

COWDEN

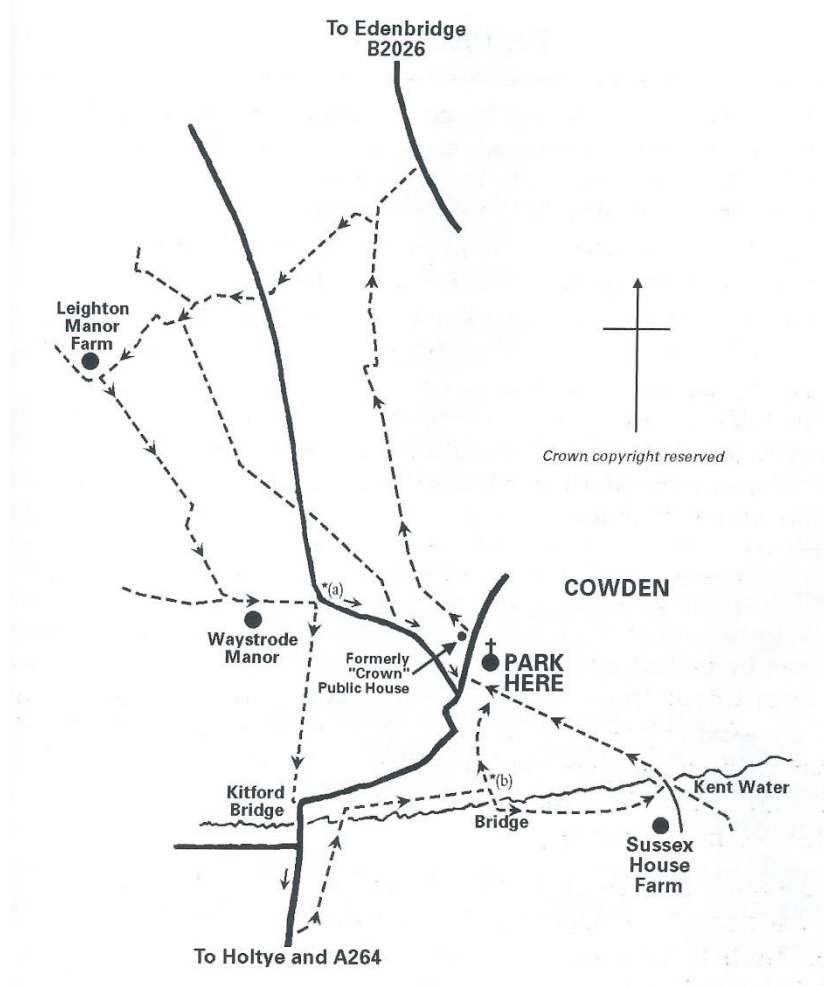
Cowden is a most attractive village. The church is well worth a visit. Items of particular interest are a Jacobean pulpit with sounding board. In the churchyard are some eighteenth-century iron grave slabs – a reminder of the Wealden iron industry.

During the walk you will pass several old Sussex-type houses probably owned by iron masters. When you walk down the drive of Waystrode Manor (as it is a public right of way) you will see the house and Oast house which has the Sussex-style squared roof instead of the usual Kentish cone.

Distance: 4.5 miles (7.2 kilometres)

Map reference: O.S. Explorer 147, 467404

Parking: Street parking near the church.



Directions:

1. Walk along the road, keeping the church on your right, passing the former Crown Inn on your left. Just past the garden on your left go through a wooden kissing gate (footpath sign). Now go forward, aiming for the left-hand side of a white bungalow "Little Priors" which is in the far right-hand corner. Cross the stile into the drive, cross the drive and over the stile on the other side.

2. This brings you to an enclosed footpath, which eventually becomes a wide track and then enters a field. Take the stile straight ahead in the fence. This field gives good views southwards, back across the village and up to Pylegate Farm.
3. In the field, follow the hedge and fence on your left to the far corner. Turn right and follow the hedge on your left to a hunt gate and just beyond a stile.
4. Keeping the belt of trees on your right, head towards another stile, this leads into a path through woodland. Pass a house "Gardeners Cottage" on your right.
5. Follow the drive as it curves to the right, go over a waymarked stile through a small copse then over another stile and join the tarmac drive. Turn left and follow this drive out to a road.
6. Cross over the road into a private road leading to Ludwells farm. The re-built chimneys of the first house are replicas of the original. This road gives good views over some of Sussex's wooded hills.
7. After a few hundred yards you will arrive at the drive leading to Ludwells farm, take track going left. Proceed along this track and ignore a stile on your left and on to the junction with a tarmac drive. Ahead is Leighton Manor.
8. Leave the tarmac drive at this point and turn right onto grass keeping the hedge on your right and down to a fingerpost in the corner.
9. Turn left with a gully on your right, up a grassy slope with a fence on your left and Leighton Manor on your right. After approximately 100 yards cross over the stile on your left into a field.
10. The view of the restored Leighton Manor with its man-made lake is quite spectacular. Cross the field making for another stile next to an iron field gate in the right-hand corner.
11. Here you enter into pleasant woodland crossing a track and dropping down to a stream. Cross the stream and follow a woodland path for about a quarter of a mile.
12. At the footpath junction, turn left and climb steps to pass through a field gate into Waystrode Manor drive.
13. After entrance gate, turn right over a stile into an enclosed track running by the manor garden which leads into a field. Keep to the left-hand boundary downhill to a field gate leading to the road by Kitford Bridge.
14. Turn right to cross the bridge and go forward uphill to pass Frampton's on your right. Just beyond on the left take a track leading to a kissing gate into a field.
15. Go forward, gently downhill to a gate, then straight on to cross a fairway to find a footbridge with way-marked hand-rails. Once over the river Kentwater (the county boundary between Kent and East Sussex) go forward a few paces (way-mark on tree) and turn right. Follow the line of the river until you reach a three-finger post.
16. Look for the right-of-way footbridge with hand-rails which is to the left of the wider golfer's bridge, and cross to an extension of the golf course. The next stile is straight ahead set in a tall hedge.
17. Now go forward to a gate with white posts and pass an ornamental lake at Sussex Farm (once the home of Sir John Mills, the actor) to a grey iron gate.
18. Turn left and immediately left again to follow the stream on your left. This track passes through a field gate beyond a concrete bridge, onto a path with fence on left leading to the church.
19. Turn left at the top to pass through the church-yard and back to the car.