

The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is one of England's Finest Landscapes, 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 Unit with support from:



Walk Facts



Distance: 2.6 miles/4.2 km.

Time: 1.5 hours (depending on conditions and numbers and excluding stops).

Description: A short circular walk through fields, woods and the historic village of Lindfield. Paths can get very muddy and there is some road walking and busier roads to cross.

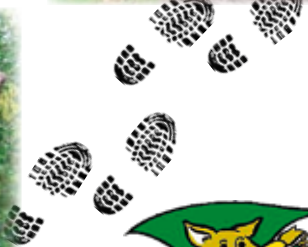


RISK ASSESSMENT - Points to consider

- 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.
- Long trousers are advised.
- Check the weather - waterproofs or hats and sun cream might be needed.
- Taking a drink with you is advisable.
- Consider adequate adult to child supervision ratios as paths are narrow, the group will spread out and there are roads and stiles to cross.
- Plants such as nettles and brambles can sting and scratch; berries from plants can cause stomach upsets if eaten.
- Whilst there are toilet facilities in Lindfield village, we recommend that toilet paper and hand wipes 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.
- *Footpaths and rights of way are subject to change. The walk should always be checked for new risks before venturing out, especially when planning to take groups of children.*
- **Remember to follow the Countryside Code.**

www.highweald.org

Lindfield 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

From the School car park, turn left to reach the end of School Lane. Cross Backwoods Lane and walk onto Lindfield Common. From the car park on the Common, walk towards the houses opposite you, **1** straight across the grass. When you reach West View, cross over and walk up to the main road, to be opposite Noah's Ark Lane. Turn right along the main road **2** and walk along Lewes Road. Walk along the pavement, crossing Scrase Stream and Gravelye Lane. Keep going, into Walstead and up Scamps Hill. Find a safe place to cross before you reach East Mascalls Lane which will be on your left. Turn down here, **3** following signs to Great Walstead School and the Golf Club.

Walk along this road, passing the burial ground on your left. Where the pavement runs out, carefully cross the road and walk along the grassy verge (take care as the verge is quite narrow) **4**. Be aware of uneven ground and drainage holes! Keep going until you see a public footpath on your left **5**. Cross over and follow the track down Snowflakes Lane. When you reach Walstead Forge, take the narrow footpath **6** through the trees and continue straight over 2 bridges. Keep going until the end of the path and turn right along the paved track **7**.

Keep going, straight on past the metal barrier **8**, over the bridge and following the path uphill – open fields to your left and right. You should be able to see the church tower over to your left.

Continue until you reach a farmyard gate. Turn left here **9** and, after approximately 300 metres, bear right **10** at the junction of footpaths. Follow the path, as it becomes more enclosed with a fence down the left side, until you reach a stile. Cross over the stile and bear right, towards the church **11**. Turn left into the church yard and bear left to come out on the main road. Turn left and walk all the way down the High Street **12**. Find a safe place to cross over so that you can continue walking on the pavement up to, and around, the pond. Follow the pavement all the way until you are opposite School Lane. Cross over, walk down School Lane and you will soon be back at Lindfield Primary School.

Look out for...










Rolling Hills



Wildflower
Grassland



Key

-  Lindfield Primary School
-  WALK ROUTE
-  wildflower grassland
-  watercourse
-  1 numbered views
-  road
-  take care, busy road

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Ancient Woodland

Trees and woodland cover over one-third of the High Weald and are a key landscape feature.

The woods of the High Weald were relatively slow to be cleared because they were a valuable resource: providing timber for building, fuel for heating and charcoal for iron smelting, as well as animal feed - acorns and beech mast for pigs. Even when agricultural clearance did begin in the High Weald, much woodland was retained and continued to provide valuable resources, particularly for the iron industry.

Today, 70% of the High Weald's woodlands are classed as ancient - having existed continuously since at least 1600AD. They have been maintained for centuries by skilled workers using a rotational coppicing system.



Coppicing is when trees are cut down low to the ground in such a way that the stems grow back afterwards. The trees are cut once every 10-15 years. The harvested wood is used to make products such as fencing stakes, charcoal, hurdles and trugs. Buying local wood products helps to ensure the continuation of traditional management.

Watch the 'Jacob' video at www.highweald.org to learn more about coppicing.

When the trees are coppiced, the light can reach right down to the ground as the branches and leaves are no longer shading the floor. This means lots of wild plants can grow including bluebells, wood anemones and wild garlic. These plants attract insects to feed on the nectar, and birds and small mammals eat the fruits and seeds.

Often, rarer species are now only found in working coppice.



High Weald Ponds

The Weald has one of the highest concentrations of ponds in South East England.

As you walk past the Village Pond on this Welly Walk, think about why it might have been created. Many ponds have developed because of human activity, e.g. quarrying, while others were created as drinking ponds for farm animals.

In the High Weald, some large 'hammer ponds' can also be found. These were created to power the bellows and hammers of the iron industry.



Think about the different habitats that you walk through on this Welly Walk - can you spot any creatures that live in the ponds, trees or fields?

Historic Buildings

The traditional building materials and styles of the High Weald are an essential part of the landscape's distinctive character. The building materials have come, in fact, from that very landscape - so it is hardly surprising that they blend in so well.

Links with the area's wooded past are evident in the number of timber-framed and weather-boarded buildings, whilst the widespread use of sandstone, bricks and tiles is testimony to the High Weald's underlying geology of sandstone and clay.

You can see examples of some traditional-style buildings as you walk down the High Street from point 12.

What local building materials can you spot on the buildings that you pass?



A Medieval Landscape

By the 14th century, the High Weald was settled and looked much the same as it does today. The landscape of the High Weald is essentially medieval: this can be said of few other places in the country.



With their heavy clay soils and steep slopes, many High Weald fields have never been ploughed up to grow crops and have traditionally been used for rearing cattle and sheep. Compared to many areas of Britain, the High Weald still has a relatively large number of ancient, wildflower-rich hay meadows and pastures.

These 'unimproved' grasslands are some of our most important habitats for conservation and you can enjoy seeing examples of them on this Welly Walk.

*Did you know...?
The name 'Lindfield' means 'open land with lime trees'. How many lime trees can you count as you walk down the High Street?*

The Story of the High Weald's Fields

One of the distinctive landscape features of the High Weald is its pattern of small, irregular fields. After the Anglo-Saxon period, settlers began moving into the High Weald in increasing numbers.

These early farmers began clearing the surrounding woods and scrub to make fields for crops and livestock. These clearances were done in an unplanned way by the individual farmers.

This is why the High Weald's fields are relatively small and irregular in shape.

Look closely at the map in this Welly Walk leaflet to see what shapes the fields are in and around Lindfield.



Valerie Alford, ESCC Landscape Group