



Cowden

Distance: 5.3 km=3.3 miles

easy walking

Region: Kent, East Sussex

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Author: Malinovka

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Map: Explorer 147 (Sevenoaks)

Problems, changes? We depend on your feedback: feedback@fancyfreewalks.org

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Village, woodland, water, green meadows

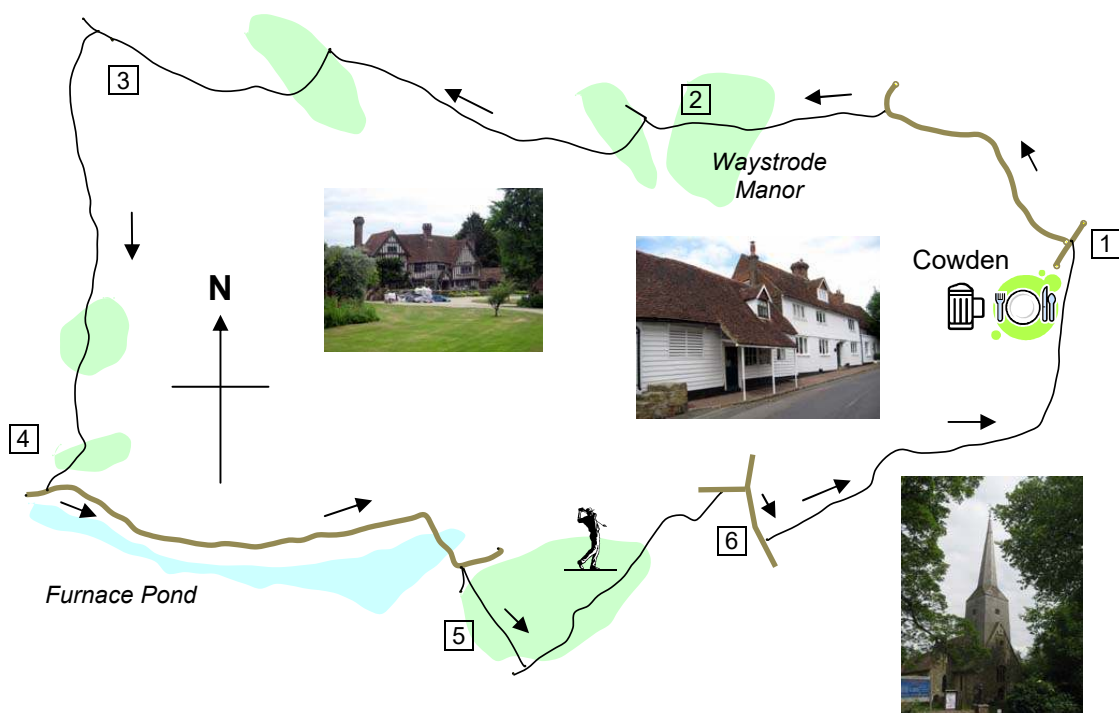
In Brief

This easy short circular walk takes you from the West Kent village of Cowden round some of the gentle pastures and back alongside the Furnace Pond and through woodland.




The terrain is easy, with only one stile and one muddy patch, and any kind of sensible clothing and footwear should be fine. Your dog can come too.

The walk begins in the centre of **Cowden** (postcode **TN8 7JE** grid ref TQ465404, www.w3w.co/silly.dirt.extra), near Edenbridge, Kent. For more details, see at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).



The Walk

For more information about Cowden and its church, see another walk in this series: "Hever and Cowden".

