

Walk 21: Hosey Common/Chartwell

With glorious woodland of all types, views over Churchill's house to the Kent Weald and a secluded valley brought alive by spring waters this 100-minute walk packs in a lot

How long? 1hr 45 mins/4 miles

Public transport: 246 bus from Bromley/Hayes to Westerham (see also Walk 15 which covers much of the same route but from Westerham)

Distance from SE London?
45-min drive from Forest Hill (17 miles)

Parking: easy, Hosey Common car park (free)

Start of walk: footpath south from Hosey Common car park

Steep slopes? No, but you do have to cross a stream by walking on a log

Day out? Chartwell, Squerres Estate, Westerham, Ide Hill, Downe, Sevenoaks all within a few miles.

Walk highlights/refreshments
Greensand Ridge woods, River Darent at its source, view over Churchill's house. Chartwell NT cafe. Ordnance Survey Explorer 147 map

[Click here for GPX track](#) (press icon bottom right for location – could be flaky though)



Giant foxglove, Tower Hill near point 9



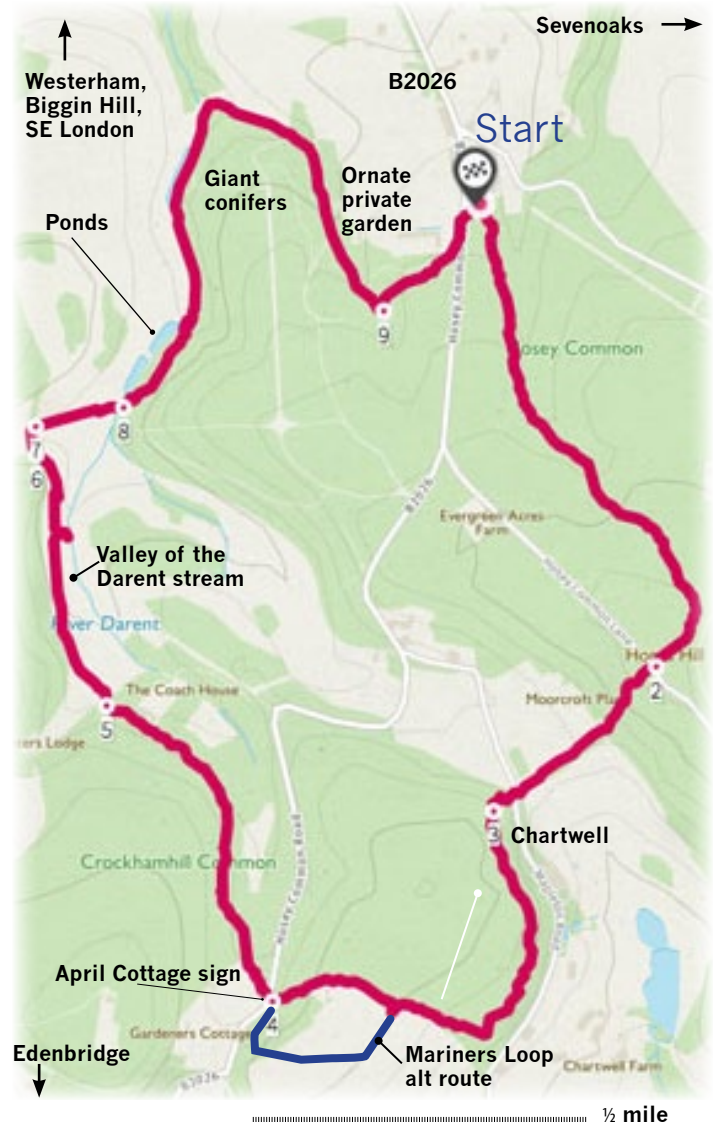
Weald view point 3-4

Start (Hosey Common car park) to point 2 (1.2km) Walk south for 20 minutes or so from the car park through mixed woodland following the signs for Chartwell. The woodland is being revived by Kent Wildlife Trust so is a bit scarred where invasive species are being stripped. On the left, close to the start, is Westerham Mines... old ragstone mines that are home to many bats. Just follow the waymarkers to Chartwell... you can't get lost although there is the odd path off to the left you should ignore.

Point 2-3 (500m) When you hit a lane (Hosey Common Lane) you are at point 2. Cross and take the path/bridleway opposite with a fence on your right still heading for Chartwell, now going downhill, heading roughly south west. This is a slightly boring section until views start opening up to your left of the Weald and Chartwell's lovely acres. After a few minutes you'll see the NT car park on the left and will cross Mapleton Road. Resume on the path opposite now climbing steeply uphill (briefly). Almost immediately look for path on the left heading south, now well elevated above the road.

Point 3-4 (1km) Take this left path – a highlight of this walk – by towering cedar and Wellingtonia conifer trees. Soon, you'll find two benches; both with views over Chartwell and the Weald. After this, the path descends and meets a path junction. Here, turn right (west) uphill. Another brilliant view soon opens up to your left across a large meadow (for a superb alternative route you can follow the path alongside the meadow – the Mariners Loop path – all the way to Point 4, overall an extra half mile). If not diverting on the alt route by the meadow, continue in the woods past the fence of a large house with a beautiful beech tree in its garden by the fence. Soon the path (slightly hidden by the fence – don't confuse with the house's drive) descends sharply to the B2026 (careful).

Point 4-5 (0.8km) Cross the B2026 passing the April Cottage sign and take the bridlepath/path opposite, downhill, which slowly bends right, to the north west. Ignore the path off to the left



you soon come across and keep on through woodland, passing some beech trees that have fused together. Can be muddy this bit. Soon you'll note the Coach House grounds on your right and see open ground ahead. Pass through the metal gate into this open area: the valley of the infant Darent.

Point 5-6 (0.6km) So, you've gone through the gate; keep going on the grassland which is the water meadow of the Darent – a stream off to the right. To the right now, beyond the stream, you'll see the tall pines of Tower Hill on the skyline. Soon you'll see a stile.

Point 6-7 Climb over the stile or walk through the open gate next to it then immediately take track on your right.

Point 7-8 (c. 120m) Walk down the track and cross the stream, using the aforementioned log (two good strides).

Point 8-9: (1.3km) After crossing, turn left (north east). The path starts to

climb slightly away from the river but soon, take a descending path bearing left which takes you back down closer to the river and its two large ponds. After 800 metres or so, the path turns right (east) leaving the river. You are now skirting the northern edge of Tower Hill with its giant conifers. On your left there is open grassland and a short steep hill. However, we're following the lower land now to the south-east and will head back into the woods with the giant conifers. You'll see signs for Chartwell again, so follow these (ignoring path off to the right) to a path junction (point 9).

Point 9-finish (350m): At the junction turn sharp left (north east) with an ornate garden visible through the trees/rhododendrons to your left and a house not dissimilar to Chartwell. Soon you'll hit the B2026 and will see Hosey Common car park ahead. Nice stroll.