

Whatlington to Staplecross circular



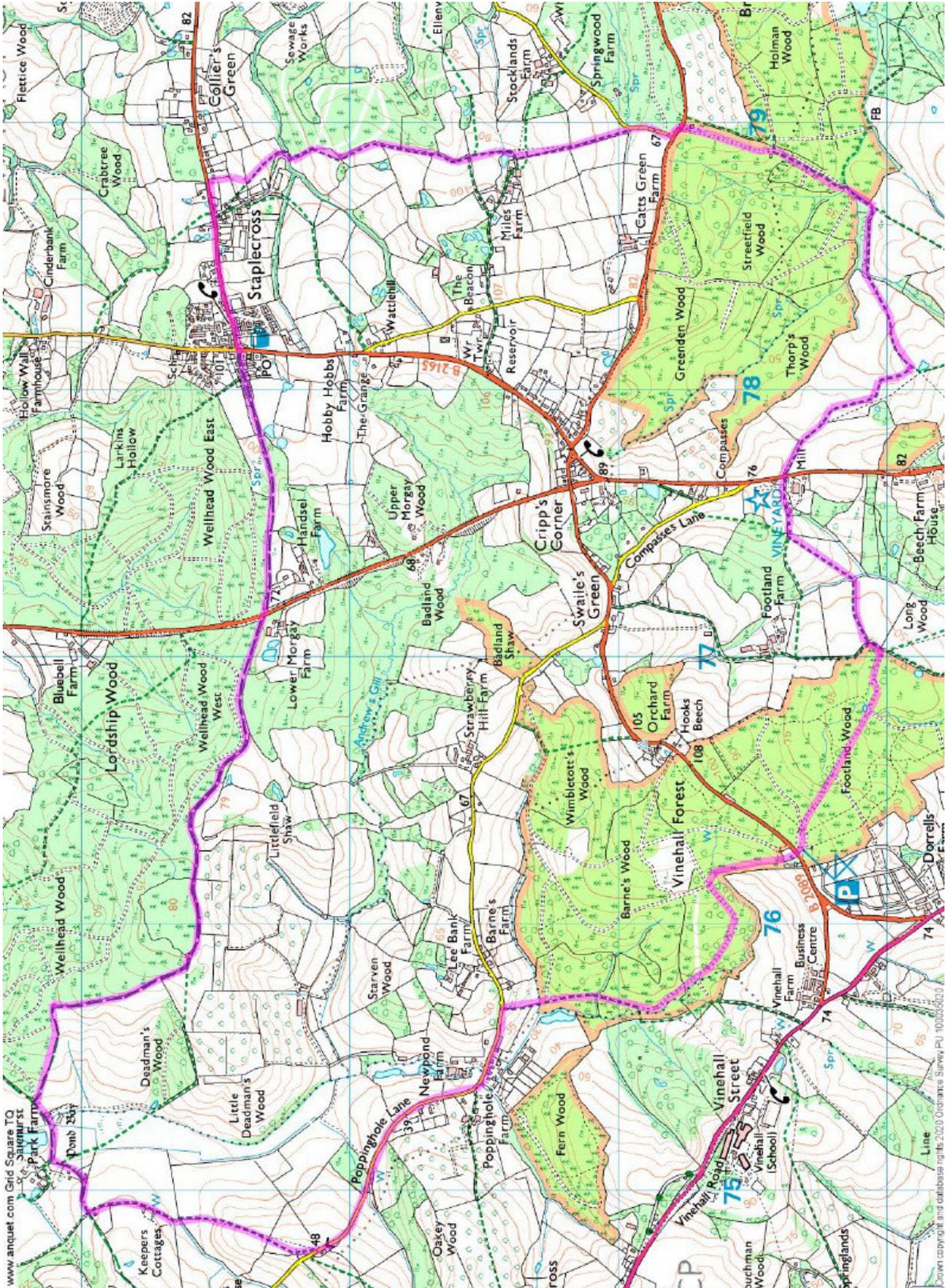
Welcome to the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, an unspoilt medieval Landscape. Passing a site from the industrial age when ironworks were a feature of this landscape and the remnants of ancient routeways. This walk was kindly provided by Lionel Pringle a member of Rother Ramblers

