





# Hildenborough to Hadlow or Tonbridge Walk

Gentle walk through the Kentish Weald to one of the tallest follies in Britain.

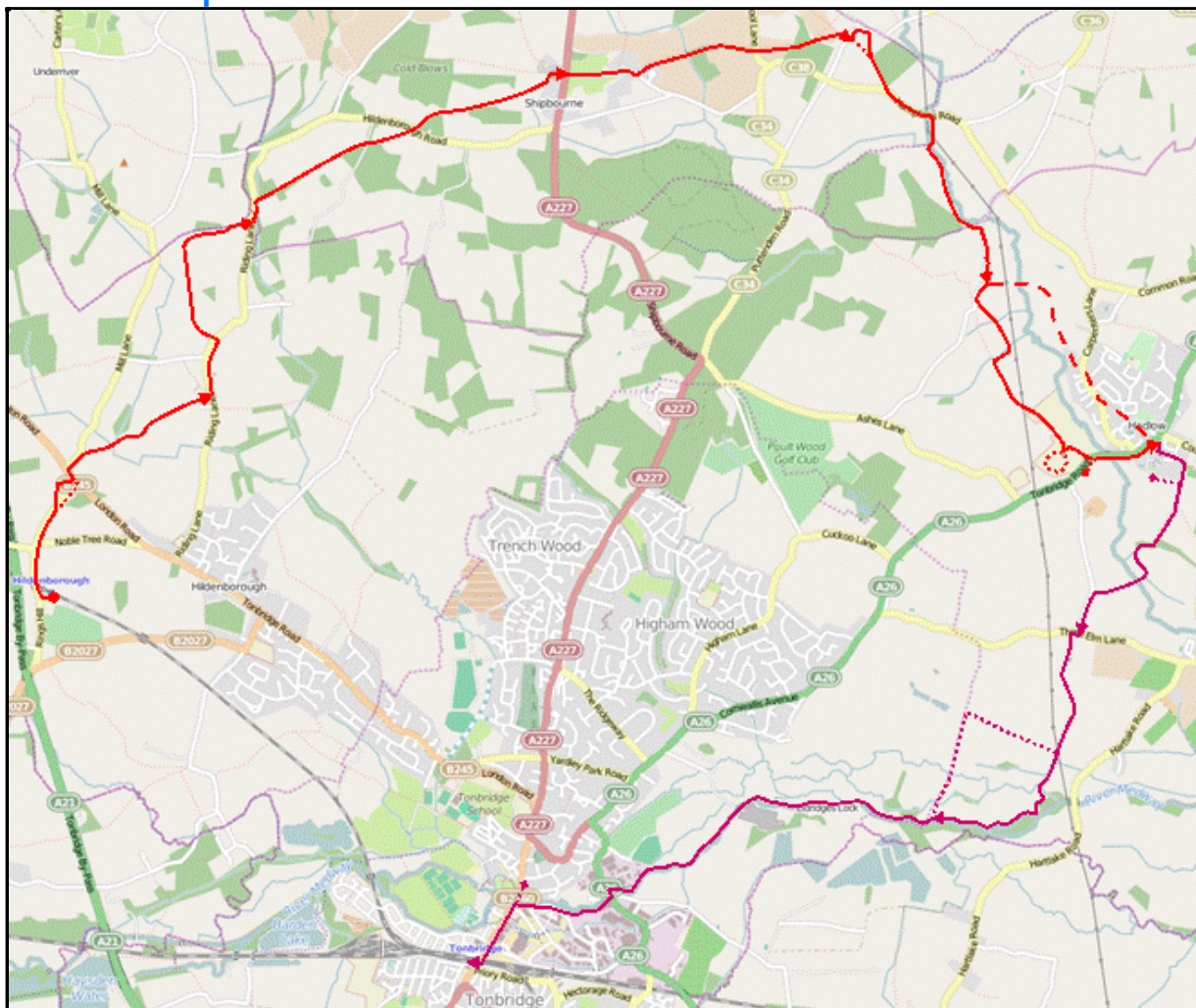
<b>Length</b>	<p><b>Main Walk, to Hadlow:</b> 13¼ km (8.2 miles). Three hours 5 minutes walking time. For the whole excursion including trains, sights and meals, allow at least 7½ hours.</p> <p><b>Long Walk, to Tonbridge:</b> 21½ km (13.4 miles). Five hours walking time.</p>
<b>OS Maps</b>	Explorers 147 & 148 (plus 136 for the Long Walk). Hildenborough, map reference TQ557485, is in Kent, 4 km <b>NW</b> of Tonbridge.
<b>Toughness</b>	2 out of 10 (3 for the Long Walk).
<b>Features</b>	<p>After an unpromising start – 1 km of roadside walking – you eventually escape into typical Wealden countryside of fields, meadows and the occasional wood. At Shipbourne (pronounced <i>Shibbun</i>) you join the <b>Greensand Way</b> for a short section to the hamlet of Dunk's Green, then head south-east along the valley of the River Bourne to <b>Hadlow</b>. On this last stretch you find yourself heading towards one of the more peculiar sights you are likely to encounter on a Home Counties walk: a multi-tiered Gothic folly, taller than Nelson's Column.</p> <p><b>Hadlow Tower</b> was built in 1838 by William Barton May as an embellishment to his equally eccentric father's extravagant house in Strawberry Hill Gothic style ("the most singular looking thing I ever saw" according to William Cobbett). Much of <b>Hadlow Castle</b> was demolished in 1951 but fortunately the Tower was saved; after a local campaign it has now been beautifully restored. It can be visited in summer months on <u>Thursdays only</u> (contact 07913-861979), last entry 3.30pm; admission (2016) is £7 (£5 concessions).</p> <p><i>The trust running the tower went into administration in 2016. It is still open to the public (on Thursdays until the end of September 2017) but its long-term future is uncertain.</i></p> <p>The walk route also passes Hadlow's other attraction, <b>Broadview Gardens</b> (free entry). This is a collection of small landscaped gardens designed by successive generations of horticultural students at <b>Hadlow College</b>.</p>
<b>Additional Notes</b>	Two sections of the Main Walk overlap with <a href="#">Book 1 Walk 21</a> (Leigh to Sevenoaks) and <a href="#">Extra Walk 41</a> (Yalding to Sevenoaks), although the latter is in the reverse direction. This less-than-perfect scenario should allow you to reach Hadlow by mid-afternoon, but on days when visiting the Tower is not an issue a good alternative is this walk's companion: <a href="#">Extra Walk 220</a> (Tonbridge to Hadlow) covers completely new ground and has more interesting features <i>en route</i> .

