



# Leigh and Penshurst walk

The Eden valley, Penshurst Place and a rural pub for lunch.

<b>Length</b>	<p><b>Main Walk, from Leigh to Penshurst:</b> 13½ km (8.4 miles). Three hours 15 minutes walking time. For the whole excursion including trains, sights and meals, allow at least 8 hours.</p> <p><b>Circular Walk, from Leigh:</b> 18 km (11.2 miles). Four hours 25 minutes walking time.</p> <p><b>Alternative Walk, from Penshurst to Leigh:</b> 15½ km (9.6 miles). Three hours 45 minutes walking time.</p> <p><b>Alternative Circular Walk, from Penshurst:</b> 12½ km (7.8 miles). Three hours walking time.</p>
<b>OS Map</b>	<p>Explorer 147. Leigh Station (map reference TQ546462) and Penshurst Station (in Chiddingstone Causeway, TQ519467) are both in Kent, 4 km and 7 km <b>W</b> of Tonbridge respectively.</p>
<b>Toughness</b>	<p>3 out of 10 (4 for the Circular Walk).</p>
<b>Features</b>	<p>This is a group of walks to and from adjacent stations on the Redhill–Tonbridge line, all centred around the hamlet of Hoath Corner and its traditional rural pub: “all dogs very welcome...children must be kept on a lead!”. The link routes to and from Leigh station have been taken from the <a href="#">Leigh to Tunbridge Wells walk</a> (1–15) and the <a href="#">Hever to Leigh walk</a> (1–19), but the other sections are in less familiar Wealden territory.</p> <p>The <b>Main Walk</b> options start from Leigh station and head west through parkland to the attractive village of <b>Penshurst</b>. After crossing the <b>River Eden</b> there is a gentle climb from Salmans Manor to the lunch pub in Hoath Corner. The <b>Alternative Walk</b> options start from Penshurst station (almost 3 km north of its village, in Chiddingstone Causeway) and head south through low-lying farmland in the Eden valley to join the other route at Salmans Manor.</p>

From Hoath Corner all routes head north to another tiny settlement at Hill Hoath, where there is a choice of endings. You can either continue through the picturesque village of [Chiddingstone](#) and return from Penshurst station, or take a longer route looping back through Penshurst village to Leigh station.

Both Penshurst and Chiddingstone have interesting historic houses which you could visit, and all the routes go through at least one of these villages.

[Penshurst Place](#) is a well-preserved medieval manor house with an attractive formal garden, the home of the Sidney family since the 16<sup>th</sup>C. It is open weekends from mid-February to March, and daily from April to October; admission (2018) is £11.50, or £9.50 for the gardens only. [Chiddingstone Castle](#) is a castellated manor house rebuilt in the 19<sup>th</sup>C, containing an unusual collection of art and curiosities left behind by its late owner, Denys Eyre Bower. It is open Sun–Wed from April to October; admission (2018) is £9.50.

*The Wealden soil does not drain well and parts of the walk can be muddy even after moderate amounts of rain.*

---

### Walk Options

In addition to the routes outlined above you could simply omit the outer loops on those walk options which feature a crossover design, making two very **Short Walks**. Either of these would be a good choice if you wanted to spend time visiting Penshurst Place.

The fairly short Alternative Circular Walk (which does not go through Penshurst itself!) has been included here for completeness. A new [Penshurst Circular walk](#) (#300) contains some more satisfying circular routes from this station, the longer versions of which take in Bough Beech reservoir to the north of the railway line.

---

### Transport

Leigh and Penshurst are adjacent stations on a branch line with an hourly service between Tonbridge and Redhill (through trains from London were withdrawn in 2018). It is usually quicker to travel from Charing Cross and change at Tonbridge (taking about 1 hour); travelling from Victoria or London Bridge and changing at Redhill can be 10–15 minutes longer. Tickets are valid on both routes. The suggested ticket is a *return to Penshurst* if you travel via Tonbridge and a *return to Leigh (Kent)* if you travel via Redhill, but in practice it is unlikely to matter as the fare from London is the same.

If you want to finish the walk in Penshurst village, Metrobus 231 & 233 go via Penshurst station to Edenbridge in one direction and Tunbridge Wells in the other (Mon–Sat).

If driving, there is no car park at Leigh station but roadside parking is available. There is a small private car park on the south side of Penshurst station where a sign says the charge is £3 per day.

---

### Suggested Train

Take the train nearest to **10:00** from **Charing Cross** to **Leigh** for one of the **Main Walks**, or nearest to **10:30** to **Penshurst** for the **Alternative Walks**, changing at Tonbridge in both cases.

