

Withyham Walks 2011

Walk no. 2a 8 miles – 3 ½ hrs

Ashurst Station, Weald Way, Summerford Fm. Forest Way, Top Hill Fm, Perry Hill Fm, Highfields, Lodgefield.

Start/Finish at Ashurst Station, OS grid ref. TQ507388
Ordnance Survey Explorer map no. 135 – 'Ashdown Forest' is recommended.
A half-way stop at the Dorset Arms also.

Leave station platform, and turn right uphill on metalled track to Jessops farm. Opposite the farm turn left uphill on sunken track. At the top, bear right across another track, through a gate into field. Follow field-edge path uphill, and turn right at top, noting fine views in all directions.

Keep fence on left, then cross stile into another field. Continue to other side, then cross stile on left, and go round right-hand corner to another stile. You are now on the Weald Way long-distance path from Gravesend to Eastbourne.

Cross the stile and go downhill, keeping hedge on right as far as another stile. Cross this and with hedge now on left, continue downhill to cross another stile in front. Cross another field to railway. Go under bridge then bear left across field to a footbridge. Cross this and bear right across field to Ham Farm track. Turn right over river and along track towards Hale Court Farm. When track reaches hedge turn left (signpost Weald Way). Follow this well-signed path to Beech Green lane at Summerford Farm. Cross the lane and continue following Weald Way signs past the iconic triple oast house and along the drive past Summerford Oast. Some 200m further, the path climbs away from the river valley into a small wood. The Weald Way turns left down a steep bank, but you continue straight on through the wood. Follow path for 900m.

At other side of a second small wood on left, turn right onto path uphill across field. Follow signs into wood and go past rear of Tophill farm and on track to gate into field. Bear left across field, cross stile through shaw and straight on downhill through field to track. Turn right and then left uphill to Perryhill Farm. At top, turn right past farmhouse and straight on (north) through two fields, staying close to fence. After 400m bear right through gate into wood, then cross stile into another field. Follow hedge on right to Beech Green Lane.

Turn left and continue for 400m to gate and stile on right. Cross into field and go straight across, skirting wood on left, then bear left to stile into small wood. Pass through to stile into another field, with Highfields Park on left. Skirt wood on right, then bear right uphill to stile into 2nd field. Cross this field, with fine views to front and right, to gate and stile onto wide grassy track. Follow this downhill to Lodgefield Farm, staying up on the left bank to enjoy the views northward into Kent.

Go through gate and cross track, and descend steps to yard. Go straight on to stile into field. Bear left downhill to another stile onto fenced-in path along field edge. Follow to footbridge on left into tree plantation. Follow path towards A264, and just before it, bear right on licensed path through plantation. At end turn right across stile, and follow path along river bank, bear left through gate and cross bridge over weir. Continue under railway and between gardens to A264. Turn right, then right again along Ashurst station approach road to return to start.

e othe through the From Station Rd. go west on Forest Way towards Hartfield. After 800m cross a stile on right and footbridge over R. Medway. Follow path across field to river bank, cross stile and climb short steep path to east-west path. Turn left and