<b>Walk Options</b>	You can extend the walk by continuing to <a href="#">Tonbridge</a> (pronounced <i>Tunbridge</i> : see Walk Notes). From Hadlow Square the route heads south across fields and orchards, and the walk finishes with a long but easy stretch alongside the <a href="#">River Medway</a> .
<b>Transport</b>	<p>There is a half-hourly service (hourly on Sundays) from Charing Cross to Hildenborough, the station between Sevenoaks and Tonbridge, taking 40 minutes. Tonbridge generally has six fast trains an hour to London, reducing to four in the evenings and on Sundays. Buy a return to Tonbridge.</p> <p>There is no station in Hadlow, so at the end of the Main Walk you will need to take <a href="#">Bus 7/77/147</a> to Tonbridge. There are buses every 20-30 minutes (Mon–Sat), with an hourly service on Sundays to 5pm.</p> <p>There are two bus services through Shipbourne and Dunk's Green: the 222 goes to Tonbridge (Mon–Sat) and the 404 goes to Sevenoaks (Mon–Fri).</p>
<b>Suggested Train</b>	Take the train nearest to <b>10:00</b> from <b>Charing Cross</b> to <b>Hildenborough</b> .
<b>Lunch</b>	<p>There are two possible lunch pubs on the route to Hadlow. Halfway through the Main Walk the <a href="#">Chaser Inn</a> (01732-810360) in Shipbourne has a pleasant beer garden next to the churchyard and serves food all afternoon. Half an hour further on you come to the smaller and quieter <a href="#">Kentish Rifleman</a> (01732-810727), a charming old pub in the hamlet of Dunk's Green. It serves homemade food up to 2pm (3pm Sun) and has a particularly attractive back garden.</p> <p>A late pub lunch might be possible in Hadlow. The direct route into the village passes the <a href="#">Rose &amp; Crown</a> (01732-850242), while the <a href="#">Two Brewers</a> (01732-850267) is on the A26 to the north of The Square.</p>
<b>Tea</b>	<p>If you have been visiting Hadlow Tower the suggested tea place is the <b>Gingerbread Teashop</b> (01732-850240) opposite The Square, open to 5pm (Thu only). Another interesting place with limited opening hours is the coffee shop in <a href="#">Weathered and Worn</a> (07963-909156) on the High Street between the Tower and Broadview Gardens, open to 5pm (Thu-Sat only).</p> <p>At all other times a good alternative is the <a href="#">Broadview Gardens Tearoom</a> (01732-853286), open to 5pm (4pm Sun). The late lunch pubs mentioned above would provide stronger fare towards the end of the Main Walk, or before starting the final leg back to Tonbridge on the Long Walk.</p> <p>There are plenty of refreshment places at the end of the Long Walk in <b>Tonbridge</b>, although the High Street is not a particularly enticing place to linger before catching the train back. If you get there in time, the suggested place for tea (serving home-made cakes) is <a href="#">Finch House Café &amp; Bakery</a> (01732-771775) at the front of the Pavilion Shopping Centre on the High Street, open to 5.30pm (5pm Sun). The direct route to the station also passes <a href="#">The Humphrey Bean</a> (01732-773850), a JD Wetherspoon's pub in the old Post Office building, which has a large beer garden overlooking the river. Alternatively, a short detour across the river would take you to the <b>Rose &amp; Crown Hotel</b> and <b>Ye Olde Chequers Inn</b>, plus other watering-holes tucked away down side streets.</p>
<b>Help Us!</b>	After the walk, we would love to get your <a href="#">feedback</a>
<b>Photos</b>	<p>Upload your photos to the <a href="#">SWC Group on Flickr</a>, and <a href="#">videos to YouTube</a>. This walk's tags are:</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"></div> </div>
<b>By Car</b>	<p><b>Start:</b> <a href="#">TN11 8LX</a></p> <p><b>Finish:</b> <a href="#">Hadlow</a></p>
<b>Help</b>	National Rail: 03457 48 49 50 • Travelline SE (bus times): 0871 200 2233 (12p/min) • TFL (London) : 0343 222 1234



