

Etchingham to Devil's Leap circular



Self-Guided Walks



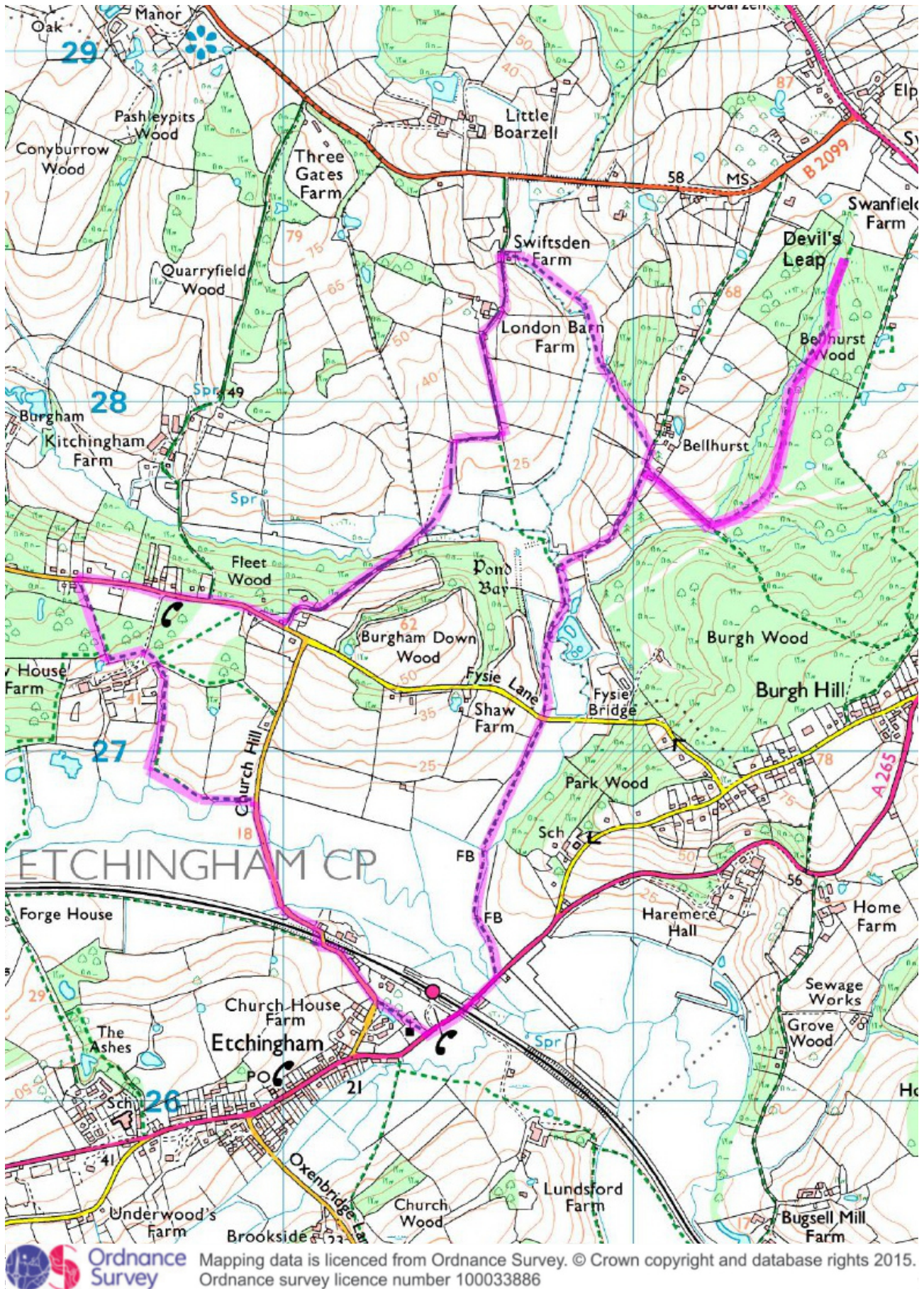
Welcome to the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, an unspoilt medieval Landscape. There are a number of ups and downs on this walk, visiting a secluded, and at Times, spectacular waterfall. This walk was kindly provided by Heather Rae a member of Rother Ramblers

