

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: 3.9 miles/6.2 km.

Time: 2.5 hours (depending on conditions and numbers and excluding stops).

Description: A beautiful historic walk, largely on Ashdown Forest. Parts of the walk are quite hilly and grazing livestock are prevalent in places.



RISK ASSESSMENT - Points to consider

- Please use with an Ordnance Survey Explorer Map.
- Wear sturdy footwear or wellingtons, being aware of uneven ground. Long trousers are also advised.
- Check the weather - waterproofs or hats and sun cream might be needed.
- Taking a drink with you is advisable.
- Consider adequate staff to pupil supervision ratios as paths are narrow, the group will spread out and there are roads to cross.
- 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 hand wipes are taken as a precaution.
- Remember a large group of people can be intimidating, especially to animals.
- Everyone must clean their hands before eating.
- *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

Nutley Church of England Primary School High Weald Welly Walk



Be a High Weald Hero - you can make a difference



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
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

Turn left out of the school gate then immediately left again into School Lane **1**. Follow the road straight on for approx 600m. Once you pass Brickyard Farm (which will be on your left) look for the short wooden posts ahead of you at the edge of the woods **2**. Once in the woods, follow the main track uphill. When you meet a track, cross straight over and follow the narrow path, continuing uphill through the bracken. At the tarmac track turn right. Continue on until you reach Little Garde and Alma Cottage on your left. Soon after this, find the footpath that bears left off the main track **3**. Follow the grassy track a short distance until you meet the main road. Carefully cross straight over **4** and follow the road as it bears right and then left. Continue forward until you reach Nutley Windmill on your left **5**. This is the oldest working windmill in Sussex with parts dating from the 16th Century. Bear right as you pass the windmill and go through the wooden gate. Carry straight on along the narrow woodland path and continue forward as you emerge from the woods to join the wider track. Walk straight on going gently uphill, and enjoying views across the Forest. Head towards 'Friends Clump' a group of tall trees on your left. When you reach the clump, turn right through the car park **6** and cross the main road. Now continue forward, towards the information board ahead of you. Continue downhill and shortly afterwards, at the crossroad of paths, turn left along a broad path **7** . You are now walking parallel with the main road (up on your left) and with extensive open views of Ashdown Forest and rich heathland to your right. Keep going until you reach a car park (Hollies) on your left. Be aware that sheep and cattle graze

this part of the Forest. They play an important role in maintaining the heathland habitat through controlling the growth of trees and bracken. When you reach the car park turn right and head downhill on a wide, grassy track **8**. The main road is now behind you. Keep following the path as it goes downhill and enjoy spectacular views (if it is a clear day you might be able to spot Firle Beacon, a hill on the South Downs, 16 miles away!) Keep going downhill towards Airman's Grave **9** - a memorial site for the crew of a World War II plane that crashed here in 1941. Now continue downhill for about 200m to reach a stream. Turn right, cross the bridge **10** and head uphill to follow the main track. Keep going uphill until you reach a junction of paths. Go straight on here and head downhill, bearing slightly left down to a small stream. Cross the stream and follow the path sharply uphill. Shortly afterward, take the path to your left off the main track, **11** leading to Misbourne Farm. Turn right at the farm and follow the track. Cross the cattle grid and turn immediately left into a grassy clearing. Bear right, go through the wooden posts **12** and then continue straight on down the hill. Stick to the main track all the way through the woods as it heads down and then back up again - following it as it bears right. Eventually you will emerge from the woods and meet a track. Turn right and follow it, past several houses, walking straight on to reach the end of Clock House Lane. Now, turn right and walk all the way back to school, which will be on your right!

Look out for...



