

Note: This walk is currently provided in electronic format only. The Lenham to Charing walk was originally intended to be included in the "Time Out Country Walks near London - Volume 2" book. (ISBN 0141018658). This walk can be considered typical of the walks contained in that book.				
Lenham to Charing		Lenham to Hollingbourne		
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Lenham to Charing

Start: Lenham station **Finish:** Charing station

Length: 13.3km (8.3 miles). For a shorter walk, see *below* **Walk options**.

Time: 4 hours 15 minutes. For the whole outing, including trains, sights and meals, allow at least 7 hours.

Transport: Trains go from London Victoria to Lenham, journey time just over an hour. Lenham is one stop up the line, so buy a day return to Charing. (Hollingbourne ending: Day return to Lenham.) For those driving, park at the station car park at Lenham. Trains back from Charing to Lenham only take 5 minutes, but are hourly.

OS Landranger Map: 189 **OS Explorer Map:** 137, 148 (for the Hollingbourne ending.)
Lenham, map reference TQ 891518, is in **Kent**, 14km south-east of Maidstone.

Toughness: 3 out of 10

Walk Notes: A large section of the walk is to the north side of the North Downs Way and passes along some little used footpaths, making for a tranquil walk. Its attractions include the pretty hamlet of

Stalisfield Green for lunch and the historic village of Charing for tea. Some of the stiles along the route are poorly maintained and consequently this walk is not suitable for the less able walker. In summer the footpath across a couple of the rapeseed fields can become very overgrown.

Walk options:

- a) Alternative ending at Hollingbourne.** You may vary the end of the standard walk and finish in Hollingbourne for tea. This increases the length of the walk by 1.2km. Follow the walk directions until [2], and then follow the alternative ending directions at the end of the main text.
- b)** It is possible to shorten the Lenham to Charing walk by 4.3km to 9km (5.6 miles) by continuing along the North Downs Way from [2] to [6].

Saturday Walkers' Club: Take the train nearest to 9.45am from Victoria Station to Lenham. If finishing at Hollingbourne, take the train nearest to 10.05am

WALK DIRECTIONS**[1] [~~Numbers refer to the map.~~]**

Coming out of the ticket hall *turn right up the station road to reach a T-junction after 250 metres. Cross onto the pavement opposite and turn right to cross the bridge over the railway. Immediately after the bridge turn left along a footpath along the left-hand edge of a field, marked by a metal footpath signpost.*

*In 450 metres, just after a slight bend to the left, turn left to cross the railway flanked by two stiles and veer left down across a field towards its left-hand corner, your direction north. In 100 metres continue into the next field to go along its left-hand edge, following a yellow waymark. After 300 metres at the left hand field corner, cross over a 3 plank bridge and through a wooden kissing gate into the next field, and *turn half left towards the far field corner, your direction 340 degrees. After 160 metres exit the field via a kissing gate to the churchyard of **St Mary's** to reach the church entrance after 80 metres.**

*Coming out of the church veer right to exit the churchyard after 25 metres and turn right along the road, following the road round to the right. In 160 metres turn left up a tarmac footpath marked by a metal footpath signpost, your direction 40 degrees. After 200 metres go through a wooden gate to cross the A20. Go through a gap in the fence on the other side into a field and *turn half right up across the field**, following the direction of a signpost, your direction 55 degrees. In 250 metres cross a wide field boundary into the next field to continue in the same direction. In 350 metres at the upper side of the field, go up some steps and through a gap in the fence, to *go up a short, steep incline, to reach the North Downs Way. [2] [*In boggy conditions / recently ploughed, you may find it easier to turn right and follow the lower right-hand edge of the first field, to then turn left up along the wide field boundary to reach the top and turn right, (left for Hollingbourne) along the North Downs**

Way.]

[If you are intending to finish the walk at Hollingbourne refer to the directions at the end of this main walk text under Alternative ending at Hollingbourne.]