---

### Lunch

The intended lunch pub for all but the two Short Walks is the attractive **Rock Inn** (01892-870296) in the hamlet of **Hoath Corner** (after 7½ km if starting from Leigh; 6¼ km from Penshurst). This out-of-the-way rural pub has some outside seating at the front and a small back garden. It is closed Mondays and as with any small pub it is a good idea to call beforehand to check it is open (and serving food).

On the walk routes which go through **Penshurst** you could get a pub lunch at the up-market **Leicester Arms Hotel** (01892-871617) or a light meal at the **Porcupine Pantry** (see below). However, this village is better placed on the two Short Walks and comes relatively early or late on the other walk options.

On the walk routes finishing at Penshurst station you could stop for a late pub lunch in **Chiddingstone** at the **Castle Inn** (01892-870371), which reopened in April 2017 after being closed for nearly a year.

## Tea

On the walk routes finishing at Leigh station there are two options for tea in **Penshurst**. In the centre of the village the **Fir Tree House** (01892-870382) tearoom has a large garden and is open from 2.30-6pm, but is closed on Mondays (except Bank Holidays, when it is closed the following Tuesday; it might also be closed on other weekdays in winter). A good alternative is the **Porcupine Pantry** (01892-870307), just outside the main entrance to Penshurst Place and open to non-visitors; it has indoor and outdoor seating and is open daily to 6pm.

On the walk routes finishing at Penshurst station there are two good tea places in **Chiddingstone**. The **Tulip Tree** (01892-871504) in Burghesh Court, behind the Chiddingstone Stores, is a popular tearoom which is open daily to 5pm. On days when it is open you are spoilt for choice as you can visit the equally good **Chiddingstone Castle Tea Room** (01892-872746) and explore the grounds without necessarily paying to visit the house.

There are conveniently-placed pubs near both stations, but in **Leigh** the **Fleur-de-lis** (01732-832235) is sometimes closed in mid-afternoon. In **Chiddingstone Causeway** the **Little Brown Jug** (01892-870318) is normally open all day and serves tea and coffee as well as normal pub fare.

## Help Us!

After the walk, we would love to get your [feedback](#)

## Photos

Upload your photos to the [SWC Group on Flickr](#), and [videos to YouTube](#). This walk's tags are:



