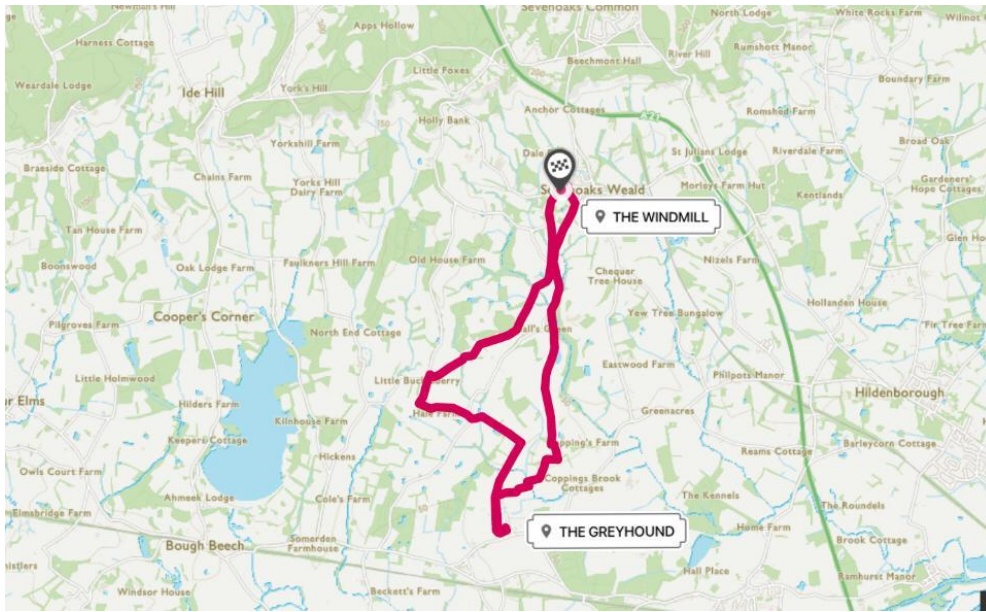


Walk 19: The Far Side of The Weald

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Description: A hilly circular walk exploring the history, geology and landscape of the Kentish Weald.

Length: 6.5 miles / 10.5 km (approximately 2.5-3 hours, longer if stopping at The Greyhound, Charcott)

Grade: A little challenging

Good for: A journey round the Weald

1. Begin your walk at Sevenoaks Weald. Please park considerately if arriving by car, there are normally spaces along the village green. Just before the Windmill pub turn right and walk up the edge of Hurst Lane. When you come to the tarmac path at the end of this lane continue straight on past the houses until you reach Mount Pleasant Road. Turn right and walk downhill for 20 metres before taking the byway to the right. Follow it all the way to the road, ignoring the other footpaths that branch off this path.
2. When you reach the road turn left and follow this with care for approximately 600 metres until you come to Brook Cottage. Walk past this and then shortly afterwards you will see a footpath on your left. Take this and then continue along a very muddy path that runs through the woods. At the end of this muddy path, the route gives way to a gravel track. Follow this until you reach a small lake and then you will see a path branching off between two fences. Follow this past the lake and then as you pass through the hedge you will emerge into a large field.
3. Follow the path across the field and proceed through the metal gate, before passing across the next field and going through a second metal gate. Walk across this field, before passing through a third gate, crossing yet another field. Pass the pond and then walk through a fourth and final gate. At

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this point head straight on uphill aiming for the point where the opposite hedge meets a clump of tall trees.

4. Walk through the gap in the hedge and then continue straight on, keeping to the right-hand side of the field until you come to a stile next to a tree near a row of houses. Climb over this and then continue down the track before turning right and then walking through Wickhurst Farm. Stay on the track as you pass Wickhurst farmhouse and then continue anti clockwise around the small black barn. Keep going past the first footpath and then continue along the track until you see a gate and another path in front of you.

5. Walk through this gate and then continue diagonally across the field, as you aim for the bottom right-hand corner. Once you reach this corner, pass through the gap in the hedge and follow the hedge to the corner of the next field until you come to a bridge crossing a stream. Climb over the rail and then cross the bridge, then turn left before following the perimeter of the field guided by the yellow footpath arrows. The path can get boggy here, particularly after wet weather.

6. Once you reach the small metal kissing gate, cross the field, heading for another metal gate in the distance. There are sometimes sheep and cows here, so make sure you have your dog on a lead if there is livestock grazing.

