

Old Heathfield and Cade Street circular



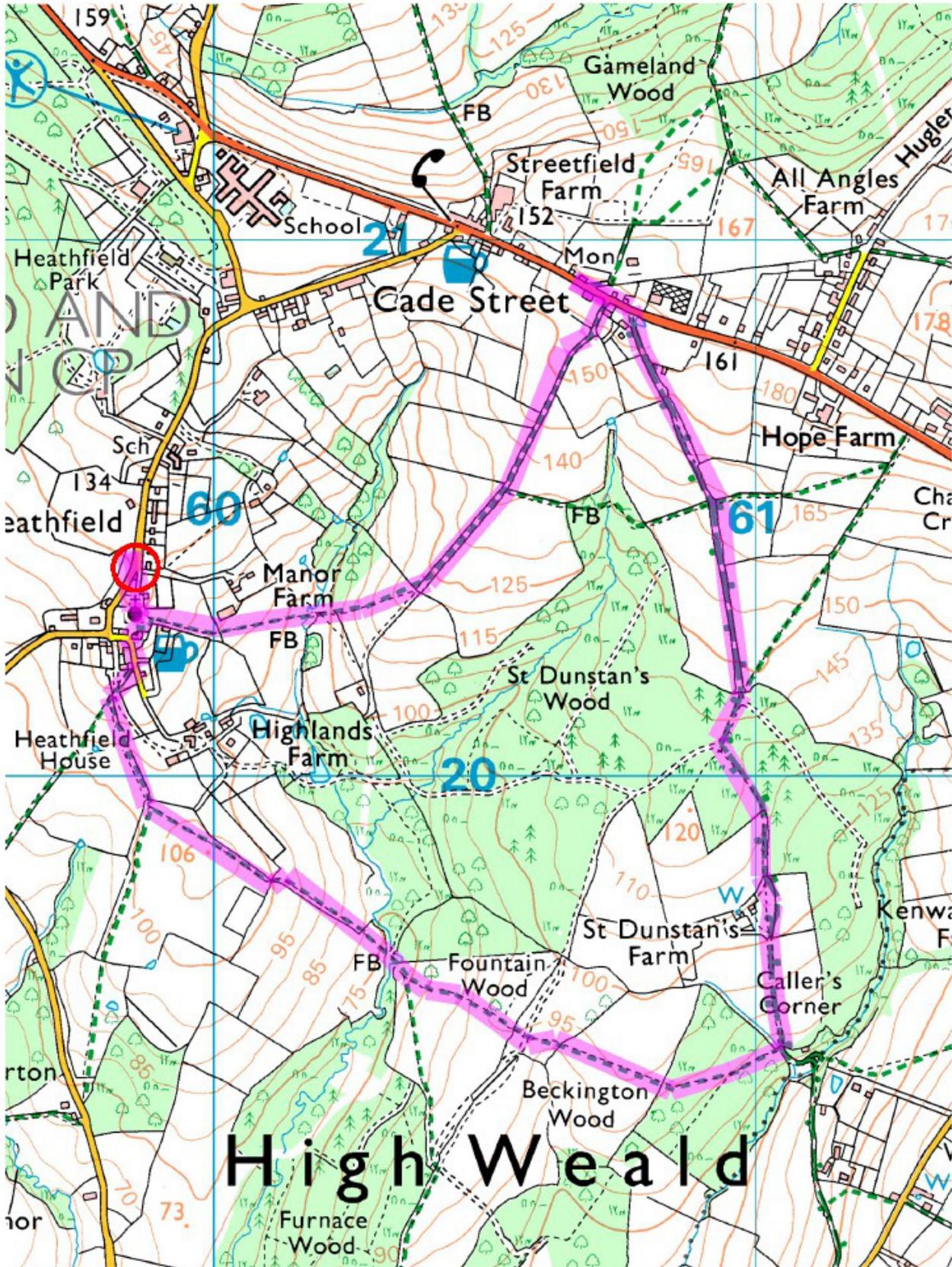
Welcome to the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, an unspoilt medieval Landscape. This is a short walk exploring the hills, woods and history of this ancient part of Sussex.

Distance and duration	3 miles / 5 kilometres - 1½ hours
Level	Moderate
Start point / Post code	School Hill, Old Heathfield / TN21 9AE
OS map reference / what3words	TQ598204 / https://w3w.co/graphics.frightens.gulped
Other information	Roadside parking. Complete this walk virtually at https://www.highwealdwalks.org/heffle.mp4 Find GPX at https://www.highwealdwalks.org/heffle.gpx

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



The High Weald - An outstandingly beautiful medieval landscape



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Cade Street and Jack Cade

Cade Street is part of the town of Heathfield which hosts a dark past. In 1415 discontent was rife throughout the country so Jack Cade decided to take a stand. He roused the men of Kent “to correct public abuses and to remove evil counsellors”. An army of 20,000 rallied in Blackheath and fought the King’s men in Sevenoaks. Flush with triumph, the men degenerated into a murderous mob and Cade’s dream with them. He tried again at Rochester, but it was hopeless. In desperation he fled for Heathfield and hid on a local farm. But one fateful day he poked his head out at the top of Cade Street and was captured. He was dead before he reached London.

