church tower on the hill ahead.
- 208.** Keep straight on, passing a pond on the right in 150 metres and picking up the right-hand edge of the field.
- 209.** In another 130 metres exit the far right-hand corner of the field by a gate, marked by a two-armed footpath sign. Cross a plank footbridge and veer slightly right across the next field.
- 210.** In a further 150 metres pass through a gate by a three-armed footpath sign.
- 211.** Here you have a **choice**:
- **The shortest and most rural route** to the station is to *turn left* and continue with the directions in paragraph 212 below.
 - **But to return to the historic centre of East Grinstead** (eg for its tea options), or if you did the main walk morning or version **(i)** of the **short walks to Standen** and do not want to reverse the start of your outward route, then *turn right* and continue with paragraph 223 overleaf.

Rural ending (2.1km/1.3 mi)

- 212.** Having turned left just beyond the three-armed footpath sign follow the

path for 300 metres until it emerges into a park and becomes tarmac.

- 213.** In another 200 metres you come to a road. Opposite is **Old Dunnings Mill**, a possible tea stop, but to continue the walk cross the road and turn left. In 30 metres turn right up Streatfield Road ("Private Road" but also a public footpath).
- 214.** In 100 metres, at the end of the cul-du-sac, pass through a gap in the fence (marked by an arrow on a post) to carry on up a gravel footpath.
- 215.** In 100 metres carry on up a path with a hedgerow left and a fence and a building right.
- 216.** In 150 metres pass through a kissing gate into a field and keep on up its right-hand edge on a fenced-in path.
- 217.** Carry on along the right-hand edge of this and three more fields, a distance of 700 metres.
- 218.** At the end of the fourth field pass through a gate and carry on past a fenced duck pond to your left.
- 219.** In 50 metres pass a redundant stile into a field. In another 80 metres, 10 metres past two sheds on the right, turn right through a gate to follow a rather narrow path for 100 metres to the road.
- 220.** Cross the road and turn right. In 30 metres, at a roundabout, go left, and follow the main road as it curves right uphill, ignoring side roads.
- 221.** In 450 metres you pass **Sainsbury's** on your left (whose **Starbucks Cafe** is a possible late tea stop: there is a way into the complex on the road about 30 metres past the supermarket facade).
- 222.** Otherwise carry on past Sainsbury's to a roundabout and here turn left to **East Grinstead station**, which should be visible beyond its car park.
- Ending via the centre of East Grinstead (2.7km/1.7 miles)**
- 223.** Having turned right in paragraph 211, with the field fence to your right, cross a footbridge in 30 metres. Beyond this, fork right, with houses visible to the left and a stream to the right. (There are **ramsons** - aka **wild garlic** - all over this wood in late April or early May).
- 224.** In 250 metres this brings you to a road, where you go left uphill. (*You are now back on the other half of that bridleway route mentioned in paragraph 174 that was cut off by the making of Weir Wood Reservoir, incidentally: this is the old way from the south up into the town.*)
- 225.** Carry on up this quiet lane for 800 metres, until at the top of the hill, it curves sharp left and comes to a junction with a suburban road. Go straight across this suburban road, and on up a car-wide tarmac drive beyond (later a stony track).
- 226.** In 300 metres you come to a junction with a busier road: cross this and carry on up Hermitage Lane beyond. In 20 metres turn right into the road marked with a No Entry sign, which is also Hermitage Lane.
- 227.** Follow this as it goes first fairly level, and then turns left and steeply uphill, to arrive in 400 metres at the heart of old East Grinstead.
- 228.** The **Dorset Arms** is to your right here, with **CJ's Coffee Bar** facing it across the main road. Otherwise, 10 metres before the main road turn left up Middle Street. In 10 metres ignore Portland Row left and keep straight on.
- 229.** In 40 metres more the road widens out into the Old High Street of East Grinstead: the **Old Bank Cafe** is to the right here, with the **Crown** beyond it on the other side of the main road, and in another 50 metres, **Caffe Nero**, is on the right.
- 230.** 70 metres beyond Caffe Nero, turn right at the mini roundabout into London Street. **Costa Coffee** is in 100 metres on the left.
- 231.** 120 metres beyond this, keep straight on at the traffic lights and in 130 metres at the mini roundabout, turn left into Railway Approach. **Bluebells**, yet another tea option, is on this corner.
- 232.** In 300 metres, at the end of Railway Approach, you come to the large roundabout: keep to the right of this to cross a main road and the station car park beyond to get to **East Grinstead station** in another 100 metres.