

The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is an outstanding medieval landscape, protected for its historic character of: rolling hills draped with small irregular fields; abundant woods and hedges; scattered farmsteads; and sunken lanes. It covers parts of 4 counties: East Sussex, West Sussex, Kent and Surrey and has an area of 1,457 square kilometres (570 square miles).

**High Weald Heroes** is a primary school programme that encourages children to do the following actions:

**Explore** the local countryside around your school - there's nowhere else quite like it.



**Take care of** your local environment as you walk. Remember to follow the Countryside Code. For more information, visit [www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk)



**Enjoy!** yourself and have fun outdoors whatever the weather.



**Find out about** the habitats you walk through - discover the story behind the landscape. To find out more go to the learning zone on [www.highweald.org](http://www.highweald.org)



**Be proud of** your countryside. Tell other people about the special landscape around your school - even better, take them on your school's Welly Walk and show them!



Produced by the High Weald AONB Partnership with support from:



# Walk Facts

**Distance:** 5.3 km/3.2 miles

**Time:** 2 hours (depending on conditions & numbers)

**Description:** Mainly unsurfaced paths through woods and farmland, over gentle terrain. There are stiles and footbridges. Be aware paths through the wood can get very muddy!



## RISK ASSESSMENT - Points to consider

- Please use with an Ordnance Survey Explorer Map.
- Wear sturdy footwear or wellingtons, being aware of uneven ground and fallen trees, especially near water and in wet weather.
- Adequate staff to student supervision ratios.
- Fields may contain farm animals.
- Long trousers are advised.
- Check the weather - waterproofs or hats and sun cream might be needed.
- Taking a drink with you is advisable.
- Plants such as nettles and brambles can sting and scratch; berries from plants can cause stomach upsets if eaten.
- There are no toilet facilities, so we recommend that toilet paper and antibacterial hand gel are taken as a precaution.
- Everyone must clean their hands before eating.
- Remember that a large group of people can be intimidating, especially to animals.
- Remember to follow the Countryside Code.

*Footpaths and rights of way are subject to change. The walk should always be checked for new risks before venturing out, especially when planning to take groups of children.*

[www.highweald.org](http://www.highweald.org)

# Broad Oak Community Primary School High Weald Welly Walk





Be a High Weald Hero - you can make a difference



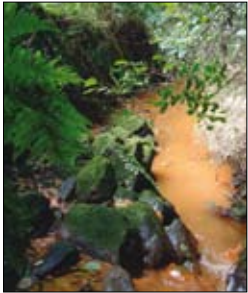
*For guidance only; actual conditions may be different from those shown, depending on the weather and time of year.*

## Photo guide and route description

Turn left out of the School gate and follow the road down crossing over the side road, Street End Lane **1**. When you reach the bottom of the hill, just before French's Garage, look out for a stile and gate on the other side of the road **2**. Climb over the stile to follow a wide footpath up a slow incline. Stay on the path passing a gated field on your left shortly followed by an old, coppiced, sweet chestnut wood . Remain on the main path and follow it as it bears left with woods either side of you. When you come to a junction of paths ignore the footpath to the right and bear left to go through the gate **3**. Bear right following the hedge almost to the end of the field. Turn left to face the view and head down the same field to go through the large gap in the hedge **4** , keeping the fence to the right. Keep walking straight down to pass through the gate and enter the wood **5**. Very soon the path forks. Take the right-hand path **6** that goes down to cross the bridge. Follow the path straight ahead and up the slope **7**. Stay in the wood, keeping the meadow on your right. Cross over another bridge and follow the path with a wire fence on your left **8** until you reach a stile in the fence **9**. Cross over the stile and turn right. Go straight ahead ignoring the paths to the left and right. At the main T junction of paths turn left, following this path to go through the bridal path gate **10**. Walk down and cross over another bridge. Carry straight on through the wood passing a pond on your right. Bear left out of the wood with a barn **11** on your right and pass through a gate. After passing a farmhouse on your right, turn left onto a lane and follow it for about 30 metres.