## By Car

**Start** TN11 8RU

## Help

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

## Version

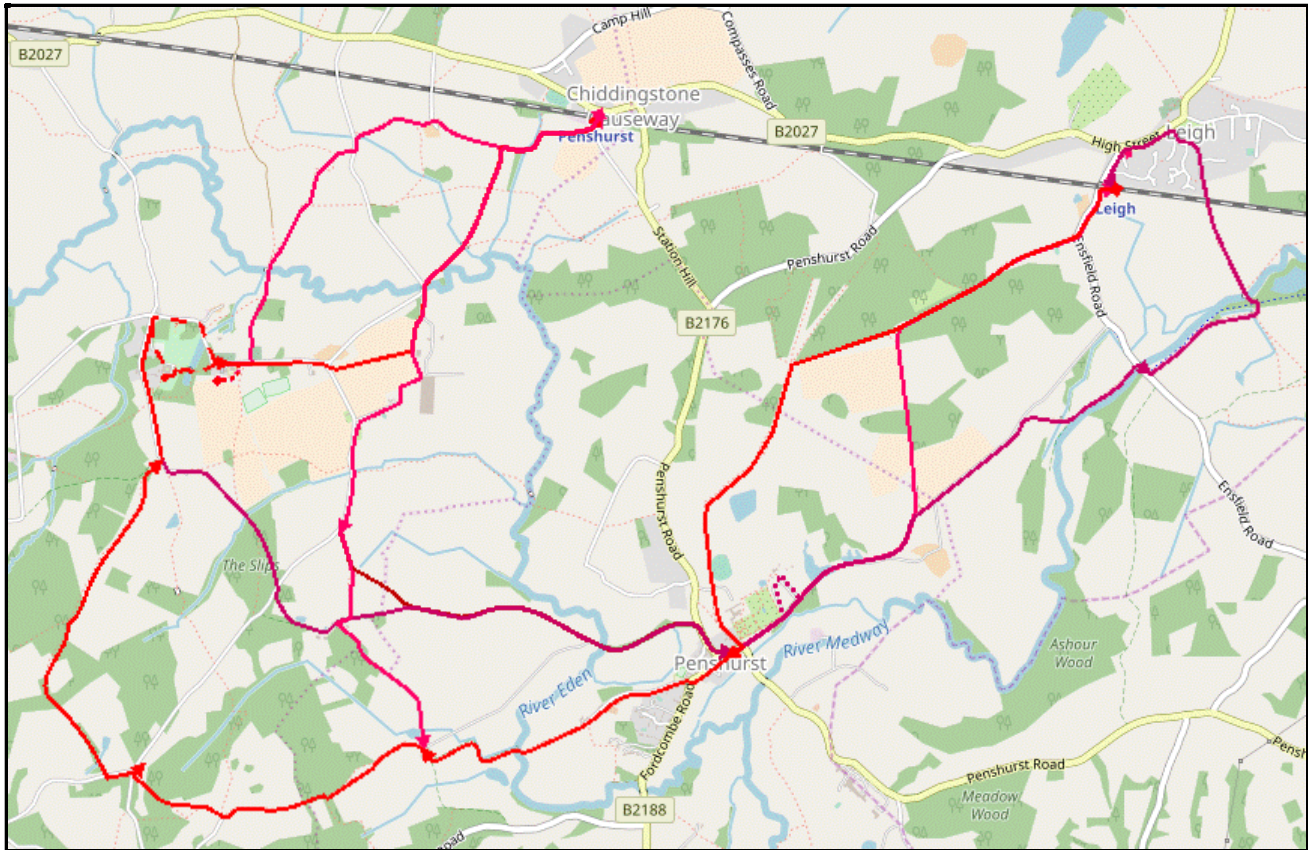
Oct-18

## Copyright

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

# Walk Directions

# Walk Map



All maps © OpenStreetMap contributors

## Walk Options ( Main | Alternative )

- M. Main Walk, from Leigh to Penshurst (13½ km)
  - a. Circular Walk, from Leigh (18 km)
    - ai. Short Circular Walk, omitting Hoath Corner (8¾ km)
  - b. Alternative Walk, from Penshurst to Leigh (15½ km)
    - bi. Alternative Short Walk, omitting Hoath Corner (9 km)
  - c. Alternative Circular Walk, from Penshurst (12½ km)

## Walk Directions

If you doing one of the Alternative Walks from Penshurst station, start at §3.

### 1. Leigh Station to Penshurst (3¾ km)

*This section is the same as the start of Walk 1–15.*

From either platform at Leigh station, take the path down to the road. Turn left and walk along it for 250m, **taking care as there is no pavement**. At Paul's Hill House **turn right** up a rough track which soon enters the Penshurst Place Estate. Where it comes to an open field, follow a grassy path across it to the far left-hand corner.

Continue in the same direction along a broad tree-lined avenue for 1 km, ignoring a footpath off to the right after 100m and another to the left after 500m. Eventually, where another footpath joins from the right, **turn left** downhill along another tree-lined avenue towards a lake, with Penshurst Place beyond.

After going through a gate, the right of way continues ahead for 150m and then turns half-right at a footpath signpost, but most walkers bear right onto a clear grassy path cutting off this corner. Go through a gate by the lifeless trunk of the veteran **Sidney**

**Oak**<sup>1</sup> (with a plaque recording that it expired in 2016) and continue alongside a fence, with the lake and a line of clipped yew trees on the other side.

Follow the grassy path up to a kissing gate in the next fence. Go through this and head **S** across the parkland towards the right-hand side of Penshurst Place. After passing a cricket pitch on your left, cross a driveway flanked by two metal kissing gates. Continue towards the corner of Penshurst Place's hedge-topped stone wall and keep ahead with the wall on your left-hand side.

At the end of the wall, go through another kissing gate and follow a path through the churchyard of **St John the Baptist** church<sup>2</sup> (which is worth visiting; its entrance is on the south side). Leave the churchyard through an archway<sup>3</sup> and go past the picturesque houses in **Leicester Square**<sup>4</sup> to the B2176. **Turn right** onto the road to enter the village, soon coming to the **Leicester Arms Hotel** (a possible early lunch stop) on your left.

*If you are doing a Short Walk, go to §11.*

## 2. Penshurst to Salmans Manor (1¾ km)

Continue past the pub and keep left at the road junction in the centre of the village. Go along the B2188 for 200m, passing some attractive old buildings<sup>5</sup>. Immediately after passing the primary school, **turn right** into a lane (The Warren). Stay on this lane for 600m, eventually passing a row of cottages.

Where the lane ends, keep ahead down the right-hand edge of a large field. In the bottom corner go through a metal gate and veer right across the grass to a footbridge over the **River Eden**<sup>6</sup>. Cross this and continue on an enclosed path.

In 200m go through a metal kissing gate and turn right along a narrow fenced path. This takes you around two edges of a large field, with two more kissing gates along the way. After the second of these, do not continue on the broad grassy track ahead (with a tall hedge on its left), but **turn right** to head **NW** on another wide track.

The track soon comes to a tarmac lane by the buildings of Salmans Manor. Turn left briefly onto the lane, but instead of following it round to the right **go through a fieldgate** (or a wooden side gate) to continue in the same direction on a tree-lined track.

