

Walk 24: Knockholt Pound/Chevening

Explore the meadows and woods of the North Downs escarpment with grand views over 18th-century Chevening House, starting from the village of Knockholt Pound.

How long? 2 hours
5 miles (8km)

Parking: Northern end of Chevening Lane or in Knockholt Pound village
Public transport: Not really, infrequent R5/R10 bus service from Orpington to the walk's start. Knockholt station 2 miles.
Start of walk: Chevening Lane
Steep slopes? One after Point 5.
Pub: Three Horseshoes

Walk highlights

Views, wildflowers and an atmospheric hamlet

See Ordnance Survey Explorer 147 map

[Click here for GPX map](#)

THE WALK

Point 1-2 (2km)

This first part is a bit boring. Well actually, Chevening Lane (point 1) is a really nice road to stroll down with lovely trees and one or two vivid gardens (including one on the right near the end with one of the nicest hanging baskets I've ever seen). There are next to no cars, because it's effectively a dead end with few houses. After about 350 metres (6 minutes?) you reach the North Downs Way footpath. I think it's best to turn right here (westward) so we get the dull bit over with early. There are fields on your right and woods on your left, that's all there is to say really, it's a bit meh. Oh, wait, yes, fairly early on there's a view down a cleared streak of woods of Chevening House at the foot of the scarp a couple of miles distant. The path is easy to follow as it twists around with much of the land either side private property, so there's little risk of losing yourself. Anyway, after about a mile you reach Sundridge Lane (Point 2).

Point 2-3 (700m)

Turn left (south-east) on Sundridge Lane, which soon becomes Sundridge Hill. Still nothing too exciting. It's another quiet road with just the occasional car and bike so although you have to walk about half a mile down it, it's relatively safe for a road. Thick hedgerows line both sides of the lane with dense woods on your left. It's OK, but there's nothing much to see. Walk past Knockholt Lodge on left, then around 230 metres further on you'll come to Keepers Cottage (point 3), again on the left. From here the walk is all good and not dull at all.

Point 3-4 (1.5km)

Look for the footpath gate on the left just past the cottage and stride off, downhill through the woods heading south-east. Soon you'll leave the woods and hit a lovely meadow overlooked by a bench. Follow the footpath easterly now and enter another meadow via woodland with quite a spectacular view of Chevening House up ahead. This meadow has a damaged tree in it... maybe a lightning strike. Stay descending on this path over the odd stile and enter the Chevening estate proper... the 'keep out' signs will ensure you maintain the right course! After emerging from the final bits of woodland, the path crosses a lane within the grounds amid pleasant pasture/parkland. Note ahead, to the right,

the church tower of Chevening's St Botolph's; that's where we're headed. Eventually the Chevening estate path reaches a T junction: a north-south path (point 4). (If you've had enough, turn left, which heads straight back to Chevening Lane - but you'll miss some of the best bits.)

Point 4-5 (1.5km)

At point 4, turn right for Chevening (south). The hamlet has the feel of somewhere that never made it out of the 1930s with its ancient telephone box, old houses and churchyard. It's a lovely spot that always makes me want a cream tea for some reason. But that's a Devon thing... in Kent, forget it, unless you're in National Trust territory. Walk through the churchyard and take the slightly overgrown path directly behind. This path is pretty good for wildflowers, particularly purple thorns and wild teasels. As a result it's popular with birds, especially goldfinches and keep an eye open for rarer bullfinches here. Before you reach Sundridge Road you will turn left at a new footpath sign just before farm buildings so you no longer have to walk on the road. Hello Point 5.

Point 5-back to start (2.8km)

The longest and nicest section. Follow the footpath sign left and walk up the farm track (heading north) past the farm buildings for 100 metres. Turn right, east, when you can go no further with hedgerow on your right, then soon turn left to head straight up the steep slope of the North Downs chalk escarpment. The path becomes shallower and turns slightly north-west, skirting Star Hill Wood. Take it slow and enjoy the views over the vale behind you and over towards Ide Hill, perched on the Greensand Ridge. The path, actually the North Downs Way, bends round to the west. At the top of the scarp, walk through a gap in woods then on the borders of attractive meadows. Don't worry if you can always see the path exit from the meadows - the gates don't show themselves until you reach them. Soon you'll be back on Chevening Lane again. Voila.

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