

# Syndale Valley Walk

PEACE, SOLITUDE:  
A RURAL WAY OF LIFE

Explore  
KENT

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**FAVERSHAM**  
MARKET TOWN OF KINGS

NEWNHAM - EASTLING - STALISFIELD - DODDINGTON



# Peace, solitude: a rural way of life

*“Enchant, stay  
beautiful and graceful,  
but do this, eat well”*

Charles Pierre Monselet



Escape to a land that time forgot, where farming, food and rural traditions remain the cornerstones of community life among the unspoilt and picturesque scenery of the Syndale Valley.

Running through the mid Kent Downs – an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty – the chalk valley remains one of the few timeless landscapes in this busy corner of Kent.

Not without its own share of historic highlights and notoriety, your walk begins in the ancient settlement of Newnham, nestled in the Syndale Valley since at least the 12th century. Here the Romans grew grapes and James Pimm was born – creator of one of Britain’s best-loved summer drinks, the eponymous Pimms.

The Revd. Granville Wheler proved the existence of electric current in 1725 at Otterden Place – just one of the grand homes that pepper your path as you make your way through ancient woods, working farmland and historic grazing pastures.

Many of the woods on your route are still hunted by wildfowlers who sell their game to local butchers and restaurants, while others support the rural craft of coppicing - common in this area. Traditional coppicing of sweet chestnut shoots for fence stakes extends the life of the trees and floods the woodland floor with light in spring and summer, promoting an abundance of flowers and food for wildlife.

As you pass back into sweeping open fields you may see kestrels and other birds of prey. The village of Eastling then comes into view. Its pub, renowned for serving local produce and a centre for village life, used to host celebrations at the end of another ancient tradition, the St Andrew’s Day squirrel hunt.

You will also pass the village church of St Mary’s with its massive yew tree, not only older than the church, but older than Christianity itself, having lived for more than 2,000 years. The tower of the medieval church is thought to pre-date the Norman Conquest.

The most fertile parts of this area are put to work producing cereals, while many hundreds of acres remain undisturbed woodland – home to badgers, blue jays and other wildlife.

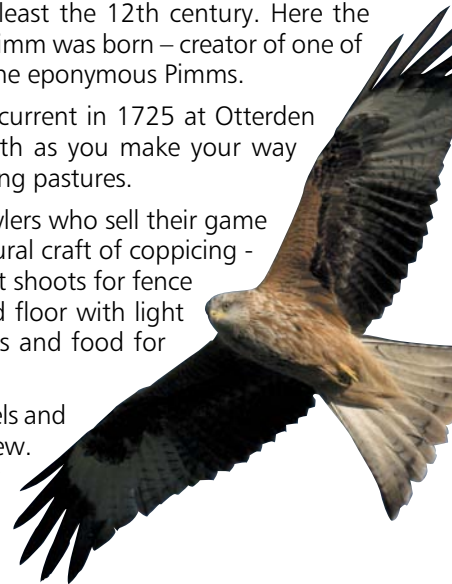
The next stretch of agricultural land brings you to Derbies Court, where the 16th century manor house is part of a working farm.

Then it’s on to Stalisfield Green and its picturesque pub. The Plough is a 15th century Wealden Hall house that provides a fantastic place to enjoy food from the area, an open fire in winter and fine views in summer.

If you decide to call at Otterden Place, cross the cattle grid and go through the gate next to the clock tower. Otherwise, walk on to Snoad Farm, with its free-range pigs and chicken. The Murrays, who farm here, sell excellent meat reared on the farm.

Farms and coppiced woodland accompany you as you make your way into the village of Doddington, where you will find SW Doughty’s, a family butcher renowned for selling excellent local meat. The nearby Chequers Inn has awards for its real ale or you might be tempted to visit the tearoom at Doddington Place Gardens.

The fragrant woods at Doddington take you back to Newnham and The George Inn, whose impressive menu extends a hearty welcome to weary walkers.





# Step by step WALKING GUIDE

## Planning Your Walk

Feel free to start your walk at any point: as this is a circular walk you'll always return to where you began. Many sections of the walk end at a spot where you'll find a pub, restaurant or tearoom to help fortify you for the next stage of your walk – or perhaps offer a welcome treat once you've finished the whole route. There is also a shortcut highlighted on the map, for those who may prefer a shorter walk. There are several places to leave your vehicle in the villages on your route if you are arriving by car.

