

Barming Bridge is also known as St Helen's Bridge or Kettle Bridge. A number of places in this area have the prefix kettle; such as Kettle Lane and Kettle Corner. "Kettle" is thought to come from "cattle" as this would have been part of the route taken by drovers; men who 'drove' or herded the cattle moving from Romney Marsh on the south coast to the Medway towns and on to London.

Barming Bridge has been destroyed on two occasions; once in 1795 due to flooding and the second due to a tractor incident in which a 10 tonne traction-engine ended up upside down in the water! The old wooden bridge was declared unsafe and replaced by a concrete and steel structure in 1996.

In recent years Barming Bridge has been one of the spots in the area where otters have been seen and you may be lucky enough to spot one here if you are quiet. Otters can dive for several minutes at a time and male otters can have very large territorial ranges, so you'll need to keep your eyes peeled.

- 8 After crossing Barming Bridge turn right keeping the river on your right and walk along the riverside footpath.

Look out for kingfishers, cormorants and moorhens that are frequently seen along this stretch of river.

- 9 Continue along the river for approximately 1.5km. Just before you reach East Farleigh Bridge you'll see a footpath sign to your left. Go up the steps and follow this path around to the right and up to the road. East Farleigh train station is just to your left across the road.

Distance: 2.7 miles / 4.3km.

Time: 1 1/2 hours approximately.

Terrain: These paths can become very muddy and there are some steep sections. One stile, two short flights of steps (four steps each) and some gates.

Start/end point: East Farleigh train station.

OS Explorer Map: 148.

Kettles & Crossings

East Farleigh

A 2.7 mile / 4.3km circular route from East Farleigh train station through orchards with beautiful views of the surrounding countryside.



Yalding Twyford Bridge (MVCP)



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This walk is endorsed by Explore Kent.

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This walk meanders through local orchards with beautiful views of the surrounding valley and finishes along the banks of the River Medway. It's a relatively short walk of less than three miles and although there are some steep slopes, it is relatively easy.

- 1** Leaving East Farleigh train station turn left and cross the medieval Farleigh Bridge; take extra care here as there is no pavement.

This 14th century ragstone bridge is considered to be the oldest bridge in Kent and is only 11.5ft wide. East Farleigh Bridge is most well known for the location of a battle during the Civil War in 1648.

East Farleigh village is located two miles up stream of Maidstone. Originally called 'Ferlaga' in the Domesday book this translates from the Saxon meaning 'the way of passage', referring to the river crossings available at both East and West Farleigh.

- 2** After the bridge continue uphill along Station Road. At The Bull Inn cross the road and turn right onto Lower Road past St Mary's Church.

This church was founded before 96AD but was rebuilt by The Normans in 1120.

- 3** After 150 metres you'll see a footpath across the road on your left. Take this path which leads away from the road along the tree line up the field. After about 100 metres (half way up the hill) the path turns a sharp right to cut through the field towards the tree line opposite. Follow this path as it goes through the trees and diagonally across the field.

- 4** Go up the steps, through the gate and turn right and continue straight ahead until you reach the gate and road.

- 5** Turn left and walk up Gallants Road for about 200 metres then on your right take the footpath leading up some steps into an orchard. Turn left then immediately right to cross the orchard. At the fence follow the path to the left, cross the track, go through the gap in the fence and continue to follow the path across the next orchard.

These orchards are a beautiful sight with an abundance of blossom and fruit providing a delicious food source for local wildlife. Enjoy the lovely views over the Medway Valley below.

- 6** Go through the metal gate onto the footpath which comes out opposite Farleigh Green and onto Kettle Lane. Turn right and walk down Kettle Lane.

