

Trail Summary

Trail : SUSSTR0017
Activity : Walk
Type : Pub
Author : Ben Perkins
Distance : 3.7 miles / 6 kms
Ascent : 374 feet / 114 metres
Location : TQ598202 / TN21 9AH



The Star, Old Heathfield
© Nigel Chadwick



Nettlesworth Place
© Oast House Archive



All Saints Church, Old Heathfield
© Andrew Hill

Some of the finest walking in Sussex can be found within the rich undulating countryside of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, to the north of the county. It is a small-scale landscape which probably hasn't changed much since it was at the centre of the iron-smelting industry in the 16th and 17th centuries. The walk starts and finishes at the small hamlet of Old Heathfield, where the parish church and Star Inn stand well away from the large new settlement which grew up on the other side of Heathfield Park after the arrival of the railway.



Trail Description

1. From the pub car park, turn right to enter Heathfield churchyard. Pass to the right of the church and drop down along the right edge of the graveyard. Leave the church through an iron kissing-gate and bear very slightly left down across a field to find a stile and footbridge hidden in the trees in the bottom corner. Climb through scrub to a stile and continue in the same direction uphill across a field. Once over a stile beside a gate, turn left along a gravel track.
2. After about 250 yards, turn right over a stile set back from the track and follow a path along a left field edge, with a good view southwards to the Downs. The path continues through a wood and along a left field edge to join a hedged grass track where you should turn right.
3. Follow this fine old track, probably an ancient highway, southwards. It passes through woodland and then along a left field edge before skirting well to the left of the buildings at St Dunstan's Farm, where it follows a right field boundary. An enclosed path continues, parallel to the drive from the farm, before joining and following the drive. At the bottom of the hill the official bridleway doglegs to the left to avoid a locked gate. Rejoin the drive and follow it out to join Furnace Lane.
4. Turn left, then immediately right at a road junction. After about 200 yards, turn right up overgrown steps to a stile and head out half left across two fields, with a stile between them. In the field corner, go over a stile and follow the right edge of the next field. Beyond a stile into the next field, veer half right across the corner of the field to rejoin Furnace Lane down steps cut in a bank. Turn left.
5. After about 300 yards, turn right along a wide access drive which, beyond a cottage, becomes an enclosed track for a while and then continues along a left field edge with Furnace Wood on the left. At the corner of the wood, veer half left through a gate and begin to drop downhill along an unfenced grass track, still with the wood nearby on your left.
6. From the bottom corner of the field, a track continues through a dip, with Heathfield church briefly in view ahead. A few yards beyond a bend to the left, turn right over a stile and follow a left field edge. In the field corner, cross a stile and continue beside a fence on the right. In the next field corner, go right through a gate and, after a few yards, left along a wide fenced path. Where this enclosed path ends, go ahead, joining and following iron railings on your right. After about 100 yards, go right through a kissing-gate, cross a drive and go half left across grass to join a lane. Turn left back to the pub, a few yards away.



Old Heathfield

The Star Inn

The date on the inn sign suggests that the Star Inn was built in 1348 and the story goes that it housed the stonemasons constructing the church next door. In all likelihood the pub was actually built about 200 years later, in the 15th century. The two modest bar and dining areas are full of character, with wood floors and low beams and outside there is a sheltered garden. It is a free house, offering, like so many Sussex pubs, the locally-brewed Harveys Sussex Bitter, as well as two more rotating guest beers. The high-quality menu favours a wide choice of seafood dishes.