If not driving, you can take a train to Faversham or Teynham and from either catch a bus to Newnham. Although there are no public conveniences along this rural walk, you can use the toilets at the various 'pub stops' en route. Use our directory to find a list of local accommodation, food producers, retailers and restaurants. Also, check out the wealth of additional information at [faversham.org/walking](http://faversham.org/walking).

## NEWNHAM TO EASTLING

**A1.** Outside The George Inn in Newnham, nestled in the Syndale Valley, face the handsome flint-built medieval church and turn left along The Street.

**A2.** Immediately before the last house on right, turn right at footpath sign. Pass next to gate, entering woodland behind houses.

Keep right and follow track uphill, ignoring signs to left and right. Keep going straight. At kissing gate, turn right following fence line between two wooded areas. Note the coppicing of sweet chestnut trees, a common practice in this area. At fork in path, go left and follow path to road.

**A3.** Turn right at road and head into Eastling, where you will find The Carpenters Arms – a great place to try the local food and the venue for the once-popular St Andrew's Day squirrel hunt celebrations.

## EASTLING TO STALISFIELD

**B1.** Bear left at white weather-boarded King's Cottages, passing through gate opposite. If you've taken a detour to the pub, retrace your steps and bear right opposite King's Cottages. Follow path across field to St Mary's Church; turn right at the church and follow wall, passing through gate to right of church. Pass through beech corridor, cross wooden bridge and turn left into arable field. Follow path to right, keeping hedge to your left and field to your right, to woods. Pass through two gates onto Belmont

Estate, then cross valley along a corridor of hawthorn hedges.

**B2.** On entering woods ahead turn right. Following bridleway, ignoring way-markers pointing uphill to left. Pass through coppiced area.

**B3.** Go through gate at end, cross road, climb stile and bear left through field. Climb stile in far left hand corner of this field. (For shortcut, see directions in panel)

**B4.** At road, turn right then immediately left along signposted bridleway. Keep to bridleway, ignoring footpaths uphill to left. Pass Gilham's Cottage on right and keep straight ahead (ignoring first signed path left).

**B5.** Turn left at next way-marker leading uphill and leave bridleway. Pass through a small gate and walk along edge of field uphill to right, heading towards Derbies Court, a 16th century manor house, now a working farm. Cross road after Derbies Court, pass through gate opposite and cross field.

**B6.** At end of field turn right. Keep wire fence and woodland on your left and head for the houses in the distance. Pass through gate and keep left, following fence line towards houses in the distance. At next gate cross field at an angle, heading for gate and white house opposite.



## Rural gem...

### AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY

Syndale Valley runs through the mid Kent Downs, a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The chalk beneath your feet makes for dry valleys. Millennia ago, glacial rivers surged through them; today they are peaceful havens for walkers and wildlife alike. Your walk takes you through a patchwork landscape of woodlands, arable fields, parkland and orchards. You'll see signs of coppicing in many of the woods, where trees are cut down almost to ground level and the stumps allowed to regenerate over a number of years (between seven and 25). The resulting stems are harvested on a rotational cycle and used for rods, poles and logs. Between the picture-book villages, the roads are lined with hedgerows laden with brambles and dog-rose; on the steeper valley sides, areas of old grassland still thrive.

**B7.** Pass through gate and turn right on to Hillside Road. At next junction, turn left and head into hamlet of Stalisfield Green where you'll find The Plough Inn - a 15th century Wealden Hall house with an extensive menu of fresh locally-produced food.

## STALISFIELD TO DODDINGTON

**C1.** Just past The Plough, take sign-posted lane on right hand side before entrance to white cottage on right. Keep to right of path, with fence line on your right.



## SHORTCUT DIRECTIONS

**B3:** Turn right at road end of bridleway and take footpath to left through woodland and into field. Cross field. At road turn left then right, past Tong Farm Cottages. Continue across fields to lane.

Turn left then after a few yards right through kissing gate into field. Drop into valley and up the other side, passing through gate. Follow path through fields held to have been home to Roman vineyards. At the orchard, cross diagonally to the gate in the far left hand corner to the road.

Cross road and continue ahead down lane before taking footpath right. Pass through wood and across fields to road. Turn left into Doddington. Rejoin walk at D1.





