

# The Bolney Stage and Wykehurst Park, Bolney, West Sussex



Challenging Terrain

5 miles  
Circular  
2 to 3 hours

210114



## Access Notes



1. The route has several climbs and descents throughout.
2. The paths are unmade for the most part and can get quite muddy in winter and after periods of rain so good waterproof boots are recommended.
3. There are a couple of sections of road walking along quiet lanes so take care of any traffic on these parts.
4. You will need to negotiate several gates plus seven stiles (all of which have either adjacent dog gates or open fencing alongside).
5. Whilst the vast majority of the paths are fenced, you will cross a couple of pastures which are likely to be holding sheep so take care with dogs. The first (and last) sections of path can be a little overgrown – but persevere, it is only a few hundred yards.

The Bolney Stage dates from about 1500 and oozes character with inglenook fireplaces, ancient flagstones and crooked beams.

A 5 mile circular pub walk from the Bolney Stage in Bolney, West Sussex. The walking route explores the beautiful surrounding hills and valleys, with amazing views and plenty of wildlife. There's something for everyone on this varied route, from woodlands to parkland, sheep pastures to smallholdings and even a vineyard.

## Getting there

Bolney is located about 11 miles north of Brighton, just to the west of the A23. The walk starts and finishes at the Bolney Stage which is on London Road (just north of the village centre) and has its own car park.

Approximate post code **RH17 5RL**.

## Walk Sections



Start to Wykehurst Park Drive



Stand with your back to the pub, facing London Road. Cross over the road with care to take the signed public footpath into the woodland opposite. Keep ahead as the path narrows following a fence on the left and an (encroaching!) tall hedge on the right. (Do persevere if this is a little overgrown – it is only a few hundred yards and the rest of the walk is worth it!). The path opens up a little with fenced fields each side, you may see a pair of donkeys to the left.

You will reach a T-junction with another path, turn right here. Follow the woodland footpath downhill and at the bottom you'll come to a minor fork. Keep left here, signed as the public footpath and continue as the path passes to the left of a large pylon.

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Continue on the path, meandering for some distance. You'll see remnants of old iron fencing, part of the old Wykehurst Park estate. The 105 room mansion at the centre of the estate was built in 1872 by E. M. Barry, the designer of the Royal Opera House. The house and grounds have appeared in many films including several made by the Hammer House of Horrors, as well as *The Eagle Has Landed*.

You'll pass by a derelict stile and the path swings right along the bottom of an open area of heath. The path continues past another waymarker into a small section of trees and then emerges out to a T-junction with a stone drive, one of the entrance drives to Wykehurst Place.

## 1 → 2 Wykehurst Park Drive to Rout Lodge Gate



Turn right for just a few paces and then turn left across a stile. Follow the obvious path which crosses diagonally right over this open field. The path swings left through some trees and then continues ahead to reach the top fence of the field. Cross the stile to reach a T-junction with a quiet residential lane. Turn left along this (signed for the High Weald Landscape Trail) and follow it as it swings right and then left, then continue until you reach the T-junction at the end of the road.

Turn right along the road edge (signed again for the High Weald Landscape Trail), taking care of any traffic. Continue along the pretty lane for some distance, with secluded properties and paddocks each side. Soon after you pass the entrance to Rout Lodge on the left, look out for a footpath sign and gate on the left.

## 2 → 3 Rout Lodge Gate to Rout Farm



Turn left through this gate into a hillside pasture (which may be holding sheep) and cross the field at about 1 o'clock. Take time to enjoy the spectacular views ahead. In the bottom corner, pass through a gate and cross the stile immediately afterwards. You will see a small lake visible in the valley bottom ahead. Walk at about 11 o'clock through the area of scrub and the obvious wide path passes immediately to the left of the lake.

Beyond the lake, keep in the same direction crossing diagonally

over the next field. In the field corner, bear left to continue on the path which crosses the top of the next field. Cross the stile into the next field and continue across the top of this. Another stile leads you out of the field alongside the pretty white Rifleman's Cottage.

Walk up the short cottage driveway and then turn sharp left down the access lane which runs immediately to the right of the cottage (the entrance to Routs Farm). As you reach a fork with a property ahead, keep left. The tarmac lane emerges from the trees and then begins to climb steadily between sheep pastures. At the top of the slope, you'll come to a junction of lanes. Keep straight ahead on the bridleway lane, with a row of cherry trees to the left. At the end of this line of trees, you'll see the bungalow farmhouse of Rout Farm on the right.