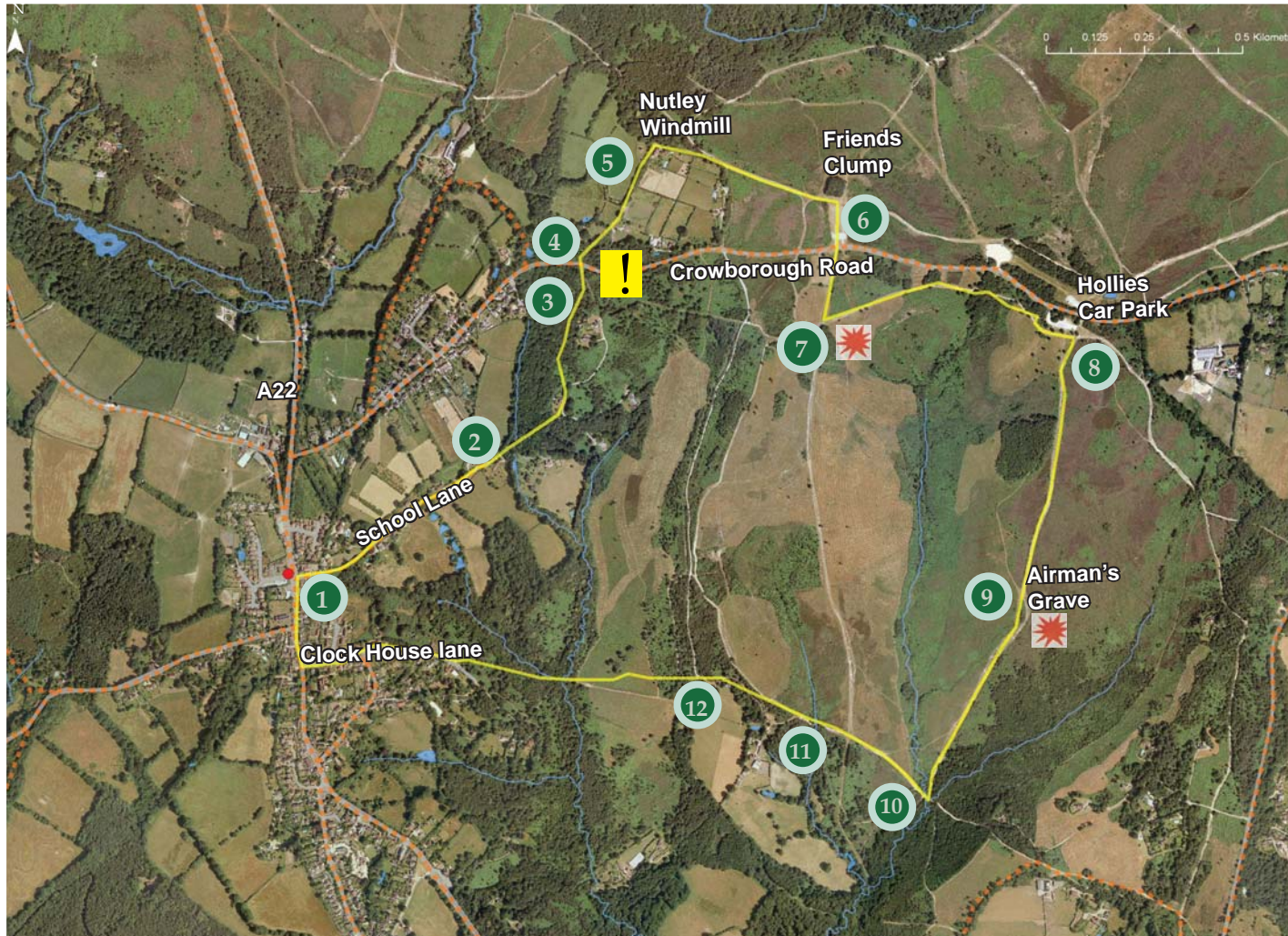
Heathland










Nutley Windmill



Ancient Routeways



Key

-  Nutley CE Primary School
-  WALK ROUTE
-  watercourse
-  historic routeway
-  busy road
-  numbered views
-  suggested activity point

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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.

Ashdown Forest, where much of this walk takes place, is also steeped in history. There have been many archaeological finds on the Forest, dating from as early as the Mesolithic period (8000 BC - 4500 BC) right up to World War II.



Ancient Routeways

As far back as the Neolithic period (c.4300 - 1400BC) farmers from the Downs and coastal plains would drive their pigs into the woods each year to fatten them on acorns and beech mast. This happened during the late summer and early autumn, and the farmers would have built temporary shelters to keep warm while watching their pigs.