*“If more valued food and cheer above hoarded gold, it would be a merrier world”*

J.R.R. Tolkien



## The Plough, Stalisfield Green



The Plough is home to authentic country dining. This beautiful rural pub serves quality English food using the best ingredients, sourced directly from local farmers and producers. Everything from its bread to ketchup, cloth-wrapped sponge puddings to dry cured bacon is produced on the premises by Robert and Amy's skilled kitchen team. Seasonal specialities include Kentish cobnut ice-cream and blackberry Queen of Puddings. Open fires in winter and a big garden for the summer make this the perfect place to catch your breath. Serving noon-2.30pm and 6.30-9pm, weekdays, noon-9.30pm on Saturday and Sunday lunch from noon until 4pm.

**C2.** On reaching road turn right and take bridleway on right past Hall's Place. At end of bridleway turn right onto road and head downhill.

**C3.** At bottom of hill, at the first grass triangle, take second lane on left uphill (a concrete track) towards Otterden Place: you'll see its white gates ahead. At top of lane, cross road, cattle grid, and enter Otterden Place through gate next to clock tower.

**C7.** At road, cross over and take lane opposite to Frangbury Farmhouse. At farmhouse keep right and pass along boundary, heading forwards into field. Halfway across field, just before pylon on right, turn left and head into Jackson's Wood, keeping pylon on left.

**C8.** At T-junction in wood, turn right through coppiced woodland and at end cross diagonally to right across field. At end of field turn right, with tree line on your left and proceed to lane at end.

**C9.** Turn left into lane for Doddington. Family butchers SW Doughty's is in front of you – famous for local meat and prize-winning sausages. It even has its own abattoir. Turn right as you enter village along The Street towards The Chequers Inn - an ideal place for a refreshment break; it's over 400 years old, reputed to be haunted, and has won awards for its real ale.



## DODDINGTON TO NEWNHAM

**D1.** Continue along The Street then turn left after Home Farm up Church Hill.

**D2.** Turn right at top of hill and proceed forward. Pass through kissing gate at end and head diagonally across parkland, keeping Doddington Place on your right.



## Wildlife...

### DODDINGTON CHURCHYARD: A WILDLIFE HAVEN



Doddington churchyard is carefully maintained as a habitat in which wildlife can flourish undisturbed. Discover pyramidal orchids, as well as snowdrops and wild daffodils in the early spring, ox-eye daisies in the early summer, and masses of common knapweed in August. If the church is open, look out for the 13th century wall paintings in the window recesses on the north side of the nave. One – showing St Francis receiving the stigmata – is unique, being the only one from that era of its kind in England.

The gardens are a colourful break from your walk and the tearoom a welcome place to relax (open Bank Holiday Mondays and Sundays 2-5pm from Easter to September).

**D3.** Pass through small gate in corner of parkland about 200 yards to left of entrance to Doddington Place, entering woodland. Walk through the Forestry Commission woods.

**D4.** At end, turn right (with impressive Sharsted Court in front of you). Pass through gate, keep right, then take right hand fork in road down hill.

**D5.** Turn left into The Street, heading back to The George Inn with its garden, welcoming atmosphere and extensive menu for weary walkers.



**C4.** At end of barn, turn right through kissing gate and head across field towards gate, left of thatched cottage

in distance. Keep small woodland to your right. Go through gates and pass Snoad Farm on your left. The Murrays, who farm here, sell excellent meat from free-range pigs and chickens reared on the farm. Turn left at road.



**C5.** At bend in road to right (at Walnut Tree House) take dirt track immediately to your left. At end of out-buildings walk straight on, ignoring track to your left, and pass down a dirt track. On reaching field in front keep close to left edge following hedge line. Keep left, passing gardens of houses until you reach a dirt track. Follow track to end house and turn left on to road.

**C6.** Immediately before first house on right, turn right at footpath sign and take right hand path diagonally across field. Head for telegraph pole in distance, to left of house in front of you.

## The George Inn



The 16th century George Inn at Newnham is a former farm house retaining much of its rural charm and historic character, with beams, polished wood floors, inglenook fireplaces and candlelit tables. Among the inn's popular bar snacks is home-made steak and ale pie, or you can enjoy chef's specials in the restaurant including pan fried fillets of seabass with lime butter and locally-reared slow roasted half shoulder of lamb in red wine and rosemary sauce. The beautiful garden is a centre for village life and the venue for its fete in summer. Open 11am-3pm and 6.30-11pm and noon-10.30pm on Sundays.