Distance and duration	9 miles / 14.5 kilometres - 4.5 hours
Level	Moderate
Start point / Post code	Footland Wood free car park / TN33 0NT
OS map reference / what3words	TQ762203 https://w3w.co/gashes.balance.passively
Other information	Find GPX at: https://www.highwealdwalks.org/HWWF-0438.gpx

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



The High Weald - An outstandingly beautiful medieval landscape



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Three

This walk starts from the car park at Footland Wood, which will be found off the B2089, the road from Vinehall, on the A21, to Cripps Corner.

From the car park, cross the main road and go into the entrance to Barne's Wood opposite.

These woods are open access and so it is not necessary to stick to the rights of way.

Choice 1 - The more adventurous can take the path that goes into the woodland directly ahead when entering from the road. The path is pretty well defined and goes downhill weaving about and keeping the open fields to the left. It may well be a difficult route particularly in winter. Eventually it comes out on a wide ride.

Choice 2 - For a more straightforward route, turn right after entering from the road and follow the open ride and then turn left onto the next available ride. Continue on downhill, (the route of choice 1 will merge from the left).

Keep on this ride for just over $\frac{3}{4}$ mile, ignoring all turns and paths to right and left.

At the bottom the ride bends sharply to the right look for footpath on the left going into the woodland.

Go along the path and over a footbridge, the path then climbs uphill through the wood.

At the top go through the gap and out onto the road.

Turn left and walk down the hill.

At the bottom of the hill pass New Pond Farm on the right and Poppinghole Farm on the left.

Continue on up the next hill, passing Oakland Farm and Quercus Cottage on the left.

The road then goes downhill, levels out and goes past Knight's Shaw Cottage on the left.

Continue uphill again and look for the footpath on the right at the top of the hill. The entry will be found to the side of the gate directly opposite Holly Cottage.

Continue straight across the field, heading for the stile in the fence ahead.

Go over the stile and then straight ahead and downhill to a stile at the bottom of the field.

There are two stiles in quick succession.

In the next field bear left and look for another stile in the hedgerow.

Move into an enclosed path and continue uphill passing a house on the left.

Pass by an old Morris Minor living a new life as a greenhouse and continue straight on along the track.

Just after passing a stone house on the left at the junction turn right and continue along the track past Lordship Cottage on the right.

At the next junction take the track to the right and carry on. There is a lake to the left beyond the hedge.

To the right is a narrow single storied dwelling, a holiday cottage known as Pipe Cottage. Go straight ahead through the gate by the cottage and at the top by the next gate turn sharp right and with the woods to the immediate left carry on up the field.

Upon reaching the top left hand corner of this field turn right and continue to walk along the edge of the field.

At this point take time out for a breather and to admire the view right across the valley.

In the top left hand corner of the field there are two gates, do not go through the one into the next field, instead take the one which appears to go into the wood. In fact the path actually turns right and continues along the outside of the wood, there is a tall fence to the right.

This is a path where a pair of secateurs and a stout stick may be useful, there are also a few large potholes to be aware of, so take care.

The path continues along this enclosed section for ½ mile, passing orchards on the right.

Eventually the path moves into the wood. The path through the wood is fairly well defined as it follows a shallow gully, this can be very wet and muddy in winter so it may be necessary to divert to one side. Initially, if the fields to the right continue to be visible, the line is correct.

Eventually the path becomes a wider track surfaced with cinders, or something similar, and there is an intermittent fence on the right.

Stay on this track until the point where it turns sharp left and follows the line of the main road below.

Follow the track to the left and at the road, cross to the other side, take care this is a fast and busy road.

Turn right and go up the road a short way to reach a short flight of steps. Go up the steps and follow the path back up the hill.

At the top turn left and continue along the path. This path continues for about ½ mile, at the end it comes out into a built up area. Continue straight on in the same direction to the main road.

