

05 KENT WYE DOWNS & CRUNDALE

■ Distance: 8¾ miles/14.1km ■ Time: 4½ hours ■ Grade: Moderate



SEE
FEATURE
ON PAGE 18



Wealden views over the
Devil's Kneading Trough.

PHOTO: PHILIP THOMAS



CHOSEN BY... PHILIP THOMAS

From the Wye Gap,
where the River

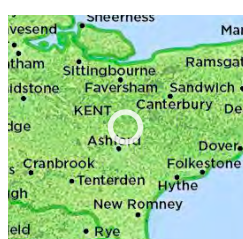
Great Stour breaches Kent's North Downs, this top-drawer downland circuit climbs to the isolated Norman church at Crundale (said 'Crunle'). Traversing a limb of chalk through bluebell woods, you come to the walk's down-crest finale, passing above the Devil's Kneading Trough, an impressive V-shaped coombe formed by ice age snowmelt. The gleaming, 180ft-high Wye Crown was cut into the wildflower-spangled escarpment by agriculture students from the now-closed Wye College in the spring of 1902, to

celebrate the coronation of Edward VII. Terrific views stretch across the Weald of Kent and Sussex to the coast.

1 Start

From church gate, take path R of church, signposted North Downs Way (NDW) and Stour Valley Walk (SVW), between allotments and derelict college buildings. Going R to road, cross into Occupation Road. Continue on field-edge bridle track at end. About halfway along (signpost broken at time of writing), go diagonally L on SVW path across field into trees, towards communications mast. Cross lane, up track to mast, tucking L to cross another lane. Emerging from trees, SVW leads R along

PLAN YOUR WALK



ROUTE

Start/parking St Gregory & St Martin's Church, Wye, free car park nearby, grid ref TR053468, postcode TN25 5EG

Is it for me? Undulating downland; mostly on tracks, claggy field and woodland paths, steep in places. Livestock in fields. Follows waymarked trails, signage lacking in places
Stiles 4

PLANNING

Nearest town Ashford

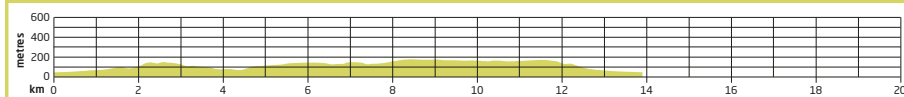
Refreshments Wye Coffee Shop & Kitchen and pubs/bars in Wye. Try The New Flying Horse, Upper Bridge St (01233 813414) or riverside Tickled Trout (01233 812227)

Public toilets Near start

Public transport Ashford to Canterbury West trains to Wye station, local buses 1/1A (stagecoachbus.com)

Maps OS Explorer 137; Landranger 179

GRADIENT PROFILE



05 KENT
WYE DOWNS & CRUNDALE■ OS Explorer map 137 ■ Buy maps at: ordnancesurvey.co.uk/shop

wood edge, then diagonally L over flinty field, rising steeply through Beech Wood. Head straight on over sheep fields through kissing gate, down dip and up to metal gate in top field corner (a point marked 'Ash' on OS Explorer maps).

2 1½ miles/2.7km

Crossing byway, follow signed SVW path L along wood edge (fallen tree obstructing path at time of writing) to pick up track down through Marriage Wood. Emerging from trees, follow signed SVW L along slope below Warren Wood. Where path enters woods, turn R down a sunken byway track. At concrete track junction, go straight on. The byway next goes up R-hand side of cottage/silos. At signpost, turn R and cross stile L before metal gate, angling L up steep, grassy trod to gate/higher byway below St Mary's Church, Crundale (to sidestep steep section, carry on up byway to lane and R to church).

3 3 miles/4.8km

Turn R on byway. Stick with this track for 1.8km through Towns Wood (flooded with bluebells in late April). Meeting a farm track, cross to metal kissing gate and follow onward path along R-hand field edge, then through kissing gates/chalk pit at far end. Turn R down banked byway towards Coombe

Manor, then L along fence to metal gate. Don't go through; instead swing L up grassy path along line of planted trees to cross stile in top field corner. Continue through metal gate ahead, then along bottom of bank past pits, crossing another two stiles up to kissing gate at copse corner. Cross next paddock to follow driveway L, which becomes a paved lane.

4 5 miles/8.8km

At crossroads, cross into lane for 'Staple Farm'. At end, cross Cold Blow farmyard to follow waymarked NDW R through a series of gates into Wye National Nature Reserve. Keep on higher path along crest of downs above Devil's

Kneading Trough, following NDW markers to road.

5 6½ miles/10.7km

Cross to resume trail L on crest of downs above Wye Crown, after which the official NDW goes R through ramblers gates, down to lane and L. At fingerpost, in 250m, it tucks L (signed for Wye) through wood and along field edge to lane. Cross to track, picking up outward route to the start. **CW**

VIEW THE WALK ON OS MAPS ONLINE!

walk1000miles.co.uk/cwroutes

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



Ordnance Survey

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DATE WALKED

TIME TAKEN

YOUR RATING