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### Walk Overview

**Distance:** 11 miles (17.5 km); 4.5 hrs (no stops)  
**Short cut:** Top loop 6.5 miles (10.4 km)  
 Bottom loop 8.6 miles (13.8 km)  
**Fitness level:** Suitable for the more experienced walker  
**Toilets:** No public toilets - pub facilities can be used  
**Refreshments:** Restaurants and pubs en route

**Transport:** Mainline railway stations at Faversham and Teynham. Local bus service from Faversham and Teynham to Newnham [www.traveline.org.uk](http://www.traveline.org.uk)  
**Pay phones:** Newnham, Eastling, Stalisfield Green, Doddington  
**Map:** OS Explorer 149

- Garden/Arboretum
  - Public house
  - Telephone
  - Viewpoint
  - Refreshments
  - Place of worship
  - Stile
  - Gate
- 0 0.5 1  
 Miles



# Directory of local businesses

## FOOD, DRINK AND PRODUCE

**A J Barkaway Butcher**, Faversham ME13 7JE  
01795 532040. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Lamberhurst Farm Dairy**,  
Dargate ME13 9ES 01227 751741  
[www.cheesemakersofcanterbury.co.uk](http://www.cheesemakersofcanterbury.co.uk)

**Grow**, Brogdale Farm ME13 8XZ  
01795 531888. [www.brogdaleonline.co.uk](http://www.brogdaleonline.co.uk)

**Macknade Fine Foods**, Faversham ME13 7JE  
01795 534497/53737. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Moor Organics**, Deerton Street ME9 9LJ  
01795 521341. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Pine Trees Juice**, Doddington ME9 0AX  
01795 886266. [www.pinetreesfarm.co.uk](http://www.pinetreesfarm.co.uk)

**Seasalter Lamb**, Eastling ME13 0BD  
07891 004474. [www.seasalterlamb.co.uk](http://www.seasalterlamb.co.uk)

**Snoad Farm**, Otterden ME13 0DB  
01795 890700. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**SW Doughty Butcher**, Doddington ME9 0BH  
01795 886255. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

## PUBS AND RESTAURANTS

**Albion Taverna**, Faversham ME13 7DH  
01795 591411. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Anchor Inn and Crabshack**,  
Faversham ME13 7BP 01795 536471  
Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Ardennes Restaurant**, Faversham ME13 7JB  
01795 590008. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Black Lion**, Lynsted ME9 0RJ  
01795 521229.

**Courtyard Restaurant**,  
Brogdale Farm ME13 8XZ  
01795 530013. [www.courtyard-restaurant.co.uk](http://www.courtyard-restaurant.co.uk)

**Elephant**, Faversham ME13 7JN  
01795 590157. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**George Inn**, Newnham ME9 0LL  
01795 890237.

**Osteria Posillipo**, Faversham ME13 7LD  
01795 590580. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Phoenix Tavern**, Faversham ME13 7BH  
01795 591462. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Plough**, Stalisfield Green ME13 0HY  
01795 890256. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Plough Inn**,  
Lewson Street ME9 9JJ 01795 521348  
Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Provenance**, Faversham ME13 8PE  
01795 539508. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Read's**, Faversham ME13 8XE  
01795 535344. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Rose and Crown**, Perry Wood ME13 9RY  
01227 752214. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Shipwrights' Arms**, Hollowshore ME13 7TU  
01795 590088.

**Spice Lounge**, Faversham ME13 8NU  
01795 533322. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Sun Inn**, Faversham ME13 7JE  
01795 535098. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Three Horseshoes**, Hernhill ME13 9AX  
01227 750842. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**White Horse Inn**, Boughton ME13 9AX  
01227 751343. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**White Lion**, Selling ME13 9RQ  
01227 752211. [www.thewhitelion-selling.com](http://www.thewhitelion-selling.com)

