

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



Education Resource

Distance: 5.6km / 3.5miles

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

Description: A circular walk with contrasting environments. The walk starts at the edge of town on a busy road and then leads to a tranquil ancient woodland. 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 Mary's C.E. Primary School High Weald Welly Walk



Be a High Weald Hero - you can make a difference



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 left onto Windmill Lane. At the end of the road turn left onto the A22. At the first pedestrian traffic lights, just before the mini roundabout, cross the road and turn left to continue in the same direction. At the next pedestrian traffic lights cross back over the road and turn right to continue. At Homebase, use the zebra crossing to cross the shop's entrance.

Turn left at Green Hedges Avenue, just before the railway bridge **1**. Walk up the road and cross the footbridge over the dismantled railway. Cross Charlwoods Road and walk up Wellington Town Road **2**. Take the first left and then turn right onto Lingfield Road. Take the next right onto Dormans Park Road crossing over to walk on the pavement on the left hand side. Cross to the right hand side of the road when the pavement starts. Head downhill and cross over Kennedy Avenue to continue straight ahead along Alders Avenue **3**. Continue past Betchley Close and cross the road to take the left hand fork after Frith Park **4**. Follow the footpath sign. At the road cross over to continue on the footpath **5**. As you emerge at a cul-de-sac, turn right to walk along the pavement. Look out for and turn down a footpath on your right and head downhill **6**. Do not continue up the hill but turn left into the woods **7**. Follow the main path through the woods above and along the stream. Cross the footbridge **8** and continue along the stream to another bridge then onwards to a third footbridge where you emerge out of the woods to open scrubland. A well-worn path takes you straight ahead to enter woodland through a kissing gate **9**. Here, turn left along a wider bridle path. Continue to a crossroads of paths with a large house on your

right. Turn left to continue through woodland, passing fields on your right. The path takes you between two old gate posts to meet a track. Continue straight ahead. As you pass a pond on your left the road becomes tarmacked. Continue along the road as it passes houses uphill and there is a pavement. At a junction bear left to continue on Eden Vale **10** . At the end of the cul-de-sac take the footpath straight ahead **11** . When you emerge continue up Alders Avenue **12** . Cross over Kennedy Avenue to carry on uphill, and retrace your steps back to school.

Look out for...