7. When you reach the next gate turn left and continue down the track. Turn left and after a short distance you will reach The Greyhound, Charcott. Please check their opening hours and reservation policy if you plan to stop here.

8. Upon leaving the Greyhound, Charcott turn right and follow the road for 90 metres before turning right into the lane, as you retrace your earlier steps. Continue up the lane and then pass through the metal gate on your right before crossing the field diagonally towards the next gate.

9. Pass through the gate and then continue straight ahead, following the path besides the hedge. Be sure to keep the hedge on your left and the field to your right. Keep going downhill and then cross over a stream before continuing uphill and through the field. When you reach the hedgerow continue straight on, keeping the hedge to your left, then just before you reach the trees take an immediate left and follow the path uphill through the field.

10. Pass through the gap in the trees and then cross the next field, before continuing through the gap in the next treeline and heading downhill towards Little Hale farm. Cross over the little stream and on your right you will pass a large pond. As you walk uphill, keep the farm to your right and walk past a smaller pond before passing through a metal gate. Turn right up the lane and then walk up the road for approximately 30 metres before taking a left through another small gate.

11. Continue straight ahead, following the muddy path running between the hedge and a field. When you reach the top of this path, there will be a pair of ropes running across the path. Pass through these and then continue straight on. Just after you pass the farm you will see a metal kissing gate on your left. Walk through this and then continue uphill until you pass through a second kissing gate. After passing through this turn right and walk approximately 50 metres to the hedge and then pass through a third gate.

12. Having walked through this, continue straight on, heading in the direction of the oast house. When you reach the stile, climb over, then continue down the driveway before climbing a second stile that leads into a quiet country lane. At this point continue straight along the lane for 30 metres,

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before turning right into a track leading to a garage. Follow the path between the left-hand side of the garage and a large metal gate, then continue uphill to the left as the path passes between a wooden shack and an open sided brick barn.

13. Walk straight on through the gap in the fence and then follow the path diagonally right across the field as you head downhill once more. At the bottom of this path, walk down the steps and cross the bridge before passing through a metal gate. Continue along the path to your left and then follow this between the trees for 50 metres, before taking the path on your left which cuts across the field.

14. When you reach the edge of the field continue straight on along the narrow muddy path as it runs between a wood and a thick hedge. Continue through this field for approximately 100 metres before climbing the stile on your left. Having climbed this, continue straight on across the grassy field heading towards the far hedge. When you reach the hedge, cross the ditch via the wooden bridge and then walk across the stony track and go through the rambler gate that leads into another field.

15. Walk uphill keeping to the left of the clump of trees surrounding a deep pond, then continue downhill before passing through two metal gates in quick succession. After the second gate, keep walking downhill towards the hedge. It's nearly impossible to spot the gap until you are right on top of it, but when you get to the hedge you will spot a rickety bridge.

16. Cross over and then follow the path across the grassy field and down another hill. This section of the walk is very slippery after rain or when muddy, so watch your step. At the bottom of this hill you will come to another bridge. There is only a rail on one side of the bridge and it's a high drop to the stream below, so do be careful when crossing!

17. Once safely across, walk uphill following the path to the right of the barb wire fence. Continue straight on past the ditch, heading for the far hedge, where you will find a kissing gate in the left-hand corner. Go through this and then cross over the ditch and onto Hale Oak Road. Cross the road with care and directly opposite you will see the bridleway you came down earlier. Ignore this and take the footpath on the right slightly further up the road.

18. Follow this path between a field and a strip of woodland, then continue over a wooden foot bridge, then up and across the next field, passing under two large trees. At the top of the hill, you will see a beautiful historic house called Long Barn, once the home of author Vita Sackville West and latterly aviator Charles Lindbergh.

19. When you reach the fence, turn left and then turn right up Long Barn Road, passing the entrance to the house.

20. Continue you along the road until you reach Weald village green and the end of the walk.

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When out walking please remember to follow these guidelines...

Respect other people

Consider the local community and other people enjoying the outdoors

Park carefully so access to gateways and driveways are clear

Leave gates and property as you find them

Stay on footpaths but give way to others where it's narrow

Protect the natural environment

Leave no trace of your visit - take all your litter home

Keep dogs under effective control

Bag and bin your dog poo.

Enjoy the outdoors

Plan ahead, check what facilities are open, be prepared

Follow advice and local signs and obey social distancing measures