- 1 Coming from the church down the main street, turn **right** into North Street which soon becomes Spode Lane. After ½ km, where the lane bends right, keep straight ahead on the drive to Waystrode Manor, passing this historic building on your left. *(For further details, see other walks "Hever and Cowden" and "Cowden and Dryhill" in this series.)* Where the drive bends left, go through the right-hand of two wooden gates ahead, along a knobby path, down steps and onto a woodland path.
- 2 [\[May 2024: there was a temporary closure here posted by KCC: follow the diversion in the field.\]](#) In 50m, at a junction with a post [\[Jun 2021: still leaning against a tree\]](#) and yellow arrows, take the **left** fork leading through woods of wild garlic, on a long bridge over a stream. *Note that you are on the Sussex Border Path (SBP), a long-distance path round all the land borders of both Sussexes.* On entering a meadow, keep ahead up the centre of the grass. At the end, go through a new metal kissing gate next to a large new metal gate and straight up the centre of the next meadow. Just before the end of the meadow, look to your **left** for a marker post and a small metal gate. Go through this gate, across a patch of scrub and turn **left** on a newly-made wide track. [\(2018: A soil management project has carved out new tracks round the fields here.\)](#) Follow the wide track out of the trees and **right** along the right-hand side of a field. In the corner, go through a small metal gate beside a large gate and up the left-hand side of the next meadow, with great views developing. In **130m**, look for a small marker post. Turn **left** here through a **small** single metal gate, thus leaving the SBP. *(Don't miss it! If you reach a double metal gate into a very large field, you have come 80m too far.)* Keep ahead on a wild path between a meadow and a sheep pasture.
-  3 In 100m, your path veers left and becomes an attractive woodland path. You will be following this wide woodland strip round two sides of the meadow visible on your right. In 100m, be sure to follow the woodland path round to the **right**, passing another marker post. In another 100m, go **left** through a small metal gate into a large hayfield. Keep tightly to the right-hand side of the field. After passing a large clump of trees on your left, continue down the side. Go through a modern kissing gate and across the centre of a much smaller meadow past a house on your left, through a kissing gate, down steps and **right** on a tarmac driveway. At the bottom, by a house called *Pondtail Rough*, turn sharp **left** on a lane.
- 4 For some distance, on your right you can see the Furnace Pond, an elongated stretch of water, indicating the importance of the iron industry in past times. Ducks and other waterfowl are seen here in profusion. On your left soon you pass some caves, later a bench seat carved in the sandstone. After a total of 700m on the lane, it bends right over a sluice, passing *Furnace Mill* on your left, entering East Sussex. Where the lane bends left, go ahead into the woodland of Holtye Common.
- 5 Immediately, at a 2-arm fingerpost, take the **left** fork, avoiding the muddy horse path, slightly uphill. There is a small patch of mud, but it quickly clears. At the top, go watchfully over a golfer's fairway. On meeting a crossing wide sandy bridleway, about 50m across the fairway, turn **left** and cross another fairway keeping close to the trees on your right. The path

runs through woodland and, after 300m, descends and finally comes down to a lane. Turn **right** on the lane and in 50m, at a road junction, turn **right**.

- 6 In 80m, turn **left** on a signed footpath. The path goes through a small wooden gate, along the bottom of a small meadow and through a large wooden gate at the corner under some trees. Keep straight ahead, looking out for golfers. Cross the fairway, passing just to the right of a long clump of trees. At this point, a wide golfers' bridge comes suddenly into view. Go straight over this bridge and keep ahead in the same direction across the greens into the far corner, with a stream (Kent Water) on your right, now in Kent again. Now keep ahead on a wide grassy path, still with the stream on your right. In 300m, you pass another small green on your right and meet a 3-way fingerpost. Turn **left**, going through a wooden gate and ahead on an enclosed path, over a tarmac drive through a tall wooden gate, straight up through allotments, through a wooden swing gate beside a large wooden gate, up a grassy path and turn **left** back into the village, by the church, where the walk began.



For refreshments, "The Fountain" (Harveys) a friendly pub-restaurant with a big garden is on your right.

Getting there

By car: park prettily in a side road of Cowden. The village is signposted from the B2026 south of Edenbridge.

By bus: route 234 from Tunbridge Wells or Edenbridge, not Sunday (check the timetables).

Not by train: note that Cowden Station is 2km=1½ miles from the village and is therefore *not* a suitable start (but see the *Markbeech* walk in this series).

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