

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



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.



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 Unit with support from:



Walk Facts



Education Resource

Distance: 3.9 km / 2.4 miles

Time: 1.5 hours (depending on conditions and numbers and excluding stops)

Description: A gentle walk along historic routeways, through ancient gill woodland, parkland and farmland. The footpaths can get very muddy and slippery.



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.
- Remember that a large group of people can be intimidating, especially to 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 to follow the Countryside Code.

Footpaths 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

Rolvenden 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

Come out of the School into the car park and go through the kissing gate into the school playing field. Follow the footpath along the right hand edge of the field and through the trees **1**. Walk diagonally across the farm field to another kissing gate. Cross over the road and turn right to walk along the narrow pavement. Pass the recreation ground and look for a footpath on the left just before the Bull Inn **2**.

Follow this footpath between high hedgerows to a kissing gate with ponds on either side. Go through the gate and follow the path with the fence close on your right **3**. Before you head down the steep slope take a moment to admire the view of rolling High Weald hills. Walk down the hill staying to the right of the field to enter the wood at the bottom through a gate **4**. Turn right and almost immediately bear left to walk down steps that lead to a wooden bridge over a gill stream **5**.

Climb the steps on the other side to enter a field **6**. Cross the field via a well-worn path with the oast house ahead of you. At the farm road turn left (look right to see the timber framed farmhouse). As the road enters parkland go through a gate on your left by a cattle grid **7** bear right and walk diagonally across the field to another gate about half way down the field **8**.

Go through this field and bear right to cross diagonally, passing a veteran oak on your left, heading for the bottom right hand corner of the field. Leave the field via a wooden gate to meet a road **9**. Turn left and walk along the road. Continue along the road looking out for a finger post, that marks a footpath on your left **10**. Follow the path across parkland towards the windmill. Pass the windmill on your right and continue on the path until it meets the road **11**. At the road turn left to walk along the narrow pavement. Look out for a footpath sign on the right hand side of the road **12**. Cross the road and follow the path diagonally across the field to return to the school via the playing field.


Look out for...





Timber Framed House


Key


 WALK ROUTE


 numbered views

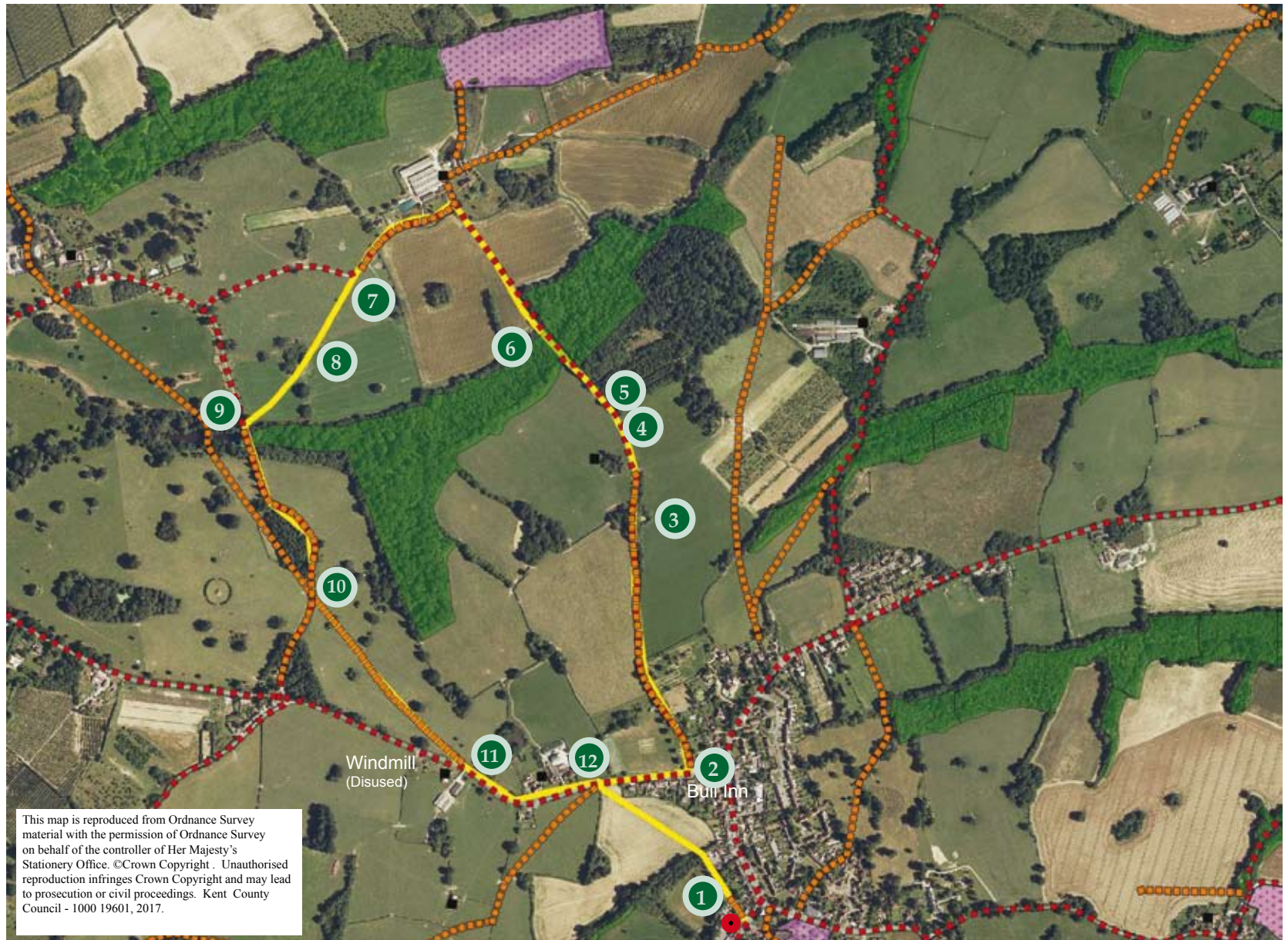
 Rolvenden Primary School

 meadows

 historic public rights of way

 historic roads

 ancient woodland



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

Ancient Routeways



Many paths in the High Weald have been used for centuries, some as far back as Neolithic times. This use by people, animals and later, carts, has worn away the soft ground to create deeply sunken sections. Look at the map to see that the walk is mainly on historic routeways.

What's in a Name?

Villages which end in 'den' were once used as a pig pasture by Anglo Saxons. Settlements became more permanent and the history lives on in our wood, farm and village names – such as Rolvenden, Tenterden and Standen.



Ponds

Many ponds in the High Weald developed through human activity, such as quarrying, and are now an important habitat for wildlife.



Oast Houses

Oast houses were traditionally used to dry hops for brewing and can be seen all over the High Weald. Hops have been cultivated in the High Weald since the sixteenth century but today only a handful of hop gardens remain.



Windmills

The High Weald's high, windy ridges are an ideal location for windmills. Their most important traditional use was for grinding grain into flour.



Medieval Landscape

Many views of the High Weald look much the same today as they did in the 14th century with gently rolling hills, irregular-shaped fields, scattered settlements and wooded areas. These features give the area its unique character.



Gills

Steep-sided, wooded gills are formed where a stream has carved a deep channel through the soft clay and sandstone of the High Weald. Shaded, damp gill slopes create a unique environment for plants such as ferns, liverworts and mosses.



Local Building Materials

Traditionally buildings were made from materials in the local landscape. In the High Weald, that means wood for timber-frames and weather-boarded buildings, clay to make bricks and tiles, and sandstone.



Visit www.highweald.org to find out more about the High Weald's historic routeways