

Walk 14

West Hoathly Circular

(6.5 miles / 10.5km)

Grading = Difficult (some steep hills)

OS Explorer map 135
(Ashdown Forest)



Start/End point:

Finche Field Recreation Ground
(car park), Church Hill, West
Hoathly RH19 4PN

1. Follow the path out of the car park toward the village (WAYMARKER 8) with the post and rail fence to your left and the road (Church Hill) below. Walk through the houses and at the end of Sandy Lane, turn left along North Lane past the Village Hall, the Cat Inn and St Margaret's Church on your left.
2. Follow the road around the corner past the Priest House Museum on the right and West Hoathly Bowls Club on the left and continue straight ahead on the broken-up tarmac track signposted Philpots Quarry and public bridleway that goes gradually downhill.
3. The track goes past Philpots Manor School, it snakes right and then left, keeping to the right of farm buildings and stables, and goes down a steep slope into the woods. Continue on the main bridleway past some big clumps of bamboo and a hidden lake on the left-hand side, until you reach a road.
4. Cross the road and follow the public bridleway ahead. The path goes uphill through the woods bearing left, keep the metal fence to your left and you will pass some large rock boulders on your right.
5. The path comes out onto a track, turn right and then left to follow the public footpath sign down the hill. Follow the footpath left down the hill and into the trees (not the bridleway that goes straight on), it goes quite steeply downhill to a wooden bridge over a little stream (it can be very muddy here) and continues on through the trees.
6. At the top of the hill, where you come out of the woods, the path bears left signposted High Weald Landscape Trail. It goes straight through the field to a gate at the top. It is quite a steep hill and then the footpath narrows between a hedge on the left and a fence on the right until you reach Hook Lane, a quiet country road with no pavement.

7. Turn right along the road past Ludwell House on your left and walk for a couple of minutes until you reach a footpath on the left-hand side with signposts to Pickeridge, Holly Farm. Follow the High Weald Landscape Trail along a track until you reach a footpath junction, take the left-hand fork past Old Holly Cottage, a wooden beamed building, and walk toward a barn ahead on the right.
8. When you get to the barn the footpath is signposted off to the left, go over a stile and down the hill on the edge of the field with the hedge on your right. Go through a gap in the hedge into the next field and keep walking down.
9. At the bottom, go over a stile and down some steep wooden steps through a wooded area that leads to a wooden bridge over a stream. On the other side, go through a gate into a field and go diagonally right up a very steep hill. At the top the path bears right onto a tarmac track which leads to a metal five bar gate and a farmyard. Go straight on past the farmhouse on the right and over a stile into Hammingden Lane where you need to turn left toward All Saints Highbrook Church.
10. Just before the church entrance turn right onto a public footpath, passing a renovated smokery with information board on your right (the door is usually unlocked if you want to stop here for a break), the footpath continues on a muddy track with a fence on the right and hedge to the left. Go through a five-bar gate into a field and down a very steep hill, keeping to the left-hand side of the field, with nice views to the South. Go through a gap in the hedge and continue on until you reach a gate and a stile, at the bottom of the field go through a five-bar gate and walk on through trees, with a steep gully on the left-hand side.
11. You will reach a wooden bridge over a stream and then go up some wooden steps on the other side. Go over a stile and carry on into the field ahead, the path goes slightly left. At the top of the field go over a stile and continue on until you reach the Bluebell Railway.
12. Stop, Look Listen! And cross over the line, then the path goes over a stile and turns left

along the edge of the field. Over another stile to reach a brick bridge over the railway, cross the road and follow the narrow path straight ahead (can be very muddy).

13. Go over a stile and go through the next field, over another stile then the path goes off to the right past a barn and a house until you reach Vox End and Horsted Lane where you need to turn left. There is no pavement but a wide grass verge, walk along the road past Saxons on the left and Violet Cottage on the right, until you reach a tarmac road on the left signposted public footpath toward Northwood House, Northwood Farm and Stablehurst.
14. Go past Bromhall Cottage and then follow the public footpath sign to turn right through a gate and over a stile, go straight up the hill ahead along the left-hand edge of the field and then turn diagonally right toward a gate in the top right-hand corner.
15. Turn slightly diagonally right through a field until you reach a metal gate into the next field where the path goes off downhill to the right. You will

reach a stile, go over a stream and then through another metal gate. Go straight ahead across the field and there is another metal gate opposite.

16. Keep going up the hill on the right-hand side of the field until you reach a kissing gate. Follow the track up the hill, the path leads to the back of the Sharpthorne Village Club where you need to turn left around the back of the building and out onto Top Road.
17. Turn left here, by the Cost Cutter and Sharpthorne Village Garage, toward West Hoathly along the pavement. When you reach the junction by The Fox pub, turn to the left up some steps by the village noticeboard which leads back to the car park (WAYMARKER 8).