

Dover to Dorking Robust Ramble

Section 10 (Return)

Smarden to Bethersden

WALK DETAILS

Map OsExplorer 137 (Ashford)

Distance/Time 6 Miles/ 3 Hours

Start Smarden village centre; there is a village car park

Comment This a longer return so allow plenty of time if completing the circular walk. Interesting and varied countryside but the usual provisos about lack of waymarking and finding the route across large fields and through woodland. Many stiles, some broken, and boggy patches.

WALK INSTRUCTIONS

With the Chequers Inn on the left and the church behind walk up the road out of the village. Soon reach a butcher's shop on the right. Almost opposite is a gate into a playing field. Go through this and keep forward through a childrens' play area. Follow the hedge on your left looking for a footbridge and gate on the left.

Through this gate, turn right and go up along the fence line to a squeeze stile between trees. Keep on up the hedge line. At a corner by a seat, follow the hedge to the right and then left back into the original direction (do not be tempted to take the path going off left at the seat).

At the top corner of the recreation ground leave by a metal gate. Cross over a road and go forward, over a footbridge and stile into a field. Cross, slightly right, to a hedge and turn left along the hedge line.

Continue into a second field. In 100 metres, go right over stiles and a footbridge and aim to the left of farm buildings. Cross two stiles and paddocks to reach a road. Turn right on the road up to a T-junction. Here turn left. Having passed a row of cottages the road bends right at Baker's Bridge.

Pass a broad stony entrance drive on the left, then immediately look for a stile over a ditch on the left. Cross this and follow the hedge line to a further stile (broken and dangerous). Cross a farm track to a stile by a metal fieldgate and go on up a broad track.

Just short of an open field, go right over a stile to continue ahead with the hedge on your left. Cross a fence (no stile) and continue to a grassy cross track in trees (boggy ground here).

Cross the track and go over another broken stile into a field by a pond. Keep on in the same direction with a wood on your left. Follow this gently uphill for some way reaching and passing more woodland on your left. At the top of the field go through a gap into a further field just short of the railway.

Do not go forward to the railway but turn right to follow the hedge on your right (there is a waymark post here). Cross a stile at the end of the field and walk over to another by a green shed. Bear left, still along the hedge line, to a stile.

Over this stile briefly cross open ground to a corner of woodland. Go forward into a field and on, uphill, by a wood to a fence and stile. Over this turn right and follow along to a road just below a red brick house. Turn left on the road to a junction. Here cross over to a footpath going up a stony entrance drive.

Very soon, at the end of a conifer hedge on your left, turn left towards a fieldgate between houses. Cross the field to a stile and come into a large field. Head slightly left, downhill, across centre of field heading just left of a distant chimney to reach a waymark post in the bottom hedge line.

Here turn right to follow the hedge now on your lefthandside. When the hedge drops away, keep going in the same direction, bearing slightly right across the field.

At the far side is a wide gap in the hedge and a farm bridge into the next field. Cross this and turn left along the stream for a few metres until reaching an obvious farm track on your right going uphill. Turn up this track looking for a stile and footbridge in the

hedge on the left.

Go over this stile and bridge and head diagonally right across the field towards a white house in the distance. The path passes the corner of the perimeter fence of Newhouse Farm on your right.

Once in midfield, aim more to the right of the white house, towards the end tree in a long line of conifers and cross a stile onto a road. Go left along the road to a T-junction.

Turn left up the road to cross the railway and reach the 'Dering Arms'. Turn right to pass between the pub on your left and the station entrance on your right. Go along a rough track with distinctive stone houses on the left. Continue through a double fieldgate, by the last house, to a stile.

Go leftwards, across the centre of the field ahead, to the far corner and cross a stile and footbridge in the hedge. Bear right into the bottom corner of a field then go gently uphill towards power lines. Soon after passing under these, go to the right, downhill, to the field edge and a stream. Turn left and follow the stream then a wood to a railway.

Keep along by the railway on your right, to a crossing on the right via stile. Over the railway (a high speed line so take especial care) climb another stile and go on into a wood on a clear path.

Cross a broad track and keep on to a second broad track. Turn left here by a wire fence towards open fields. Cross a stile into a field and turn right along the field edge for 10 metres. At a corner, turn left to cross the field to a solitary tree. On the right, just before the tree, is a metal fieldgate. Go through this and turn immediately left. Follow the hedge on your left to a second fieldgate then keep on, still by the hedge on your left, for some way as it twists and turns until reaching a footbridge and stile on the left just before a woodland.