*A short detour up the lane would give you a fine view of a large mill pond opposite a particularly attractive oast-house conversion.*

*Continue the directions at §5.*

## 3. Penshurst Station to Wellers Town (3 km)

If you arrived on a train heading towards Tonbridge, cross the tracks by the footbridge to the westbound platform. Leave the station on its southern side and bear right through a small parking area towards a wooden fieldgate. Cross a stile to its left and go along a grassy track, with a tall hedge on your right. Continue in the same direction across the next field.

On the far side turn left along the field edge. In 150m **turn right** through a metal fieldgate, as indicated by a footpath marker. Go along the left-hand edge of a small field and cross a stile beside another fieldgate into a much larger field. Continue briefly along its left-hand edge, but in 100m **go over a stile on your left** to head **S** along the edge of another field, with a line of trees on your right. In 200m go through a gap and keep ahead, now with a wire fence on your right.

At the end of this field go over a stile into another field. If you continue in the same direction you will come to a wide bridge over a stream in a gap in the trees, but a slightly shorter (and potentially less muddy) route is to head for the field corner to its right, where there is a footbridge over the stream. Either way, head **SW** for 300m across the next field (turning half-right if you crossed the wider bridge), aiming to pass just to the right of a projecting group of trees.

On the far side go over a stile and turn left onto a lane to cross the **River Eden**<sup>6</sup> on the attractive Vexour Bridge. On the other side **keep ahead** onto a tarmac driveway where the lane swings right, as indicated by a footpath signpost. In 100m **turn right** by another

signpost onto a short path going up through a belt of trees into the corner of a large field. Keep left and go along its edge, still climbing and passing the buildings of Vexour on your left.

In 150m **keep ahead** at a footpath signpost by a large oak tree (the path from the right is one of the return routes from Chiddingstone). In a further 150m, however, **turn right** (with no signpost) on a grassy strip towards the right-hand edge of some trees surrounding a few houses. On reaching these turn left to go alongside them for 60m, then **turn right** and make your way past the houses onto a long straight driveway. Follow this out to a lane and turn left onto it.

You now have 600m of road walking, eventually going through Wellers Town. About 75m after passing the last house in this hamlet, **turn left** off the lane at a footpath sign, going over a stile to the right of a metal fieldgate into a field. Across the hollow to the right you can see what looks like a long low building but is actually a *trompe-l'oeil*: the back of a large barn at Wat Stock has been painted to resemble a manor house.

*If you are doing a Short Walk, go to §13.*

#### 4. Wellers Town to Salmans Manor (1¼ km)

Go across the grass, aiming a little to the left of the building and passing some isolated trees in the field. As you go down the slope you will see a footbridge over a ditch in the line of trees at the bottom. Cross this bridge and go through a metal kissing gate into a field.

Make your way straight up the field towards the left-hand end of the building. Go through a metal fieldgate and turn right onto a farm track, passing the derelict barn. At the far end of the barn **turn left** onto a tarmac lane, passing some cottages. The lane goes through a small wood, veering right and left past a large pond, then continues between hedges. At the entrance to Abbotsmerry Barn follow it round to the right and down a long slope.

At the bottom you come to the buildings of Salmans Manor, with a large mill pond opposite a particularly attractive oast-house conversion. Shortly afterwards, where the lane curves left, **turn right** through a fieldgate (or a wooden side gate) onto a tree-lined track.

#### 5. Salmans Manor to Hoath Corner (2 km)

Go along the track for 100m, with glimpses of the mill pond on your right. Just before a metal fieldgate leading into a large field, **turn left** through a kissing gate and climb a short flight of steps. This leads through another kissing gate into the field where you continue up its left-hand edge.

In 150m **turn left** through a wooden kissing gate into a small enclosure, leaving it by a metal kissing gate in the opposite corner. Bear right and go across a small fenced-in field to another gate. Go through this and continue along the field edge, passing **Harden Vineyard** on your left. At the end of the vineyard go over a stile and through some trees to a path T-junction. Turn right and follow the path round to the left.

In 100m you come to the edge of the wood and go over a stile into a more open area. Follow the enclosed tree-lined path gently uphill between two large fields. At the top cross a stile onto a path through a belt of trees, joining a driveway by the entrance to a house "Skipreed".

**The final part of this section needs some care.** About 100m along this drive, opposite a house "Oakenden", **turn right** up a few steps in the earth bank. Go over a stile and along the left-hand edge of a field (with a distant view of Penshurst Place away to your right). At the end of the hedge, **go over a stile on the left** into the corner of another field.

Follow the right-hand of two grassy paths across this field (moving slightly away from its left-hand edge). On the far side go over another stile and downhill through Puckden Wood. At the bottom of the slope, the path curves right and then veers left to leave the

wood. Climb a broad grassy path between fences and continue along a short driveway past some houses to a road junction in the hamlet of Hoath Corner. Follow the road round to the right to find the suggested lunch stop, the **Rock Inn**, on the right-hand side.

