Fancy Free Walks *point your feet on a new path*

Kings Wood (Challock)

Distance: 5¾ km=3½ miles — easy walking

Region: Kent — Date written: 18-sep-2014

Author: Malinovka — Last update: 4-sep-2026

Refreshments: Molash

Map: Explorer 137 (Ashford) *but the maps in this guide should be sufficient*

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

Public rights are restricted to printing, copying or distributing this document exactly as seen here, complete and without any cutting or editing. See *Principles* on main webpage.

Woodland, nature reserve, valley walk, pub

In Brief

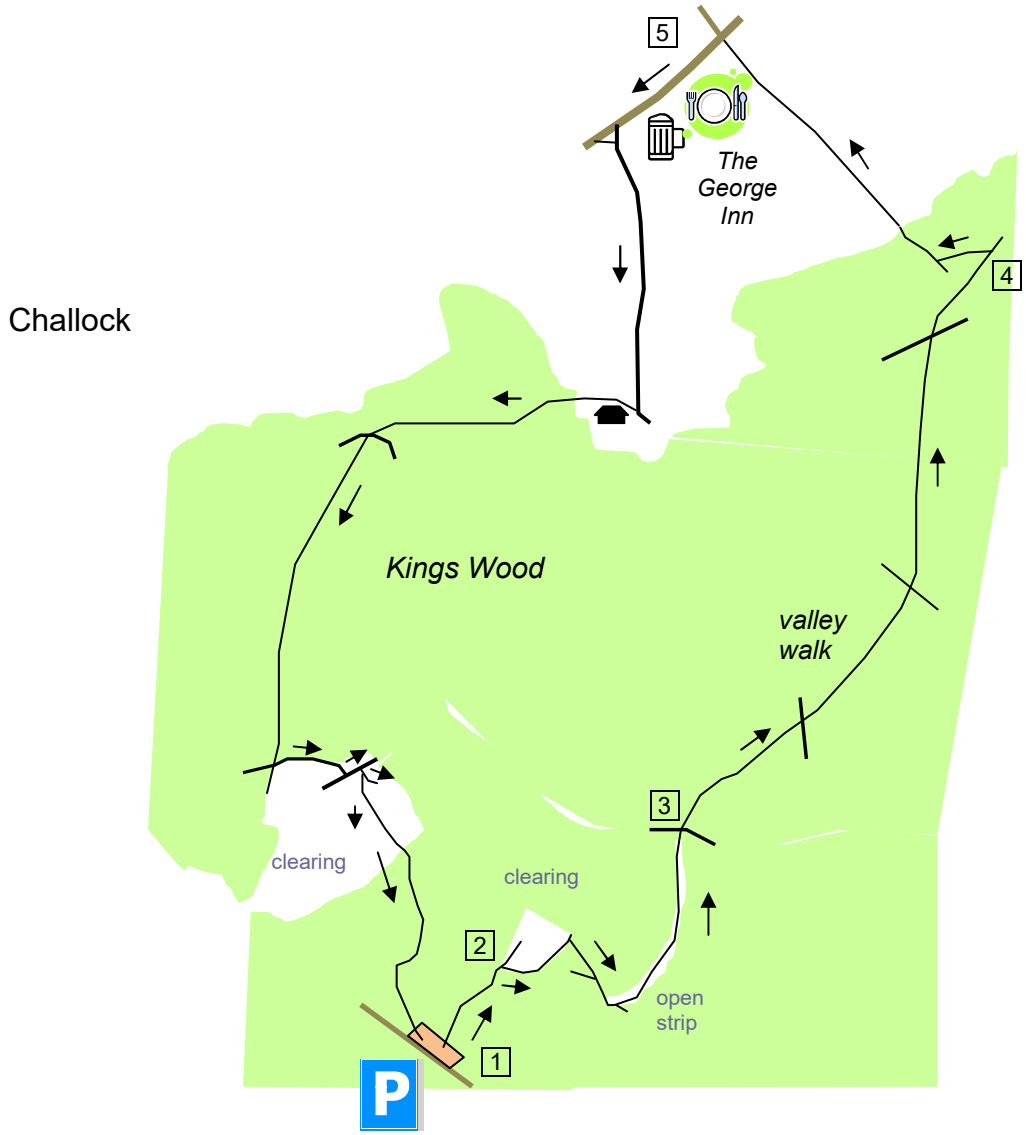
In this hidden corner of East Kent is a vast and beautiful woodland, containing every kind of tree, showing wonderful colours in autumn (indeed, in any season) and with a stunning display of bluebells in late spring. This walk takes you through what we call the Valley Walk, since it runs in a series of shallow valleys with gorgeous woods on both sides. At the centre point you can call in at the *George Inn* which has won accolades for good food. (To enquire, since the *George Inn* is very popular, ring 01233-740323.)

There are no nettles or brambles on this walk. Sensible walking shoes or trainers should be adequate. With only one stile, this walk is ideal for your dog, but you will need to keep tight control for the 250m along the main road; note that the pub is no longer dog-friendly.

The walk begins at the *northwesterly* **King's Wood** car park, White Hill, off Buck Street, near Challock, Kent, w3w:cafe.dreamers.upstairs, nearest postcode **TN25 4AR**. (There are *two* car parks in White Hill: the one you want is nearer Challock.) Currently free, but the FC may charge in the future. For more details, see at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).