# Walk Directions

## Walk Map



All maps © OpenStreetMap contributors

## Walk Options

- M. Main Walk, finishing in Hadlow (13¼ km)
- a. Long Walk, continuing to Tonbridge (21½ km)

## Walk Directions

1. Hildenborough Station to Riding Lane (2¼ km)

Cross the footbridge to leave the station by the ticket office on the far side. Turn right, go up the station approach road and turn right onto the pavement alongside Rings Hill, soon crossing over the railway. About 300m after going straight ahead at a staggered junction onto Watt's Cross Road (joining the route of Book 1 Walk 21), there is a footpath sign by a kissing gate into the field on the left.

*The suggested route avoids some road walking by taking this little-used footpath, but you could simply continue along the road and turn left onto the B245 at the end (as per the Book 1 route). If you do this, continue the directions at [•] below.*

There is unlikely to be a path on the ground but the right of way cuts diagonally across the field towards a large house on the B245, heading **N**. On the far side of the field **turn right** at a post with footpath waymarkers onto a grassy path slanting up the edge of some rough grassland towards another house. Go over a stile and between its outbuildings to the main road.

[•] Cross this busy road carefully, go past a garage and turn right into Mill Lane, 125m from the junction with Watt's Cross Road. In 175m **turn right** onto a signposted footpath, going through a pair of metal gates into a meadow. Follow a clear grassy path curving down to the bottom corner. In the belt of trees cross a stream on a footbridge and go straight ahead across a corner of the next field towards a wood, continuing gently uphill alongside it.

At the top of the rise do not follow the field edge round to the left, but **keep ahead** across the field towards a gap in the trees. Make your way through a potentially muddy patch here and **turn left**: the right of way cuts diagonally across this next field to the opposite corner but you may find it easier to walk around the edge. In this corner go over a stile into a large field and **turn left** as indicated.