His corpse was dragged through the Capital, decapitated, disembowelled and quartered. Portions were exhibited throughout the country. On the far side of Cade Street stands the Cade Stone, our most famous monument, which reads: “Near this spot was slain the notorious rebel Jack Cade by Alexander Iden, Sheriff of Kent, AD1450. His body was carried to London and his head fixed upon London Bridge. This is the success of all rebels and this fortune chanceth ever to traitors”.

Cade Street also sported a long-standing tradition that was upheld throughout Sussex for many years. On 14th April gipsy horse traders and pedlars from all over the South of the country would gather in Cade Street for an annual Spring market. Once everyone had gathered, an elderly gipsy woman would release a cuckoo from her basket. Once the cry of ‘cuckoo’ has been heard by all, the buying and selling could begin. The gipsy woman was nicknamed Dame Heffle, or Hefful, as this is a contraction of Heathfield. Sadly the fair faded away shortly before WWI but was revived in 2005 with a parade of children instead of horse traders and pedlars.

Old Heathfield

Old Heathfield is the original Heathfield that existed before the railway came and the town moved further west. Its local pub, ‘The Star Inn’, was originally built to serve as an alehouse for the stonemasons that were engaged in building the Norman Church of All Saints. The church has a list of all the vicars that have served which dates as far back as 1400.

The church is most famous, however, for one vicar in particular, Robert Hunt. In 1606, the 37 year old vicar was chosen by the Archbishop of Canterbury to accompany Richard Haklufft on his expedition to the New World to discover new lands. Robert Hunt became the first clergyman to settle in America. On the 29th April 1607 he gave his first prayer as the new settlers planted a cross at Cape Henry to commemorate the founding of the first permanent English Settlement in North America.

The Walk

Walk along the approach to Old Heathfield church and go through the lychgate into the churchyard. Follow the narrow path around the church to the left, then bear right and turn left down the short section of drive alongside the Star Inn.

Go straight across at the bottom of the slope and carry on down the lane ahead of you. Just before the first house on the left, Highlands Cottage, look for a stile on the right and cross over into the field. Go diagonally across the field towards the line of trees.

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Go across the drive and through the metal kissing gate into the field beyond. Turn to your left and make for the wooden gates ahead of you. Go through the small kissing gate and follow the enclosed path.

Go through the next gate and stay straight ahead within the enclosed path. At the end of the enclosed path go through a gate under an oak tree. Bear left and then turn immediately right and go straight ahead down the field keeping the hedge to your right.

At the bottom of the field go through the gap and turn left. Continue on a track passing through a lightly wooded area. As you emerge from this area the track forks. Take the slightly less distinct route to the left following the tree line.

As it approaches the trees it forks again, this time take the right fork. Do not take any path which takes you into the trees on the left.

Another track crosses yours at right angles. Go straight across, through a gap in the undergrowth, and follow the footpath towards the trees ahead of you to a stile. Go over the stile into a field and, bearing slightly to the left, cross to another stile on the opposite side, which goes into the woods.

In the woods, the footpath bears round to the left through the trees, it is fairly well defined. Follow the path right through the wood until it emerges by way of a stile onto a track. Turn left, and diagonally across the track, and through the small metal gate on the opposite side.

Continue up the enclosed path which runs alongside a private drive on your left. This is a bridlepath, and as such can be very muddy and full of ruts and potholes.

Go through the next gate into a field and go ahead round the edge of the field, keeping the hedge on your left. In the top left hand corner go through another gate into another enclosed footpath, and follow ahead. Go through one more gate and into the woods beyond.

Follow this very well defined path through the middle of the wood. At the top of the path you will find yourself at a junction in a clearing, take the track to your right. At the next junction keep left through a metal gate, and then, ignoring the footpath almost immediately on your right hand side, carry straight on along the bridle path.

After some distance the track comes out into an open yard with a barn on the left. Go through the gate on the right and out onto the main road at Cade Street.

At this point a slight historical detour to view the memorial to Jack Cade is recommended. Cross the road to the safety of the footpath on the opposite side and walk to the left along the road for a short distance. Just beyond Cade Cottage on your right, you will find the memorial.

Retrace your steps back along the road and look for a track on the opposite side near a 40mph limit sign painted on the road, opposite a cottage called Sadlers. The track is on the same side of the road as, and only a short distance from, the one that brought you onto the road earlier.

Go down the track and almost immediately through a gate. Continue along this track for some way, until you come to a short right fork to a metal gate visible on the right.

The footpath continues by way of a stile to the right of this gate into a grassy compound, with the track running through it. Do not follow this, but instead bear half-right and enter an

enclosed path between two fences.

Follow to the bottom and go over a metal stile. Go slightly right down the slope and then round to the left and over a wooden footbridge.

In the field beyond, carry on up the field towards the trees at the top. The medieval house “Manor Farm” can be seen to the right, complete with its outbuildings, and a 20th century swimming pool.

Go through the metal kissing gate into the churchyard.

Continue straight up through the churchyard, go to the right of the church and back through the lychgate to finish the walk.

You can, if you wish, adjourn to the Star Inn for refreshments.

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