

Chiddingstone & Hever Castles & the High Weald



Welcome to the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty an unspoilt medieval landscape.

A Walk through the rolling fields and woods of the High Weald, taking in the National Trust Village of Chiddingstone, Chiddingstone Castle, Hever and Hever Castle. Tranquil countryside that is easy to get to from London Some parts muddy after rain

Grateful acknowledgement to Ramblers "Routes" (Chris Smith & Peter Rogers) for the loan of this walk.

Distance and duration	7.2 miles / 11.5 kilometres
	3 hours
Start point	Start: Cowden Station Blowers Hill, Edenbridge, TN8 7DS Finish: Hever Station, Edenbridge, TN8 7ER
Map reference	TQ476416 Map OS Explorer 147
Other information	Getting there by train: trains run hourly to Hever and Cowden from London (London Bridge) East Croydon and Uckfield. By car. Parking at station limited. Parking on road. Find GPX at https://www.highwealdwalks.org/041.gpx

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

A) *The Rock Inn named after the rocks you have just seen on the walk. A proper old pub, with locally brewed Larkins beer, with traditional locals, traditional and upgraded decor. Like stepping back in time.*

B) *Chiddingstone castle. The Historic Housing association says this about it :-*

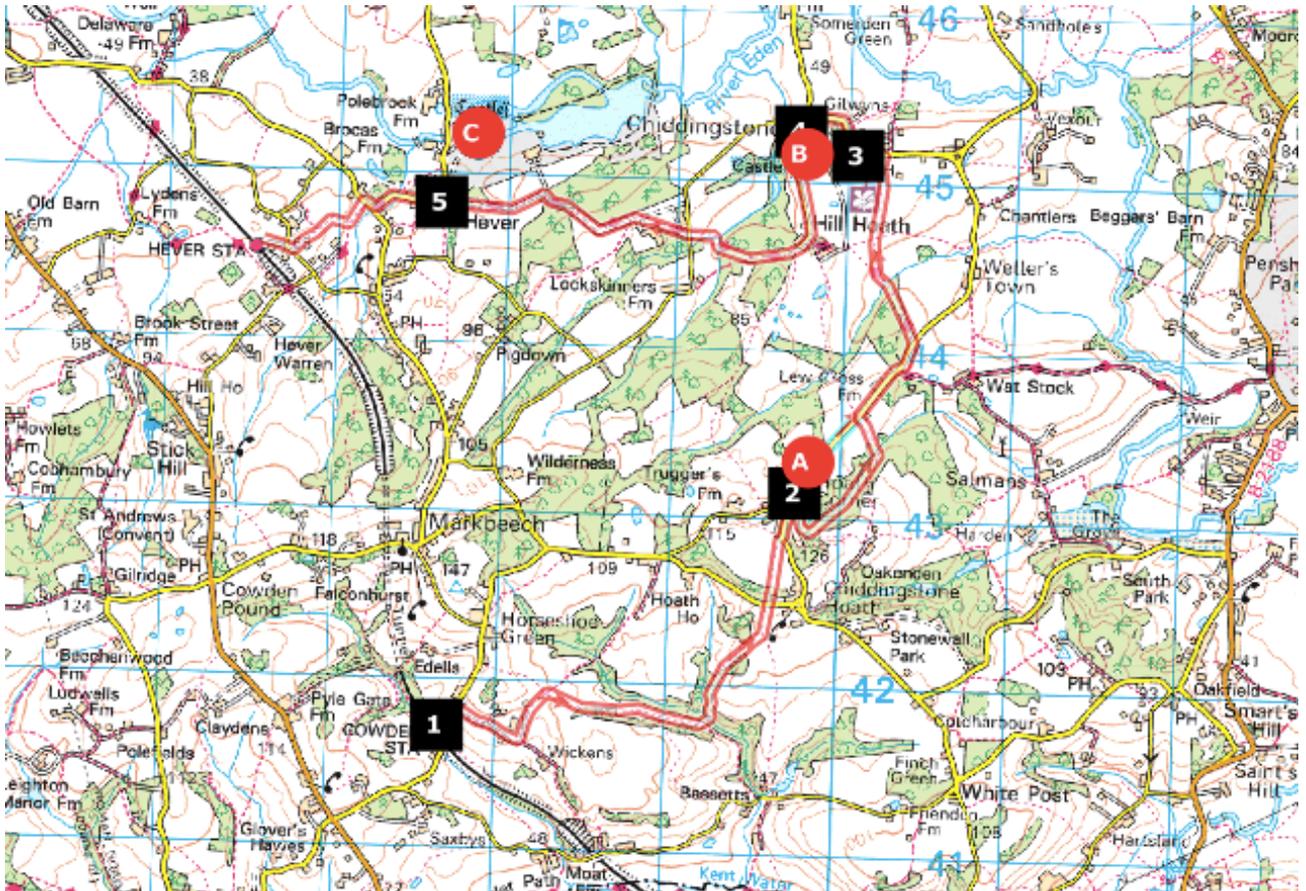
" The fantasy of two romantics, Henry Streatfield in the 1800s and Denys Eyre Bower in the 1950s. The stone castle, formerly a brick carolean house, is both gothic and picturesque. Designed by William Atkinson, the Henry Kendall and finally Bower who introduced a collection of Stuart memorabilia, Egyptian and Japanese artefacts."

Features: Miniature 35-acre 19th century park was devastated in 1987 gales, contains Georgian gothic buildings."