There is no clear path but you will eventually be going past a riding school which you can just see in the distance. As you head towards these buildings, make for the point about 200m away where a low fence stretching across the field meets the left-hand field edge, 50m to the right of a metal field gate in the hedge. In this corner go through a pair of metal kissing gates into a small field, with horse training grounds on your left.

Make your way to the opposite corner and leave the field through another kissing gate. Turn left briefly onto a track, but almost immediately **veer right** towards a stile with a footpath marker. Go over this onto a broad grassy path to the right of another exercise area. At the end go down to a wooden gate and turn left. Make your way past outbuildings and along a house's driveway to Riding Lane.

## 2. Riding Lane to Riding Lane (again) (1¾ km)

Turn left onto the road; there is no pavement at first but after passing Princess Christian's Farm there is a surfaced path in the grass verge on the right-hand side. 125m after passing Vines Lane, **cross the road** to take a signposted footpath on the left, to the right of "Woodside".

Bear right off the driveway onto a broad grassy path between fences. At the end of its garden go over a stile in a belt of trees into a large field and take the clear path straight ahead (if the field has recently been ploughed, head **NNW** towards the right-hand end of a hedge 250m away). Go alongside this hedge, straight across a farm track and continue in the same direction towards a line of trees on the far side of another field.

Do not take a path into the trees (the Book 1 route) but **turn right** to go along the field edge, with trees on your left. After about 300m (two-thirds of the way along this field edge) **go over a stile on the left** and across a plank bridge to resume your original direction on a fenced path on the other side of the trees. Follow this onto a driveway and out between houses to a road, Riding Lane again.

## 3. Riding Lane to Shipbourne (2½ km)

Turn left onto the road, taking care as there is no pavement. In 150m **turn right** onto a signposted footpath along the edge of a wood, with the landscaped grounds of a new estate (Fairhill) behind a fence on your right. At the end of the wood the path emerges into the corner of a large field and you continue along its right-hand edge, with trees on your right.

In 500m go over a stile and continue in the same direction in the next field, which takes you to a private road. Go straight across this onto a short track between trees, then over a stile into the corner of a large meadow. **Turn half-left** to go diagonally across this meadow; if there is no clear path aim for the bottom corner which comes into view as you go over a small rise.

Leave the meadow via a stile in the hedge and carefully cross a lane (Hildenborough Road). Go over a stile into another field and bear right, making for its top right-hand corner. At the top veer right through a wide gap in the trees into a large field, with Shipbourne church visible 800m ahead.

Follow a clear path across the field, slightly to the right of the church as it goes gently downhill. After crossing a stream continue up the next field towards the church and go over a stile into its churchyard, joining the **Greensand Way**<sup>1</sup> (GW). Pass to the left of **St Giles** church<sup>2</sup> and go out through its lychgate to the A227, with the beer garden of the **Chaser Inn** (the early lunch stop) on your right.

## 4. Shipbourne to Dunk's Green (2 km)

*In this section along the GW you follow (in reverse) part of the route of Extra Walk 41.*

Cross the A227 carefully and head **E** across Shipbourne Common (there is a clear grassy path to the left of Upper Green Road). On the far side of the common join the road and follow it briefly round to the right, then **turn left** onto a signposted grassy path to the left of a house. After passing its back garden go through a kissing gate into a large field.

Keep ahead on a clear path across the field, gently downhill. At the bottom cross a stream and continue on a track up the right-hand edge of the next field. Near the top of the rise this leads into a tarmac driveway by the buildings of Fairlawne Home Farm. Veer right to continue along the broad grassy strip to its right and follow this out to a minor road (School Lane).

Cross the lane and go over a stile to continue in the same direction across a field. On the far side go over a stile into a wood. Ignore faint paths off to both sides and **fork left** to go gently downhill through the wood, heading **ENE**. At the bottom of the slope leave the wood via a stile, with two footpaths climbing up the field ahead.

Do not take the main path straight ahead but **turn half-right** to cut diagonally across the field, aiming for its top right-hand corner when it comes into view. Go over a stile and continue alongside a hedge on your right. At the end go through a metal kissing gate and down a few steps to a lane on the outskirts of Dunk's Green.