The Cross Inn opposite provides an ideal spot for some welcome refreshment.

Once again there is a choice here of routes, choice one is much more rural and involves a bit of investigation, choice 2 is more straightforward and has more road walking.

Choice 1 – Cross the road opposite the pub and walk straight ahead along the pavement.

Go past the village hall and the recreation ground, looking for a finger post on the right hand side of the road, the footpath you need should be here and is shown as

such on the OS maps, but in fact it has been moved about 100 yards up the road alongside the next telegraph pole.

Continue to this point and go over the stile and along the enclosed green space beyond.

Go over the stile to the right of the gate at the end.

Continue straight on and through the next gate.

Go straight across the next field and make for the bottom right hand corner.

Go through another gate and follow the path through the wood.

As the path nears the woods edge it turns sharp left and continues uphill on the edge of the wood.

At the top look for a stile on the right, go over it into the field beyond and turn left.

In the field continue to follow the edge of the wood to another stile on the left.

Go over the stile and continue to walk in the same direction.

Maintain direction and go over a further two stiles.

One more stile accesses a large open field. Go across bearing slightly right.

Exit the field on the farm track to the left of a pond.

Follow the track round to the right and look out for a stile on the left.

Choices 1 and 2 have now merged.

Choice 2 - Turn right and carry on along the road, make sure you admire the beautiful thatched building to your right. Carry on for about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile looking for the first turning on the left, Beacon Lane.

Go down Beacon Lane for another $\frac{1}{4}$ mile where the lane will be found to go up a slight incline. At the top of this incline the footpath will be found on the left down a drive leading to Miles Farm.

Go along the drive and through a controlled gate half way along which is marked Wish House leading to Miles Farm. Should the gate be closed it can be opened by a push button on the side of the right hand gatepost, it will close automatically.

Upon reaching the farm, turn off through a gap in the farm buildings to the right, following what is indicated as a permissive footpath. Then turn left and go straight ahead alongside the barn, there may occasionally be a temporary gate at this point, this leads on to a wide grass track.

A stile will be found almost immediately in the fence on the right-hand side.

Choices 1 and 2 have now merged.

Go over the stile and continue straight down the field towards the trees on the opposite side.

Go over a stile at the bottom and carry straight ahead through the next field, keeping the hedge to your right. At the bottom of the field go through the gap and out onto the road. Turn right along the road.

At the junction with the main road turn left and then cross the road and go through the gate into a dilapidated wood yard beyond. (This is not actually the footpath, that is a little further up the road, but this area of woodland is open access and so this path is available).

Carry on along the track ahead, keeping the ramshackle corrugated iron buildings to the left. After a while a path merges in from the left ignore this and continue in the same direction as previously.

Eventually go past a five bar gate and then through a tall kissing gate into the field beyond.

Turn right and follow the bottom edge of the field, with the wood to the right.

Upon reaching the corner of the field go through the gap into the field beyond.

The footpath bears slightly to the left up through this field making for the junction between the tall, thick bank of trees and the thinner, shorter bank of trees on the horizon.

At the top of the hill there is a small copse of trees, at the corner of this copse the footpath goes off to the right, making directly for the oak tree in the field below.

From under the oak head for the far end of the line of trees which is over to the left.

At this point continue across the field in the same direction to the tree line opposite.

Turn to the left and continue along the edge of the field. Note the large concrete blocks in the hedgerow at this point, these are known as "Dragon's Teeth" and are anti-tank defences, which were set up during World War II.

Upon reaching the main road, which is fast and busy, go straight across and down the drive leading to Sedlescombe Vineyards.

Follow the track right through the vineyard, passing the winery and then a wooden "chalet" style house on the left. In the top right hand corner there is a stile.

Go over the stile, turn left and go diagonally across this field to the far corner. Go over a footbridge and into the field beyond.

Turn right and keeping the hedgerow on the right go straight up the field.

In the top left hand corner turn left and continue along the top of the field.

Look for a gap in the tree line which gives access to Footland Wood.

Go straight on along the track and follow it all the way through to the car park and journey's end.

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