Otherwise, turn right and in 15 metres fork left up a footpath to leave the North Downs Way, to then after 50 metres go through a gap in the fence into the corner of a field. Head up across the field aiming for a stile just visible on the right hand corner of a small central field jutting onto this larger field, your direction 50 degrees. In 140 metres cross over this stile and continue in the same direction aiming for a stile on the upper side of the field, which is visible (just to the left of two small gorse bushes) once you reach the top of the initial slope.

*After 200 metres cross the stile and veer right across a field, aiming for the left-hand edge of a wood, your direction 60 degrees. In 450 metres at the right hand corner of a field (next to the corner of the wood on your right) go over a plank footbridge and *turn half right across the field, aiming just to the left of a water tower 1.2 km distant, your direction east. In 250 metres cross a dilapidated concrete car wide track to continue in same direction aiming for the far left telegraph pole just visible next to a hedge.**

In 400 metres, just to the left of the left most telegraph pole, go through a gap in the hedgerow and cross a single railed footbridge to come out onto the corner of a lane. Turn immediately half left across a single railed footbridge into a field, to go diagonally across the field, following a footpath sign, aiming for the far corner, your direction 50 degrees. In 400 metres exit the field onto a lane and turn right.

*In 80 metres at a T-junction [3] turn right. In 200 metres you reach the **Harrow Inn** a possible early lunch stop. If not stopping, *turn left along Waterditch Road. In 60 metres turn left over a stile (to the left of a double metal fieldgate) to**

veer right across a field, aiming for a gap in the hedgerow (30 metres to the right of a tree), your direction 60 degrees.

After 120 metres on the far side of the field go over a stile and continue in the same direction aiming for a stile to the right of a double metal fieldgate which you cross after 150 metres into the next field.

There are now two alternatives. (a) Continue with the recommended footpath route, or (b) If the state of the field is poor go along its left-hand side.

(a) Continue in the same direction (aiming for the left corner of the field jutting into this one) on a marked path, towards the left-hand side of a high hedge and small wood. After 180 metres at the corner post of the adjacent field on your right, turn left, your direction north. In 120 metres go through a double metal fieldgate. Rejoin the route at the asterisk [*] below.

(b) Go along the left-hand side of the field. After 200 metres turn left through a double metal fieldgate.

[*] Cross over a lane and continue up Hurst Lane, your direction north. After 600 metres by a red brick house on your left-hand side, turn right (as indicated by a footpath signpost) along a car wide track through Hurst Farm.

In 70 metres go through a metal fieldgate to continue along a fenced in car wide grass track. In 140 metres just before the track descends more steeply turn left over a stile to go along the right hand edge of a field bordered by a wood. After 60 metres, by the corner of the wood on your right-hand side, continue across the field aiming for a stile, your direction 55 degrees. In 150 metres go over the stile into the next field and turn half right down across the field (aiming for a metal fieldgate at the bottom), your direction 80 degrees. In 160 metres go through a metal kissing gate to the right of a metal fieldgate to go up through a wood.

After 80 metres cross over a stile to the right of a metal fieldgate to emerge from the wood to go up the right hand side of a field, your direction 120 degrees. In 200 metres cross over a stile and continue along a fenced in footpath. After 100 metres you come out onto a lane and turn left down it. In 130 metres turn right over a stile (left of a metal fieldgate), to go down across a field, your direction 130 degrees. After 180 metres go over a stile into a wood. In 25 metres cross over a car wide track to continue ahead up some steps.

In 50 metres cross over a stile to emerge from the wood and veer left up across a field aiming for the upper left hand corner, your direction 110 degrees. (If the footpath is not made up, it may be easier to follow the right-hand side of the field round to the exit point.) After 100 metres cross over a stile and cross a lane to turn half-right up a shingle car wide track. In 350 metres the track joins a lane, where you veer left. After 35 metres turn left down a car wide track (with a wood on your right hand side). In 50 metres continue down a fenced in footpath on the left-hand side of a field. In 150 metres at the end of the first field [!] veer left to cross over into the next field, now with the hedgerow on your right-hand side. Continue in the same direction along the footpath for a further 550 metres to then emerge onto a small green and turn left for **The Plough**, the recommended lunch stop.

