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

Lamberhurst, Furnace Mill and Vineyards

Distance: 4 km=2½ miles — easy walking

Region: Kent — Date written: 6-aug-2012

Author: Malinovka — Last update: 5-jun-2026

Refreshments: Lamberhurst

Map: Explorer 136 (The Weald) *but the maps in this guide should be sufficient*

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

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Village, water, mill house, vineyard

In Brief

This is an easy short walk from the delightful village of Lamberhurst, visiting two things for which the village is best known: the valley of the Teise and the famous Vineyard.

There is a good inn in Lamberhurst (the *Chequers*) and further opportunities for refreshment in the Vineyard (sse below).

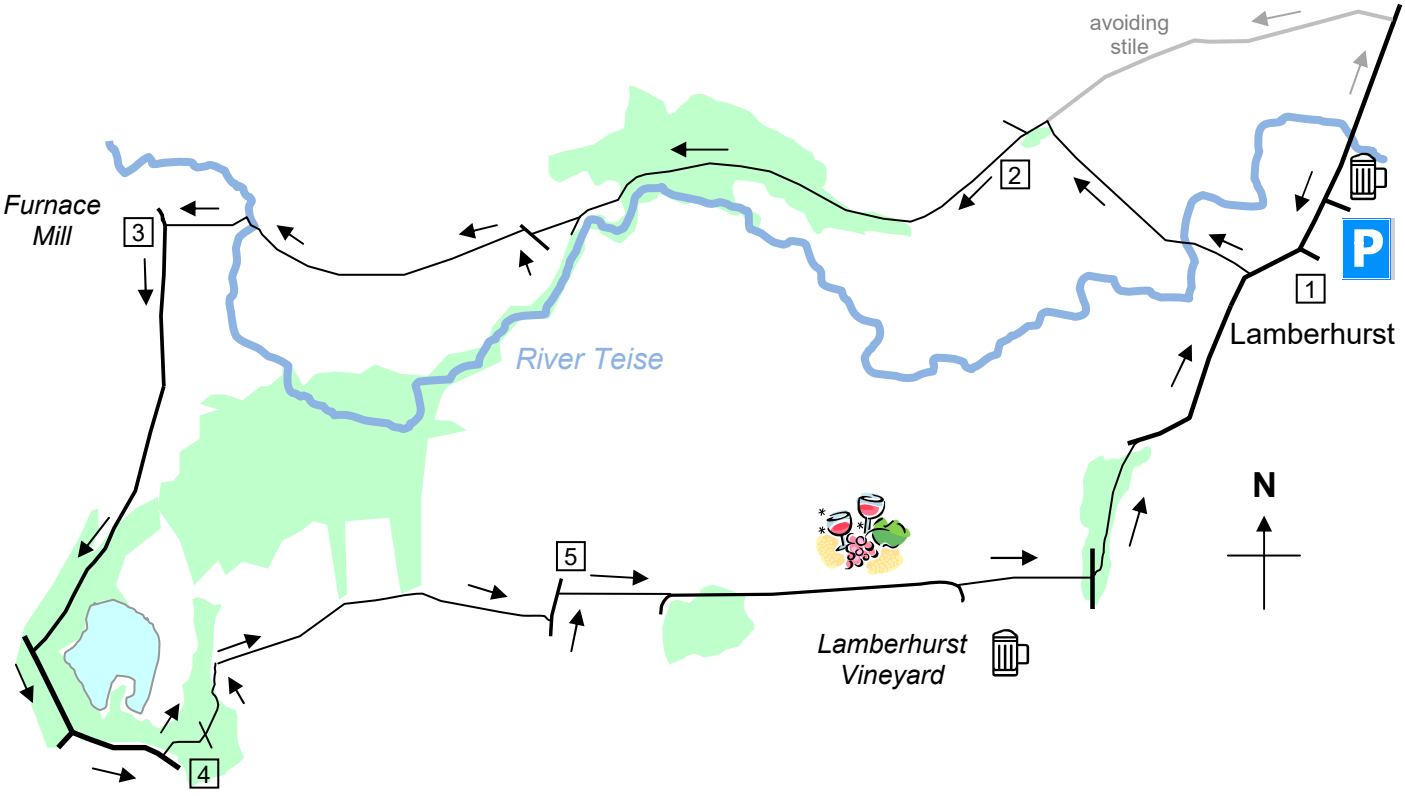
There are very few nettles on this walk and the going is easy in most seasons, when any sensible clothing and footwear should be fine. But in high summer, there is at least one short section with thick undergrowth which would challenge any exposed flesh. Your dog can certainly come too as there are only two stiles. (The first of which can be avoided by going north up the main street at the start and turning **left** on Brewer Street to reach the "grey barn".)

wc The walk begins in the free public car park in **Lamberhurst, Kent**, post-code **TN3 8DB**, w3w:spring.sandpaper.hurt, which has a WC. For more details, see at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).

The Walk

The village's name comes from Saxon LAM referring to the soft earth and HURST meaning a wood. For many centuries it was the centre of the iron industry in this part of Kent, using the power of the sprightly Teise stream which runs into the Medway. The Furnace Mill is one relic that has been preserved from that time. You are on the far west side of Kent and in fact part of the parish is in East Sussex, including the nearby 13th-century Bayham Abbey which is now part of English Heritage. The village contains a large number of historic houses and cottages, which you will see on this walk and the other walk in this series which goes to Scotney Castle. The Chequers Inn, just near the Teise bridge, is a perfect rambler's pub and will be re-introduced at the end.