The Walk

1 **See map overleaf.** *The parking bays at Kings Wood are named after the various trees that you find in this wood: douglas fir, oak, hawthorn, birch, chestnut.* From the back of the car park, take the main path across a clearing with the remains of an information tablet and memorial stone on your left, between info boards. Take the main path through the woods, an old chestnut coppice. You come out into an open space. *In some years past, Kings Wood has created a sculpture trail here: feedback please if it is re-established!*



2 Turn immediately **right** and follow a path that curves left round the edge of the open area. Before the path curves left again, you come to a post with a red arrow. Turn **right** here on a clear but narrow path between birches and chestnut. Avoid a left branch opposite a yew tree and, at a 3-way junction, take the **left** fork, by a marker post. Avoid a small path on your right, staying in the open. You are now following a path along the right-hand side of an open strip curving gently left. You reach a wide vehicular crossing track.

3 Go straight over the crossing track, thus leaving the trail of red arrows. You are in a wonderful woodland valley path with every kind of tree. Your path goes over a crossing forestry path and continues, wider now, through more lovely woodland. You cross another path, this time more grassy. Ignore a path forking right uphill soon after. Finally you reach a junction of paths with a pair of fir trees (and previously a hidden bench, now sadly gone). Go

straight ahead, crossing a wide track diagonally, joining a grassy path on the other side. Soon you approach a wooden barrier.

4 15m before the barrier, turn very sharp **left** uphill by a post with a yellow arrow. Your path goes quite steeply up, reaching another post with a yellow arrow and a sunken path. Turn **right** on this sunken path which takes you up to a fence, through a metal kissing-gate and out of the wood. Take a path straight ahead across the field. The path may be faint after ploughing or it may be through grass for hay. At the other side, go through a modern kissing gate and straight across the next field. At the corner, the path continues along the left-hand side. You come through a metal kissing-gate and out to the main road. Straight ahead on the lane, as a short there-and-back diversion, there is the little church of St Peter, Molash. Turn **left**, immediately reaching the *George Inn* at Molash.

*The George Inn has been rather smug after winning the 'Kent dining pub of the year' award in 2013 but with good reason as the food and the drink are consistently good. No craft brews are available but with Adnams Southwold, Harveys and Doombar there is enough to satisfy. The pub is **closed Mon and Tue**. Lunch is served 12-2.30. You will need to remove your boots! Dogs are welcome, but only outside the building.*

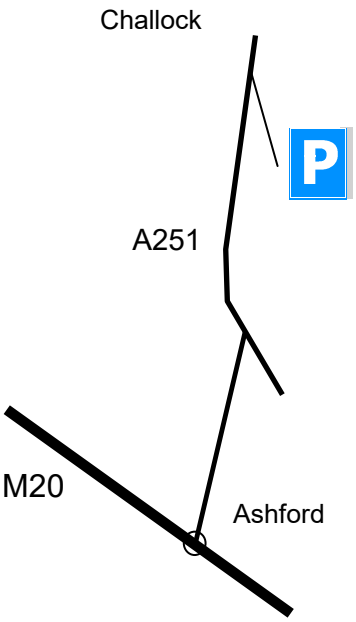
5 After possible refreshment, continue on the main road (i.e. **left** coming out of the pub) using the footway on the other side, taking care when crossing. In 250m, opposite some houses by a little green, turn **left** on Pound Lane. Follow this tarmac lane past houses and, where the tarmac ends, continue on a track to meet the fine new *Oathill Farm House*. Turn **right** passing the house on your left, on a grassy path beside a fence. Your path goes through a small wooden gate and up through bracken, and suddenly you are back in fine woodland, with tall beeches and, in late spring, bluebells. Follow the path until finally you reach a very wide forester's track at a bend.

6 Cross straight over the track, taking a grassy path on the other side. This path widens and goes very gently uphill between old chestnut coppices. Soon on your left is an area which has been copiously planted with new saplings. (The extent and size of the trees has changed considerably over time.) Over 100m from the start of the plantation, look for a wide crossing track coming down a slope on your right. Turn **left** here into the cleared area on a wide curvy path. In 150m you reach a T-junction with a wide stony track. Turn **left** on the track.

7 In 20m turn **right** and immediately fork **right** again on a narrow path. This path zigzags wildly between chestnut shrubs. In just over 150m, you meet a crossing path on the edge of the woods. Cross straight over into the woods on a narrow path. In 100m, veer **left** where a path joins you from the right. In 100m, your path swings right and then left across a cleared area which, at the time of writing (2014) is undergoing forestry work. Your path enters the line of trees on the left of the cleared area and, in 50m more, takes you back to the car park where the walk began.

Getting there

By car: Kings Wood is easily accessed from the M20 at Ashford. Leave the motorway at Exit 9 signed *Ashford, Faversham*. At the first roundabout, turn **left** for *Faversham A251*. Keep straight on over four more roundabouts, large and "mini", to a T-junction with the A251. Turn **left**, signed *Challock, Faversham* , immediately going past the ornate Eastwell Tower on your left. Stay on the road for about 3 miles. White Hill is **very sharp right** just before the first houses of Challock and is at a sign for *Wye* as well as a brown tourist sign for *Stour Valley Arts*. If you miss this turning, continue into Challock and do an about-turn at the roundabout.



By bus/train: bus 666 runs between Ashford and Faversham, stopping at Challock which is only about 1 km from the walk.

*fancy **more** free walks?* www.fancyfreewalks.org