After lunch coming out of the Plough cross the road and turn half right down a lane to the left of a cream painted single storey house, your direction 160 degrees. In 70 metres at a junction (and in front of a red slate house) veer left up a lane, your direction 110 degrees. In 130 metres at a T-junction turn right. After 25 metres turn left [4] through a metal gate to go down across a field, your direction 120 degrees (following a line of mini pylon cables). After 300 metres go through a metal kissing gate to go down through a wood (a nature reserve). In

160 metres *at a crosspaths at the bottom, turn right, your direction 210 degrees.*

After 350 metres you emerge from the wood through a metal gate into a field to go uphill, your initial direction 150 degrees, following an indistinct winding footpath, aiming 30 metres to the left of Parsonage Farmhouse visible on the hill. In 200 metres at the top, go through a metal kissing gate and turn half right for 40 metres to go through a metal gate followed by a wooden gate to follow a shingle car wide track leading to the exit (of Parsonage Farm) onto a lane. Cross over the lane and go through a metal gate to follow a footpath signpost across a small field, aiming for the corner, your direction 160 degrees.

In 100 metres cross over a stile to *continue diagonally across a large field aiming for the far side, your direction 170 degrees. After 500 metres follow the footpath into a wood, marked by a footpath post just to the left of an oak tree. (If you have difficulty locating the entrance to this footpath, turn right and go along the field boundary with the wood, to then turn left along a car wide track for 60 metres to arrive at [5])*

In 50 metres turn right down a lane [5]. After 180 metres at a T-junction, cross over the lane and go over/under a wooden barrier on the opposite side into a field, to follow a winding footpath half left, aiming for the lower far corner of the field, your direction 150 degrees. In 250 metres go over a stile into a wood. After 30 metres go through a gap in the fence and turn right to continue up through the wood. In 150 metres go through a metal horse blocking barrier and veer right up a car wide track, your direction 200 degrees.

In 700 metres *at a T-junction turn right. In 30 metres veer left off the road and continue in the same direction along a tarmac drive, your direction 250 degrees, passing Mill House Lodge on your right hand side. In 150 metres you pass by a windmill on your right hand side to*

continue down a fenced in footpath. In 40 metres go through a wooden kissing gate to go down across some open space, your direction 250 degrees. After 80 metres you enter a wooded area. Follow the path and veer left down some steps, and after 50 metres continue down an enclosed footpath. In 150 metres you *come out onto the North Downs Way (with the Old Pumphouse entrance on your right) and turn left. [6]*

In 50 metres turn right down a lane, to cross a main road (A252) after 50 metres. to go down "The Hill", your direction 210 degrees. In 280 metres you pass Pett Lane on your left-hand side to continue down "High Street".

After 150 metres cross over School Road. (10 metres after School Road, there is a path off to the left to the church and the remains of the palace; worth a look. The palace buildings are of attractive flint stone and the church tower is considered amongst the most ambitious in the country with a tower arch on a splendid scale.) In 50 metres you reach the **Rosebud Vintage Tea Rooms** at Charing on your left, the recommended tea stop. After a further 100 metres you pass by **The Oak**, on your right an alternative tea stop. In a further 30 metres you reach a crossroads with the A20. Cross the A20 via a pelican crossing to reach **Charing station** after a further 250 metres. Cross the footbridge for trains back to London.

Walk options

a) Alternative ending at Hollingbourne

Turn left and after 650 metres you come out onto a tarmac road, to continue up the road (ignoring a footpath to the right), your direction 290 degrees. After 130 metres (where the road swings up to the right), continue ahead along a fenced in car wide track (Pilgrims Way - byway). In 600 metres just before the car wide track joins a lane, turn right through a gap into a field, to veer slightly left up across the

field, aiming for a footpath post on the far side with a farm beyond, your direction 10 degrees.

