



North Downs Way - Section 8: Detling to Lenham

9.2 miles (14.8 km) allow 4 hours

Stroll in the footsteps of the pilgrims from Detling to Lenham. Pass the ancient Thurnham Castle remains and journey through the protected Hucking Estate. Finish your walk by attempting to find the source of the River Stour in Lenham!









Thurnham Castle ruins

How to get there -

Parking: On street in Detling, on Lenham Road in Lenham.

Train: Nearest stations: Bearsted and Lenham.

Bus: 334 from Maidstone to Detling. 10X from Ashford to Maidstone stopping at Lenham.

S	Start	Near Jade's Crossing, Detling. Postcode ME14 3EY
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F	Finish	Near Lenham ME17 2EY
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	Gates	16
	Stiles	1
	Steps	11
	Terrain	Bare earth, gravel tracks, grass, surfaced tarmac roads, chalk.
	Views	Great views from the Downs
	Refreshments	Pub and shops in Detling, pubs in Thurham and Hollingbourne

Route description

1. Turn left along Pilgrims Way away from the footbridge. Follow the road as it turns to the right. Turn left onto Pilgrims Way opposite the The Cock Horse pub. After 400 metres turn left and walk uphill on a footpath along the edge of a field to a gate.
2. Go through the gate, keep to your left following the footpath straight up the steep hill and round to the right. Follow the footpath with the fence on your left passing a footpath sign and wooden gate. Go down a long set of steps and through the gate at the bottom.
3. Continue straight ahead and footpath will lead up a hill to a small collection of trees, go up some steps and keep to main footpath. Follow the fence on your left and pass through a metal gate turning right onto a small road.
4. Follow the road downhill and round to the left. When the road bends sharply to the right turn left on the footpath and pass through a gate. Keep walking and pass through a second gate and continue along the edge of a field to a third gate at the top of the field.
5. Turn to your right and follow the narrow footpath that runs between two fences. Pass through a second gate and continue straight. Walk down a few steps then up a long section of steps through woodland. Weave through woods and down a long section of steps.
6. Continue straight and walk up a steep set of steps. At the top a footpath will join from the left, turn right and continue through woods. Cross a small road and uphill along the edge of a field. Pass down a set of steps, through a gate, across a field to a wooden gate.
7. Pass through the gate and turn left. Follow the footpath as it bends. Continue straight, passing footpaths on your left. Pass through a gate into an open field and across the field. As your approach the trees on your right take the footpath that leads to the edge of the woodland.



View from Cat's Mount (point 7)

8. Pass through woods and bear left along edge of field. As the woods end turn left and then right to cross the field. When you reach the fence turn left and walk uphill to the corner of the field. Cross over a stile, down some steps, across a road and up some steps.
9. Walk straight passing a Hucking Estate viewpoint signpost on your left. Continue for 1/2 a mile, down some steps to a track. Turn left and walk uphill. Turn right through a gate opposite a Hucking Estate sign. Continue straight on main footpath under pylons leading through a gate to a panoramic view ahead.

10. Keep left and pass through a gate which leads along a wide sectioned off footpath. At the end pass through a second gate. Cross the next field at the top of the field. Pass through gorse woodland downhill. Follow main footpath round to left and cross the field to a gate.
11. Pass through the gate and keep close to the fence as it bears to left. At the footpath waymarker turn right downhill through a small woodland and through a gate. Continue straight following the edge of the field. Keep left following footpath down to a road.
12. Turn right onto road and immediately turn left onto the Pilgrims Way down the side of the Dirty Habit pub. Continue straight for 2 miles until you reach a road. Cross the road and continue straight along the Pilgrims Way.



The figure in this sculpture of a pilgrim between points 12 and 13 is known as 'Brother Percival'

13. Follow this road for 1 mile. When the road bends to the right continue straight ahead onto a gravel track. At the end continue straight onto the road. After a short distance houses named Lime Tree Terrace will appear on your left. Your walk finishes at the Pilgrims Way signpost on your left just beyond these houses.

Points of interest

3. White Horse Country Park

A mile into your walk you will pass very close to White Horse Country Park which has been designated a Site of Nature Conservation Interest. Over 20,000 trees have been recently planted including oak, ash, silver birch. Twelve acres of land has also been seeded to create an area of open grassland.