## 5. Dunk's Green to Stallion's Green (2½ km)

*If you are not stopping at the later lunch pub you can take the footpath opposite, a grassy path across a meadow; on the far side go through a kissing gate, turn right and continue the directions at [•] below.*

For the main route, **turn left** onto the lane and follow it round to the right to find the **Kentish Rifleman** on your right at a road junction.

Turn right out of the pub to continue briefly along Roughway Lane, but almost immediately **turn right** again onto a signposted footpath, leaving the GW. This soon becomes a fenced path along the edge of a meadow. In 125m the path bends left by a metal kissing gate, where a grassy path joins from across the meadow (the short cut).

[•] The path heads **SE**, soon with a wood on the left, and comes out past a cottage onto Hamptons Road. Turn left to go gently downhill on this road for 350m, taking care as there is no pavement. Shortly after crossing a branch of the River Bourne, and opposite the entrance to a fish farm, **go over a stile on the right** onto a signposted footpath heading **S** along a narrow meadow.

At the far end of the meadow bear right to cross the stream on a wooden footbridge. Do not take the obvious path ahead across a large field, but **turn left** to go along the field edge for 600m, with the meandering tree-lined river always close by on your left.

At the end of the field keep left on a grassy path through a small and rather overgrown area. This leads out via a stile onto a farm track, where you **turn left**. Go down this potentially muddy short track to join a lane at a sharp bend, by a house called "Mount Pleasant". **Turn right** to head **S** on High House Lane for 450m, where the lane turns right and there is a signposted footpath on the left.

## 6. Stallion's Green to Hadlow (2¼ or 1¾ km)

*There is a choice of routes into Hadlow. The main route goes past Broadview Gardens (and its tearoom) on the way into the village. If you are visiting Hadlow Tower, however, take the alternative route in §6b and (optionally) proceed to the gardens afterwards.*

### a. Main route (2¼ km)

Ignore the footpath and follow the lane round to the right, into the hamlet of Stallion's Green. In a further 125m, just after the lane bends left, **turn left** onto another footpath, going over a stile in the hedge into a large field. Follow a clear path off to the right, gradually moving away from the lane and heading **SE** (slightly to the right of Hadlow Tower, 1¾ km away). Follow the path for 400m, crossing a ditch along the way. On the far side **turn right** to go along the field edge, with a line of trees on your left.

In the field corner go through the belt of trees ahead and **turn left** onto a broad grassy track between the trees and a low hedge. Later there is a small wood on your right and you could switch to a parallel permissive path on the other side of the hedge if you wish. Either way brings you out to an area in front of some stables, part of **Hadlow College**<sup>3</sup>.

Go over a stile to the right of a fieldgate to continue in the same direction along its main driveway (which is a right of way). About 200m before the main road which you can see up ahead, **veer right** through the car park for **Broadview Gardens** and its **tearoom**.



The entrance to the gardens is to the right of the Garden Centre. At the information panel you should be able to pick up a leaflet with a plan of the gardens, which shows a suggested short route through them. However, they are worth exploring more fully if you are not pressed for time.

After visiting the tearoom and/or the gardens go back through the car park, keeping to the right. **Veer right** onto a surfaced path running parallel to the driveway and follow this out to the A26.

If you want to finish the Main Walk without going into the village, the Hadlow College stop for buses to Tonbridge is 100m off to the right, on the other side of the main road.

For the village turn left and go along the pavement beside the main road. Shortly after crossing the River Bourne there is another possible tea place on your right, **Weathered and Worn**. Later you pass the **Maltings**<sup>4</sup> on the left and an imposing old gateway on the right, the visitor entrance to **Hadlow Tower**<sup>5</sup>.

*This entrance arch is one of the few surviving parts of Hadlow Castle. Note that you are only allowed to enter this private estate when accompanied by one of the Tower stewards, on days when it is open to the public.*

If you have not already done so, cross over to the right-hand side of the A26 at the pedestrian lights ahead. In a further 50m you come to a small parking area called The Square, with a bus stop for Tonbridge if you are finishing the Main Walk here. Another possible refreshment stop, the **Two Brewers** pub, is a little further along the main road.