In 350 metres go past the post to cross a tarmac car wide track into the next field, to veer left across it, aiming 20 metres to the left of two trees in the field, your direction 330 degrees. In 90 metres go to the left of the two trees, to continue in the same direction, now aiming for a stile 35 metres to the left of where the mini pylon cable run goes into the trees on the far side of the field.

After 300 metres cross the stile into a field, and veer right, your direction 330 degrees, aiming to the left side of a mini pylon pole with a grey transformer box mounted on it, to then continue towards a hidden stile immediately to right of a large holly bush, After 160 metres cross over the stile and *turn right along a car wide tarmac track*.

In 30 metres fork left along a wide footpath through a wood, your direction 330 degrees. After 130 metres cross over a tarmac lane, to continue in the same direction through the wood.

In 270 metres with a lane immediately to your left, ignore a car wide footpath track off to your right, to continue along the narrower path, (330 degrees). After 50 metres this footpath merges with a car wide track; continue down it in the same direction.

In 350 metres (having ignored a previous cross paths along the way) *you come down to a car wide track cross paths, turn left up a track, your direction 210 degrees. After 120 metres cross over a stile into the corner of a field to go up its left hand edge. In 180 metres at the field corner, ignore a stile to follow the field edge round to the right, (with a wooded area on your left-hand side), your direction 340 degrees. In 60 metres at the corner of the wooded area, continue across the field, passing to the right of two oak trees.*

In 320 metres, (having come down to the

right hand corner of a field ahead), cross a stile and after a further 15 metres, cross a sheep pen stile to go up the left-hand side of this field. After 180 metres at the field corner, go over a stile to continue up an enclosed footpath. In 45 metres cross over a stile and a lane to cross another stile into a field, to veer slightly right aiming for its far corner, your direction 350 degrees.

After 250 metres at the far corner of the field, cross over a stile to continue in the same direction down across a field with caravans. In 100 metres follow the footpath which veers to the right, to enter a lightly wooded area after a further 50 metres. In 180 metres at the bottom corner of this field, cross over a stile into a field to go up across it, aiming for a gap in the hedgerow (which only becomes visible after crossing the brow), your direction 330 degrees.

After 160 metres cross a stile to veer slightly right aiming for the far corner of this field (with a house beyond it), your direction 350 degrees. In 200 metres at the field corner, go over a stile and turn left to reach the **Ringlestone Inn**, the recommended earlier lunch stop.

Coming out of the pub, turn right and after 30 metres turn left up a car wide track (footpath), your direction 20 degrees. In 100 metres go through a wooden fieldgate, to pass by a pond on your left-hand side. After a further 70 metres go through a metal kissing gate (to the right of a metal fieldgate), to go along the left-hand side of a small field. In 50 metres, turn left over a stile into the corner of a field, to go diagonally across it, aiming for a metal kissing gate (to the left of an HV pylon) on the far side, your direction north.

In 350 metres, go through the metal kissing gate into a small field, to go along its right hand side. After 170 metres at the corner of this field, go through a metal kissing gate. Cross a tarmac lane to go through a gap, to then after 15 metres, cross a stile into the corner of a field.

Turn half left down across this field, aiming for a gap between a line of trees on the left and a fenced in wood on the right on the far side of the field, your direction 330 degrees.

In 180 metres, go through the gap into the next field, to go up across it, aiming for a (not initially visible) stile to the left of a metal fieldgate in the corner of the field. (To the left of some redbrick houses.)

After 300 metres *cross the stile and turn right along a lane*. In 140 metres you reach a metal gate on your left (between metal fieldgates).

If stopping at the later lunch stop: **The Blacksmith Arms** continue ahead for 80 metres.

Otherwise *turn left to go through the metal gate* into the corner of a field. Cross the field, *aiming for the gap between three small trees on the left and a small tree on the right*, your direction 250 degrees. After 140 metres go through the gap, to continue in the same direction down across the field, *aiming for the left hand corner of a wooded area* in the distance. In 180 metres, you pass by the corner fencing of a field on your right hand side, to continue in the same direction down into a dip, (still aiming for the left hand corner of the wood on the far side).