Distance and duration	6 miles / 9.5 kilometres - 3 hours
Level	Moderate
Start point / Post code	Etchingham railway station / TN19 7PA
OS map reference / what3words	TQ714263 / https://w3w.co/tanks.plod.battling
Other information	Parking charges apply at the station. Some free roadside parking at the weekend Find GPX at:- https://www.highwealdwalks.org/HWWF-HR.gpx

I-Spy - Things to look out for in the landscape



The High Weald - An outstandingly beautiful medieval landscape



Etchingham

Etchingham in East Sussex was one of the first Anglo Saxon settlements in the area long before the Norman conquest in 1066. The manor was taken over by the Normans, and in 1166 it was left to the De Achyngham family, who took their name from the place and were well known landowners. The manor used to stand at the point the main London Hastings train station is currently located.

The current church, St Nicholas', was built next to the manor probably in the 1358, when Pope Innocenti VI directed that a burial ground be consecrated at Etchingham. The main road in the village was a major military supply highway during the Napoleonic wars taking iron products manufactured in the area towards Dover.

The 19th century artist Henry Corbould (the designer of the Penny Black) is buried in the churchyard. He was travelling from Hastings to London when he was taken ill at Hurst Green where he died, and was buried at Etchingham which was the local parish Church.

Finally the oldest brass weather vane in England is to be found on the Church Spire, in 1990 it was the inspiration for the design of a special postmark organised by the village to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Postage Stamp. The church also has the largest series of Misericords in Sussex, apart from those in Chichester Cathedral. A Misericord is a 'comfort' ledge under tip up seats designed to give a little support to those who had to stand there for long periods.

The Walk

The walk starts from St Nicholas' Church, next to the Station

Walk through the churchyard and out onto Church Hill

Continue on the road, over the railway bridge and three small river bridges to find a footpath on the left, through a hedge.

The footpath follows the bank of the river then turns slightly uphill towards a stile in a gap in the hedge. (Note the pillbox hidden in the bushes on the right).

Continue west and slightly uphill, towards the hedge-line and a house on the hill.

At the top corner of the field go over a stile next to a metal gate, onto a track.

A few yards along the track take a path to the right, then bear left through a wooded area to cross another track. Straight across the track to follow a well-signed path (avoiding a left turn) through the wood to the road (Sheepstreet Lane).

Turn right and walk along this quiet road, almost to the junction, to take the second bridle path on the left, by Church Hill Cottage.

Bear right past Limden House and follow the bridlepath down through the woods. Cross a stream into the field.

Walk diagonally uphill towards a gap in the tree-line. Through gap to right and follow hedge-line to a gate in corner.

Here join a sunken path as far as London Barn Farm. Quietly cross the yard and parking area to join the lane.

At Swiftsden Farm, turn right in front of the house and follow the path along the valley.

At the far end go left over a stile and bridge, and climb the hill ahead to the farm buildings of Bellhurst and the farm track.

Turn right onto the track, then left past the open barn.

Here you are making a detour to Devil's Leap and you will retrace your steps to this point.

Follow the path down to a clearing and junction of paths and stream.

Take the very first small path on the left which initially hugs the stream edge, and follow this uphill and north, as the stream and its steep ghyll drop away to your left.

Soon after a huge beech tree on the left, with a rope swing, you will see paths and access to the Devil's Leap, a ledge of Ashdown Sandstone with waterfall – its force very dependent on recent rainfall.

The Right of Way terminates shortly beyond this point, though a permissive path allows local walkers to join other paths and access the A21.

Here our walk stops to enjoy the woods and water, (and at bluebell time the wonderful colours and perfume) before retracing the route to Bellhurst and the open barn.

Turn left, through a gate and onto the track. Where the track veers to the left, find a stile on the right. Follow this path to cross a bridge over a stream.

Continue ahead and slightly left, to follow the valley to its end, through two gates to reach the road (Fysie Lane).

Go straight across, through a kissing-gate onto a well-trodden path to a footbridge.

Follow the path along the stream, cross a bridge on the left, turn right and reach the main road (A265). Here you turn right to return to the Station and the Church.

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

Wildlife, including nesting birds, may have moved into new areas. Land managers may have provided extra protection for wildlife. Be vigilant and comply with these protective measures so that you do not disrupt the local wildlife