



Sprivers Wood, Kent

TRAIL
Walking

GRADE
Easy

DISTANCE
1 mile (1.6km)

TIME
20 minutes

OS MAP
Explorer 136;
Landranger 188

Contact

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Facilities

National
Trust

nationaltrust.org.uk/walks

Sprivers Wood walk

Travel back to the 18th century as you enjoy this gentle walk through Sprivers Wood in the heart of the High Weald. Unearth signs of the estate's Second World War activity and spot a whole host of wildlife, from butterflies to dormice.



Terrain

Circular walk along gently undulating, well-trodden paths with several gates and stiles. Some paths are naturally uneven, others are tarmac. Option of a 0.75 mile (1.2km) shorter route along tarmac roads, suitable for pushchairs and wheelchairs - follow directions 1 and 2 then go straight to 5, then return back along the route you came: see the red/white dashed line on map. Please keep dogs on lead at all times.

Things to see



Ammunitions dump

During the Second World War, Sprivers Wood was used as an ammunitions dump. You can still see evidence of the trenches, (pictured here) thought to have been built by the British Army in the run up to the D-Day landings of 1944.

Beech tree

Keep an eye out for a beech tree (*fagus sylvatica*) by the moat and pond that's been reduced to a tall deadwood stump. As it decays it will attract many insects, bats and birds. Oak trees from Sprivers Wood were used to build the Houses of Parliament in 1840 and again, a hundred years later in 1940, following damage caused by a Second World War air raid.

Common blue butterfly

The coppice woods and wide woodland tracks are a favourite place to find butterflies, like the common blue (pictured here) on sunny summer days. They love to bask in the warm sunshine that pierces through to the open spaces and glades.



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Start/end

Start: A267 lay-by, grid ref:TQ694404

End: A267 lay-by, grid ref:TQ694404

How to get there

By foot: 0.25 mile (0.4km) east of Horsmonden village along a pavement. The High Weald Landscape Trail passes through the estate

By bus: Arriva 297, Tunbridge Wells to Ashford, passes the lay-by and Horsmonden

By car: 7 miles (11.2km) west of Tunbridge Wells, east of B2162, on A267, Horsmonden to Brenchley road

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1. From the lay-by, go through a bridleway gate which is next to a large field gate. Continue straight down the tarmac track, passing an old ammunition dump on your left, before reaching a pond and the old moat, which is part of Sprivers House. The Sprivers family lived here from 1447 to 1704, when it was bought by the Courthope family, who reconstructed the 15th-century timber-framed house in brick and added a new east wing. During the Second World War the house was used as a military command centre. In the 1960s Sprivers and nearby Nap Wood came to the National Trust in the will of Robert Courthope.

2. Walk between the pond and the moat, keeping the beech tree on your left.

3. Once you've passed the moat, continue down Sprivers Drive to a metal kissing gate. Go through the gate and then turn right. At the stile, climb over and walk straight ahead through two fields. Cross another stile, and head for a stile in the top left corner of the wood. Cross this stile into a stand of sweet chestnut coppice. Coppicing is a traditional and sustainable way of managing woodland. Trees are cut down to ground level, lots of new stems re-grow, ready to be harvested again in the future. This cycle can be repeated for hundreds of years, keeping a tree young and healthy. Coppice products are great for making charcoal, building railway lines and fences, and is also important for maintaining a diversity of woodland wildlife.

4. Take the path in front of you, which will bend around to your right, following what used to be an avenue of Scots pine trees.

5. Eventually you'll reach a tarmac road. Turn left onto this road and, soon after, turn right onto a rough dirt track. Follow the track through the woods to a pair of gates. Go through the first gate, across the dirt track and then through a second kissing gate.

6. Follow the path, with an old ammunition dump on your right, and when you reach a wide open track, turn left.

7. After a short distance along the wide track, turn right along a forest trail until you reach a T-junction. Turn left onto the track, which will lead you back to the entrance gate and where you started.