Cross these and turn immediately right to follow the hedge on your right. Where this hedge turns off right, go ahead, downhill, to a metal fieldgate, then up to a farm ahead. The path has been diverted into the field on the right then across the corner to a stile onto the farm drive at the side of the farmhouse. If this is not evident go into the farm yard and turn left down the side of the farmhouse to the entrance drive. Go down to a road.

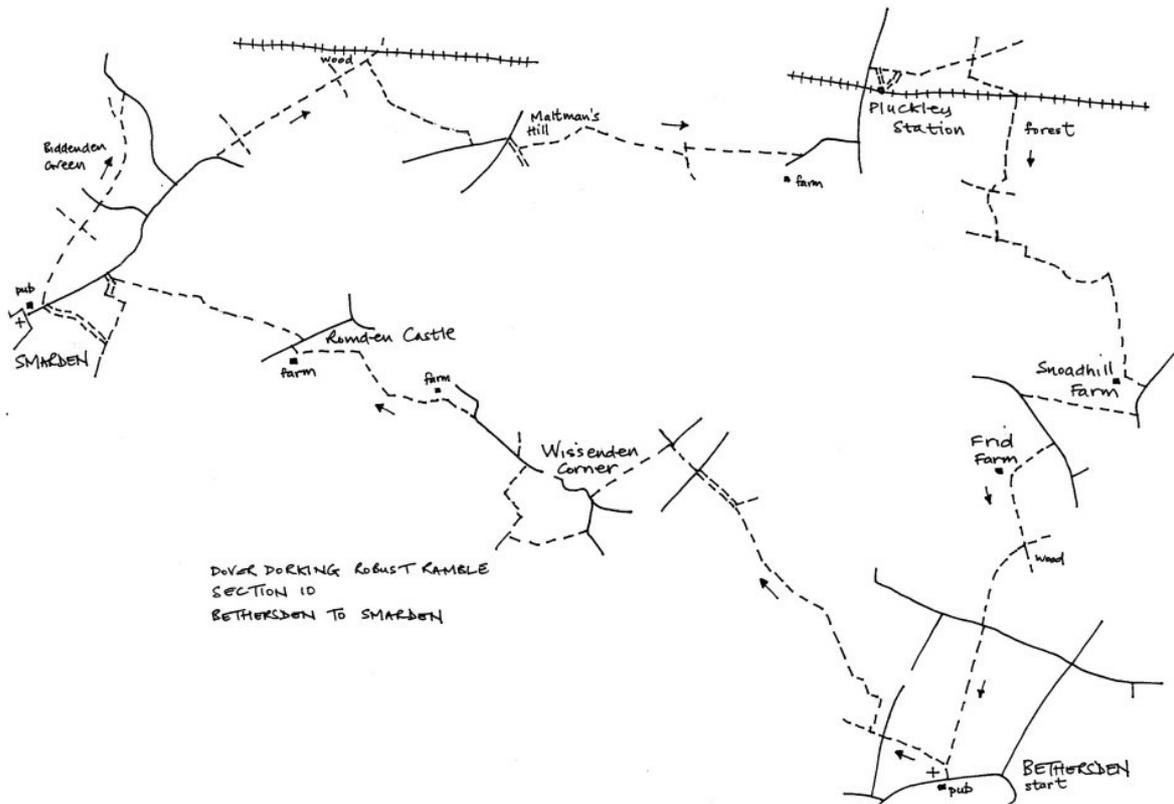
Turn right on this for a short distance to a footpath on the right across a footbridge and a stile. Head straight forward with a stream on your right, to the far corner. Here cross a footbridge and stile in a wire fence into an open field.

Go ahead slightly left, following power lines past a concealed pond in trees. Pass under the power lines and walk ahead to the far corner where a wire fence on the right meets a hedge coming in from the left. Here cross a stile by a metal fieldgate to a road.

Turn left on the road and in ¼ mile turn right up the entrance to Frid Farm crossing a grass airstrip as you go. Go ahead through the farm units and onwards past a house on the left. Here go through double metal fieldgates and bear left up a grassy way to a gap into a field.

Cross the field to the lefthand corner of a wood. At this corner turn right to follow the wood edge, now on your lefthand side. Soon reach a stile going into the wood itself. The broad track ahead passes through the wood and becomes a vehicle drive by a buildings salvage store. Keep on down to a public road.

Cross straight over to walk down a treelined avenue. Continue over a grassy field directly towards Berthersden Church. At the foot of the field, cross a stream and go through a kissing gate and go on into the churchyard. Turn left to the road with the 'George Inn' on the left and the start of the section.



This is a walk from Robust Rambles, a collection of walks across the South East of England

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