

The High Weald National Landscape is a 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 four counties: East Sussex, West Sussex, Kent and Surrey and has an area of 1,461 km² (570 miles²).



High Weald Heroes is an outreach primary school programme that encourages you to:

1

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

2

ENJOY yourself and have fun outdoors whatever the weather.

3

FIND OUT about the habitats you walk through and the story behind the landscape. Discover more at the School Zone on www.highweald.org

4

CELEBRATE your countryside. Tell other people about this special landscape - or take them on your school's Welly Walk and show them!

5

CARE FOR your local environment as you walk. Remember to follow the Countryside Code. For more information visit www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code



Produced by the High Weald
National Landscape Partnership



Walk Facts

Distance: 2.2miles /3.5km

Time: 1.5 hours (depending on conditions and numbers)

Description: A walk from the Woodgate development and through the ancient woodland of Tilgate Forest. Paths are uneven and 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 may not be toilet facilities,.
- Remember that a large group of people can be intimidating, especially to animals.
- 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

Woodgate Primary Academy High Weald Welly Walk



High Weald
National
Landscape



Be a High Weald Hero - you can make a difference



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



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9



10



11



12

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

Photo guide and route description

From the school cross the road to the Green and follow the path around the playground then turn left at the road to walk alongside the Green. **1** Cross Grace Holland Avenue and continue in the same direction to get to a green space on your right. Turn into here **2** and take the left-hand path leading into the wood. As the surfaced path bears left out of the wood, continue straight ahead on the woodland path. **3** Cross a little stream gully **4** and continue with the fence on your left. Just beyond the pond, visible on your left, the path divides. Take the right-hand path deeper into the wood away from the houses. **5** Continue on this main path as it winds through the wood and begins to head downhill **6** (Beware: a section here can get very muddy and obliterate the path. A path to the left skirts around it and re-joins the original route). Continue downhill. As a metal rail fence appears ahead look for, and turn into, a path on your left. **7** Very soon there is a narrow fork. **8** Take the left-hand path passing the remains of a rusted car then turn right when you come to a T-junction. **9** Almost immediately veer left and continue to an open area of bracken and grass a little way ahead. Turn right along the right edge of the open area **10** and head gently downhill. At the end of this path turn right. Walk along the wide path with the stream on your left coming in and out of view. Continue as the path bears right uphill and a fence appears ahead. **11** Continue alongside the fence on your left. As the path veers right, away from the fence, you pass the path where you turned left coming down the hill —now on your right. Pass this and re-trace your steps up the hill, across

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

Medieval Hunting Forest



Tilgate Forest was once part of Worth Forest, a large medieval royal hunting forest. It was used by royalty to hunt deer and wild boar. There were strict rules about who could do what in the forest. Anyone found hunting animals without permission would be severely punished.

Look for bluebells in the spring. These flowers are clues to ancient woodland.

Ancient Woodland

Almost one third of the High Weald is woodland. Most, like Tilgate Forest, is at least 400 years old. The older the woodland, the better habitat it is for wildlife and plants.



Iron Industry



The High Weald had all the ingredients to create a thriving iron industry in Tudor times: iron ore in the rocks, wood for charcoal to heat the blast furnaces and water for power. A blast furnace on the edge of Tilgate Forest was melting iron for cannons in the 16th century.

Look out for orange/red water in streams and puddles caused by iron ore in the surrounding rocks

Ponds

Many High Weald ponds were made by past human activity such as quarrying. Tilgate Lake once provided water for the iron industry. Now many old ponds provide homes for plants and animals such as dragonflies, caddis flies and frogs.



Ancient Routeways

A pre-historic track runs across Woodgate. Many flints from the Stone Age have been found around here. Later Saxon farmers drove their pigs into the thick forest to fatten them on acorns and beech mast.

They used the same paths year after year and over time the soft ground was worn away to create some deeply sunken parts.



Can you spot a sunken routeway on your welly walk?

Gill Streams

Steep-sided, wooded gills are formed where a stream has carved a deep channel through the soft clay and sandstone of the High Weald. Plants growing on these slopes, such as ferns, liverworts and mosses form an important and fragile eco-system.



the muddy patch and through the wood. Houses come into view and at the path junction turn left to keep the houses and fence on your right. 12 Re-join the surfaced path and follow it out of the wood and back to the road. Turn left to walk a short distance before crossing over Grace Holland Drive and returning across the Green to the school.

Look out for



Amazing Old Trees

Key



Welly Walk Route



Woodland