There are spectacular views from this Country Park

4. Thurnham Castle

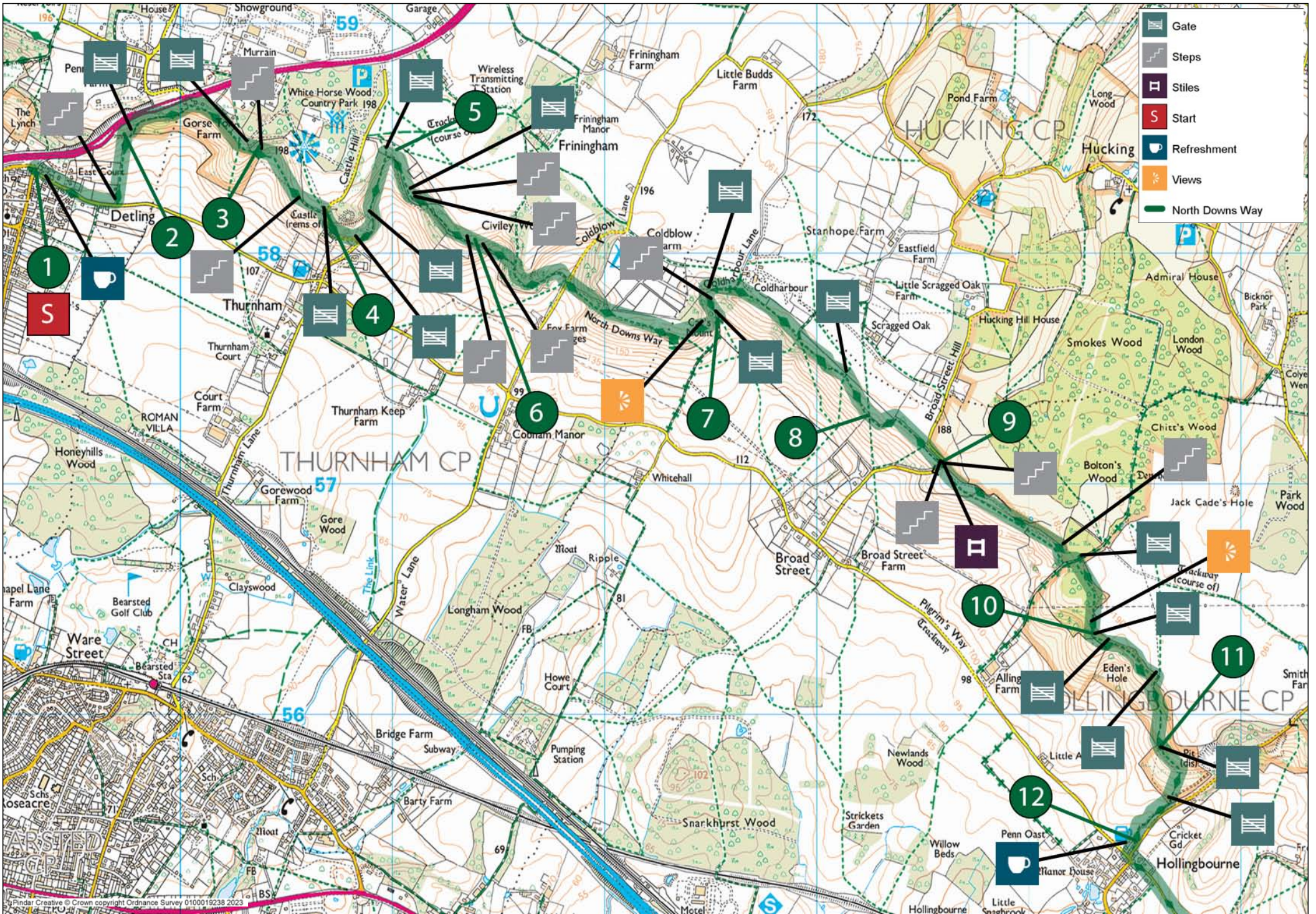
A short detour from the walk is the site of Thurnham Castle and the ruins that remain. The 12th century flint built castle was created by Robert of Thurnham. It is thought that the castle was abandoned by the 15th century and in later centuries chalk quarrying damaged the site.