After 140 metres you reach the corner of the field adjoining the corner of the wood, (with a metal fieldgate on your left-hand side). *Cross over a stile and then another (on your left), into a field. Turn half-right aiming for its far left-hand corner* (in the direction to the left of a pylon in the distance), your direction 290 degrees. In 200 metres go down a car wide track for 70 metres, to go through a metal chain linked stile into a field.

Turn left to go (initially) down across this field, aiming to the right of an HV pylon on the far side. After 150 metres, coming up the other side of the field (with a

disused quarry? on your right hand side), follow the path up and round to the right, to *go under some HV cables, to then after 30 metres go over a stile, into the next field. Slice the corner of this field, and after 70 metres cross another stile into the next field.*

Veer slightly right to cross the field, aiming for a barely visible footpath post (100 metres to the right of the left-hand corner of the field), your direction 250 degrees. (However depending on the time of year and the state of the field it maybe easier to go round the left side of the field, rather than cross it.)

After 200 metres, turn right along a car wide byway (with a fenced off wood on your left-hand side). In 120 metres follow the car wide byway round to right along the edge of the field. In 50 metres *turn left over a stile and another into the corner of a field*, to go (initially) down across it, aiming for its far corner, your direction west.

After 220 metres at the far field corner, cross over a stile to turn right along a fenced in car wide track. In 120 metres pass to the left of a metal fieldgate, (ignoring a stile on the left) to continue up the fenced in car wide track. In 300 metres, at a T-Junction with a road, cross over to go to the left of a wooden barrier to follow the footpath through a wood. After 250 metres *at the corner of the wood, go over a broken stile into a field, to turn left* along its left edge, (bordered by garden fencing), your direction 290 degrees.

In 70 metres at the corner of the garden fencing on your left, veer slightly left (across the field) aiming for a barely visible stile (just to the left of where a mini pylon cable run enters the wood on the far side of the field), your direction west. (During growing season, you may need to turn left here for 30 metres or so to then turn right to pick up the path across the field.)

After 300 metres, go over the dilapidated

stile to follow the footpath through the wood, your initial direction west. In 250 metres go through a horse blocking barrier, to *turn right down a lane*. After 180 metres, follow the lane round to the left, (ignoring a lane down to the right). In a further 20 metres, *turn left along a car wide track (byway)* through a lightly wooded area, your direction 220 degrees.

After 300 metres, the car wide track enters Chitt's Wood. In 400 metres ignore a footpath off to the right, to continue up the car wide track.

In 300 metres you pass by a fenced off [disused shaft](#) on your left-hand side. After a further 200 metres, *where the car wide track starts to curve to the right, turn left off the track through a wooden horse blocking barrier and along a footpath for 15 metres, to come out into a field. Cross this field, aiming just to the left of an HV pylon in the distance, your direction 160 degrees.*

After 250 metres at the far side of the field, cross over a car wide track into the next field to continue across it, passing to the right of an HV pylon in the middle of this field after 150 metres, to then veer right, *aiming for a wooden kissing gate on the left corner of a wood, your direction 170 degrees.*

In 300 metres go through the wooden kissing gate at the corner of the wood, to veer slightly right down through the wood, to emerge after 50 metres and *turn left at a T-junction to join the North Downs Way (NDW), your initial direction 160 degrees.* In 300 metres (having gone through a small wood along the way) go through a wooden kissing gate (left of a wooden fieldgate) to continue along the ND Way. After 150 metres *turn right, (as marked by a NDW footpath post), down across the field, your direction 200 degrees.* In 160 metres go through a wooden kissing gate (to the left of a double wooden fieldgate), into the next field to go down its left-hand side (with a road down to your left).

After 200 metres (just before a mini pylon cable run) fork left to follow the NDW footpath for 70 metres down to the road. Turn right down it, and in 45 metres *at a crossroads*, turn left* (passing by **The Dirty Habit** on your right) along a car wide track to continue along the ND Way. [*Shortcut to station: Continue ahead at crossroads for 1.2km.]

