

# Danehill and the Birch Grove Estate



Welcome to the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty an unspoilt medieval landscape. A reasonably easy, but undulating, walk through the beautifully maintained Birch Grove Estate and attractive woodland.

<b>Distance and duration</b>	3.8 miles / 6.1 kilometres 1.5 - 2 hours
<b>Level</b>	Moderate
<b>Start point</b>	Danehill village car park off School Lane, Danehill, East Sussex, RH17 7JE
<b>Map reference</b>	TQ404278 OS Explorer map 135 What3words:///potential.gurgling.tested
<b>Other information</b>	There are five stiles on this route and two or three of these would be difficult for dogs. Also, dogs will have to be on a lead for a good deal of the walk, so this is probably not a good walk for them.

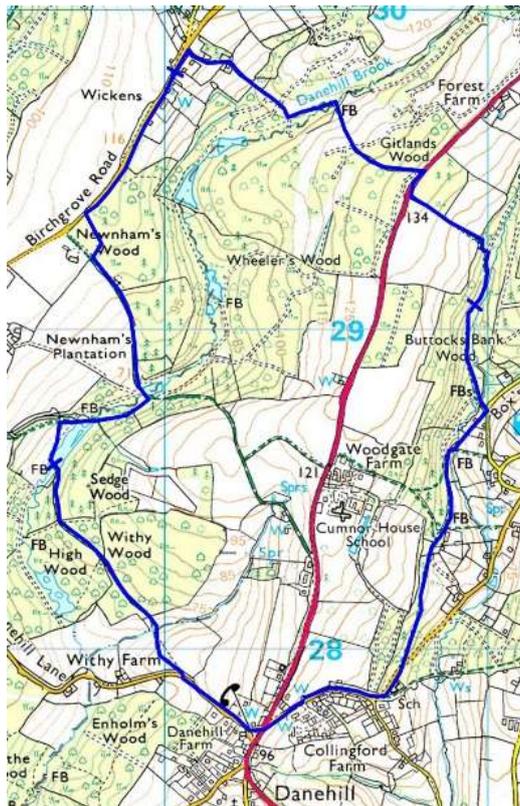
## I-Spy - Things to look out for in the landscape



### The walk

This 4-mile undulating walk starts from the car park off School Lane, about 180 yards from the junction with the A275 in the centre of Danehill village. The Metrobus service 270 could also be used to get to the start point. Follow the path at the far end of the car park up past the Village Hall and out to the A275. Cross the road and go left past the former Crocodile pub, you can see where the sign hung, to take the road with a 'No Entry' for vehicles sign.

*The pub closed in the 1980's and was frequented by Bee Gee Maurice Gibb who lived in the village for some time.*



You shortly join a larger road and bear right to follow this road downhill towards Horsted Keynes. After about 200 yards, and a short distance past the de-restriction sign and before the bend, look for a grassy path on your right leading to a stile. You are about to join the Greenwich Meridian Trail (GMT), which you will follow all the way to the Birchgrove Road. Go over the stile and follow the well-trodden path which initially parallels the road and then continues straight ahead as the road swings left. Go downhill to cross a stream and then enter woodland.

Follow the obvious path through the wood which descends to a bridge. Cross the bridge, taking care on the steep descent on the far side, and walk beside a pond to a T junction, where you turn right onto a signed track. At a junction of paths, turn right onto a narrow, signed path. At a T junction by a pond, bear left, then continue uphill on the signed track, ignoring a turning off to your right. You pass a house on the right, and then a very imposing, newly rebuilt one on the left to come out on the Birchgrove Road. There is a (temporary) diversion to the path here, taking you further away from the house, but it is easy to follow.

Turn right along this road, usually quiet outside peak hours, for about half a mile and, when you reach the road junction at the hamlet of Birchgrove, just after passing *Hamewith* and opposite a small post box, turn right on a signed path down a track. At a dwelling, bear right and then left to go over a stile, then a gate and follow the left-hand field edge downhill and into a wood. Cross a footbridge and stile and go uphill to cross a golf course, carefully following the waymark posts. When you next enter woodland there is a misleading waymark sign, indicating you should head towards a ditch, but instead stay on the track. Turn left where signed to walk alongside woodland for about 75 yards, then bear right on a path, descending through a strip of woodland. On the other side, continue uphill to cross a gravel track and then take the left-hand option where the path splits. You then cross another gravel track and then leave the wide track to enter woodland on a narrow path.

*The large house away to your left, which you may be able to spot, is Birch Grove House, home of the former Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan, Earl of Stockton, who died there in 1986. During Macmillan's time, Charles De Gaulle, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Nikita Khrushchev, Jawaharlal Nehru and John F.*

**The High Weald: An outstandingly beautiful medieval landscape...**

*Kennedy stayed as guests at Birch Grove. Macmillan is buried at nearby St Giles Churchyard, Horsted Keynes.*

Follow the path ahead to a stile giving access to the A275. Turn right along this road for approximately 100 yards, taking advantage of one of the verges as the traffic is fast. Cross the road with care, sooner rather than later for the best visibility and pass by/over a stile at a signed path. Go down with woodland on your left and enter a wood at the bottom, taking care on the first section as it is very rough under foot. Cross a wider track and carry on downhill on a sunken track through the wood. You may need to divert around a large fallen tree, but there is an obvious route to follow. At the bottom of this sunken track, continue ahead to cross an earth bridge and then a stile, eventually coming out close to Box's Lane at Holly Cottage.

*For those wanting refreshment, turn right and then left along Box's Lane for about 300 yards to the well-regarded Coach and Horses pub. It has a wonderful garden with views to the Downs. Use the same route to re-join the walk just off Box's Lane.*

Do not go out to Box's Lane, but take the signed path to the right, which initially runs alongside Holly Cottage and crosses a boardwalk over a boggy area. Ignore all paths off to your left and right and carry on ahead on a meandering path through woodland for about 500 yds. The path joins a concrete track beside a house, then shortly bears right uphill, taking the left-hand option where the path splits, on a signed path still in woodland to join the road from Danehill to Chelwood Common. Cross the road to the pavement opposite by the school and walk uphill to return to the car park.

*Updated August 2022*

## **Please follow the Countryside Code:**

### **Respect other people**

- Consider the local community and other people enjoying the outdoors
- Park carefully so access to gateways and driveways is clear
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Follow paths but give way to others where it's narrow

### **Protect the natural environment**

- Leave no trace of your visit, take all your litter home
- Don't have BBQs or fires
- Keep dogs under effective control
- Dog poo - bag it and bin it

### **Enjoy the outdoors**

- Plan ahead, check what facilities are open, be prepared
- Follow advice and local signs and obey social distancing measures

Wildlife, including nesting birds, may have moved into new areas and 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