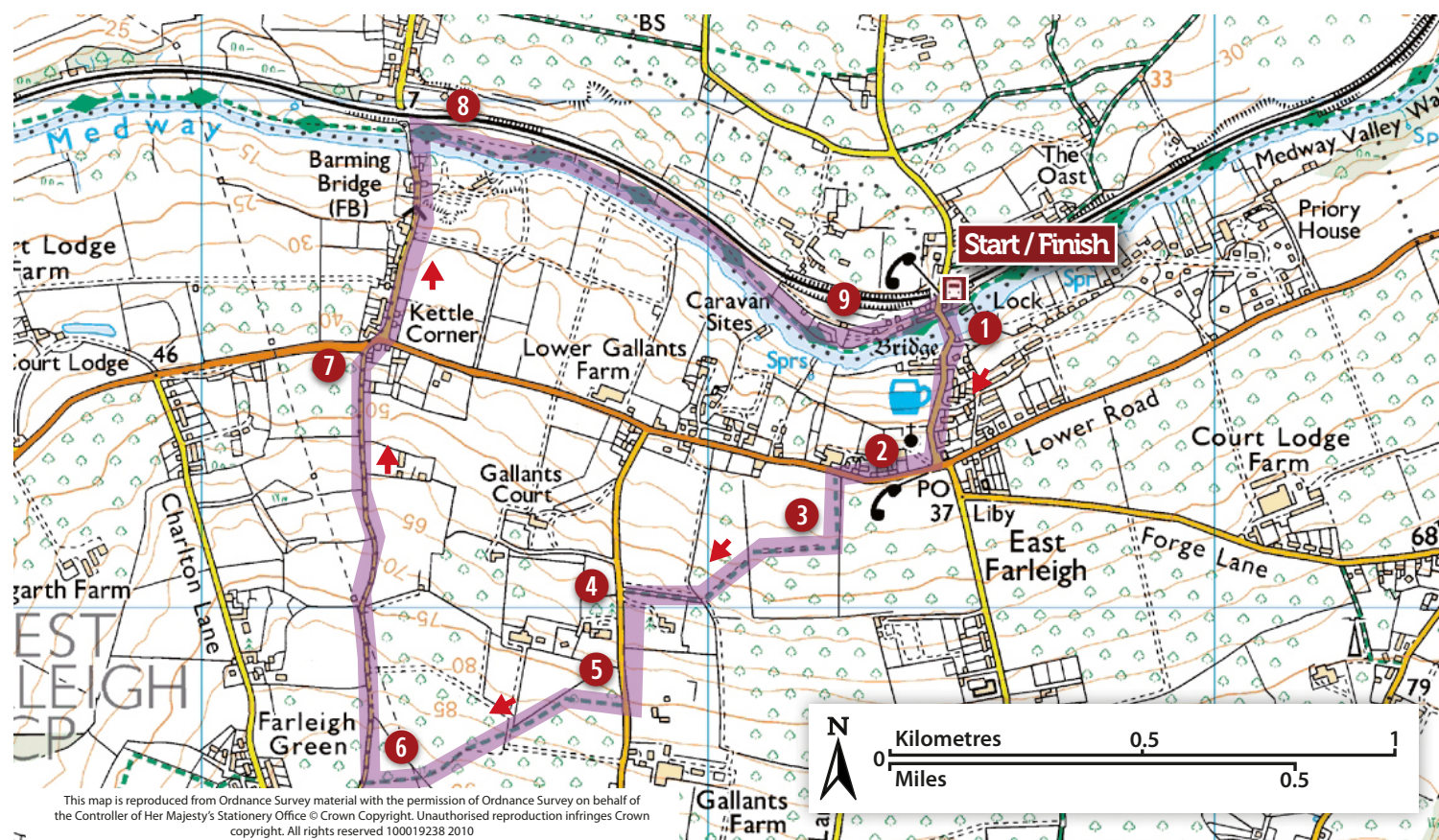


Cowslips (Explore Kent)

Orchard (Explore Kent)

Mute Swan (Andy Vidler)

- 7** At the bottom of the road carefully cross over Lower Road and immediately to your right at Kettle Corner, turn left to walk down St Helen's Lane. At the bottom of the lane at the River Medway is Barming Foot Bridge.



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