

WOODCHURCH

FOOTPATH

WALKS



Walk 3 Cole Wood & Whitewick Wood

Approx. 3 1/2 miles
Allow 1 1/2 hours

Woodland, track and arable walk,
using stiles and gates.

Lovely in springtime for bluebells,
and views over Woodchurch

Directions

This walk starts at the beginning of D1304 Georges Hill (1). Walk past Cookfield until you reach a wooden stile into the field on your right (FP 206) (2). The path lies diagonally to the left across the field, rising up to a gate in the far corner (3). There are some superb views southwards from here of the village and over Shirley Moor. The route continues half left over a small field at the side of Hillside Farm (4). Nearby is a fine farmhouse pond which has the reputation of never running dry. Alternatively, if there are animals in the Hillside Farm field you can continue to walk along the road until you come to a large wooden bar gate just past the Hillside Farm buildings. Go through the gate and turn immediately left to re-join the footpath (4).

Proceeding diagonally left the footpath passes through a nuttery and brings us to a stile leading on to the road (5). On the other side of the road a sign stone indicates the continuation of the path through the "shave", a narrow band of trees, to a stile in the hedge (6), and, rising across the field, to another stile in the hedge (7) on the left of Mount Pleasant which is so aptly named. The path follows the fence through Cole Wood where bluebells are in profusion in the spring. The path continues through Cole Wood through a gap in the fence (8) hardwood trees have been interplanted with conifers by the Forestry Commission.

The path to follow bears half right (don't be misled by other tracks), passing a large pond on your right, to a stile (9) leading to a secluded field.

Turning to the left in this field the route follows the field boundary into an area of hawthorn until another stile (10) leads into the wood again. Here, the path, sometimes muddy, "tunnels" through the densely planted trees and rises gently to welcoming daylight at an open area of teasels and gorse and so to the road at Cold blow (11). Turn right towards Warehorne and past a well preserved typical Kentish farmhouse, Beacon Farm, on the left, with its modern farm buildings and old oast.

On the right hand side of the road, just past the trees, a gate passes into a pleasant field (FP 205) (12). Keep walking straight across the field aiming towards the gap in the far hedge and barn in the distance. Pass through the gap (13), and continue walking across the next field, aiming towards the right of the barn, to a metal gate (14). Continue aiming to the right of the barn across the next field to another metal gate (15). The footpath continues straight across this next field (where there may be animals) to the far corner, passing to the right of the barn and through the wooden kissing gate and around the right of the farmyard. Pass through the large wooden gates (16) and onto the road/track D1304, George's Hill.

Turn left here to the end of the narrow, tree lined, made up road. Ignore the private drive to the right which leads to Highlands Farm (The Rare Breeds Centre) (17) and continue along the unmade road between hedges of oak and hornbeam. This road is used by horses and tractors and tends to be rutted and muddy at all seasons. Ignore any signs on your left saying that you have gone the wrong way - these are for the benefit of visitors to The Rare Breeds Centre. Continue along the track where our route bears round to the right (18) and borders Hunt's Wood which is mainly chestnut with some tall oaks.

