

BED & BREAKFAST

Royal Tunbridge Wells

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WALK 3

Duration:

1.15 to 1.30 hours, 6.5 km/4 miles approx.

Highlights:

Superb views of the Medway Valley, Greensand Ridge and North Downs. Also lovely woodland.

Terrain:

Undulating with no steep climbs. The route is on footpaths which are easily walked, together with tracks, minor roads and paved footpaths.

Refreshment facilities:

Hand & Sceptre Hotel, Southborough Common, The Imperial pub, London Road, Southborough.

Starting point:

Hand & Sceptre, Southborough Common.
O.S. Ref. 576429.

Transport facilities:

Car parking next to St. Peter's.

Bus Routes: 7 AK(NS), 151 AK, 216 AK,
232 MB(NS), 233 MB/AU(NS), 402 AK/NE.

NS: Not Sundays

AK: Arriva Kent & Sussex Telephone: 01634 281100

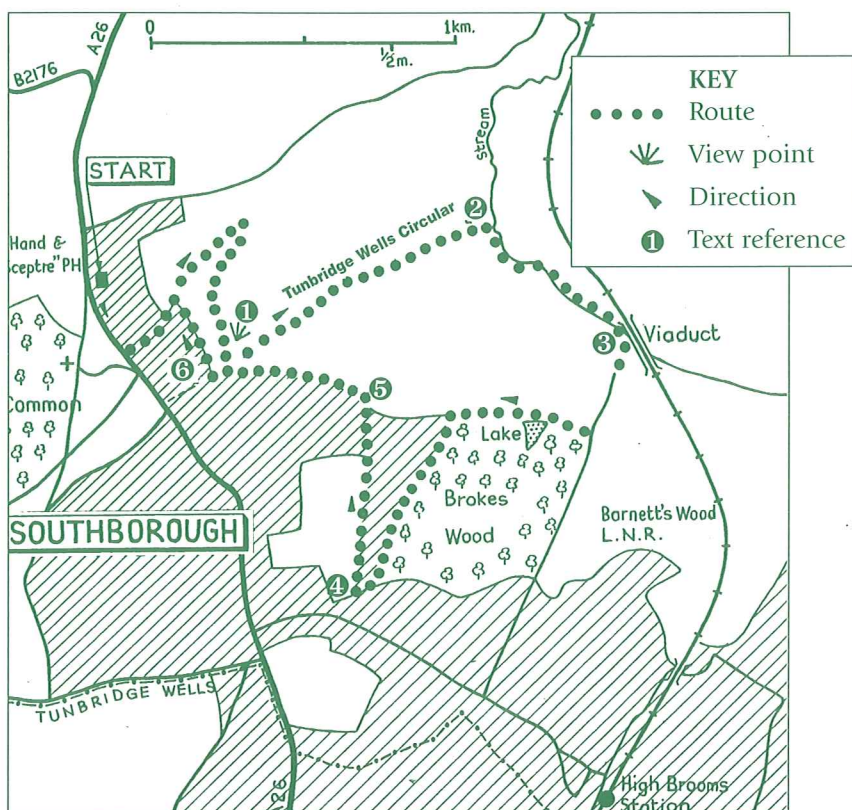
MB: Metrobus Telephone: 01698 861432/
01342 893080

AU: Autocar Telephone: 01892 833830

NE: New Enterprise Telephone: 01732 350509

WALK
THE
BOUNDS
and eat the view

Southborough



Kent County Council (Licence No. LA 76708)



Route: With back to Hand & Sceptre and facing St Peter's Church, turn left and walk down path for 50 metres. Turn left on to High Weald Walk footpath, between wall and play area on right. Cross stile and bear diagonally left passing Meadows School, to waymark in corner of field. Pass through gap in hedge and turn sharp left, leaving the High Weald Walk. Proceed through a scrubby meadow and on with woodland on right. Cross stile to field.

Descend diagonally left towards gate, stile and house in a hollow of the field. Before reaching the gate turn back to initially walk along left boundary fence of a house. On climbing the field and with a converted oast on the left, bear right to follow the line of a wide old track and aiming for large oaks higher up the field. On reaching the oak trees, the path becomes more distinct. Pass the trees and through a gate into woodland, and following the boundary fence to the wood. Cross stile to more open land and after 50 metres reach waymark post. **1**

Pause here to admire the panoramic view of the High Weald, Medway Valley, Greensand Ridge and North Down. In the middle distance the Jacobean mansion of Somerhill House can be seen.

At the waymark post turn left (before reaching road) and head downhill in the direction indicated by High Weald Walk marker. Walk downhill to stile and continue straight ahead over next field to gap in line of trees. Continue across next field to stile and into copse. Follow right hand boundary fence of copse. Cross stile on far side of copse and bear diagonally right across field. As a guide aim slightly to the right of mast on the skyline. As you cross the field a waymark post becomes visible on the far side. Cross bridge over ditch, adjacent to waymark and bear left following right hand boundary fence of field. Cross stile and continue along the same fence line to arrive at stile in corner of field. **2**

Cross stile (ignoring bridge and footpath left), continuing across field with trees and stream to the left to stile at the side of stream. Cross stile and bridge then pass through narrow strip of woodland and continue along the left hand boundary of field. Approaching the end of field cross stile and two bridges then right to pass through more woodland. Emerge at another stile and immediately below Victorian railway viaduct. **3**

Cross stile and immediately turn sharp right to walk alongside the viaduct and where the path joins a lane turn right again, passing Old Forge Farm.

Southborough Valley was a centre of industrial activity during the late Middle Ages. Iron blooms from ore was smelted in nearby Vauxhall Furnace then transported to the Old Forge where firebacks and other implements were produced. The works were closed in the 17th century.

Continue up lane for approximately 400 metres to a footpath on the right hand side. Follow footpath which runs between fences to woodland and passes a lake on the left hand side. At junction of paths, turn left (immediately before stile), continuing through wood for approximately 500 metres, eventually to walk between beech trees on right and boundary fence of bungalow on left. On reaching track bear right towards red pillar box and road junction. **4**

Immediately opposite pillar box turn right to walk along Ridgeway, with houses on right, playing fields and allotments on left. Where road ends continue on footpath through holly and laurel bushes/trees to road. **5**

Turn left up road. Ignore all turns to left and right until reaching Vicarage Road on right and indicated as High Weald Walk. **6**

HERE YOU HAVE A CHOICE OF ROUTES FOR THE SHORT RETURN TO HAND & SCEPTRE HOTEL:

a) Ignore Vicarage Road and continue to London Road, turn right and walk up path to Hand & Sceptre on brow of hill,

or

b) Turn right into Vicarage Road and follow High Weald Walk waymarks which picks up the outward route passing Meadows School and passing playground to emerge opposite Southborough Common and below Hand & Sceptre Hotel.

Southborough Common was once grazing land on the edge of South Frith Forest. The Hand & Sceptre was built in 1663 but did not become an inn until 1728.