C) *Hever Castle. The Childhood home of Anne Bolyn and one of England's major tourist attractions. After their attempts to keep walkers in their place you may feel less disposed to give them your money, but a lot of people do and there is no denying that it is a grand show.*

POI information

Chiddingstone Village Except for the church and the castle, the whole village (including the pub) is owned by the National Trust who say: "One of the prettiest villages in Kent, and perhaps England, Chiddingstone is a beautiful example of a Tudor one-street village. It's very typical of the Kent style, with half-timbered sides, gables and stone-hung red-tiled roofs. We bought the entire village, including the *Castle Inn*, houses and post office, in 1939 to ensure its preservation. The building that's now the post office is mentioned as early as 1453 and many of the other buildings probably took materials from earlier settlements. Over 70 percent of the buildings in Chiddingstone are more than 200 years old. Chiddingstone takes its name from the large sandstone outcrop in the village known as the 'Chiding Stone'." Wikipedia describes it as "the most perfect surviving example of a Tudor village in the county" It is somewhere you really must visit at least once.



Route Description

(1). On leaving Cowden Station turn right and follow the station approach road to a T-junction. Turn left (into Blower's Hill) and walk uphill. Take the first turning on the right; a tarmac lane with a footpath sign. Follow the lane for approximately 450 yards, until you reach a footpath sign on your right, pointing along a stony track to your left. Turn left and follow the track uphill towards a house.

(2). Before reaching the house go through a metal gate on your right. Walk through a field (to the right of the house you had been walking towards) and go to a metal gate on the far side of the field. Go through the gate. Do not proceed to another metal gate which stands a few yards directly ahead of you. Turn right, and go through two metal gates which stand close together, either side of a fenced track. Carry on to a waymark post and pass over the brow of a low ridge.

- (3).** Continuing in the same direction descend the slope across a field to a stile on the edge of a wood. Enter the wood and follow the path to emerge over another stile into a long field. Follow the path through the middle of the long field (with woods on either side) for approximately 600 yards until you reach a stile in the fence line to your left. Cross the stile and descend to a footbridge over a stream.
- (4).** Beyond the bridge bear left on a path that soon begins to climb uphill. Ignore a turning on your left, and then ignore another path which joins you from your right. Follow the path until you emerge through a metal gate into a field. Bear right and walk uphill through the field with the fence line on your right. At the top of the field pass a metal farm gate, and then go through a metal pedestrian gate to join a footpath in a wood. Follow the path to the end of the wood.
- (5).** Pass through a metal gate to enter a field. Bear left, and follow the hedge-line on your right to the top end of the field. Go through a metal gate. Cross a road (Hoath Road) and join the footpath opposite. Follow the footpath uphill, ignoring a turning on your right quite close to the top of the slope. Emerge from the wood into a large field and follow the path straight ahead. When you reach tall poles, supporting overhead cables, bear right to leave the field and turn left into a road (Rock Lane).
- (6).** Follow the road past dramatic sandstone rocks (some adorned with the roots of rock-climbing trees) to enter the quiet hamlet of Hoath Corner. Beyond the T-junction with Truggers Lane (on your left) stands The Rock pub (on your right). Turn about, so that Truggers Lane is now on your right. Bear left, past cottages, into a track which leads into a footpath and descends into a wooded area. Follow the path for a short distance, until you come to a fork.
- (7).** Take the left path, at which point you leave the right of way and follow a permissive path. The path zig-zags repeatedly over undulating ground, and there are numerous fallen trees for you to step over. Follow the path through woodland for approximately 700 yards, until you emerge onto an open patch of ground, sloping gently upwards to your left. Bear left to pass through (or over) a gate (or a stile), take your pick, to join a narrow lane.
- (8).** Follow the lane for a short distance to reach a road (Wellers Town Road). Turn right, and follow the road for approximately 700 yards, as it descends gently into a wooded area. A bridleway (part of the Eden Valley Way – (EVW)) joins the road from the right and the left. Cross a stile to join the bridleway on your left and follow it through the woodland. Approximately 100 yards after passing through a wooden gate you reach a fork in the path.
- (9).** Bear right (leaving the EVW) and follow the path to where another path joins from the left. Turn right, go through a wooden gate, then immediately turn left. Follow the path gently uphill through a field. Beyond the field continue along the footpath until you emerge onto a road in the National Trust village of Chiddingstone. Turn left and follow the road through the village, passing a school, shops, a cafe, a church and a pub (The Castle Inn). At the pub the road bears sharply right. Continue along the road for a further approximately 350 yards.
- 

(10). When you reach a crossroads, with Mill Lane on your right and a narrow lane on your left (Hill Hoath Road), turn left into the lane. Follow it for approximately 800 yards to reach the hamlet of Hill Hoath. The lane bends right into a short section of road lined with cottages. Continue straight ahead and re-join the EVW footpath, following it to Hever. Follow the path past sandstone rocks and, approximately 600 yards from the hamlet, bear right at a fork in the path. After a few yards, bear left through a metal gate. At a point where the path does a sharp Z-bend, pass through a metal gate with a ramblers' memorial plaque attached. Shortly afterwards cross a road (Wilderness Road).

(11). Continue along the EVW for approximately one mile until you enter the churchyard of St Peter's Church, Hever. Thomas Bullen, father of Queen Anne (Anne Boleyn) is buried in the church. Emerge from the churchyard onto a bend in a road (Hever Road), opposite the Henry VIII pub. Follow the road left, past the pub, and continue to a T-junction with a bus shelter. Turn right and continue along the road for approximately 80 yards.

(12). Join a footpath on your left. After approximately 200 yards turn right through a metal gate in the hedge-line. At this point you are leaving the EVW. Cross a field, and follow the footpath, bearing left, for a further approximately 350 yards to reach a road (Station Road). Turn right and follow the road to Hever Station (on the Uckfield line). From here you can catch trains to Cowden, where the walk began.