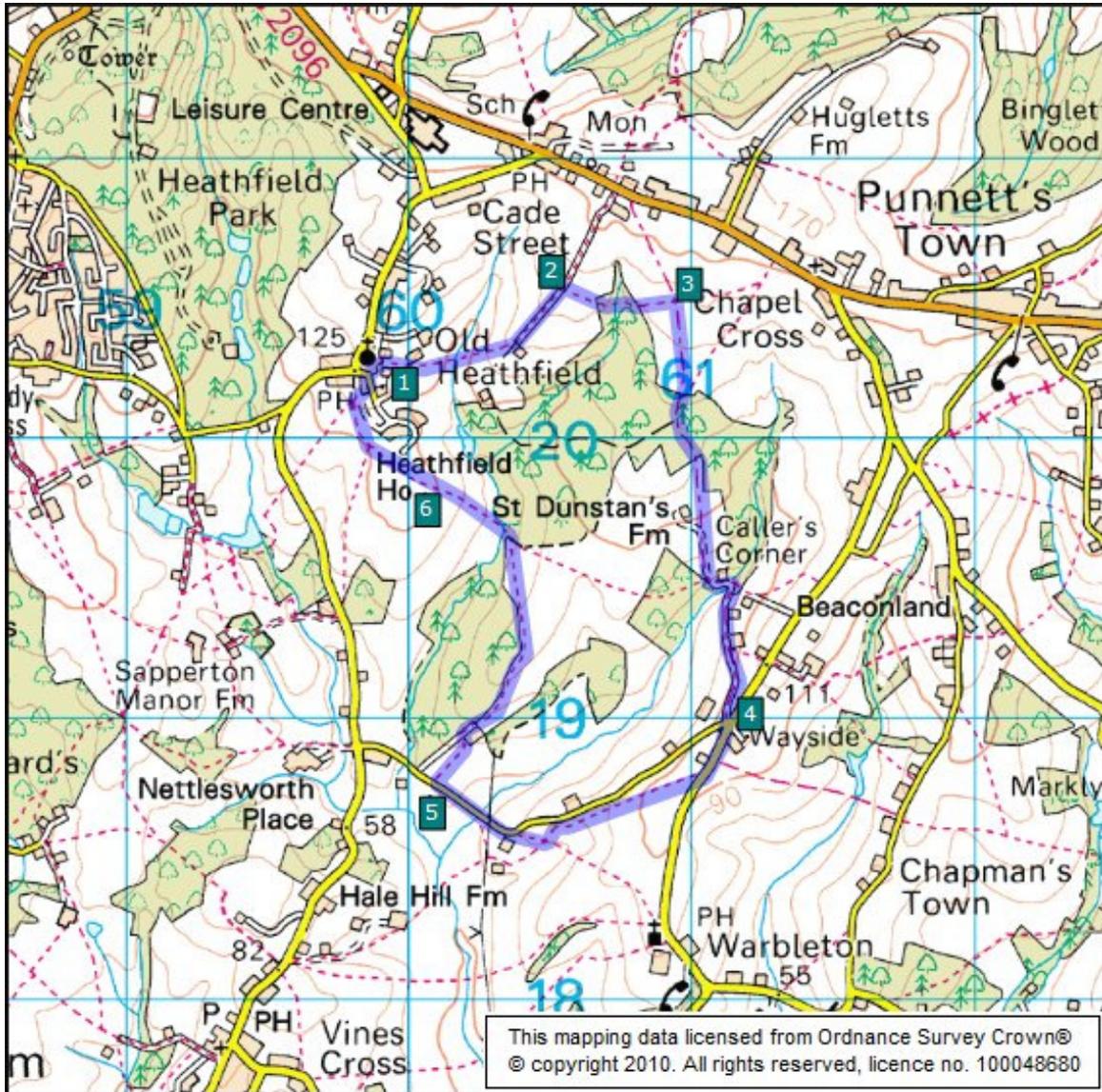
Opening times: 11.30 am to 3.30 pm and 5.30 pm to 11 pm on Monday to Saturday and 12 noon to 3 pm and 7 pm to 10.30 pm on Sunday. Food is served from 12 noon to 3 pm and 7 pm to 9.30 pm (9 pm on Sunday). Telephone: 01435 863570

Bateman's

Bateman's, the fine 17th century mansion near Burwash, a few miles to the east, was the home of Rudyard Kipling between 1902 and 1936. It is now owned and managed by the National Trust and many of the rooms are furnished much as they were when Kipling lived there. The house and garden are open from mid-March to October except on Thursdays and Fridays. Telephone: 01435 882302