**Woodrose Restaurant**, Hernhill ME13 9TX  
01227 751168. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

## ATTRACTIONS

**Beech Court Gardens**, Challock TN25 4DJ  
01223 740735. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Belmont House**, Throwley ME13 0HH  
01795 890202. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Brogdale Farm**, Ospringe ME13 8XZ  
01795 536250. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Doddington Place**, Doddington ME9 0BB  
01795 886101. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Farming World**, Boughton ME13 9SP  
01227 751144. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Fleur Museum**, Faversham ME13 8NY  
01795 534542. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Faversham Swimming Pools**, ME13 8PW  
01795 532426. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Sailing Barge Greta**, Standard Quay, Faversham  
07711 657919. [www.greta1892.co.uk](http://www.greta1892.co.uk)

**Mount Ephraim Gardens**, Hernhill ME13 9TX  
01227 751496. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**St Mary of Charity Church**,  
Faversham ME13 8JZ  
01795 530599. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Shepherd Neame Brewery Tours**,  
Faversham ME13 7AX  
01795 542016. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Shrine of St Jude**, Faversham ME13 7SE  
01795 539214. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

## ACCOMMODATION

**Barnsfield**, Fostal ME13 9JG  
01227 750973. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Black Lion**, Lynsted ME9 0RJ  
01795 521229. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Brenley Farm House**, Boughton ME13 9LY  
01227 751203. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Church Oast**, Hernhill ME13 9JW  
01227 750974. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Cot-Hoy**, Buckland ME13 0TP  
01795 535616. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Court Lodge**, Oare ME13 0QB  
01795 591543. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Fairlea**, Faversham ME13 8NH  
01795 539610. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Frith Farm Cottages**, Otterden ME13 0DD  
01795 890701. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Gladstone House**, Faversham ME13 8DZ  
01795 536432. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Judd's Folly Hotel**, Ospringe ME13 0RH  
01795 591818. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Leaveland Court**, Leaveland ME13 0NP  
01233 740596. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**March Cottage**, Faversham ME13 8NH  
01795 536514. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Old Vicarage**, Doddington ME9 0BD  
01795 886136. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Painter's Farm Caravan Camping Site**,  
Painter's Forstal ME13 0EG 01795 532995

**Palace Farm**, Doddington ME9 0AU  
01795 886200. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Railway Hotel**, Faversham ME13 8PE  
01795 533173. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Read's**, Faversham ME13 8XE  
01795 535344. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Sandhurst Farm**, Newnham ME9 0NE  
01795 886854. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Sun Inn**, Faversham ME13 7JE  
01795 535098. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Syndale Lodge**, Faversham ME13 0RH  
01795 531488. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Tenterden House**, Boughton ME13 0RH  
01227 751593. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**Uplees Farm**, Uplees ME13 0QR  
01795 532133. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

**White Horse Inn**, Boughton. ME13 9AX  
01227 751343. Find us on [faversham.org](http://faversham.org)

## Food Trails in this series

- **Footsteps of Royalty & Romans** (Faversham – Ospringe – Painter's Forstal – Brogdale)
- **A Walk on the Wild Side** (Faversham – Davington – Oare – Luddenham)
- **Syndale Valley Walk** (Newnham – Eastling – Stalisfield – Doddington)
- **The Peasants' Last Revolt** (Boughton – Hernhill – Dargate – Dunkirk)
- **The Two Creeks Walk** (Faversham – Thorn Creek – Davington – Oare)
- **First Fruit** (Teynham – Conyer – Lewson Street – Lynsted)
- **Earth, Wind and Water** (Faversham – Goodnestone – Graveney – Seasalter)
- **A Land for All Seasons** (Sheldwich – Selling – Perry Wood – Badlesmere)

A Faversham Enterprise Partnership project, working in collaboration with Faversham Area Tourism Association

## The Countryside Code

Respect – Protect – Enjoy

If you follow the Countryside Code wherever you go, you will enjoy walking in Kent and help protect the countryside now and for future generations.

Be safe, plan ahead and follow any signs. Leave gates and property as you find them. Protect plants and animals, and take your litter home. Keep dogs under close control. Consider other people.



For further information please visit [www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk](http://www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk) or Tel: 08451 003298

Remember to always follow the Highway Code.

For walking information: go to [faversham.org/walking](http://faversham.org/walking) Telephone: 01795 534542

Visit: Tourist Information Centre, Fleur de Lis Heritage Centre, 10-13 Preston Street, Faversham, Kent ME13 8NS

