

Hellingly

Hellingly is a small village just off the A267, mainly consisting of a church, local pub and cottages.

The church, which opened in 1190 has been built on the only remaining undamaged ciric in Sussex. A ciric is a circular Celtic burial ground, raised above ground level, to keep the dead dry. The circular form is believed to be the celtic symbol of immortality. The mound at Hellingly is no longer circular, but oval as some more land was given to the church in the 12th century. The original wall surrounding the ciric was built during the 13th century, as the Bishops at the time required a churchyard to be surrounded by a wall, ditch or hedge. The wall has been replaced and the current wall was built fairly recently.

In 1541 an illegal deerhunt on the land of Sir Nicholas Pelham ended with a fight in which Lord Pelham's gamekeeper John Busbrig was killed. The hunting party was found guilty of murder, and Lord Thomas Fiennes of Herstonceux, along with three others were hung. It was the first time in English history that a man of noble birth was executed for the death of a commoner. The reason that Lord Thomas who was 23 at the time was killed is more than likely to have been due to greedy peers, who were after the lands owned by the Fiennes.

During the reign of Queen Mary in June 1557 Reverend John Mills was burned at the stake in Lewes for his Protestant beliefs.

1792 brought a proposal for a canal to run from Beddingham near Lewes on the River Ouse to Horsebridge Mill, but this was abandoned. The mill continued to operate, suffering a major fire in 1908, and was closed in 1969.

The churchyard contains a number of Terracotta enhanced grave stones, created by Jonathan Harmer of Heathfield in the early 1800's. In 1897 400 acres of land were sold by the Earl of Chichester to Sussex Council, to be turned into Hellingly Asylum the East Sussex County Mental Hospital.

Source: www.villagenet.co.uk

Hellingly Railroad Station

Date opened: 3.4.1880

Date closed: 14.6.1965

Present state: The station is little changed since closure and is the best preserved station on the line still retaining its front and rear canopy. It is now a private residence. The Cuckoo Trail passes along the trackbed past the platform which is now partly obscured by bushes and a fence for privacy.

Source: www.disused-stations.org.uk

For more information see 'Walks of The Gun no. 7 – The Cuckoo Trail'

The Hellingly Walk

Walk overview:

Distance: 4.5 miles (7.5 km)

Time: 2 – 2.5 hour

Description: Enjoy walking along the Wealdway to the old traditional village of Hellingly. This walk could be extended to see the closed Hellingly railway station and an old railroad bridge.



The Gun
Gun Hill, Chiddingly
Heathfield, East Sussex
TN21 0JU

www.thegunhouse.co.uk
enquiries@thegunhouse.co.uk
Tel. 01825 872361

 @GunHeathfield

 find us on facebook

Leave The Gun and turn left around the corner of the building. Follow the yellow arrow on the post and walk through playground to the furthest corner. Cross a broken style and continue straight across the field in the direction of the corner of the forest. Carry on straight along the edge of the forest until a style at the end. Climb over the style and turn left onto the road.

Keep walking for 0.1 mile (150m) and turn right in front of the pond. Follow the yellow arrow and go through a wooden gate with the sign 'Prices Farm' **(1)**. Walk over a wooden bridge, turn right and climb over a style marked by a yellow arrow into the field. Follow the arrow and walk diagonally across the field and through bushes into the next field. Keep walking diagonally until a style in the corner **(2)**. Climb over it and turn left onto the rural road. After 50 yards (50m) turn right (follow a 'Wealdenway' signpost), continue along the rural road past Rock Harbour Farm until a signpost on the left.

Follow the 'Wealdenway' sign, turn left and climb over the style into the field. Keep walking along the edge of the field, climb over the next style **(3)** and follow the trail to the corner of the next field. Climb over the following style and continue along the edge of the field and in the corner climb over a couple of styles into the next field. Keep walking straight along the edge of the field, later in between the fields, climb over two more styles and follow the edge of the next field until a wooden signpost with a yellow arrow. Turn right, go over another style and turn left onto the forest trail. Follow this trail down the hill, over a footbridge **(4)**, and climb over a style into the field. Continue along the path (later join the edge of the field) until the next footbridge. Walk over the bridge, through an iron gate **(5)** and up the hill along the edge of the field. Go through the next iron gate and continue straight until a track. Turn right and follow the track until you come to a road.

Turn right onto this road and follow it until a main road. Turn right (you can use pavement on the right side of the road), carry on for 0.1 mile (150m) and turn left onto 'Vicarage lane'. Immediately behind the crossroad turn right and climb over a style marked by a yellow circle. Follow the trail up the hill and keep walking straight through the field. At the end climb over a style **(6)** and turn right onto the road. Carry on along this road and at the crossroad turn right (you can admire the church of the Hellingly village **(7)**) until a T-junction.

*If you want to visit the abandoned railway station of Hellingly: Turn left and keep walking for 0.5 mile (800m) until you see a turning to the Cuckoo Trail car park. Follow this sign and walk through a small car park until you reach the trail. The station building **(8)** is on the right, and on the left you can see a beautiful railway bridge. Later use the same way to come back to the T-junction.*

Turn right and follow the road over a bridge until you reach a wooden signpost on the right. Turn right, go through the gate and walk diagonally across the field (following the direction of a yellow arrow). At the end walk through the next iron gate, go across the main road and continue onto the street opposite. Keep walking along the track until an iron gate on the left **(9)** (the track bears to the right). Walk through, continue along a small trail and then go through the bigger iron gate **(10)** (marked by a yellow arrow) into the field. Keep walking straight in the direction of the post of electric lines in the middle of the field and by the post turn slightly right in the direction of the right yellow arrow. Continue until a track, turn right and keep walking straight along this track in between the fields, and later along the edge of the forest until the end of the field on the right.

Turn right and keep walking along the edge of the field until a signpost of four footpaths **(11)**. Turn slightly to the right (follow the yellow arrow) and walk across the field. Down the slope you meet a footbridge **(12)**, go over it and walk straight along the edge of the field until a crossing into the next field on the left. Walk through, turn right and keep walking along the edge of the field (later along the edge of the farm property until you meet a style. Climb over it and into the next field, turn slightly to the right and walk diagonally up the hill. In the corner turn right onto a track, keep walking along this track past Popp's Farm and Rock Harbour Farm house and in front of the pond turn left (follow the 'Wealdenway' signpost). Keep walking along this road until a bigger asphalt road. Turn right onto the road and walk for 0.1 mile (150m) until a wooden signpost with yellow arrows on the right. Turn left and climb over a style into the field. Continue along the edge of the forest and later straight across the field (you can see The Gun ahead of you). Climb over a style into The Gun playground and go back to The Gun.