

Walk 9: Hever circular

A few miles south of Ide Hill is this gem on the Weald with quiet meadows, woods and a sandstone outcrop. The castle and church set a Tudor theme. Great for woodland birds. **4½ miles**

How long? 4½ miles (7km),
2½ hours

Public transport: Trains serve Hever hourly (sometimes more frequently) on London Bridge to Uckfield line via East Croydon. Parking: easy, at Hever Castle car park opposite church (free) Start of walk: St Peter's Church next to entrance to Hever Castle Steep slopes? None Easy to navigate? Yes, because until Point 3 you are following the waymarked Eden Valley Path. At Point 3 the right turn is obvious and from there it's straight on to Point 5.

Walk highlights

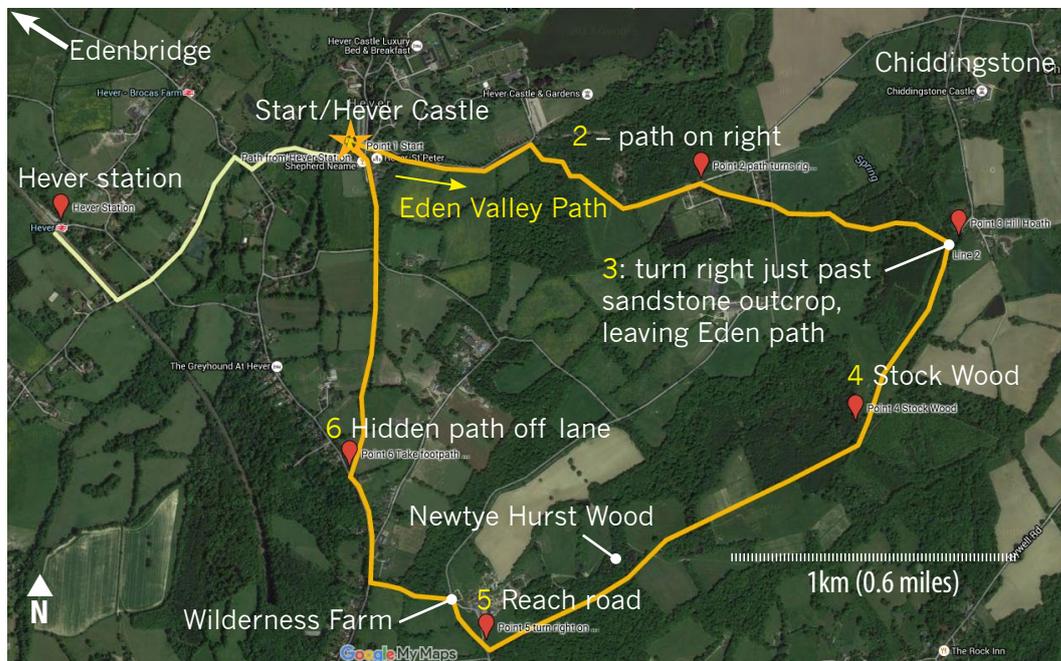
Sandstone outcrop and holloway on Eden Valley Path at Hill Hoath, St Peter's church in Hever, Stock Wood, wildflower meadows, beautiful woodland

Description (and pub)

A lovely walk without any steep inclines through quiet woods and meadows with a great variety of trees and birdlife. The route starts at the medieval church of St Peter right by the entrance to Hever Castle. Just before Hill Hoath there is a really fun section of path between tall green sandstone boulders, a hidden Wealden rocky outcrop. Later on there's a bit of the walk for a few hundred metres on Uckfield Lane so take care (especially with kids), but the final stretches are back on footpaths and pleasant, cutting through fields and woods. At the end of the walk a large historic pub, the Henry VIII. The walk is one for spring, summer, early autumn – appallingly muddy bits from December to April.

[Click here for GPX AllTrails map](#)
[Click here for GPX OS map](#)

Covered on Ordnance Survey Explorer 147 map.



THE WALK

Points 1-2: 1.3km

Start at Hever Castle car park by St Peter's Church and Henry VIII pub or walk to the start point from Hever station on the Eden Valley Path. Walk through St Peter's churchyard on the Eden Valley Path (EVP) and exit by a gate then across a little bridge. Follow the path through woods, with fields to your right, and a lane to your left before turning away to the right on a track going continuing through woods then curving out of the woods to the left with two houses ahead.

Point 2-3: 1km (Pay attention at this point – danger of missing turn off)

When you reach the second of two houses (Bothy Cottage Two) continue on the Eden Valley Path, which angles off the track to the right (look out for the yellow EVP marker). Pass a lovely, small meadow with very tall pine trees (look out for alpacas), cross Rectory Lane, then walk by a larger, attractive field with woods to your right. Watch out for birds here like blackcap, treecreeper, goldcrests, coal tits and nuthatches. Soon the rather rutted path turns sharp right then left, crosses a stream and becomes enclosed by woods and goes slightly uphill on steps. Cross a firebreak then continue east (left) at a path junction. Pass a large ancient yew tree and then green sandstone rocks – an ancient holloway. After you emerge from the holloway you are about

to leave the Eden Valley Path – look out for a path heading south west to the right, next to a strip of meadow with horse-jumping obstacles in it. If you reach a lane or Hill Hoath Farm you've gone too far. Take the footpath through a kissing gate to the side (on the left of the meadow). The path is marked with a blue sign. (Pay attention at this point – danger of missing turn off.)

Point 3-4: 750m

You've hopefully found the aforementioned path through the kissing gate heading south-west so follow it through meadows to Stock Wood. In the south-west corner of the meadow is a stile, perhaps now replaced by a gate. The path then goes by young pines and between bramble/rosebay willow hedges and enter Stock Wood (you'll see the sign).

Point 4-5: 1.5km

Walk through Stock Wood, ignoring paths off to the right and left (so plough straight on, don't deviate) emerge, cross a meadow (used by radio-controlled plane enthusiasts – look out for their runway on the left) and another copse, pass a caravan (usually) on the right behind a hedge and enter Newtye Hurst Wood. Continue all the way to a junction of country lanes. A long stretch, but a lovely one.

Point 5-6: 0.8km

Turn right down the quiet lane a few hundred

yards to Wilderness Farm. Then, turn left on the lane opposite the farm house (Dyehurst Lane). Next, after a few hundred metres, turn right again on the busier Uckfield Lane. Carefully continue down this road. You can soon turn right on Pigdown Lane then turn left on the footpath after 300m on the left, or as per maps, cross Pigdown Lane and follow Uckfield Lane for 250m looking out for a slightly hidden but signed footpath through a kissing gate in the hedgerow on the right. If you miss this path you have another chance to join it 300m further on, next to the Greyhound pub.

Point 6-7: 1km

Follow this footpath north as it turns left through several fields (often with livestock), aim for the church steeple and eventually across a lane, past the primary school, back to the church and Henry VIII pub.

Choice fact

Anne Boleyn's dad (Elizabeth I's grandfather) is buried at St Peter's church with other members of the Boleyn family. Inside is a wonderfully decorated 1419 tomb of someone called Margaret Cheyne. See onthetudortrail.com

Pop in on way back...

Bough Beech reservoir has a nature reserve and viewpoint plus a short walk (17). Ide Hill and Emmetts Garden (see my walks).

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