#### b. Alternative route (1¾ km)

For the direct route into the village, **turn left** onto the footpath, going over a stile to the right of a fieldgate with a Fairlawne Estate notice. Head **E** along the right-hand field edge, passing a pylon. In the field corner go through a gap in the hedge and continue (slightly to the right) on a grassy path across a meadow. On the far side follow the path into a large field and bear right.

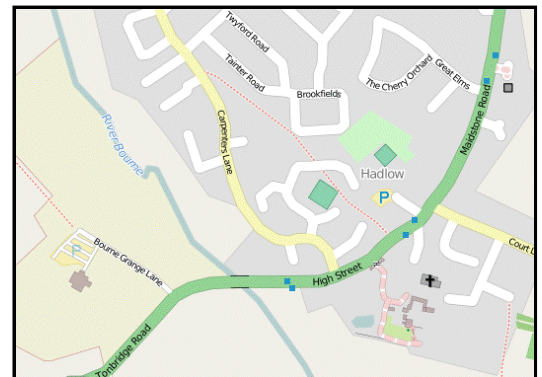
Do not take the clear path across the field but **keep right** to stay on the farm track, with a copse on your right. At the end of the trees go over a footbridge (with a good view of Hadlow Tower ahead, 1½ km away) and follow a clear path across the next field to its far right-hand corner.

On the far side go straight across a farm track and over a stile onto a broad grassy path, with a wire fence on the left and a tree-lined stream off to your right. In 250m go over a stile to the left of a metal fieldgate, with the buildings of Hope Farm on your right. Keep ahead to join the farm's driveway and follow this out to a road (Carpenter's Lane).

Cross the road and turn right, at first on a wide grass verge and then a pavement as you come to some houses. You pass the **Rose & Crown** pub on the right, opposite Hope Avenue. Shortly after crossing another residential street (Twyford Road) **bear left** onto a tarmac path heading **SE**, signposted as a footpath.

You now simply follow this path for 500m into the centre of the village, going straight across a residential street along the way. Towards the end the path broadens, goes past Hadlow Library and comes out onto the A26 by Hadlow Post Office. Cross this busy main road at the nearby pedestrian lights and **turn right**. In 50m there is an imposing old gateway on the left, the visitor entrance to **Hadlow Tower**<sup>5</sup>.

*This entrance arch is one of the few surviving parts of Hadlow Castle. Note that you are only allowed to enter this private estate when accompanied by one of the Tower stewards, on days when it is open to the public.*



If you want some refreshment after visiting the Tower there are several appealing tea places nearby. As you come out onto the A26 the **Gingerbread Teashop** is 100m to the right, opposite a small parking area known as The Square (with the **Two Brewers** pub a little further along the main road). In the opposite direction, the coffee shop at **Weathered and Worn** is 150m away on the route to Broadview Gardens.

*There are bus stops for Tonbridge near all these tea places, but even if you are finishing the walk in Hadlow the short detour to Broadview Gardens (below) is recommended.*

- **Detour to Broadview Gardens (+1 km)**

Head towards Tonbridge on the A26 (ie. going back past Hadlow Castle if coming from The Square). After crossing the River Bourne you can see the vehicle entrance to **Hadlow College**<sup>3</sup> ahead, although you can **bear right** onto a tarmac path cutting across its grounds. This joins the driveway coming up from the A26, after which you turn left into the car park for **Broadview Gardens** and its **tearoom**.

*The entrance to the gardens is to the right of the Garden Centre. At the information panel you should be able to pick up a leaflet with a plan of the gardens, which shows a suggested short route through them. However, they are worth exploring more fully if you are not pressed for time.*

After visiting the tearoom and/or the gardens go back through the car park, keeping to the right.

**Veer right** onto a surfaced path running parallel to the driveway and follow this out to the A26.

Unless you wish to retrace your steps and return to the village, cross the main road carefully and **turn right** for the Hadlow College stop for buses to Tonbridge, 100m along the road.