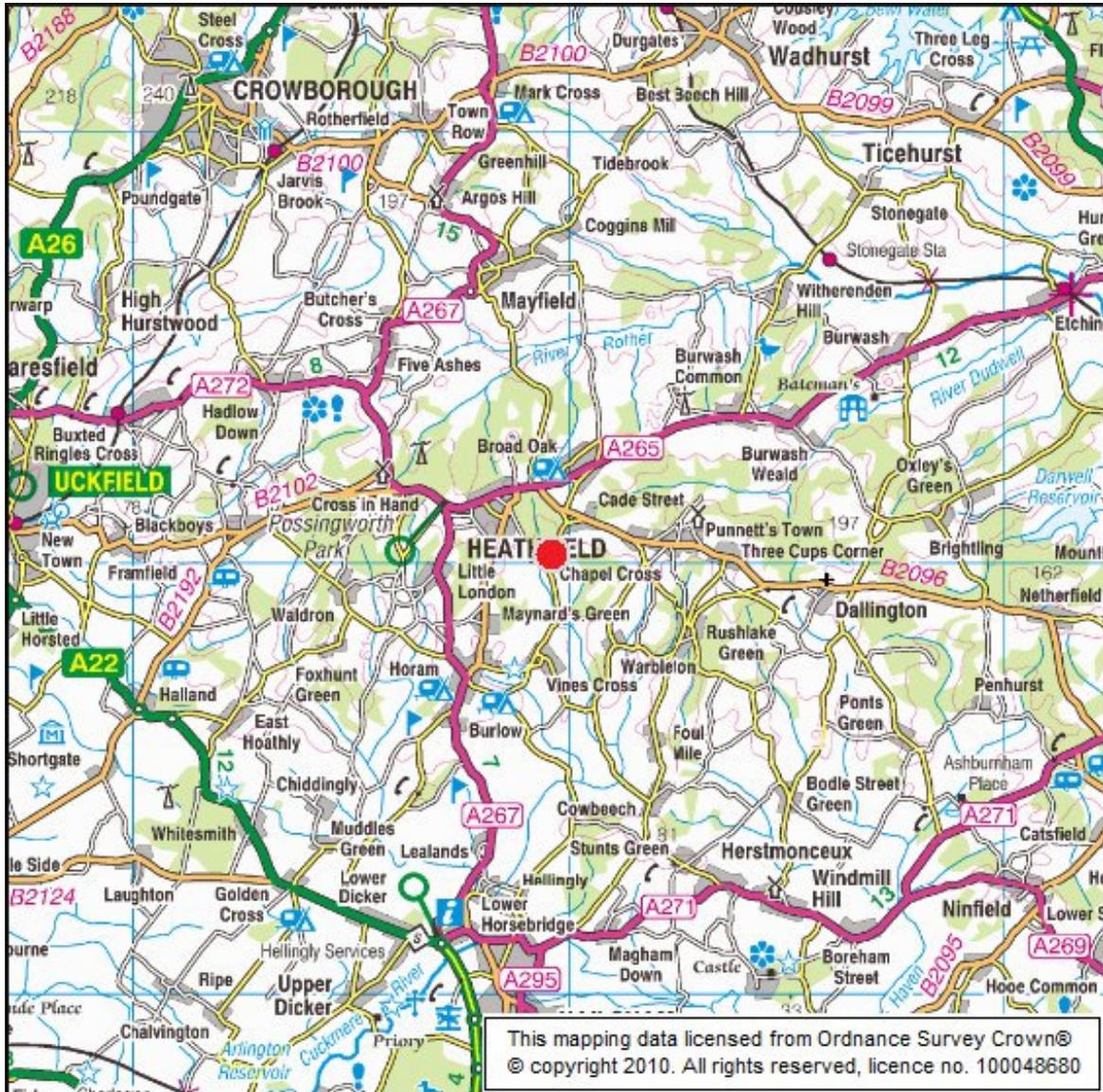


Trail Map





Trail Location



Location Details

The starting point is The Star Inn at Old Heathfield. Patrons may park in the car park with permission, or there is room beside the approach road to the village from the north, opposite the cricket ground. Old Heathfield is signposted from the B2096 Heathfield-to-Battle road about a mile east of Heathfield. The pub is tucked away on the south side of the parish church.