

The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is an outstanding medieval landscape, protected for its historic character of: rolling hills draped with small irregular fields; abundant woods and hedges; scattered farmsteads; and sunken lanes. It covers parts of 4 counties: East Sussex, West Sussex, Kent and Surrey and has an area of 1,457 square kilometres (570 square miles).

High Weald Heroes is a primary school programme that encourages children to do the following actions:

Explore



the local countryside around your school
- there's nowhere else quite like it.

Take care of

your local environment as you walk. Remember to follow the Countryside Code. For more information, visit www.naturalengland.org.uk



Enjoy! yourself and have fun outdoors whatever the weather.



Find out about

the habitats you walk through - discover the story behind the landscape. To find out more go to the learning zone on www.highweald.org



Be proud of

your countryside. Tell other people about the special landscape around your school - even better, take them on your school's Welly Walk and show them!



Produced by the High Weald AONB Partnership with support from:



Walk Facts

Distance: 5 km / 3.25 miles

Time: 2 hours (depending on conditions, numbers and excluding stops)

Description: A moderate walk through a variety of habitat with lots of features. A quiet track leads to the Nymans Estate, owned by the National Trust, with ancient woodland, lakes and sandstone outcrops. The unsurfaced woodland paths can get very muddy and slippery.



RISK ASSESSMENT - Points to consider

- Please use with an Ordnance Survey Explorer Map.
- Wear sturdy footwear or wellingtons, being aware of uneven ground and fallen trees, especially near water and in wet weather.
- Adequate staff to student supervision ratios.
- Fields may contain farm animals.
- Long trousers are advised.
- Check the weather - waterproofs or hats and sun cream might be needed.
- Taking a drink with you is advisable.
- Plants such as nettles and brambles can sting and scratch; berries from plants can cause stomach upsets if eaten.
- There are no toilet facilities, so we recommend that toilet paper and antibacterial hand gel are taken as a precaution.
- Everyone must clean their hands before eating.
- Remember that a large group of people can be intimidating, especially to animals.
- Remember to follow the Countryside Code.

Footpaths are subject to change. The walk should always be checked for new risks before venturing out, especially when planning to take groups of children.

www.highweald.org

St Mark's C of E Primary School High Weald Welly Walk



Be a High Weald Hero - you can make a difference



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



10



11



12

For guidance only; actual conditions may be different from those shown, depending on the weather and time of year.

Photo guide and route description

Come out of the school and turn right. At the crossroads turn right again. Look out for the footpath sign on your right at a small road **1**. Turn right here and walk up the long track beyond the houses. Turn left at a footpath sign to cross a stile and cattle grid **2**. The public footpath takes you diagonally across the field. At the top of the field by the house turn left to cross the driveway and go down through a gate **3**. Head down steps and cross the footbridge to enter the Nymans estate with an information board in front of you **4**. Turn right with the lake on your right. When you join another path, turn right again keeping along the side of the lake. Turn right to cross the footbridge between the two lakes and pass the bird hide on your left **5**.

Cross another footbridge to walk across a meadow and climb steps on the other side **6**. Turn left to walk along a medieval track **7**. Stay on this track, past two turnings on your left, and continue on it as it bears left then heads downhill **8**. Use the steps with hand rails to walk downhill passing rocky outcrops on your left. Stay on this path until the bottom, passing a finger post with an orange arrow, and bear left to walk above a lake on your right. Turn right to go down more steps with handrails **9** and follow the path round to the left with the river on your right. Turn right when you join another path **10** and continue straight ahead ignoring paths to the left and right.

The path continues uphill and as you join another path turn left to keep the lake on your left **11** . Keep straight ahead and pass the turning with the bird hide on your left. Take the left hand path when the path forks **12** and turn left to go back over the footbridge and up the other side. Cross the field again and turn right to go back down the lane and retrace your steps back to the school.

Look out for...



Dead wood habitat



Lakes

Key

● St Mark's C of E Primary School

WALK ROUTE

1 numbered views

meadows

historic roadway

ponds/lakes

Tudor water driven ironworks



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Look out for these key High Weald landscape features on the Welly Walk

Ancient Woodland

Almost one third of the High Weald is woodland. Most of this is classed as ancient, which means it has existed for at least 400 years. All the woodland on this Welly Walk is ancient. Look out for bluebells and wood anemones in the spring.



Bluebells



Wood anemones

The area of woodland at the top of the medieval track is known as Jack Reeding's Wood. Jack was a local, notorious highwayman who was said to use a nearby cave in the wood as a hideout. Look out for shallow pits in the woods that show where iron ore was once dug out.



Coppiced Woodland

Coppiced trees are cut down low to the ground to allow multiple stems to grow back. The stems are used to make products such as fence poles, charcoal and trugs. Look out for a sweet chestnut coppice on this walk.

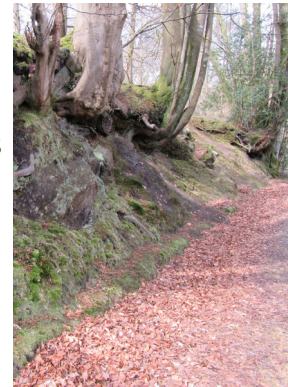
The High Weald Iron Industry

The High Weald was at the heart of the great Tudor iron industry, when iron was extracted from the local sandstone and clay to make objects such as cannons. Gill streams were dammed to make huge ponds to power the industry. The large lake that you pass was created as a hammer pond. The power of the water behind the dam drove hammers to break up the ironstone and drive the bellows that stoked the great furnaces. The lake is now a haven for wildlife.



Ancient Routeways

Many paths in the High Weald have been used for centuries, some as far back as Neolithic times. This use by people, animals and later, carts, has worn away the soft ground to create deeply sunken sections. The long, straight path after Furnace Green is a sunken medieval track. It is connected to the area's historical iron workings and once led to the iron master's house.



Meadows

Ancient meadows and pastures are important because they support so many different plant and

If you are interested in finding out more then please visit www.highweald.org/learning zone

animal species and yet over 80% have disappeared in the last 100 years. The High Weald has more of these 'unimproved' grasslands than most areas of the country. In Tudor times Furnace Green was the site of an iron-extracting furnace but is now a flower-rich hay meadow. See how many different flowers you can see in spring and summer.



Sandstone outcrops

Dramatic sandstone outcrops can be found scattered all over the High Weald. You pass a small outcrop as you descend the steps on this Welly Walk. The sandstone rock is porous and when shaded by woodland creates a unique habitat. They are home to some rare mosses, lichens and liverworts.



Gill Streams

Steep-sided, wooded gills are formed where a stream has carved a deep channel through the clay and sandstone of a High Weald hillside. Plants growing on these slopes, such as ferns, liverworts and mosses, form an important but fragile eco-system. Look out for gill streams that flow into the ponds and lakes on this Welly Walk.