## 7. Hadlow to Three Elm Lane (2 km)

To continue the Long Walk to Tonbridge, make your way onto Church Street at the back of The Square. At the end of this short street a quick visit to **St Mary's** church<sup>6</sup> is recommended; the **Hoppers' Memorial** is right at the back of the churchyard, in the opposite corner. The walk continues along the signposted footpath along the north side of the church (ie. turn right if coming out of the churchyard).

At the end of the path keep ahead on a short residential street, curving to the right past the last house onto a tarmac path heading south. In 150m there is a permissive path off to the right, through a wooden kissing gate.

- **Detour to see Hadlow Tower (+400m)**

The path leads to the edge of Hadlow Castle grounds directly opposite the Tower in about 200m. If you did not visit the Tower this is about the closest you can get, although the view is still partially obscured by some large trees. If you take this detour, return the same way.

Continue along the tree-lined tarmac path past the kissing gate, heading **S**. In 150m, as the path bends left, **fork right** onto a path through a belt of trees leading to a metal kissing gate (ignore the track into a field between the two paths). Go through the gate and continue along the left-hand edge of a field.

In the next corner go through another kissing gate and **turn right** onto a broad tree-lined path, heading **W**. Follow this round to the left and out into the corner of a large field. Bear right to go along the field edge, heading **SE** with trees on your right.

In 150m **turn right** through a wide gap onto a broad strip of grass on the edge of another field. In 75m cross the River Bourne and continue along the edge of the next field, with Bourneside Farm off to your right. In a further 250m, where a footpath joins from the field on your left, **veer right** through a squeeze gate in the hedge. Turn left and go along a short grassy strip, then out through a side gate onto Blackman's Lane. Turn left and follow this quiet road **S** for 300m to a T-junction with Three Elm Lane.

## 8. Three Elm Lane to the River Medway (opposite Roughs) (2¼ km)

Turn right briefly onto this road, passing the driveway to Hadlow Place House and a lodge on the left.

**The next turning is easy to miss.** About 50m from the junction with Blackman's Lane, go through a small gap in the hedge on the left of the road (with a concealed footpath sign) into an orchard. Bear left and go along its left-hand side, with the driveway (and later the manor house itself) behind a dense belt of trees on your left.

In 300m go slightly left across the driveway to Hadlow Place Farm into another orchard. There is no clear path ahead and although it looks natural to turn half-left along a broad grassy strip between the fruit trees towards some barns, the right of way weaves diagonally between the rows of trees towards a tall pole 200m away, to the right of these barns and heading **SSE**.

At the end of the trees bear right to join a farm track initially heading **S** between two orchards, with a tall hedge on your left. In 400m you come to a junction of tracks at the end of the orchard, with an electricity pylon in the corner of the left-hand field ahead.

*The suggested route to the River Medway is not a public right of way but is along a permitted horse ride, also used by local dog-walkers. If the landowner has put up signs prohibiting access to walkers, use the slightly longer alternative route along public footpaths in §8b.*

### a. Suggested route

Bear slightly left at the junction onto a track to the right of the pylon, with a line of trees on your right. At the end of the trees **keep ahead** on a faint path across the field and follow this over a stream on a wide wooden bridge. Turn left and follow the field edge on a serpentine route for 250m, where you reach the river and turn right onto the riverside path.

The two routes rejoin further along the river. You soon pass Porter's Lock and in a further 600m there is a footpath post on the left where the alternative route comes in from the right.

### b. Alternative route (+250m)

Turn right at the junction and follow a narrow grassy path along the edge of the orchard, with a tall hedge on your left. In 350m cross a stream on a wooden footbridge and continue in the same way alongside the next orchard. In 100m **bear left** in front of a tall oak tree to continue on a path along the right-hand edge of a large field, now with the orchard behind a line of trees on your right.

In 200m, as the path is about to curve up to the right, **turn left** onto a well-defined path going straight across a large field, heading **S**. Continue in much the same direction across four fields for 750m, crossing a stream on a concrete bridge halfway along. Eventually you come to a footpath post in front of the river and turn right onto the riverside path.