## 3 → 4 Rout Farm to Cross Colwood Lane



After passing the bungalow on the right, and the first outbuilding on the left, bear left to join the fenced grass footpath which leads you around the outside of the sheep holding pens. Pass through the wooden gate and keep ahead for just a few yards, then turn right through the next wide gate to join a wide grass footpath, fenced between sheep pastures.

Follow this beautiful path steadily downhill, enjoying the company of the sheep through the fences (the rams were very keen to ensure our dog kept walking!) and taking time to appreciate the views. Further along you'll see a large pond down to the right. If you're lucky (as we were!) you may see a heron catching his lunch here.

Beyond the farmland, the path narrows with fenced rough fields to the right. Pass through the metal gate ahead to join another section of wide fenced path, this time with horse paddocks each side. As you enter a section of trees, to the right you'll see a fenced bird enclosure holding hens, geese and turkeys. Keep ahead and then, with The Old Stables to the left, follow the footpath sign which leads you right to join the tarmac access drive. Continue along this drive to reach a T-junction with the road, Cross Colwood Lane.

## 4 → 5 Cross Colwood Lane to East Lodge

Turn left along the lane. After just a short distance (opposite the entrance to the property Colwood Park on the left) turn right through a metal kissing gate onto a signed footpath (note: this field may be holding kissing sheep). Keep close to the left-hand boundary to reach the next kissing gate which leads you into a section of woodland.

Follow the pretty woodland path for some distance. A little way in, the ground to the left opens up and you'll see orchards here. You will emerge from the trees to reach a T-junction with a tarmac track with the gated entrance to the timber-framed Old Mill House opposite. Turn sharp left and after just a few paces, turn right over a stile. Immediately after the stile look to the right where you'll



see a little display box where you can buy free range eggs (the providers of which are the hens to your left!).

Follow this fenced footpath and, after the hens, you'll pass an enclosure holding friendly rare-breed Gloucester Old Spot pigs. Cross the next stile and keep straight ahead (between more smallholding areas) to join the wide grass track with a hedge running on the right. The path soon narrows and leads you into Nailard's Wood.

Cross the footbridge over the stream and then keep left at the fork. If you look through the fencing to the right, you'll be able to see the vineyard of Bolney Wine Estate. We walked in early October and the vines were laden with beautiful red grapes. Started in 1972, the vineyard now covers 39 acres and has become a specialist red wine producer.

Beyond the woodland, a grass path leads you between fenced paddocks. Go through the staggered barrier and keep ahead passing to the right of the stables and the pretty East Lodge.

## 5 → 6 East Lodge to End



Keep ahead into Lodge Lane, the road signed to Bolney Village, taking care of any traffic. Follow the road bending right, and then left and keep ahead for some distance further. You will reach a T-junction with a pre-school on the right. Turn left here, heading uphill. As Top Street bends away to the right, keep ahead on the gravel track (once again part of the High Weald Landscape Trail). As this track bends away left, keep ahead passing a metal vehicle gate onto a smaller path into trees.

Some way in, you'll pass under an ornate paved arched bridge which carries a private driveway overhead. After a further 50 yards you will reach a crossroads of paths. Turn right here to join the path you used on your outward leg. Keep ahead on this narrow fenced footpath and you will emerge to the T-junction with London Road. Cross over with care where you'll find the Bolney Stage for some well-earned hospitality.

### Disclaimer

This walking route was walked and checked at the time of writing. We have taken care to make sure all our walks are safe for walkers of a reasonable level of experience and fitness. However, like all outdoor activities, walking carries a degree of risk and we accept no responsibility for any loss or damage to personal effects, personal accident, injury or public liability whilst following this walk. We cannot be held responsible for any inaccuracies that result from changes to the routes that occur over time. Please let us know of any changes to the routes so that we can correct the information.

### Walking Safety

For your safety and comfort we recommend that you take the following with you on your walk: bottled water, snacks, a waterproof jacket, waterproof/sturdy boots, a woolly hat and fleece (in winter and cold weather), a fully-charged mobile phone, a whistle, a compass and an Ordnance Survey map of the area. Check the weather forecast before you leave, carry appropriate clothing and do not set out in fog or mist as these conditions can seriously affect your ability to navigate the route. Take particular care on cliff/mountain paths where steep drops can present a particular hazard. Some routes include sections along roads – take care to avoid any traffic at these points. Around farmland take care with children and dogs, particularly around machinery and livestock. If you are walking on the coast make sure you check the tide times before you set out.