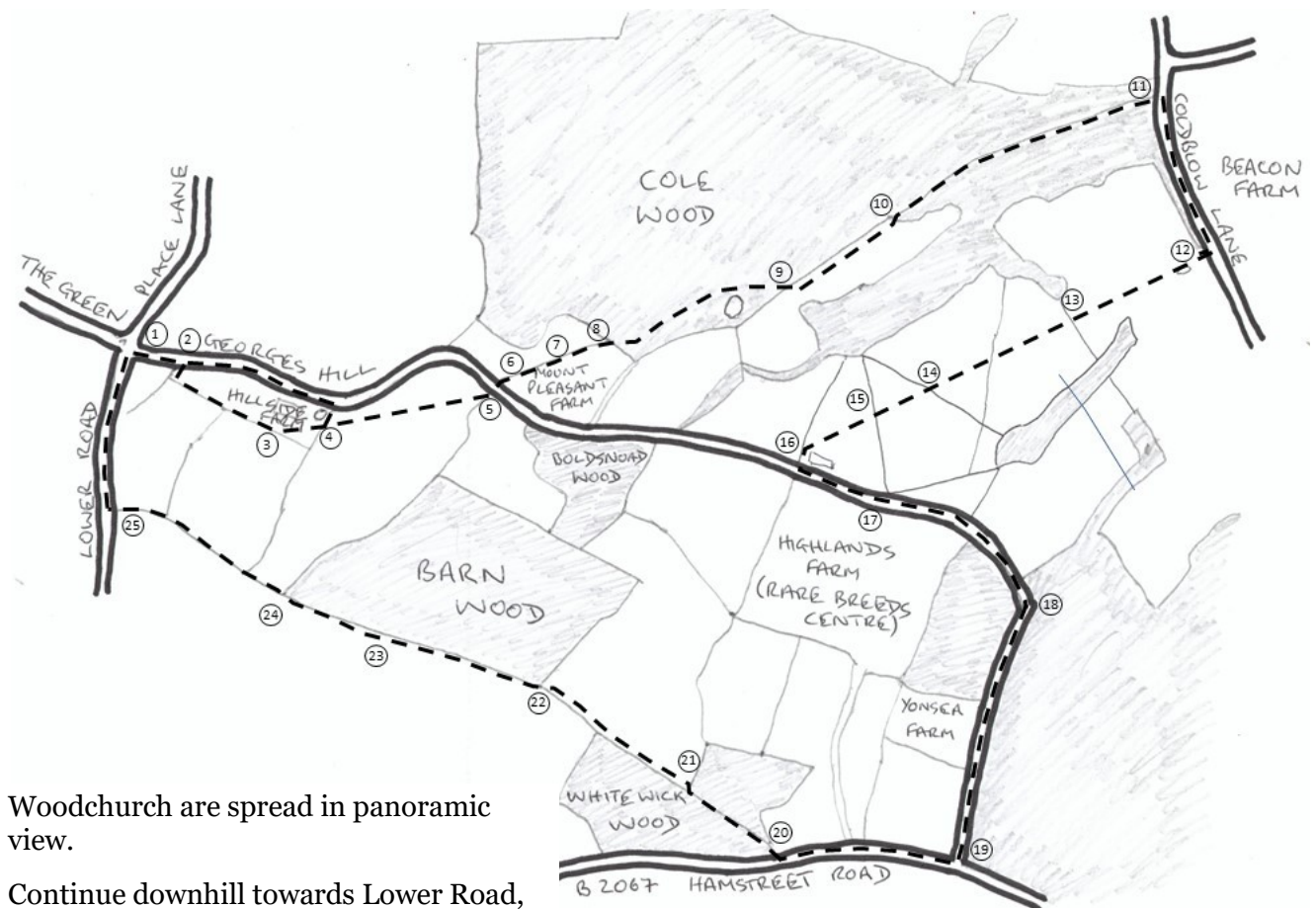
The boundary of the wood is marked by the traditional ditch and bank of earth. According to the season woodpeckers are heard in winter and nightingales in early summer. Because the path is wet at times, there are willow with catkins and sedges in places. You will pass Yonsea Farm on your right and will eventually reach the gate at the end of the track where it meets the D1305, Hamstreet Road.

Turn right along this road towards Woodchurch, keeping watch for traffic. You will soon pass the entrance drive to The Rare Breeds Centre on your right and you will then see the Footpath post indicating FP 172 (20) leading right into Whitewick Woods.

The path crosses a sleeper bridged ditch, then through woodland which is carpeted with wild flowers in

spring and summer. Primroses and bluebells fill the air with fragrance, wood anemones, lady's smock and foxgloves, with teasels, amongst others. Associated with this mixed vegetation are willow warblers and nightingales, which are frequently heard.

Follow the footpath into the field (21), turn left along the headland of the field. Whitewick Wood continues on the left. Gaps in the hedge to your left afford good views south over Shirley Moor. On the skyline ahead, the tower of Tenterden Church and the spire of St. Michael's further right are visible on clear days. Our path continues along the right-hand side of the hedge to the corner of the field (22). At the corner of the field turn left and sharp right and continue along the headland of a field with Barn Wood on your right. From this vantage point, over the "basin" in front us, Brattle and the rest of the village of



Woodchurch are spread in panoramic view.

Continue downhill towards Lower Road, through a gap in the hedge (23) into the next field. The end of Barn Wood is passed on the right, a few yards before a deep ditch (24). Cross this over a sleeper bridge into the next field. Hillside Farm may be seen across one field to the right. Our route leaves the field, crosses a wooden bridge and through a wooden gate, passes between a hedge and a garden fence, then over a specially designed stile fitted with a small gate for dogs (25), and so to Lower Road. Turn right along the road to the George's Hill to return to the starting point.



This walk was originally published by **The Woodchurch Footpath Group** in the early 1980's. It was reviewed and updated by Woodchurch HUB in 2020. For more information contact Woodchurch HUB www.woodchurchhub.uk