## 6. Hoath Corner to Hill Hoath (2 km)

From the pub, return to the road junction and **fork right** onto the narrow lane heading **W**, signposted to Markbeece. In 150m, **turn right** at a footpath sign to go down a path between fences. After crossing a stream the path continues along the right-hand edge of some rough grassland, heading **NW**.

Just before the far corner follow the path into the trees and down through a small wooded glen, then back up into the corner of a large field. Keep right, initially alongside a projecting piece of woodland. Where these trees end, bear slightly right across the field to find a path leading into a large wood on the far side.

The woodland path comes to a T-junction with footpath markers where you **turn right** onto a potentially very muddy path. After it bends left you go past a sign welcoming walkers to **Stock Wood**. Keep to the right of a horse jump and continue on a path between hedges, now with fields on both sides.

At a path crossing near another horse jump, **go through a metal kissing gate on the right** and continue on a well-trodden grassy path for about 500m, heading **NNE**. At the end of the field go through another kissing gate, down a short slope to a gap in the hedge ahead and **turn right** onto an earth track. This leads into a short lane going through the hamlet of Hill Hoath, where you pass some houses (including a renovated half-timbered cottage) and reach a three-way road junction.

*If you are doing a version of the walk finishing at Leigh station, go to §10.*

## 7. Hill Hoath to Chiddingstone (1¼ km)

At the junction **keep left** to head **N** on this quiet country lane. In 300m you pass a corner of the grounds of **Chiddingstone Castle** on your right (with a locked gate), then in a further 400m come to its main driveway. The route through the grounds in §7b is not a public right of way but you could take this if they are open (there is an Honesty Box for donations).

*The grounds are not very large but include a tearoom, an attractive lake and some pleasant woodland paths beyond the lawn at the back of the house.*

### a. Route along public roads

Continue along the lane to a crossroads and **turn right**. In 250m this road bends right and crosses a stone bridge, with a view of the castle beyond the lake. In 150m there is a pedestrian entrance to the castle on the right (the exit for the alternative route) and the road turns sharply left.

### b. Route via castle grounds

**Turn sharp right** off the lane to go up the castle's driveway, which curves gently round to its main entrance. To go directly to its **Tea Room** without visiting the house and its collections, continue past the entrance and go all the way round the back of the house to find the gift shop and tearoom in the far corner.

Afterwards, return to the front of the house and turn right. Continue across an arm of the lake on a footbridge and follow the path as it curves round and leaves the grounds through a gate in the castle walls, emerging on a bend in the road.

At the bend in the road the **Castle Inn** is on the right, the first building on Chiddingstone's picturesque village street<sup>7</sup>. Opposite **St Mary's** church<sup>8</sup> the **Tulip Tree** tearoom is up a short driveway behind the Chiddingstone Stores.

*If you are doing an Alternative Walk, go to §9 (to avoid retracing 1 km of your outward route from Penshurst station).*

## 8. Chiddingstone to Penshurst Station via Hampkins Hill (2¾ km)

Continue along the village street. After passing the primary school, follow the directions below if you want to see the Chiding Stone.

- **Detour to the Chiding Stone (+400m)**

**Turn right** onto a signposted path to the **Chiding Stone**<sup>9</sup>, where there is an information panel. Return the same way.

After the path to the Chiding Stone ignore public footpaths off to both sides and stay on the lane, climbing gently with good views of the Greensand Hills on your left. In 400m **fork right** in front of Triangle Oast (with Larkin's Farm<sup>10</sup> on your left). Almost immediately **turn left** at a footpath signpost onto a path heading **E** across the brow of Hampkins Hill, with fine views on both sides.

At the far end of the field, turn left along its edge. In the corner **veer right down a narrow path** through a belt of trees and turn left onto a tarmac driveway. At the bottom rejoin the minor road you left at Triangle Oast, crossing over the **River Eden** on the attractive Vexour Bridge.

On the other side **bear right** off the road, going over a stile to the left of a metal fieldgate. Take the right-hand of two faint grassy paths to head **NE** across a large field, going past a loop of the river. The path heads towards a metal fieldgate where there is a wide bridge over a stream in the trees, but the correct (and potentially less muddy) route is to aim about 30m to its left where there is a footbridge over the stream.

Either way, head roughly **N** across the next field (turning half-left after crossing the footbridge, or straight ahead from the wider bridge) towards a gap in the trees on the far side, 125m away. Go over a stile into the **right-hand field** and continue in much the same direction for 400m along the left-hand edge of two fields, at first with a wire fence and then a line of trees on your left. At the end of the second field go over a stile into a large field and **turn right** to head **E** along its edge.

