

# EAST GRINSTEAD AND THE HIGH WEALD, WEST SUSSEX



*Challenging Terrain*

**7 miles**  
**Circular**  
**3.5 hours**

301015



## Access Notes



- 1. The walk has several climbs and descents throughout.*
- 2. The paths across farm pastures can be very muddy so good boots are required and wellingtons are recommended in the wettest months.*
- 3. The majority of the paths are wide and well walked, with just a couple of short stretches that can be a little overgrown.*
- 4. You will need to negotiate several footbridges, kissing gates and 4 stiles (all of which have dog-size gaps alongside).*
- 5. You are likely to come across cattle and sheep in many of the fields so take particular care with dogs.*

## Hi, I'm Tom and this is my West Sussex Weekends walk.

I live and work in London but often head out of town to catch up with my dad, meeting up wherever his travels take him. My dad's latest trip was to East Grinstead and a quick bit of research tells me it's on the edge of the High Weald AONB. It's a patchwork of small farms and woodlands, sunken lanes, parkland and tiny villages. To read my full story visit [www.west-sussex-weekends.com](http://www.west-sussex-weekends.com) so I can tell you why I think you will love this walk and what highlights to expect. The West Sussex Weekends website is a great resource where you will also find ideas for places to stay, eat and drink plus plenty more inspirational stories to tempt you to explore more corners of West Sussex.

## Getting there

The walk starts and finishes at East Grinstead rail station which is served by trains direct from London. If you are coming by car, the station has its own large car park which is on the opposite side of the rail line from the station building itself. The fee is £5 per day Mon-Sat and £2 per day on Sundays (correct October 2015).

The car park is accessed from Grosvenor Road, approximate post code **RH19 1HS**.

## Walk Sections



### Start to Turners Hill Road



Standing with your back to the station entrance, walk across the front premium car park at about 1 o'clock and then bear left along the pavement of the access road (swapping to the right-hand pavement via the zebra crossing), passing Sainsburys on the right. At the

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roundabout, follow the pavement right (along the B2110 road signed to Turners Hill) and then use the pedestrian crossing to swap to the left-hand pavement.

The road begins to descend and you will pass a post box on the left. A few metres later, turn left onto the narrow tarmac footpath which leads you between tall hedges. At the bottom you will come to a T-junction with another tarmac path at the edge of Brooklands Park. Turn left and follow this path as it leads you downhill and over a stream bridge. Continue uphill, keep right at the fork and then right at the T-junction and you will emerge out to a road.

Turn right, following the pavement downhill. At the bottom of the road you will come to a roundabout. Cross over with care to go straight ahead into Turners Hill Road and immediately swap to the left-hand pavement.

## 1 → 2 Turners Hill Road to Radio Mast



When the fence on the left ends, turn left onto the narrow footpath signed as part of the High Weald Landscape Trail. Soon you are forced to dog-leg right (through a gate) and then left, continuing through a garden area and running parallel with the houses on the left. Pass a large duck pond on your right, with a stream running down to the left.

Go through the next gate ahead and follow the left-hand edge of two grass pastures, passing through a kissing gate along the way. Stay in the same direction, crossing three footbridges in a belt of woodland and passing through a gate to join an enclosed path with a fenced pasture on the right. Go through the next kissing gate and follow the path running along the right-hand side of a modern retirement and nursing complex. Immediately after this, fork left and head through a car park to reach the back of a pub, Old Dunnings Mill, should you need refreshments already...

Turn right behind the pub and then turn left down the access road to reach a T-junction with the main road. Turn right along the pavement, heading away from the pub. When the pavement ends, turn right onto a tarmac driveway marked as a no through road. Just after passing the property called Yewhurst on the right, turn left onto another branch of the tarmac drive, Medway Drive, signed as a public footpath.

Keep straight ahead, go through the squeeze gap and join the obvious path ahead (still part of the High Weald Landscape Trail). Follow the obvious path through the first two fields and then keep right at the fork, staying on the path closest to the woodland on your right for a further two fields. In the far corner of this fourth field, follow the path through the tunnel of holly bushes and then stay with it as it leads you through the centre of a grassy area of scrub.

The path becomes an unmade track, climbing through a tunnel of trees to reach a T-junction marked with a fingerpost. Turn left, go through the gap in the hedge and keep left along the left-hand edge of the sports fields. At the far end, continue ahead on the grass footpath which leads you past a tall radio mast on your right.

## 2 → 3 Radio Mast to Sussex Border Path



Follow the path beyond the radio mast and soon it swings right, passing a wide metal gate to reach the road. Cross over and turn left, following the road edge and taking care of traffic for just a few metres to reach the entrance drive for Standen House and Garden on the right. Turn right to join the drive and follow it ahead. At the first marked junction, just before you reach a row of stone estate cottages on the right, leave the entrance drive, turning right into the gap through trees. Two paces in, ignore the path turning sharp right, instead keep ahead on the fenced path with a hedge on the left and a fenced field on the right.

At this point the views across to the right really open up. Given how gradual the climb has been, it's a nice surprise as you realise the vantage point you've reached. There's a bench just further along, if you want to pause and enjoy the views.

Further along, the path swings left through an old metal kissing gate and continues, following the left-hand edge of a large rough pasture. Towards the bottoms of the field you will come to a fingerpost. Ignore the path to the right, instead go ahead to join the narrow path between sections of rough hedgerows, with a fence on the left. Follow the sunken tree-lined path steadily downhill, ignore the first path signed to the right, simply keep ahead. Stay with the main path as it bears right (still downhill) and a few paces later, at the next fingerpost, take the left-hand path.