Iron in water



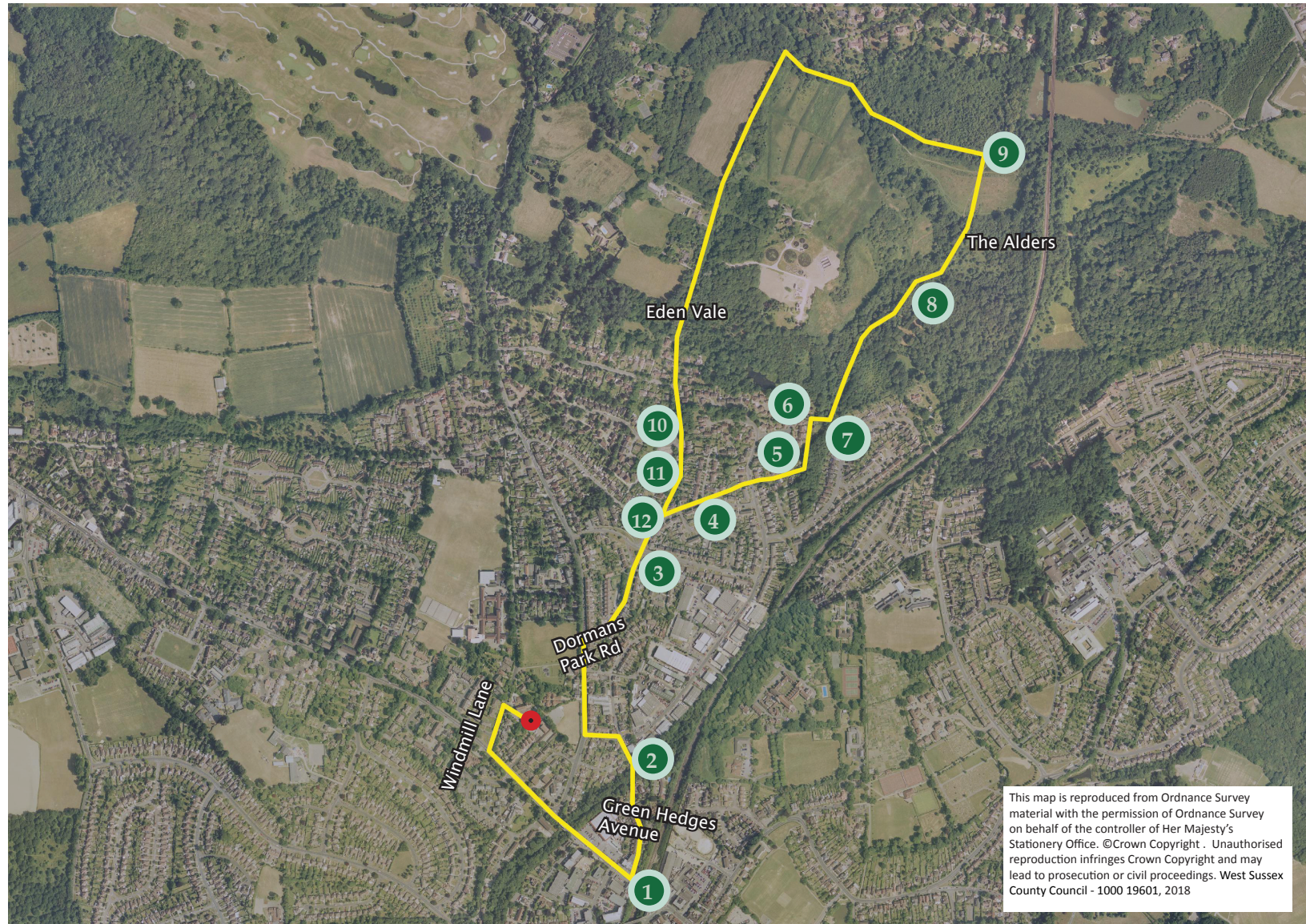
Outgrown hedge

Key

 St Mary's C.E. Primary School

 WALK ROUTE

 Route description numbers



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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. Some of The Alders is ancient woodland. Look out for bluebells, wood anemones and ransoms (wild garlic) in the spring.



Bluebells



Wood anemones

Coppiced Woodland

Coppicing is when trees are cut down low to the ground allowing multiple stems to grow back. The stems are harvested to make products such as fencing, charcoal and trugs. Hazel and sweet chestnut are trees that were commonly coppiced in the High Weald.



Ponds

Ponds are an important habitat for wildlife and the High Weald has lots of them. Many ponds have developed because of human activity such as quarrying. The pond you pass on your left at Eden Vale will be home for lots of plants and animals such as dragonflies, caddis flies, frogs and newts.



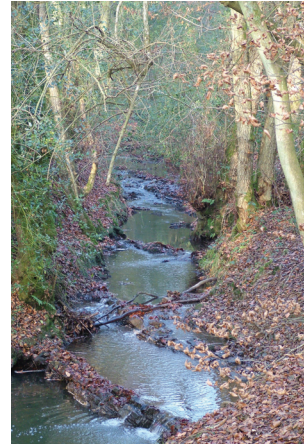
High Weald Hedges



Hedges are an important habitat for wildlife providing food and shelter for birds and mammals. The High Weald's many small fields have lots of hedges. Making or laying a hedge in the traditional way means bending the stem of the tree at almost a right angle. Look out for old, grown out hedgerows where the right angle is now a thick trunk. This one is on your left on the wide bridle path.

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. Look out for the gill stream in The Alders on this Welly Walk. Plants growing on the slopes, such as ferns, liverworts and mosses form an important, fragile eco-system.



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

Veteran Trees

A veteran tree is one that is very old and interesting because it can support lots of different types of wildlife including fungi and insects. Veteran trees can live for 1000s of years. The Yew tree is one of longest known living trees.



Stand under an old tree and imagine the history!

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 for fighting.



Trees were cut down to make charcoal for fueling the furnaces and streams powered giant hammers in the forges.

Not much is visible of that industry now, but look for clues of iron rich rocks in the orangey coloured water in The Alders.