In 130 metres (just past some houses on your right hand side), turn right down a fenced in footpath (with a car wide driveway on its right hand side), your direction 230 degrees. In 180 metres go through a wooden gate, to continue along a car wide track. After 60 metres *at a T-junction with a road, turn right.*

*In 40 metres turn left to enter the churchyard of **All Saints Hollingbourne** after 50 metres.* Follow the enclosed tarmac footpath to the right of the church. After 80 metres you come out into a field to continue down across it. In 350 metres you reach a main road (with a war memorial on your right hand side).

Cross over the main road and turn left and in 45 metres turn right down Culpeper Close. After 35 metres *follow the road round to the left and in 40 metres turn right down a car wide track (following a footpath sign) to go through a metal kissing gate (to the left of a metal fieldgate) after 40 metres.* In a further 20 metres you go under a railway bridge to come out into a field, to go down its right side, aiming for its right hand corner, your direction 240 degrees.

After 60 metres go over a stile (right of a metal fieldgate) into a field to go diagonally down across it, your direction 250 degrees. In 200 metres at the far corner of the field, go over a stile and in 10 metres cross a footbridge to go down across a field aiming for the far corner (to the left of some houses). In 100 metres, follow the garden fencing round to the right, to then go through a metal gate (to the right of a metal fieldgate), to go along a car wide path with an evergreen hedge on your right. After 35 metres the path

merges with a driveway.

After 80 metres you reach the main road to continue in the same direction along the pavement, to then cross over a river after 40 metres. In 60 metres you reach **The Sugar Loaves** on your left hand side, the recommended tea stop. (The alternative: **The Windmill** is a further 80 metres on the left.)

*Coming out of The Sugar Loaves, cross over the road and turn left for 20 metres, to then turn right along a car wide shingle track (footpath), which in a further 30 metres continues along a narrow fenced in path. After 100 metres cross over a stile into the corner of a small field. Turn half left aiming for a gap on the far side, your direction 350 degrees. In 80 metres go through the gap to continue in the same direction (350) up across the next field. In 200 metres cross a metal pole stile, a car wide track, and another metal pole stile, to go down the path to **Hollingbourne station**.*

Lunch and Tea places:

Ending at Charing:

The Harrow Hill Hotel & Inn Warren Street, Lenham, ME17 2ED (01622 858727). Food served noon – 2pm Mon - Sat (to 2.30pm Sun). Located 4.8 km from the start of the main walk

The Plough Stalisfield Green, Stalisfield, ME13 0HY (01795 890256). Food served noon – 2pm Tue – Sun. It is the suggested lunch stop. Located 8 km from the start of the main walk

Rosebud Tea Rooms 42 High Street, Charing, TN27 0HX (01233 714171). Serves tea, coffee etc. 9am - 4pm Mon - Sat.

The Oak 5 High Street, Charing, TN27 0HU (01233 712612). Open all day.

Ending at Hollingbourne:

Blacksmiths Arms Wormshill ME9 0TU (01622 884386). Located 7.2 km from the start of the walk. At the time of writing (Feb 2010) this pub no longer

opens for Saturday lunch. The suggested lunchtime pub is the earlier Ringlestone Inn.

The Dirty Habit Upper St, Hollingbourne, ME17 1UW (01622 880880) Located 1.5 km from the end of the walk.

Ringlestone Inn Ringlestone Road, Harrietsham, ME17 1NX (01622 859900) Located 6 km from the start of the walk

The Sugar Loaves 56 Eyhorne St, Hollingbourne, ME17 1TS (01622 880220) Located 0.5 km from the end of the walk.

Open all day weekend, Mon – Friday
12.00 – 14.30. 18.00 - 23.00

The Windmill 32 Eyhorne St, Hollingbourne, ME17 1TR (01622 880280) Located 0.5 km from the end of the walk.