Look out for a footpath sign on your right and turn left to pass through the driveway entrance of Braylsham Castle between the stone lions. Look out for the modern 'castle' down the hill on your left. It uses a mix of architectural styles. Bear right to pass onto the footpath 12. Follow the path through the wood and over a bridge (look out for the orange coloured water!) to return to the gate where you first entered the wood. Go through the gate and into the field. This time walk up the hill to pass through the gap in the hedge. Go to the top of the field and turn to the right keeping the hedge on your left. Leave the field through the gate and turn right onto the signposted footpath. Keep on this path to return to the road. Cross over the road and up the hill, crossing over Street End Lane and back to Broad Oak Community Primary School.

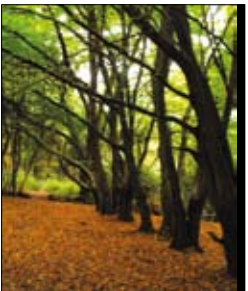
### Look out for...



Iron-stained water









Building materials



Ancient woodland



### Key

-  Broad Oak Community Primary School
-  WALK ROUTE
-  road
-  historic routeway
-  meadows
-  numbered views
-  suggested activity point
-  busy road

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## Look out for these key High Weald landscape features on the Welly Walk

### Ancient Woodland

Trees and woodland cover 27% of the High Weald. Most of the High Weald's woodlands are classed as ancient. This means they have existed since at least 1600AD. Coppicing has been used for centuries in many of these woodlands, helping to maintain them.



### Coppiced Woodland

Coppicing is when trees are cut down low to the ground allowing multiple stems to grow back. The stems are harvested to make products such as fencing stakes, charcoal and trugs. Hazel and sweet chestnut are trees that are coppiced on the High Weald. Which can you see on the walk?



Hazel



Sweet chestnut

### Biodiversity

When trees are coppiced, sunlight can reach the ground. This encourages wild woodland plants to grow. Look out for bluebells, wood anemones, primroses and wild garlic in the spring.



Bluebells



Wood anemones



Primroses

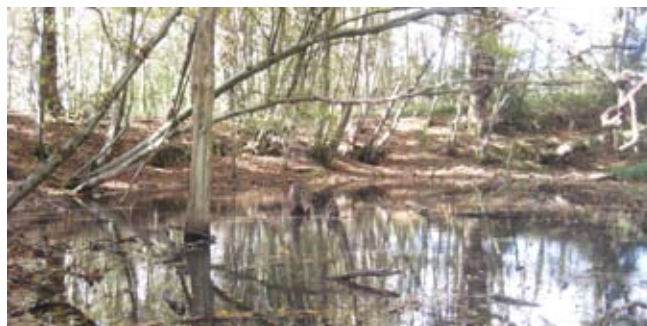


Wild garlic

A variety of plants attracts more insects. These then attract a greater variety of birds and small mammals. Buying local wood products helps with the continuation of traditional woodland management such as coppicing.

### High Weald Ponds

How many ponds can you spot on this Welly Walk? Many ponds have developed because of human activity such as quarrying and creating drinking ponds for farm animals.



*If you are interested in finding out more then please visit [www.highweald.org/learning\\_zone](http://www.highweald.org/learning_zone)*

### A Medieval Landscape

The High Weald looks much the same today as it did in the 14th century. The view from the field in this Welly Walk shows: gently rolling hills, irregular-shaped fields, scattered settlements and wooded areas. These features give the Weald its distinctive look.



### Gill Streams



Steep-sided, wooded gills are formed where a stream has carved a deep channel through the clay and sandstone of a High Weald hillside. Look out for orange water in the streams. This shows the presence of iron ore under the ground. The iron ore, water and wood provided the vital ingredients for the creation of the High Weald iron industry which flourished in Roman and Tudor times.

*Listen carefully as you walk through the gill - can you hear the water?*

### Local Building Materials



Traditionally buildings were made from materials found in the local landscape. In the High Weald that means sandstone, wood to make timber-framed and weather-boarded buildings, and clay to make bricks and tiles. Can you see all these different materials in Braylsham Castle and any other buildings you pass on the walk? Braylsham Castle was built in 1993 but uses a mix of traditional materials and building styles to make it look much older.