In the field corner go over a stile to the right of a metal fieldgate and continue up to another. Go through this gate and **turn left** along the edge of another large field. About 100m before the railway embankment which you can see up ahead, **turn right** by a footpath marker post to go straight across this field, heading **E** again. On the far side go through a metal fieldgate to continue along a grassy track on the left-hand edge of a field.

At the end go over a stile beside a wooden fieldgate and through a small parking area to reach Penshurst station. Platform 1 on this side is for trains to Redhill. For some refreshment before the journey back, or to take a train to Tonbridge, cross the footbridge to Platform 2. The **Little Brown Jug** is on the other side of the B2027, directly opposite the station.

## 9. Chiddingstone to Penshurst Station via Beckett's Farm (3 km)

Continue along the village street. After passing the primary school, follow the directions below if you want to see the Chiding Stone.

- **Detour to the Chiding Stone (+400m)**

**Turn right** onto a signposted path to the **Chiding Stone**<sup>9</sup>, where there is an information panel. Return the same way.

50m after the path to the Chiding Stone, **turn left** off the lane onto a signposted footpath, the driveway to a house "Coachmans". At the end of the drive bear right as indicated in front of a wooden fieldgate onto a fenced path skirting around the house. On the far side follow the path gently downhill alongside a wood. Keep ahead where another footpath joins from the left and follow the path up to and across the **River Eden** on a new wooden footbridge.

After crossing the river **go through a metal gate on the right** into the corner of a field. Turn left and go along the field edge parallel to the path you were on, veering slightly away from it at the end to go through a gap into the bottom of a sloping field. Follow a faint grassy path up to its top right-hand corner and go through a gap into another field. Make your way over to its right-hand side and continue along the field edge, heading **N**.

In the next corner go through an old metal gate (or over a stile) and **bear right** across a field which slopes downhill, aiming just to the right of a house which comes into view. Go over a stile at the bottom and turn right to follow the house's driveway out to a minor



road. Turn left onto the road, then in 60m **turn right** onto a signposted footpath, heading **E** along a strip of grassland.

At the end of the hedge on your left **bear left** towards the field corner. Go through a metal fieldgate in this potentially muddy area and veer right up a slope to continue along the right-hand edge of a field, heading **E** again towards the buildings of Beckett's Farm. Go over a stile in the field corner and veer left briefly onto the driveway leading away from the farm, then **immediately go over a stile on the right** into a large field.

Go alongside the boundary of the farm buildings for 40m, then bear right across a patch of rough ground (with no clear path) to find a stile in the hedge 100m ahead. Go over this stile and continue along the right-hand edge of a large field for 300m, heading **E**.

In the field corner go over a stile to the right of a metal fieldgate and continue up to another. Go through this gate and **turn left** along the edge of another large field. About 100m before the railway embankment which you can see up ahead, **turn right** by a footpath marker post to go straight across this field, heading **E** again. On the far side go through a metal fieldgate to continue along a grassy track on the left-hand edge of a field.

At the end go over a stile beside a wooden fieldgate and through a small parking area to reach Penshurst station. Platform 1 on this side is for trains to Redhill. For some refreshment before the journey back, or to take a train to Tonbridge, cross the footbridge to Platform 2. The **Little Brown Jug** is on the other side of the B2027, directly opposite the station.

## 10. Hill Hoath to Penshurst (3½ km)

At the junction **turn right**, now on the **Eden Valley Walk**<sup>11</sup> (EVW). After passing some more houses **keep left** where the lane opens out, ignoring another footpath ahead past some stables. Head **E** along a farm track and take a surfaced path to the left of some new buildings. Continue on a grassy path and **fork right** where this splits, onto a clear straight path heading **SE**.

In 300m, soon after a narrow path joins from the left, go through a kissing gate into a wood. Continue along the attractive woodland path for 400m, climbing gently at first. At the far end go over a stile to emerge on a minor road. Cross the road and continue on a bridleway just off to the right, going through a metal fieldgate to head diagonally across a field on a grassy path. On the far side leave it through another gate and turn left onto a lane.

*At a fieldgate on the left after 100m there is a view of the painted barn at Wat Stock (the trompe-l'oeil seen earlier on the Alternative Walk).*

The lane bends to the left round a large pond. In a further 50m **keep ahead** on an unsurfaced track past some derelict farm buildings, briefly reversing the outward route of the Alternative Walk.

You now follow this potentially muddy track (the old coach road) all the way down to Penshurst, with occasional views over the Eden Valley on your left and a huge array of polytunnels behind the line of trees on your right. After a long descent the driveway from Salmans Farms joins from the right and you cross the River Eden. In a further 500m you reach the B2176, with **Penshurst Place** visible in the grounds ahead. Turn right onto the road to enter the village.