9. Hucking Estate

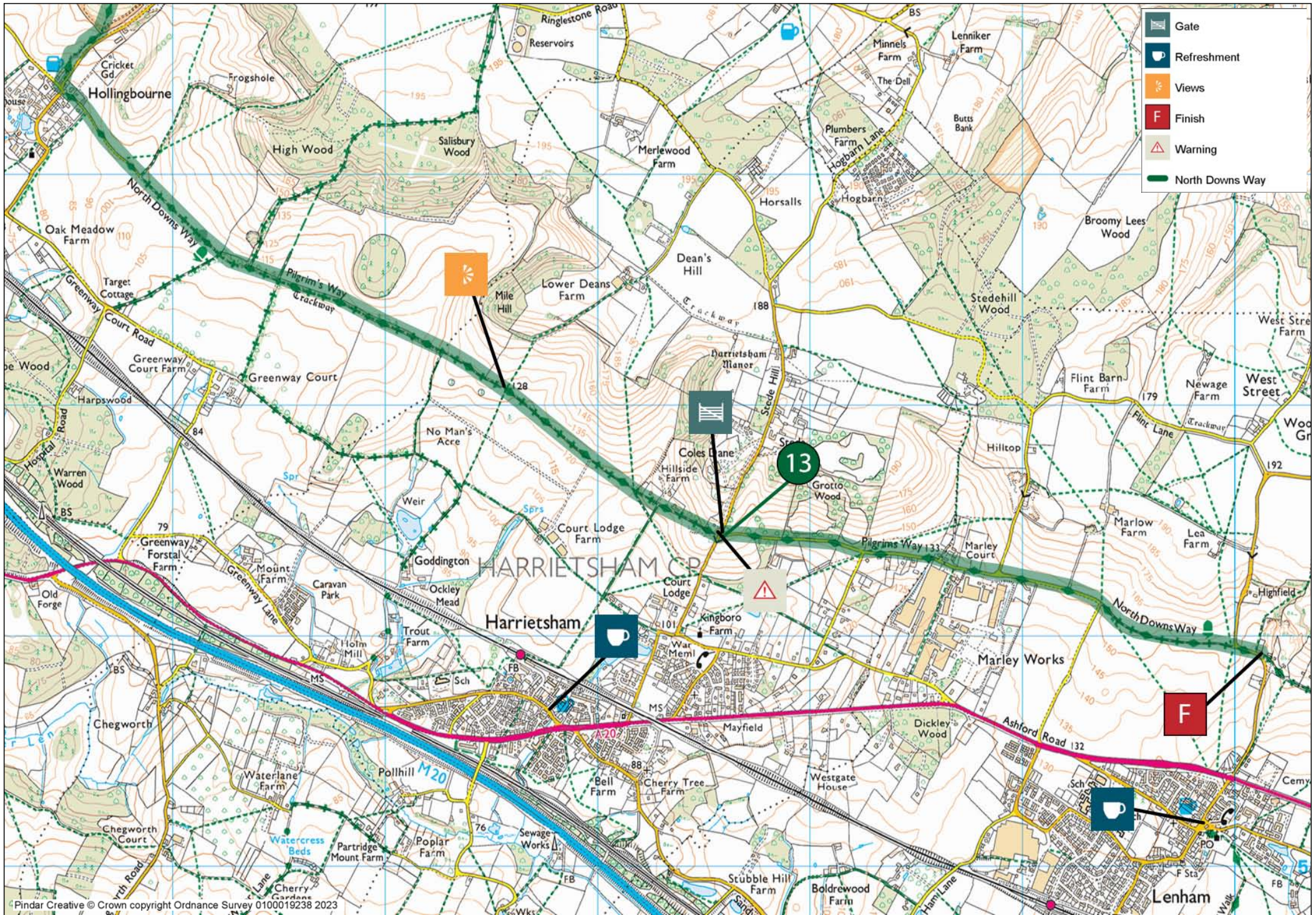
The Hucking Estate is maintained and managed by The Woodland Trust and offers beautiful views from the North Downs chalk ridge across the Weald of Kent. The estate was acquired in 1997 and an initial 180,000 trees were planted over 185 acres. Take some time to explore coppiced woodland with bluebells in the spring.











- Gate
- Steps
- Stiles
- Start
- Refreshment
- Views
- North Downs Way

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-  Gate
-  Refreshment
-  Views
-  Finish
-  Warning
-  North Downs Way