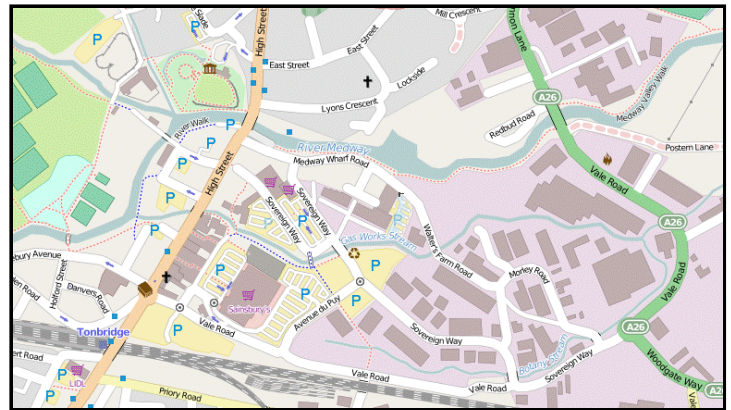
## 9. The River Medway to Tonbridge Station (4 km)

You now simply follow the **Medway Valley Walk**<sup>7</sup> all the way to Tonbridge<sup>8</sup>, although you need to take care near the end.

In 800m you pass Eldridge's Lock. In another 700m you go under a low girder bridge carrying an access road to gravel pits on the far side of the river. You stay on the main path for a further 800m, at which point you need to **fork left** to stay close to the river (the right fork goes through a belt of trees into a playing field).

The path goes between the river and a high fence shielding an industrial estate for 400m, then comes out onto the A26 at Cannon Bridge. Cross over this busy main road at the traffic island and turn left. On the other side of the river **turn right** onto the broad towpath, passing some new apartment blocks on your left.

In 400m you come to a newly-renovated area beside Town Lock. Continue alongside the river towards Big Bridge (or veer left onto Medway Wharf Road if the towpath ahead is blocked). The final stretch is along the site of **Medway Wharf**<sup>9</sup>, and at the bridge the remains of **Tonbridge Castle**<sup>10</sup> are ahead on your right.



Tonbridge station is 500m away to the left along the High Street, which contains several bars and coffee shops. **The Humphrey Bean** is opposite Medway Wharf Road; **Finch House Café & Bakery** is 300m along the High Street, on the left. To reach the station go straight on at the roundabout, up the slope. The entrance is on the right at the top; trains to London generally leave from Platform 2 (down the steps on the left).

## Walk Notes

1. The **Greensand Way** follows the course of a sandstone ridge just to the south of the North Downs. It runs for 175 km from Haslemere in Surrey to Hamstreet in Kent.
2. **St Giles, Shipbourne** was built in 1881, replacing an earlier church which had fallen into disrepair.
3. **Hadlow College** of Agriculture and Horticulture was established in 1968. It runs a wide variety of land-based training courses.
4. Hadlow had several breweries until the mid-20<sup>th</sup>C. The **Maltings** were converted into flats in 1990.
5. **Hadlow Tower** was badly damaged in the 1987 storm and the lantern had to be removed in 1996. A two-year restoration project (including replacement of the lantern) was completed in February 2013.
6. **St Mary, Hadlow** dates from the 11<sup>th</sup>C, with the tower being added in the 13<sup>th</sup>C. Its churchyard contains the elaborate Barton May family tomb and a monument to 30 hop-pickers who drowned in 1853 while trying to cross the flood-swollen River Medway at Hartlake Bridge.
7. The **Medway Valley Walk** runs alongside the river for 31 km, between Tonbridge and Rochester.
8. **Tonbridge** has always been pronounced *Tunbridge* and was often spelt that way. The 'o' spelling became standard in the late 19<sup>th</sup>C to help distinguish it from its spa neighbour Tunbridge Wells, which retained the 'u' spelling.
9. **Medway Wharf** was where barges were loaded and unloaded. The river was made navigable between Maidstone and Tonbridge in the 1740s and was profitable for 100 years, despite claims that it was "the most irregular and worst constructed navigation in England" (it had no towpath along its length and barges had to be hauled by teams of men). Like all waterways it declined after the coming of the railways.
10. The impressive gatehouse of **Tonbridge Castle** was completed in 1260. An earlier motte and bailey castle had been built soon after the Norman Conquest, but was destroyed after a failed rebellion against William I. The site is now owned by the local council and the grounds are a public park.

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