In 150m you come to the **Fir Tree House** tearoom on your right, the first of several possible tea places. The walk route continues round to the left at the road junction in the centre of the village, where the **Leicester Arms Hotel** is on your right (the Porcupine Pantry is 600m further on, in the next section).

*If you are doing an Alternative Walk, go to §14.*

## 11. Penshurst to Ensfield Bridge (2¾ km)

*The remainder of the walk is essentially the same as Walk 1–19.*

Head **E** out of the village on the B2176, briefly reversing the outward route of the Main Walk and passing the picturesque houses in **Leicester Square**<sup>4</sup>. Where the road turns right **keep ahead** through a stone and brick archway, now on Cycle Route 12 as well as the Eden Valley Walk.

As you go along the driveway to **Penshurst Place** you get a glimpse of its formal gardens through a locked gate in the high brick wall on your left. At the end of the wall the **Porcupine Pantry** is 200m off to the left, behind the large car park; if you are not visiting the tearoom or the manor house simply keep ahead on the tarmac drive (shown as a private road to Well Place, but still a public footpath).

In 400m, shortly before the road starts to ascend, **turn left** through a squeeze gate into a field, leaving CR 12. Go along the field edge parallel to the road, then through another squeeze gate. Follow a broad grassy path diagonally up the next field, heading **NE** (with a fine view of Penshurst Place over your left shoulder). At the top of the field there is a fieldgate leading out to a track.

Go through a squeeze gate to the right of this fieldgate and head **NE** along a track. In 80m keep ahead where it joins a concrete lane, rejoining CR 12 for the next 600m to Killick's Bank. After passing an isolated house there **veer right** across a lane junction and go through a squeeze gate (or over a nearby stile) into a field.

Follow a faint grassy path downhill, heading **E**. At the bottom of the field cross a wooden bridge over a backwater and go across the grass to the **River Medway**. Turn left and walk along the riverbank to Ensfield Bridge. Turn right onto the road to cross over the river, rejoining CR 12 again.

## 12. Ensfield Bridge to Leigh Station (2¼ km)

On the other side of the bridge **turn left** and follow the cycle route for about 400m. Where it bends left down a slope the suggested route is to go through a wooden squeeze gate in the fence and continue in much the same direction for 250m, near the left-hand edge of a field.

*If instead you choose to remain on the cycle route, turn left at a path crossing after a further 300m and resume the directions at [•] below.*

On the suggested route you eventually go over a stile and a ditch into another large field. **Bear left** across the field corner towards a nearby gate and go through it onto a short path through some trees to the cycle route you left earlier. **Keep ahead** at this path crossing (leaving the EVW, which continues towards Tonbridge on the long straight path off to the right).

[•] Cross a bridge over a backwater and fork left on the main path, which soon comes to a substantial bridge over the main river. Cross this and go straight across a large field, heading **NW**. On the far side go through a wide gap in the hedge and continue along the left-hand side of the next field, aiming for a broad track which you can see going over an embankment up ahead. Leave the field through a kissing gate to join this track, which takes you through a tunnel under the railway.

Stay on the track for 100m, up a slope. Where it swings round to the left, go out onto a residential street (Green View Avenue) to continue in the same direction. This leads to Leigh's village green, with **St Mary's** church visible on a knoll on the far side. Turn left and make your way around two sides of the green to the B2027.

Turn left and go along this main road for 250m, passing some attractive almshouses, the Village Stores, a restored water pump and several other interesting buildings. At the **Fleur-de-lis** pub **turn left** down a side road (Lower Green), in 225m coming to a bridge under the railway.

There are two tarmac paths (one on each side) leading up to Leigh station, but note that there is no footbridge linking the two platforms. Platform 1 is for trains to Redhill and Platform 2 for trains to Tonbridge. Check the timetable displayed here before deciding which platform to head for.

## 13. Wellers Town to Penshurst (2¼ km)

Go across the grass, aiming a little to the left of the building and passing some isolated trees in the field. As you go down the slope you will see a footbridge over a ditch in the line of trees at the bottom. Cross this bridge and go through a metal kissing gate into a field.

**Turn left** along the bottom of the field. In the corner go through a belt of trees via a couple of stiles and turn half-right to go gently uphill across a field. In the middle of the far side two more stiles and a footbridge take you into another field where you follow a faint grassy path up the side of the slope, past a projecting group of trees to the top edge of the field. Go over a stile in the trees and turn left onto a broad track, joining the **Eden Valley Walk**<sup>11</sup> (EVW).

You now follow this potentially muddy track (the old coach road) all the way down to Penshurst, with occasional views over the Eden Valley on your left and a huge array of polytunnels behind the line of trees on your right. After a long descent the driveway from Salmans Farms joins from the right and you cross the River Eden. In a further 500m you reach the B2176, with **Penshurst Place** visible in the grounds ahead. Turn right onto the road to enter the village.