These woodland pig pastures were called dens and many places in the High Weald have names ending in den - for example Tenterden.



The frequent passage of pigs being driven to and from the dens formed tracks known as droves. Over time the dens became settlements in their own right, and the roughly

north-south droving routes remained. They can be seen today in the pattern of lanes, bridleways and footpaths radiating away from the High Weald.

Look closely at the map in this Welly Walk leaflet to see where historic routeways exist in and around Nutley

The High Weald Iron Industry

For two periods - in the first two centuries of the Roman occupation, and during Tudor and early-Stuart times - the Weald was the main iron-producing region in Britain.

The iron can be seen in springs and streams across the area. Have a look in the stream at point 10 to see if you can see any 'rusty' coloured water - an indication of its substantial iron content.

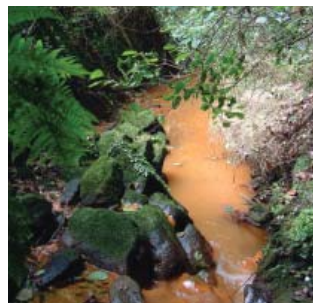
It is hard to picture the former iron industry in today's countryside of small fields, woodlands and steep, narrow, gill valleys, but in this landscape exist all the necessary raw materials that allowed iron to be smelted for over 2,000 years. The Wealden geology of sands and clays yielded the iron ore, as well as the stone and brick to build the furnaces; the coppiced woodland provided charcoal for fuel; and the numerous small streams and valleys ensured water power for the bellows and hammers of the forges and furnaces.

The raw materials for making iron were prevalent on Ashdown Forest and in Nutley. There are many former iron working sites, furnaces and bloomeries scattered in and around the village.

Visit www.highweald.org to learn more about the Iron Story of the High Weald

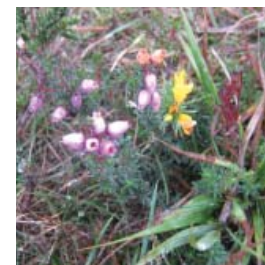
So, where are the remains of iron production? Building stone was too valuable in the Weald to be left unused, so the works were dismantled, and the woods grew back over the former sites. Only place names; the remains of charcoal hearths or pits in the woods - flattened circular areas with blackened soil beneath the leaf litter; the telltale waste, called slag, from the smelting process; and some hammer and furnace ponds are left to remind us of this once great Wealden industry.

Adapted from text by Jeremy Hodgkinson, Wealden Iron Research Group



High Weald Heathland

Much of this walk is through heathland, the most characteristic habitat on the Forest. Nearly two thirds of its 6,500 acres (2,500 hectares) are heathland, amounting to 2.5% of the UK's extent of this rare habitat.



On heathland you can find 5000 types of invertebrate, 27 out of all 39 British dragonflies, more than 500 species of spider (all of which are carnivorous), all British amphibians and reptiles (including adders!) as well as endangered birds such as Nightjar, Woodlark and Dartford Warbler.

Keep an eye out for deer on your walk too - four species of deer - Fallow, Roe, Sika and Muntjac - can be found on the Forest.

Can you spot any deer grazing on Ashdown Forest?

Managing the Landscape

From point 5 on this walk, you may encounter some grazing animals. Grazing livestock has been part of the Forest for hundreds of years. Sheep and cows play an important part in maintaining the heathland through controlling the growth of trees and bracken. Other plants, like heath spotted orchids and marsh gentians then have a better chance of survival. In summer you may also see tractors mowing large areas of bracken and, in winter, the cutting of small trees and scrub. This is all part of heathland management and restoration.

Airman's Grave



A regularly visited reminder of World War II is Airman's Grave in the Misbourne valley.

Despite the name, no-one is buried here. It is a memorial to the crew of a Wellington Bomber who were all killed when it crashed here on 31 July 1941. They were part of a bombing mission to Cologne but were forced to turn back in bad weather conditions with engine trouble. On Remembrance Sunday each year, a large number of people gather at the Airman's Grave to commemorate all those killed in war.