Pass through the small metal gate to enter the sheep field and you will now have a view of Weir Wood Reservoir in the valley bottom. The massive body of water is home to a bird sanctuary, a fishing area and a sailing club. You will shortly be following the boundary of the reservoir, but the banks are thick with trees so you won't see much of the water itself.

Walk downhill, following the left-hand boundary of the sheep field. Cross the stile at the bottom to reach a T-junction with another footpath, the Sussex Border Path.

## 3 → 4 Sussex Border Path to Picnic Site

Turn left along the path, passing through a gate and stile and



crossing a small footbridge. Follow the right-hand edge of the next pasture and cross the stile at the far end. This enclosed section of path leads you over a footbridge and past a bench which gives you a rare view of the reservoir. Soon afterwards, ignore the path signed left, simply keep ahead and cross the large wooden stile into the next open field.

Continue along the right-hand boundary of this open grass field which is surrounded by dense hedgerows of blackthorn bushes – ideal for collecting sloes for gin in the autumn. At the end of the field you will reach a fingerpost. Go ahead on the path staying with the fence on the right, passing through three gates and crossing a footbridge. Stay with the fence as it bends right and you will come to the Millennium Picnic Site on the right. This is a great place to stop and enjoy any sailing activity on the reservoir.

## 4 → 5 Picnic Site to Forest Way



About 100m after the picnic site, you will come to another fingerpost. Turn left here onto the footpath which is a continuation of the Sussex Border Path. The path leads you steadily uphill with trees on the right and a fenced field on the left. Take care on this short stretch as the path is deeply rutted and can be very slippery.

As you draw alongside a gate on the left, keep ahead to join the wider level path leading you along a belt of trees. At the end, pass through the wide gate to reach the farmyard of Busses Farm. Walk ahead, passing the barns on your right and then turn right along the grass verge which runs behind the buildings (with a pond on your left). Beyond the pond, bear left along the concrete drive and just a few paces later turn right through the gate into the adjacent cattle field (signed as the Sussex Border Path). NOTE: If this field corner is very deep with mud, you may prefer to continue along the concrete drive before ducking under the wooden fence to enter the field at a drier spot.

With your back to the gate (or fence), walk at 10 o'clock, heading for the small gate. Go through this and follow the left-hand edge of the next large field, with woodland on the left. In

the bottom corner, go through the gate and continue along the left-hand edge of this third cattle pasture (heading for the single house visible within the trees in the distance).

At the far end, keep ahead through the gate and over the large footbridge (ignoring the smaller footbridge to the left). Continue along the narrow tree-lined path and you will emerge to a T-junction with a tarmac access lane. Turn left along this, passing Horseshoe Cottage on your left. Follow the lane past a water treatment works and steadily climbing to reach a bridge over the old rail line. Immediately before the bridge, turn right down the long slope which leads you down to a junction with this old rail path, Forest Way.

## 5 → 6 Forest Way to Lewes Road



Turn left along the old rail line and follow it under the bridge. This linear country park runs for about 16km from East Grinstead to Groombridge. Its flat level surface makes it ideal for families to enjoy walking, cycling and horse riding. Across to the right you will see the old estate land of Luxford House. Owned by a music manager in the 1960s and 70s, groups such as Genesis and Van der Graaf Generator used to rehearse here. My dad tells me he went to see Van der Graaf Generator in concert, so it just goes to show how long ago that was...

Further along, the rail line passes between houses each side and leads you to a crossroads with Herontye Drive. Cross over with care and take the rail line which continues ahead, signed to the town centre. Keep left at the fork and follow this path all the way to the top to reach a junction with the main road at the edge of East Grinstead. Pass through the staggered barrier and turn left onto Lewes Road, signed to the town centre.

## 6 → 7 Lewes Road to End



At the mini-roundabout, keep straight ahead passing the impressive Sackville College across to the right. My dad has

another fun fact to share. This is the site where the carol Good King Wenceslas was written. Now there's a tune you can't get out of your head once it's lodged inside!

Continuing along the road, heading into the heart of East Grinstead you get a true sense of the age of the place. Keep ahead into Middle Row, following the partially cobbled street between shops and then continuing on along the length of the old High Street. There are lots of options for places to grab a bite to eat and a drink here.

Just beyond the war memorial you will come to a mini-roundabout. Turn right here and follow London Road through more of the retail centre. Swap to the left-hand pavement at the crossing and continue down to the junction with lights. Go straight ahead, still on London Road, and continue to the next mini-roundabout. Fork left here, marked with the brown tourism sign for the Bluebell Railway. At the end of this road, Railway Approach, you will come to the roundabout you passed earlier. Cross over to go straight ahead to reach the station where the walk began.

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#### Disclaimer

This walking route was walked and checked at the time of writing. We have taken care to make sure all our walks are safe for walkers of a reasonable level of experience and fitness. However, like all outdoor activities, walking carries a degree of risk and we accept no responsibility for any loss or damage to personal effects, personal accident, injury or public liability whilst following this walk. We cannot be held responsible for any inaccuracies that result from changes to the routes that occur over time. Please let us know of any changes to the routes so that we can correct the information.

#### Walking Safety

For your safety and comfort we recommend that you take the following with you on your walk: bottled water, snacks, a waterproof jacket, waterproof/sturdy boots, a woolly hat and fleece (in winter and cold weather), a fully-charged mobile phone, a whistle, a compass and an Ordnance Survey map of the area. Check the weather forecast before you leave, carry appropriate clothing and do not set out in fog or mist as these conditions can seriously affect your ability to navigate the route. Take particular care on cliff/mountain paths where steep drops can present a particular hazard. Some routes include sections along roads – take care to avoid any traffic at these points. Around farmland take care with children and dogs, particularly around machinery and livestock. If you are walking on the coast make sure you check the tide times before you set out.



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