

## South Wadhurst Park circular walk

This walk explores the centre of the High Weald National Landscape an unspoilt medieval landscape. It takes you across the southern boundary of Wadhurst Park and back over the hill to the glorious river valley of a main tributary of the River Rother. This river flows through an ancient river meadow and was one of the centres of the Roman and mediaeval iron industry in the weald. This is one of the most isolated and unspoilt areas of the ANOB.

<b>Distance and duration</b>	A 6 mile walk, taking about 3 hours
<b>Level</b>	Moderate
<b>Start point / Post code</b>	Three way junction of Witherenden Road and the road to Bivelham Forge Farm. TN20 6RS
<b>OS map reference</b> <b>What-3-Words</b>	Explorer 136, TQ636265 <a href="https://w3w.co/untruth.silently.endlessly">https://w3w.co/untruth.silently.endlessly</a>
<b>Other information</b>	<a href="#">Click here</a> to download a GPX file of the route

### I-Spy - Something to look out for in the landscape



## Two

This walk was kindly provided by [Battle Ramblers](#)

To find the start location you should use the What3Word location or the Ordnance Survey coordinates. Parking is just off road. Be careful using the south side of the junction as the verge may be soft. (see location 1).



From the start point follow the road north east towards Bivelham Forge Farm. After 400 yards at the bend turn onto the track north with a wood on the left. Follow the track towards the fields. The path is near the gate at the corner of the field but you can simply follow the track to the side of the field up to house at the top of the hill to enter Batt's Wood. Turn round and enjoy the view of the Rother Valley and the hill of Burwash Common to Heathfield to the south. (Location 2)



You enter Batt's Wood through the gate and then cross the wide east west path in the wood, bear slightly right and follow the path north straight down the hill. Batt's Wood is awash with bluebells in spring as can be seen by the photo above.

When you reach the prominent raised hide turn left and follow the path along the wide wood cut. (Location 3) The first part of this path is permissive becoming a right of way. The path undulates traversing the ghylls feeding Tide brook in the valley. To the north the eastern dam of Wadhurst Park lake can be seen.

The path reaches a gate into Wadhurst Park which cannot be used. Follow the path to the left along the edge of the wood around a pond till the gate to the open fields is reached (Location 4)

Follow the well trodden path across the field which then skirts a small wood and reaches the path made of concrete sleepers which enters Wadhurst Park across the bridge over Tide Brook (Location 5)

Follow this path up the hill to the way post and turn left on the path across the fields to the west. Turn around and you will have a good view of the lake and ancient Deer Park. The path crosses two fields through a gate and 2 stiles until you reach the road. Follow the road south over Tide brook and take a sharp right and follow the path bear left at the path





junction and continue past Combe Manor till you reach a wood or plantation of Willow trees. (Location 6)

Continue through the wood till you meet the path and track junction. You should take the path to the left up the hill. The hill passes through Combe Wood which is mainly silver birch and coppice. This is the second significant incline. At the top the wood opens up onto fields. In fact this is an old golf course and a green can be seen to the left. You need to cross the open space to the south west to the wood (red circle in photo). (Location 7)



Once in the wood continue down the hill through the wood to the stile and then over into the field. Follow the path south west down the hill to the stile at the bottom. Follow the path and track down past Sharnden Manor Farm on the right and follow the track round to the south east and down to the bridge across the Rother tributary. Before the bridge turn left over the stile on to the footpath along the river valley. (Location 8)

This path follows an ancient river meadow for 3 miles. The river meadow has existed since medieval times and is part of Rolf's Farm the farmhouse being built in 1650. Along the river are a series of Ghylls with streams feeding the river from the north. The landscape is one of rural tranquillity, with a sense of timelessness. In summer up to 7 species of butterflies can be seen.

From Roman to Medieval times an iron industry thrived along the valley. Iron claystone containing the mineral siderite was mined in northern side of the valley. Geologically the ore is located at the base of the Wadhurst Clay formation which overlies the older Ashdown Formation. In Roman times iron was smelted using a bloomery. During Medieval times forges were established hence the name Bivelham Forge Farm. Charcoal supplied from the extensive coppice woods was readily available for smelting. An Archeological

Survey of Rolf's Farm can be accessed with the following link - <https://wadhurstpark.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Rolf-Farm-Archaeological-Survey-2000-Compressed.pdf>

The path continues past Rolf's farm and past 2 hammer ponds; relics of the iron workings and then on up a slight climb to Hampden Lodge (Location 10) to the side of the path and small grassy mounds which are infact ancient ant hills (see I spy photos). At the lodge you pass over a stile and then follow the track first straight ahead and then the path to the right which takes you back through woods over a stile to the valley.



Another stile is encountered and then the path passes through a wooded area and becomes a track past residential houses till the road is reached. At (Location 11) iron staining can be seen in the stream exiting the last ghyll. This confirms the presence of iron bearing formation at the head of the stream.

After crossing the road you pass through a gate to pass the attractive cottage near Pound Bridge. (Location 12) You then traverse two fields with a gate and then a stile in the bottom right hand corners of each field. You then reach the road again and turning left will bring you back to your parked car.

At the end of this document along with the walk map is a map of the area locating a number of permissive paths. As you can see you can vary the walk to shorten or extend it as you see fit and explore the area in greater depth.

#### At all times please follow the Countryside Code



#### **Respect everyone**

- be considerate to those living in, working in and enjoying the countryside
- leave gates and property as you find them
- do not block access to gateways or driveways when parking
- be nice, say hello, share the space
- follow local signs and keep to marked paths unless wider access is available

#### **Protect the environment**

- take your litter home – leave no trace of your visit
- do not light fires and only have barbeques where signs say you can
- always keep dogs under control and in sight
- dog poo – bag it and bin it – any public waste bin will do
- care for nature – do not cause damage or disturbance

#### **Enjoy the outdoors**

- check your route and local conditions
- plan your adventure – know what to expect and what you can do
- enjoy your visit, have fun, make a memory







