

Dover to Dorking Robust Ramble

Section 9 (Out)

Shadoxhurst to Bethersden

WALK DETAILS

Map OS Explorer 137 (Ashford)

Distance/Time 6 Miles/3 Hours

Start King's Head, Shadoxhurst; on road parking possible

Comment A robust walk on little used footpaths with many stiles and possibly gates to climb. A short stretch of road walking needing special care. Some excellent, quiet countryside, but keep an eye on the map and don't guess at paths, especially in woodland.

WALK INSTRUCTIONS

From the King's Head car park, turn left along the road, passing the front of the pub. Keep left at road junctions passing houses on your left. On the right, just before a Methodist chapel, look for a stile and footpath sign going off on the right. Cross the stile and go over a field to a further stile.

Keep on by a hedge to a stile into a wood. The path through silver birches is easy and pleasant to follow to the middle of the wood. Cross a wide rutted track and keep on in the same direction. The path becomes feinter but keep to the best defined track as minor paths wander off. The track may disappear at the far side of the wood with a field in sight. Head towards the field edge. Just before it, turn right to walk along the edge of the wood towards a house on a road where traffic can be heard.

Emerge carefully onto this busy road and turn left. Walk facing the traffic where a grassy verge may be used in emergency. After $\frac{1}{4}$ mile reach a stile and footpath on the right. Over the stile, cross an open field, bearing slightly left, to a gap in the hedge ahead. Go on across another large field, heading just left of a white house at Harlakenden Farm.

In mid-field pass a concealed pond and isolated trees on your left. Keep on to a wide tractor gap in the fence, then out onto a road (there is a stile in the hedge but currently overgrown). Turn right on the road for 150 metres and look for a concealed stile on the left leading to a path going up the side of Harlakenden Wood.

Walk along, for some way, with the wood on the left crossing a footbridge halfway along. At the top corner of the wood, cross a stile and keep on up the field to a further footbridge and stile leading to an enclosed path. There is a converted oast over on the left.

Keep on, gently uphill, to a further stile and on again to a rusty fieldgate by a house. There is no stile so the gate may have to be climbed. Continue, passing the house, across a field to a stile in a wire fence. DO NOT CROSS but turn sharp right on a path heading off to a stile in a bushy hedge.

Over this stile, keep across the field ahead bearing very slightly away from Engelham Farm building on the left. Cross a succession of stiles, the final one being a splendid new one leading to a road via a footbridge.

Turn right along the road for 150 metres. Soon reach a strange arrangement of a footpath on the left before a bridleway a few metres beyond. Turn left through a fieldgate to follow the footpath along with a hedge on the right.

At the end of the hedge the footpath meets the bridleway. Keep straight on heading towards power lines and a footbridge by a pole. Cross the bridge and keep on diagonally left up the field to the most distant corner. Reach a stile by a fieldgate in a corner of trees.

Over the stile there is a division of paths. Keep to the lefthand one, going gently uphill to a stile in a hedge with a footbridge. Head on across a field, just right of a tree, to a stile in a wire fence.

Go on to a stile by a metal fieldgate and a small stable, and reach a road. Turn left on the road, passing Plurendon Manor, extensive farm buildings and a row of houses. Look for a stile and footbridge by the last house.

Cross this stile and go up the field. Pass an unmarked stile to come to a properly waymarked one. Cross this and follow the edge of the wood on the left for a short distance. Where the wood ends, cross a field, diagonally left, to a stile a few metres away from a

fieldgate.

Cross the stile into a wood. Go steeply down to a footbridge. The way is now obscure. Turn right to follow a slightly rising path with the stream down on the right. Soon pass a pond on the left. At the end of the pond turn left, away from the stream, and up into the wood where the path is feint but evident.

Follow the path for some way (there is yellow tape on trees). On reaching the course of a dried up ditch, cross it and go left along the ditch side for a few metres before bearing off right on the path again. Soon reach a broad green track with the edge of the wood in sight.

Turn left along this to a stile and narrow footbridge. Cross into a field beyond and go up with the hedge on the right, to a stile. Continue to meet a road. Turn right on the road and then immediately left over a poor stile. Go on along the edge of a field with a wood on the right.

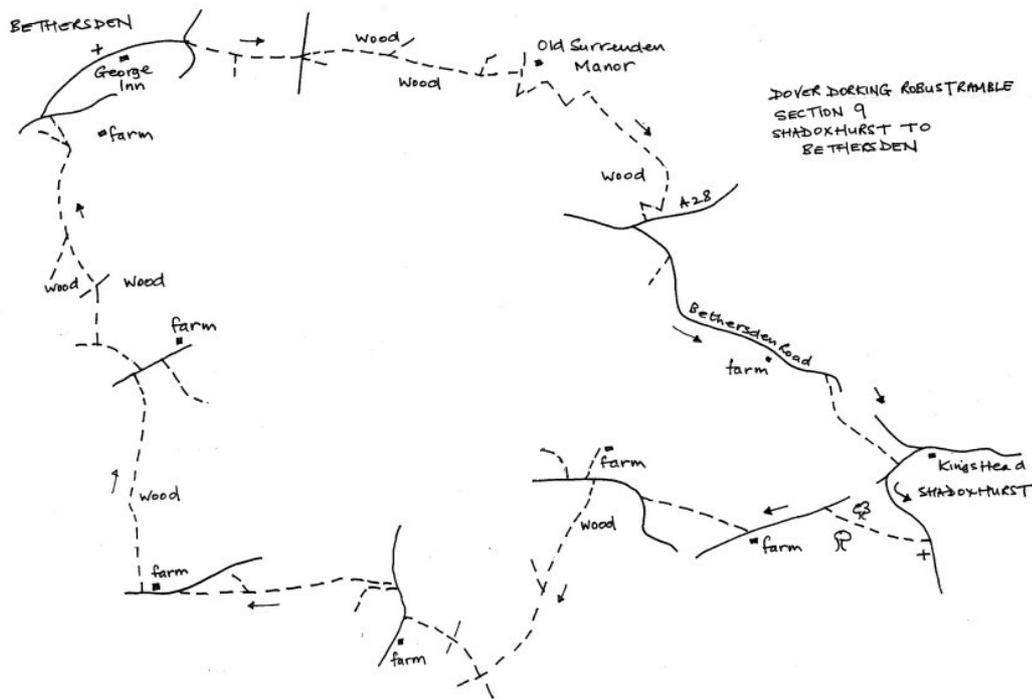
Soon the wood curves right. Bear left across the field to the bottom left corner. Cross a footbridge and stile in bushes into a sloping field. Turn right to walk the length of the field to a stile going into a distant wood on the field edge.

Walk through the wood to a stile into a field at a junction of paths. Walk ahead, downhill and across the field, to a further stile. Pass through a small wood and into a pasture. Bear downhill to a stile and long footbridge.

Over this turn right, uphill, parallel, but not too close, to the left hedge, and reach a stile between trees in the top hedge. Over this stile, continue uphill to a further stile, crossing into the corner of a sloping field.

Keep uphill, at first close to a righthand fence, then veering slightly away. At the top of the hill emerge onto the main A28 road. Go left, cross carefully and almost immediately, turn right, up the road into the village. (The Bull Inn is a little further left on the A28).

The road passes a school and soon reaches the church and the 'George Inn'. This is the end of the section.



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

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