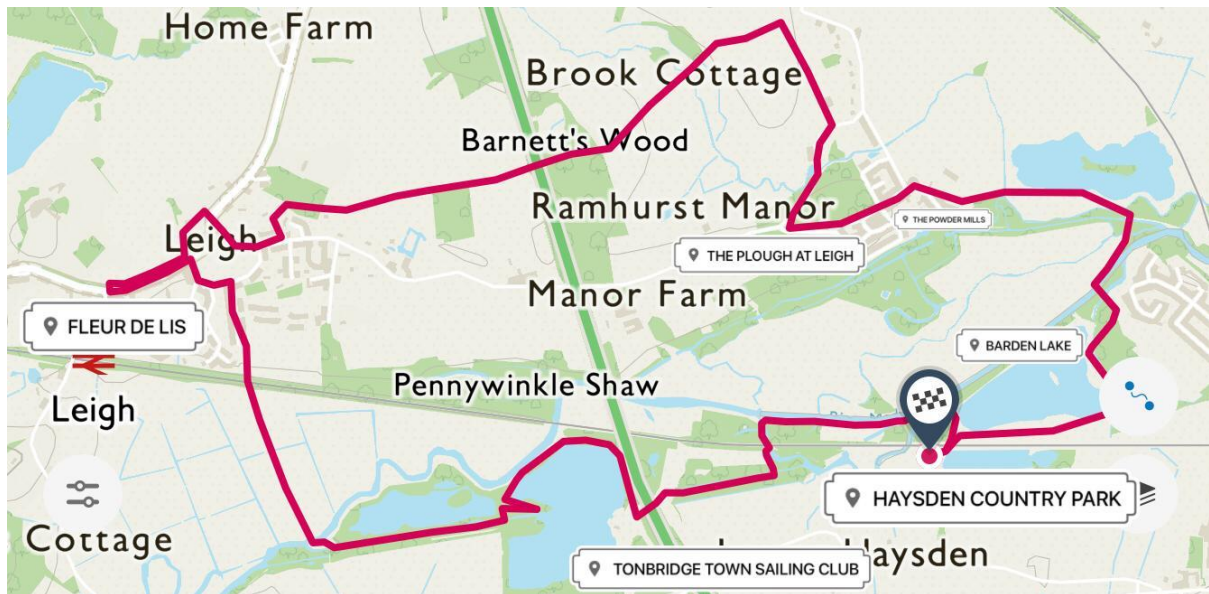


Walk 12 – The Green Mile

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Description: A long scenic walk exploring Haysden Country Park, the history of the Straight Mile and the chocolate box village of Leigh.

Length: 6 miles / 9.6 km (approximately 3 hours, longer if stopping at The Fleur De Lis or The Plough)

Grade: Leisurely

Good for: Great lakes and beautiful architecture

1. Begin your walk at 'Cafe In The Park', Haysden Country Park. Walk straight ahead and then turn left and walk under the railway bridge, continuing straight ahead, with Barden Lake to your right.
2. Turn left again, following the path over Sharpe's Bridge as you cross 'The Shallows'. Continue past Stone Lock and then follow the path along the river bank. Once you reach the wooden gate, turn left and follow the path under the railway line. Continue straight ahead, passing through the metal squeeze gate and then walk over Straight Mile Bridge before turning right and following the drainage channel upstream.
3. At the end of this path you will reach a huge embankment. **Do not attempt to pass this point after sustained rainfall. If in doubt check the status of the flood alerts before walking.**

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4. If safe to continue climb the embankment and then turn left, walking along the top before passing under the A21 flyover. Turn right and follow the gravel track downhill and then continue anti-clockwise around Haysden Water.
5. Continue straight ahead until you reach a fork in the path. At this point take the left hand turn, then take an immediate second left as you trace the path around the edge of the lake until you reach a narrow peninsula. Continue into the woods and then turn left, crossing over James Christie bridge.
6. Turn right following the path through the woods as you walk along the towpath of the Straight Mile. Turn right just before the end of the Straight Mile, cross over the concrete bridge and then follow the path across a metal girder bridge that will take you over the Medway.
7. Follow the path across the water meadow, pass through the kissing gate and then go under the railway line. Continue uphill and then walk straight down Green View Avenue.
8. Turn left, walking round the green and then turn left walking along the high street until you reach the Fleur De Lis. After your stop, cross the road with care and then turn right, walking back along High Street. Turn left just before The school and walk up church hill, passing through the church yard.
9. Exit the path via the wooden gate, passing East Lodge, then cross the road with care and follow the path behind the war memorial. Turn left, continuing along the pavement with the village green to your right.
10. Follow the pavement until you see a footpath on your left. Walk between the hedges, passing through the wooden gate en-route. Walk past the converted barn and then turn right, before taking an immediate left through a second gate. Continue through the blackberry bushes before passing through another kissing gate.
11. Walk along the wood chip path, then pass through a wooden gate, followed by a metal kissing gate. At this point the walk opens up again as you emerge into a large field. Follow the edge of the field straight on and you will pass through three more kissing gates before crossing over the A21 footbridge.
12. Continue on through the woods and you will emerge into a large field of wheat, across which sits Ramshurst Manor. Walk past the secluded Brook Cottage and then cross over the wooden bridge. Follow the path into the trees and then cross a smaller bridge, before climbing uphill.
13. Walk down the grass track and then take a right hand turn through the wooden gate. Then turn left down the driveway. When you reach the road turn right and follow this with care, passing round the bend. When you reach the past house, follow the road round the bends with care until you come to The Plough.

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14. Upon leaving the pub, turn right and then walk down the road for 200 metres before taking the second path on your left. Walk uphill along the tarmac path through the woods and then along past the housing estate.
15. Continue along the path and then cross the road before walking through the original part of this hamlet, before taking the path to the left of Hunter Seal.
16. At the end of this path cross over the footbridge and then turn right over a second footbridge, following the signs for Haysden. Cross a third bridge and then continue on the left hand path.
17. Turn left over Lucifer Bridge as you cross the Medway once more, then cross over the concrete footbridge and then take the path off to your right, leading through the woods, following this until you emerge at Barden Lake.
18. Turn left and then follow the path back to the car park/Cafe In The Park, marking the end of your walk.

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When enjoying this walk, please remember to follow the countryside code:

Respect other people

Consider the local community and other people enjoying the outdoors

Park carefully so access to gateways and driveways are clear

Leave gates and property as you find them

Stay on footpaths but give way to others where it's narrow

Protect the natural environment

Leave no trace of your visit - take all your litter home

Don't have BBQs or fires

Keep dogs under effective control

Bag and bin your dog poo.

Enjoy the outdoors

Plan ahead, check what facilities are open, be prepared

Follow advice and local signs and obey social distancing measures