In 150m you pass the **Fir Tree House** tearoom on your right (which is usually closed at lunchtime). Keep left at the road junction in the centre of the village to come to the suggested lunch stop on your right, the **Leicester Arms Hotel**.

#### 14. **Penshurst to Leigh Station direct** (3¾ km)

Head **E** out of the village on the B2176, briefly reversing the outward route of the Main Walk and passing the picturesque houses in **Leicester Square**<sup>4</sup>. Where the road turns right **keep ahead** through a stone and brick archway, now on Cycle Route 12 as well as the Eden Valley Walk.

As you go along the driveway to **Penshurst Place** you get a glimpse of its formal gardens through a locked gate in the high brick wall on your left. At the end of the wall the **Porcupine Pantry** is 200m off to the left, behind the large car park; if you are not visiting the tearoom or the manor house simply keep ahead on the tarmac drive (shown as a private road to Well Place, but still a public footpath).

In 400m, shortly before the road starts to ascend, **turn left** through a squeeze gate into a field, leaving CR 12. Go along the field edge parallel to the road, then through another squeeze gate. Follow a broad grassy path diagonally up the next field, heading **NE** (with a fine view of Penshurst Place over your left shoulder). At the top of the field there is a fieldgate leading out to a track.

Do not go out onto the track but instead **bear left** in front of the fieldgate, leaving the main branch of the EVW. Follow a grassy path along the right-hand edge of several large fields (interrupted by a short stretch through a wood) for almost 1 km. At the end of the last field bear right onto a broad grassy path heading **NE**.

*The final 1½ km is the same as the start of Walk 1–15 (in reverse).*

Continue in this direction for just over 1 km: initially along a tree-lined avenue, then across an open field and finally down a rough track to a road. Turn left and go down the road, **taking care as there is no pavement**. In 250m you come to a bridge under the railway.

There are two tarmac paths (one on each side) leading up to Leigh station, but note that there is no footbridge linking the two platforms. Platform 1 is for trains to Redhill and Platform 2 for trains to Tonbridge. Check the timetable displayed here before deciding which platform to head for.

*If you want some refreshment before the journey back the **Fleur-de-lis** pub is 225m further along the road, where it meets the B2027.*

## Walk Notes

1. The **Sidney Oak** was reputedly planted in 1554 at the birth of Sir Philip Sidney, but is now believed to be many hundreds of years older. Acorns from this ancient tree have been taken all over the world, and cloned saplings are being planted around the Penshurst estate.

2. The Sidney Chapel in **St John the Baptist, Penshurst** contains many memorials and a fine armorial ceiling, restored in 1966. By the side altar is the **Luke Tapestry** (in Greek), made by Penshurst's former village doctor: it honours the partnership between medical science and Christianity.
3. "My Flesh also shall rest in Hope", inscribed above the archway leading out of Penshurst churchyard into Leicester Square, is from **Psalm 16:9**.
4. Some of the half-timbered and tile-hung houses around **Leicester Square** (named after a favourite of Elizabeth I) are Victorian imitations, like the post office house of 1850.
5. The large horseshoe-shaped doorway in the quaint shop/garage is a relic of its days as the **village smithy**.
6. The source of the **River Eden** is in the Titsey estate, 2 km north-east of Oxted on the slopes of the North Downs. It flows into the River Medway near Penshurst.
7. The Streatfeild family sold the buildings of **Chiddingstone village** to the National Trust in 1939. As a consequence it remains largely unspoilt and has been used as a location in period films, eg. *A Room with a View*.
8. **St Mary, Chiddingstone** contains many memorials to the Streatfeild family. On display is a **Vinegar Bible** of 1717, so called because in St Luke's Gospel, Chapter 20, "The parable of the vineyard" is written as "The parable of the vinegar"!
9. The **Chiding Stone** is a large sandstone boulder after which the village is named. Nagging wives or wrongdoers were supposedly brought here and told off (chided) by the other villagers.
10. The buildings at Larkin's Farm include **Larkin's Brewery**, which was established in 1986 and moved to the family's farm a few years later. Chiddingstone Cider is also produced here.
11. The **Eden Valley Walk** runs for 24 km, linking the Vanguard Way to the west of Edenbridge with the Wealdway in Tonbridge. At its eastern end much of the route is actually alongside the River Medway, whereas there are only short stretches with convenient rights of way close to the River Eden.

» *Last updated: September 10, 2018*

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

[Saturday Walkers Club](#) • © 2000-2018 All Rights Reserved • [saturdaywalkers@walkingclub.org.uk](mailto:saturdaywalkers@walkingclub.org.uk)