1 From the green in the centre of the village, take the **right** fork, signposted *Wadhurst, Frant*. Just after an old Hovis sign and opposite *Mansard House*, turn **right** on a pebbly track. Keep **left** by some garages on a grassy path, past gardens, across a bridge over the River Teise, through a modern kissing-gate and into a large rough meadow. The footpath veers right and takes you diagonally across, heading for a grey barn. When you reach it, go though a metal kissing-gate and turn **left** at a T-junction on a wide path, going past the grey barn.



2 Continue beside a crop field on your right, then another similarly. You now enter woodland on a nice wide path, meeting the Teise again at a loop in the stream and passing some deserted huts. Where your path forks over a grassy space, keep **right** and turn **right** at a T-junction on a track. In just 10m, turn **left** on a narrow path that runs beside a new wire fence along the right-hand side of a large crop field. Soon the oast and other buildings of Furnace Mill come into view. In the far corner, your path goes down into trees and crosses the Teise by a sturdy metal bridge followed by a metal gate. Keep ahead beside a dividing fence, passing the front of the mill house. *Furnace Mill Farmhouse is a grade II listed building dating from 1700 or*

earlier. The oast and other houses of this charming small hamlet are worth a (discreet) look before you depart.

3 Turn **left** in front of the mill house, through a large white gate and follow this pleasant tarmac drive for 500m, first in open country, then through wood-land. Near the end, you pass a pond on the left and reach a road. Turn **left** on the road, Furnace Road. *You need to be **especially careful** on this road as the verge is narrow and soon there is a blind bend where it may be best to keep to the left side; however this is a thankfully short stretch.* At a junction, stay on the main road, keeping **left**. About 100m after the junction, you pass a double wooden gate on your left [2018: now solid black metal gates, hiding building work]. Only 5m after this gate, go **left** through an old metal gate, by a stone sign indicating a footpath, easily missed.

4 The path bends left between wire fences and rises to a wide driveway. Cross straight over on a narrow path uphill. Your path goes through a chain stile, turns immediately **left** and runs for about 50m beside a tall wooden garden fence. It then turns abruptly **right** over a stile into a crop field. Follow a path across the centre of the field, then straight ahead with a smaller field on your left and a line of trees on your right. Your route takes you across another crop field where Lamberhurst re-appears in the valley. *Barnfield's twin oasts are also in view up on the left.* When you reach a concrete drive near a barn, turn **left**.

5 In 25m, go **right** up some steps on a path that runs between vineyards.

Lamberhurst Vineyards are one of the largest and best-known of the English vineyards, spanning some 20 acres=8 ha and yielding about 40 tonnes of grapes annually. Vines were brought to England by the Romans and cultivated mainly by monks until Henry VIII destroyed the monasteries. This vineyard was revived in the late 1960s by local landowner Kenneth McAlpine. He had lost some land to the creation of nearby Bewl Water and decided to convert what had been a fruit and hops farm to grape cultivation. The grapes are used mainly to make English sparkling wine. For this, they are transported to Tenterden where the wine is bottled, fermented, riddled, disgorged, corked and caged to make (at least) the equal of champagne. The Vineyard is now run by Chapel Down (but the wine-tasting tours had been suspended on ringing 01892-890412 in 2018). By the roadside, the "Vineyard" pub serves these wines as well as a range of real ales and food

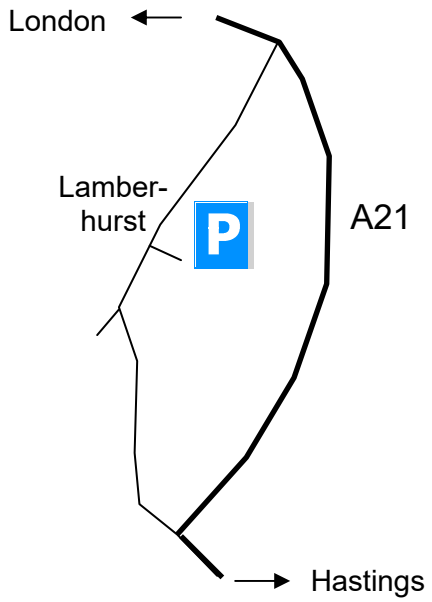
Your path joins a wider path ahead with a vineyard on your left. Where the main path bends right towards the Vineyard centre, keep straight ahead on a grassy path between vineyards. *Although most visitors come by car, you could pay a visit to the Vineyard here on the right, returning to the walk afterwards.* At the other side, go down steps to a road. Walk along the pavement on the left, soon reaching the start of the village. You pass more attractive houses and arrive back in the centre of the village where the walk began.

For final refreshments, the Chequers Inn in the centre of the village is a Shepherd Neame pub which welcomes walkers and doesn't mind muddy boots and dogs. At least one of the three ales on tap is rotated, providing the excellent Jack or Whitstable or a seasonal ale. Food is available at lunch time and there is a garden in the back. The Chequers is closed on Monday, except Bank Holidays.

Getting there

By car: Lamberhurst is signposted just off the A21 London-Hastings road (in fact the A21 used to go through it before the bypass was built).

By bus/train: bus 255 and 293 from Tunbridge Wells station to Lamberhurst. Check the timetables.



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